
Progress Report

Title of project:

**ABUNDANCE, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSERVATION
OF THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED WIMMER'S
SHREW (*Crocidura wimmeri*) IN THE BANCO NATIONAL
PARK, CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

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Background and justification

This report is an update of the implementation of the project funded by Rufford foundation with the number of registration: 32300-2 concerning the theme « **ABUNDANCE, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSERVATION OF THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED WIMMER'S SHREW (CROCIDURA WIMMERI) IN THE BANCO NATIONAL PARK, CÔTE D'IVOIRE** ». According to Rufford foundation's objectives, the project must be the subject of two interim update reports and a final report. This is the first report since the beginning of activities related to this project. This first update report deals with two essential points. The first point concerns project presentation to different stakeholders. The second point is about the survey of shrews in Banco National Park (BNP).

Presentation of the project to ACB-CI. (NGO) team

The NGO ACB-CI (Actions pour la Conservation de la Biodiversité en Côte d'Ivoire) is the organisation that has hosts the Project. This organisation is in charge of providing technical support, managing accounts and monitoring project activities. That the reason why the project was presented on 08 October 2020 at the NGO's headquarters in Abidjan. Several comments were made after the PowerPoint presentation in order to improve the logical framework of the project. Several members of the NGO and the executive board were present at this meeting (**Photo 1, 2**).



Photo 1

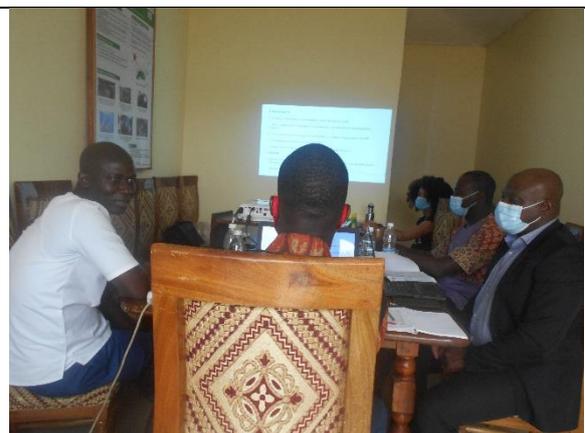


Photo 2

Presentation of the project to the management of the NGO ACB-CI

Presentation of the project to Banco National Park

A second meeting was planned with the General Manager of OIPR (Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves) in order to obtain an official licence for access to the Park. This approach aim to make our activities as legal as possible in order to avoid conflicts. This meeting led to the obtaining of the authorization to access the PNB (**Photo 3**). Following the meeting with the general manager, an additional meeting was organized with the managers of the BNP. The aims of this meeting was to clearly present the program to the manager of the BNP. (**Photo 4**). The project was presented in its entirety (context, methods and outcomes). After the presentation of the project, several comments were made by the park managers for a good conduct of the project in the park. All safety measures were addressed by the managers. Finally, all the structures capable of supporting the project to achieve the objectives were presented. These were the services "riparian measures, the NGO “Vision Verte”, the team for ecological monitoring).



Photo 3 : Access's BNP authorisation



Photo 4 : Presentation of the project of the Park managers

Sampling of shrew in BNP with particular focus on Wimmer's Shrew

Context of sampling

Shrews are small animal, insectivorous, swift, land mammals with a long pointed snout, tiny eyes, small ears, short limbs, long tails, and short, dense fur. These small vertebrates represent an important and often little-known part of biodiversity. One such species of shrew (Wimmer's shrew) endemic to Côte d'Ivoire, first described by Heim de Balsac and Aellen in 1958, has

only been observed since 1976. Declared extinct by the IUCN, recent work carried out in the Banco National Park by Kadjo and collaborator in 2013 has confirmed its existence. However, its abundance and distribution and the threats to this shrew are unknown. With this in mind, a spatial and temporal study of the Wimmer's shrew was carried out from 25 November 2020 to 04 February 2021 in the Banco National Park.

Inventory team

To carry out the inventories of the shrews in the PNB, a field team consisting of the project leader AHISSA Laurent, researchers from the Biosciences UFR of the University Felix Houphouët Boigny and professionals from the park (**photo 5; 6**). For a better follow-up of the field work, the NGO ACB-CI mandated a monitoring team made up of the President, Prof Akpatou and the account Manager, Dr Kassé Benoît, who visited the PNB to be reassured of the actual execution of the project (**Photo 7**).



Photo 5



photo 6

Field team that carried out the shrew inventories



Photo 7:
Monitoring visit of project activities by a team from the NGO ACB-CI (prof Akpatou on the left and Dr Kassé on the right)

Trapping campaign

The trapping campaign began on 25 November 2020 and ended on 4 February 2021 using pitfall (Photo 8). . These traps were placed in the main habitat types, i.e. natural forest, planted forest and swamp forest (Photo 9, 10; 11). In swampy habitats, Sherman traps were used because pitfalls could not be set up due to the abundant water on the ground.

The traps were visited every day early in the morning between 8 and 9 am.



Photo 8 : Pitfall trap

Photo 9: Natural forest



Photo 10 : Planting forest

Photo 11 : Swamp forest

Preliminary results

At the end of the trapping campaigns, a total of 57 individuals of shrews were sampled. These individuals belong to seven species divided into two genera (*Suncus* and *Crocidura*). See table below.

Table: List of shrew species recorded during the inventory

Species	Primary forest	Planting forest	secondary forest	Swamp forest
<i>Crocidura obscurior</i>	21	3	3	0
<i>Crocidura juvenetea</i>	5	4	3	0
<i>Crocidura muricauda</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Crocidura wimmeri</i>	2	1	0	0
<i>Crocidura crosseii</i>	1	0	1	0
<i>Crocidura theresea</i>	2	1	0	0
<i>Suncus megalura</i>	3	0	0	0

It should be noted that the Critically Endangered species that is the focus of this project was observed during our sampling campaign. Three individuals of this species were observed (**Figure 12**).



Photo 12: Wimmer's shrew (*Crocidura wimmeri*)

Conclusion of the first report

This report deals well with the points raised, namely the presentation of the project to stakeholders and the shrew survey in the Banco National Park. The next update report will focus on awareness campaigns and environmental education around the Park.