

SURVEYS OF CHIMPANZEE HABITATS IN WEST AFRICA: INFORMATION FROM GUINEA AND LIBERIA

G. Ohashi, T. Matsuzawa

Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University, Inuyama, Aichi, Japan

Presenter's Email: gaku.ohashi@gmail.com

Chimpanzees have been well studied for more than 30 years at Bossou, Guinea. However, the Bossou group itself is extremely endangered. Since the beginning of the longitudinal study, no female chimpanzee immigration has been recorded, whereas all of the female chimpanzees born at Bossou disappeared around sexual maturation. As a result, the percentage of aged individuals is increasing in the group. For conservation of chimpanzees, we have to care about not only one chimpanzee group, but also surrounding groups for ensuring immigration among them. Bossou is located only a few kilo-meters away from Liberian border. In recent study, Bossou chimpanzees were found to visit Liberian forest. The forest spread over the national border. We started survey in Liberia in 2006, and found that chimpanzees survived in at least three areas (Bonla, Nimba mountains, and Kpayee-Lepula). Especially in Kpayee-Lepula, the villagers "protect" chimpanzees like in Bossou. On the other hand, Chimpanzees in Liberia face various threats. Not only Guinea, but also Liberia is a mineral rich country. Looking at local activities, slash-and-burn agriculture is still popular. Meanwhile, local tribe, Manon, is also distributed around this area. By understanding their tradition, we may get a good solution for coexistence between human and chimpanzees.

Keywords: chimpanzee, transborder, Bossou, Liberia