

## Project Update: February 2020

I travelled to Ghana from Germany to start the citizen science project. The project, which was initially scheduled for September 2019 was rescheduled to start in December 2020 because of heavy rainfall which didn't permit school kids and other citizen scientists to work outdoors in the community forest.

The official permit to use the community forest was finally acquired in December 2019. Stakeholder engagements and capacity building of staff, volunteers and relevant partners proceeded immediately after the permit acquisition. The campaign in schools and communities to motivate and select project participants has also been completed successfully as well as the designing and refining of field methods. Demonstrations of how pitfall traps work and how it is constructed has also been successful.

Now, all pitfall traps have been deployed in the forest by school kids and citizen scientists to sample arthropods in the community forest. The first- and second-week sampling have already been obtained and project participants are now sorting them into their respective taxa for onwards family or species identification. Subsequent weeks shall be dedicated for the rest of the activities.

Table 1: Summary of activities and their status

| Phases  | Activities   | Remarks  |
|---------|--|--|
| Phase 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Permit acquisition to work in the community forest</li><li>❖ Stakeholder engagements</li></ul>   | Completed<br>Completed                           |
| Phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Capacity building of staffs, volunteers and relevant partners</li><li>❖ Campaign in schools and communities to select project participants</li></ul> | Completed<br>Completed                           |
| Phase 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Designing and refining field methods</li></ul>   | Completed  |
| Phase 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Field work</li><li>❖ Arthropod sorting</li><li>❖ Data management</li><li>❖ Results compilation</li></ul>   | Ongoing<br>Ongoing<br>Not started<br>Not started |
| Phase 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Conservation education, awareness program</li><li>❖ Publicizing results</li></ul>  | Not started<br>Not started                       |
| Phase 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Scientific paper and report writing</li></ul>  | Not started                                      |



Figure 1: School kids and Citizen scientist ready to learn and conserve the community forest



Figure 2: Forest Aid Ghana volunteer interacting with school kids



Figure 3: School kids ready to answer questions about biodiversity



Figure 4: A volunteer demonstrating the importance of forest and insects to school kids



Figure 5: PI demonstrating how pitfall trap is set up



Figure 6: Mounted Pitfall trap ready for sampling