

## Project Update: July 2016

Currently, my study in combination with another project counts with 50 camera stations covering a total area of 150 km<sup>2</sup> that are deployed in the forest of Darien, around the station of Pirre. They were revised after 2 months and they will remain in the field for another 2 months. So far, tapirs were detected at several stations, mainly those that are further away from communities, in the core of the Darien National Park. Noteworthy, several other species of interests were also photographed, such as jaguar and white-lipped peccaries. Analysis of the complete data set will enable identify what factors best influence tapir habitat selection in the area.

We also gathered information about tapir hunting during informal talks with people from the communities (mainly indigenous), because we consider the information more reliable when collected that way than during formal interviews to unknown people, hunting being a sensitive topic. We have developed a trust relationship with our local assistants and they provide a reliable source of information about hunting events in the area. It seems that tapirs are not actively hunted, in contrast with other ungulates species (e.g. peccary and deer species). Tapirs killed seems to be relatively rare as just one event was reported in the area since 2015. According to our source of information, the principle reason for this low hunting rate is that tapir meat is not highly appreciated, and people are scared of the repercussions if the authorities find out about a tapir killed. Nevertheless, we should gather information from a larger area to draw any conclusion.





A Baird's tapir captured on camera trap; Ninon presenting the project and showing about tapirs to the Embera people of Pijibasal and some game wardens; placing a camera trap with a student from the University of Panama; Tyson, our local Embera assistant examining a tapir latrine; a male ocelot; white-lipped peccaries