

Project Update: October 2005

Fieldwork in the area of Buayan-Kionop began in June 2005, and has been proceeding smoothly. Initial work involved social entry into the community, liaising with influential community members (such as the village chief), and identifying potential research assistants. The village of Buayan-Kionop itself consists of a number of small hamlets spread along several kilometres of valley, with a population of approximately 200 people. The habitat surrounding the village is composed principally of secondary lowland hill forest, with some areas cleared for agricultural use, and primary forest a few kilometres from the village.

Once the principal hunters in the village were identified, a system of semi-structured interviews was instigated in order to determine hunted catchment areas, hunting methods, frequencies of hunting forays, and hunted species. Information is also being elicited on hunter ecological knowledge relating to hunted mammal (which constitute the majority of offtake) species; in particular their behavioural habits and feeding ecology.

Parallel work is underway to estimate hunted mammal presence/absence and relative abundances in the forest through line transect surveying. This and the above work will remain ongoing throughout the project. Additional work to commence in the near future will involve medium-sized mammal trapping to assess presence/absence of more cryptic species, and possibly abundance estimates through the use of capture-recapture techniques.

