

## **Project Update: June 2012**

In November 2011, the Wildlife Monitoring and Use Programme of the Piagaçu-Purus Institute started the participatory hunting monitoring using self-monitoring datasheets in five communities in the SDR Piagaçu-Purus, at the Lower Purus River. Six months after the beginning of the project, there are already 73 families cooperating with the monitoring programme, representing 70% of the households in these five communities.

During this period, we have collected almost 300 data sheets, representing 280 valid hunting events. The invalid events refer to meat bought from neighbours, kills of livestock and more than one hunt event marked in the same data-sheet. The valid hunting events represent 249 successful hunts, totaling 540 animals killed from November 2011 to early June 2012 and 31 unsuccessful hunts. However, the unsuccessful hunts may be underestimated because they are less remarkable to the local residents and the importance of monitoring these events needs to be encouraged.

A preliminary analysis shows that the wildlife meat in these Amazonian *terra firme* communities is more important during the wet season. During this season, the water level of the rivers and lakes are higher, the *igapós* (annual flooded forests) and the small tributaries are more accessible, and terrestrial species are more detectable. One local resident has explained the importance of the hydrologic cycle for the hunting like this:

*“When the water is going up, there are no fruits. But, when the water reaches its highest peak, all the trees are producing fruits, which fall, reach the flooded ground and get spread through the water. They spread to the margins of the ‘igarapés’ and ‘igapós’. When the water starts to go down, the fruits remain on the ground, where the animals come to eat. Every animal come down to the margins to eat. In May, the animals start to appear at the margins, but it gets better between July and August.”*

Between May and June 2012, I have interviewed 99 residents male and female from different ages representing 68 households (67% of the total) at the five communities. They were asked about their food preferences and avoidances, the local rules and agreements and the acquaintance about the Brazilian Fauna Law.

The most cited local agreements were about sharing the meat among the neighbours and not selling wildlife meat outside the SDR. In one of the 5 communities, a meeting was held on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2012 to discuss local rules concerning the subsistence of the hunting practices. The participants agreed upon five rules stipulating quotas for the utilisation of wildlife meat at special events, maximum catch for the teachers and visitors from outside the SDR, and also decided to close hunting of the paca (*Cuniculus paca*) during the breeding season.

The monitoring programme, together with the interviews, is already revealing not only the influence of the natural biotic and abiotic cycles on the hunting activity, but also the interactions between local ecological knowledge and the strategies and decisions locally made.

## **Next Steps for 2012**

*June-July:* Transcription and preliminary analysis of the interviews;

*July:* Fieldwork at the SDR-PP: interviews and participatory monitoring;

*August:* Capacity building (attend course in Campinas, SP and in Manaus, AM);

*September:* Fieldwork at the SDR-PP: interviews and participatory monitoring;

*October:* Interviews with stakeholders of different scales (state agencies and NGOs);

*November:* End of the first year of the monitoring programme; validation of interview data and participatory preliminary analysis of monitoring data;

*December:* Participatory Evaluation of the monitoring programme and analysis of interviews data.

