

Project Update: March 2024

We have surveyed for small mammals in different habitats in the Bimpong Forest Reserve (BFR). We focused on two major habitats (secondary forest and plantations) in the Bimpong Forest Reserve. The survey was done twice in the dry season. We have documented only one *Lophuromys sikapusi*. Despite intensive sampling efforts, no records were made of the Baer's wood mouse.

Again, we also have recorded the threats facing the forest reserve and affecting small mammals. We have come to the conclusion that the major threat is illegal felling of trees in the reserve. We realised from the field and communication with locals of Nuanua community (a fringe community), some compartments will be released for them to practice Modified Taunya System. This has become a pattern of practice for the past 30 years.

In March 2024, our next field surveys will take place in the farms (cocoa and plantain) surrounding the forest reserve with the hope that we will find the endangered small mammal. We will be initiating the community component and awareness creation campaign of this project in May.



Figure 1: Numbered traps used during the survey in BFR.



A trap placed in a degraded area of BFR.



Felled trees chopped into logs in BFR.



Illegally logged tree which has created an open space in BFR.



Logged trees which has created a huge space within the BFR.



Left over of gun bullets recorded in BFR.



Confiscated sawn logs from the BFR by the Forest Service Division.



Heavy truck carrying sawn logs of trees in Assin Fosu.



Team member placing groundnut paste as bait in the trap in the BFR.



Mr James, a forest guide who assisted us during the survey.



A team member placing a shearman trap under a tree in BFR during the survey.