THE AMBATOVY LEMUR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF LEMUR BRIDGE USE, SALVAGING AND THE RE-INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLOCATION PROGRAM

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The Ambatovy Project includes an open pit mine located in Madagascar's east coast rain forest, an area recognized for its high regional biodiversity exemplified by the presence of 13 confirmed and a potential 16 lemur species present. Due the mine's location, a stringent Biodiversity Management Plan has been formulated. The Lemur Management Plan, aims to confirm that the mine's activities do not lead to a long term reduction in the pre-construction viability levels of priority lemur species' populations present in the mine area forests. The primary work to be conducted through the management program is to assess impacts on lemur species present within the mine area and apply mitigation measures including the construction of lemur bridges over roads, salvaging efforts and translocation. Preliminary results suggest that lemur bridges are effective in joining forest fragments created by the construction of roadways in the mine area. Additionally, preliminary data suggest that the translocation and re-introduction of 14 salvaged P. diadema individuals to a neighboring national park has been a success. Translocated individuals have formed stable groups and produced viable offspring. Data will also be presented on the long term monitoring of displaced lemur groups and possible cascade effects on adjacent populations. In the future, the information gained from the lemur management program can be shared with the scientific community to possibly ensure that other future mining projects occurring in Madagascar are designed optimally to benefit from residual impact management techniques applied at Ambatovy.

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