

3rd International Conference on Biodiversity & Sustainable Energy Development

June 24-26, 2014 Valencia Conference Centre, Valencia, Spain

Preliminary report on a new population of Sclater's Guenon (*Cercopithecus sclateri*) in Nekede, Nigeria

P U Okorie¹, S E Okeke¹ and K Ekechukwu²

¹Imo State University, Nigeria

²Tarrant County College, USA

Sclater's guenon (*Cercopithecus sclateri* Pocock 1904), also known as Sclater's monkey and Lagwa monkey, is a threatened guenon endemic to southern Nigeria. It ranges in small isolated populations from eastern Niger Delta and Cross River Basin northwards up to Enugu, which falls within the Guinean forests of the West African biodiversity hotspot. Sclater's guenon was initially feared extinct until it was sighted around Oguta (Imo State) in late 1980's. Ever since, several isolated populations of the monkey have been reported within this region, leading to a re-classification of its conservation status from endangered to vulnerable. This paper is a preliminary report on a small population of Sclater's guenon that has established on a free zone of a Government-owned zoological garden in Nekede, Owerri. The monkeys found refuge in the free zone following destruction of their natural forest habitat caught up in the uncontrolled expansion of Owerri metropolis, the administrative capital of Imo State, Nigeria. Unlike many other populations of Sclater's guenon, which were protected by local people as sacred objects and were therefore friendly, the Nekede monkeys were extremely shy and stealthy. In their small natural range of about 15ha, the population showed versatility in food utilization, with a wide food spectrum that included wild and cultivated fruits, leaves and insects. The population structure of young:adult ratio of 1.5:1 suggests a fairly stable population. Finally, proposal is made on habitat forage upgrading as part of a general in-situ conservation plan.

Biography

Peter U Okorie is an Environmental biologist. Formal education in College of Immaculate Conception (C.I.C), Enugu; Government College, Ughelli; University of Nigeria, Nsukka; University of Port Harcourt; and Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria. Prof. Peter Okorie holds a BSc Zoology, MSc Hydrobiology/fisheries, and PhD Zoology with interest in biodiversity conservation. He has worked in diverse capacities. He was a Development Officer with the World Bank/L.A.D.P projects in Plateau State of Nigeria, where he participated in pioneering work on integrated culture systems, namely, duck-fish culture and rice-fish culture.

He joined the university system in 1988 as a lecturer II and rose steadily to the position of full professor in 2002 in Imo State University, Owerri, including Director of Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (2000-2005), Director of Academic Planning (2005-2009), and Director of General Studies (2009-2011). He was a member of University Governing Council. He has published extensively in water resources protection, biodiversity conservation, fisheries and pollution studies. Also, some of his technical reports have made immense contribution to the strengthening of internal quality assurance mechanisms in the Nigerian universities system. He has participated in Environmental Impact Assessment (E.I.A) of several oil spills in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. He has also been involved in baseline studies of several offshore oil blocs, including Bosi field, Nigeria (OPL 209); Akpo field, Nigeria (OPL 246); and RasLaffan/UAE gas line project. He is a member of many professional bodies including National Society of Biological Conservation (NSBC), Fisheries Society of Nigeria (FISON) and Biotechnology Society of Nigeria (BSN). He is a fellow of the Society of Biologists, London and also a fellow of Institute of Corporate Administration; Nigeria. He is currently the African Regional Coordinator for Eileen and Eileen International Biodiversity Conservation Inc., a US - based conservation organization. He has many national and international awards, including the Man of the Year Award (2002) of the American Biographical Institute.

puokorie@yahoo.com