

Project Update: July 2010

This project aims at demonstrating local strategies that mitigate crop-raiding by wildlife in the Afadjato-Agumatsa Conservation area in Ghana. It is a second RSG after an assessment of crop raiding activities in the project area. This is an update of the activities of the above project from when the project started in September to June 2010.

The project activities during the period under reportage included:

- Planning meetings with stakeholders
- Conservation education programs
- Field testing of mitigation strategies

Planning meetings with stakeholders

The meetings were the first project activities. The initial ones focused on the presentation of project goal and objectives, a review of the activities and decisions on the specific mitigation strategies to use and which farmers will use them.

Some key issues discussed and concluded on include the following:

1. Addressing ground crop-raiding wildlife such as grasscutters and duikers has to be approached differently from addressing the arboreal ones such as monkeys.
2. Data collection on crop-raiding should continue during these mitigating periods to help estimate whether the mitigations help out or not.
3. The specific mitigation strategies to be used include fecal solutions (for ground and arboreal crop-raiders), chimes (for arboreal crop-raiders), and perfume-soaked cotton balls placed in slightly perforated tin cans. Also, one person adopted using chilli.
4. Initially, initially, only three farmers agreed to try the mitigation strategies, but upon further consultation, the number increased to seven and currently a total of 15 farmers.

Conservation education programs

The community meetings were also used to educate the stakeholders about general forest conservation and its benefits. In addition, special meetings were held to show videos of crop-raiding problems and some mitigation issues in other parts on the world.

Field testing of mitigation strategies

The field testing of mitigation resulted in some findings which are summarized in this report. The fecal solutions are more effective during the dry season because they are rained off or diluted during the rainy season. Also though they are more effective during the dry season, their scent which deters the crop-raiding animals does not last long because of the intense heat in the area. Thus in both rainy and dry season, they need to be replaced very often. This inconvenience makes it difficult for farmers to adopt it.

Chilli solutions faced the same challenges as the fecal solutions. Also, since there was only one person using it the data is not very conclusive.

The chimes were initially effective in deterring monkeys. However, early results indicate that the monkeys get used to them and so are not deterred after a few weeks.

Preliminary results indicate that the perfumes are the most effective during the dry and rainy seasons.

