

**Project Update: April 2021**

## **Sensitization in the villages**



### **Specific objectives**

- A questionnaire survey will be administered to a selected family following a certain number of criteria (hunter, traditional doctors, secret forest conservator, household....). This questionnaire will help have good idea of the conception that people have on bats in the community.
- Education of the communities about the role of bats, especially about their beneficial impact on the ecosystem (ecosystem services).
- Active community involvement through schools programmes and community-based organisation /or women's groups, in bat conservation.
- Collect data on the specific composition, habitat use, distribution and abundance of bats in Bafoussam "secrets forests"(relatively large) which is presently lacking. This information is of key importance to the development of strategies to monitor and protect bats and their roost.
- Greater understanding of knowledge and attitude about bats by the local population of the study area, so that an effective sensitisation awareness campaigns can be carried out.

List of recommendations will be handed to the ministry of wildlife and nature protection (regional representation) in charge of wildlife protection of the region to help bat biodiversity conservation in general, thought it conservation plans that will be included in the national biodiversity conservation policy as well as positive attitude toward bats by the local population.

### **Fieldwork**

From the 12<sup>th</sup> January to 14<sup>th</sup> February 2021 the first field trip was organised in order to inform local administration, SDO, Mayor local chiefs and some communities' leaders as well as the chiefs such as in:

Ndiangso I village give us details on various group association existing in each village such as women and men's association meeting every Sunday at the chiefdom.

Diengbou Medjo II here there is a group that held they are meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month, a women association meeting every Sunday. In this village there is no hunters but some traditional doctors. The chief said bats are not dangerous, but some people would be using the bats appearance to do bad things in the community as well as witchcraft.

Melam I, this village is divided into six blocks and their sixth representative are meeting every Sunday at the main chiefdom.

Village Banengo; they have here two groups that meet every Sunday at the chef's house.

Village Ndiengdam II group held their meetings on Sunday: men and women. This season was the biannual cultural period and we had privilege to talk to some many peoples at the king place on the various aspect of bats.

At the end of this prospective round the community and the administrative was brief on the objectives of the project and promised their support for the next trip planned for March 2021.

The second trip from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021, held in the Diengbou Melam I and Ndiengdam 2, where a questionnaire was administered to selected people in the communities in relation to the perception and knowledge of bats (figure 1) at the same time a sensitisation campaign in community and in various primary school.

Because of their farming activities we were obliged to talk to groups of people in the afternoon when they are back from the farm in the various houses or in small groups



Sensitization using bats

### Bat capture

During the second trip, six mist nets, three 12 m and three 6m plus ropes, gloves, bats bags and pools was consecutively used in each of the sacred forest. The net was checking every 15 min from 6.00 pm to 12.00 am captured bats was kept in the cotton bag to be process in the morning (table 1).

Table1: Bat's sampling night, mist nets and number of individuals caught.

Sites	Number of night	Number of nets	Nets lengths	Duration (h)
site 1	2	6	3(6m) and 3 (12m)	12
site 2	2	6	3(6m) and 3 (12m)	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6(6m) and 6 (12m)</b>	<b>24</b>

### Results

A total of 15 individuals were caught; four species were identified and one need to be clearly identified. Those 15 individuals belong to three families and five genera. Frugivorous bat was more abundant than insectivorous bat.

Table 2: captured bat in different sites

Families	Species	site 1	site 2	Total
Pteropodidae	<i>Eidolon helvum</i>	1	1	2
	<i>Myonycteris angolensis</i>	5	3	8
	<i>Rousettus aegyptiacus</i>	2	/	2
Hipposideridae	<i>Hipposideros fuliginosus</i>	1	1	2
Rhinolophidae	<i>Rhinolophus sp.</i>	1	/	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>

## Sensitisation

We were using bat pictures to sensitised peoples on the bat importance; most of them was surprised since they are seeing this animal for the first time (figure 2).



Sensitization and interview in men and women association in the villages

In the primary school we explain to students what is a bat, and their roles in the environment, a video projection was made to help them to better understand the bats and it environment, this permit them to ask some clarification questions (figure 3).



Sensitization in primaries schools

### **Future plans**

- A questionnaire survey will be administered to a selected family following a certain number of criteria (hunter, traditional doctors, secret forest conservator, household....).
- Education of the communities about the role of bats – especially about their beneficial impact on the ecosystem (ecosystem services).
- Active community involvement through schools programmes and community-based organisation /or women's groups, in bat conservation.
- Collect data on the specific composition, habitat use, distribution and abundance of bats in Bafoussam "secrets forests"(relatively large) which is presently lacking. This information is of key importance to the development of strategies to monitor and protect bats and their roost.



Master student removing bats from the net