**Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management**

University of Rwanda, Huye Campus

 **CoEB Bi-weekly Research Seminar**

**Location:** CoEB office, CGIS Building, Across Huye Park Station.

**Date:** 28 Feb 2018

**Time:** 3:00PM

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| **Presenter:** Mr Methode Majyambere, Msc.  |

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| **Affiliation:** University of Rwanda, College of Science and Technology.  |

**TITLE: ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATION EFFORTS, INCENTIVES AND CURRENT STATUS OF THREATS ON THE HAMLYN’S MONKEY AND ITS BAMBOO HABITAT IN NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK**

*Methode Majyambere, UR Biology Department and member of the organization BEST*

*Gloriose Umuziranenge, Staff at PIASS and member of the organization BEST*

*Etienne Zibera, Independent researcher and member of the organization BEST*

*Felix Niyonzima, Project assistant*

*Gerard Nzabandora, Local community guide and collaborator*

*Innocent Ndikubwimana, RDB collaborator*

*Laurent Twizeyimana, Student of UR Biology Department*

*Constantine Mukarukundo, Student of UR Biology Department*

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Nyungwe tropical rainforest harbors a vulnerable primate species, the Hamlyn’s monkey *Cercopithecus hamlyni*, of which the selective bamboo habitat is particularly threatened by illegal bamboo harvesting by the local people compromising the survival of that species. Our research project was focused on an evaluative approach to understand the impact of conservation efforts and incentives for the protection of the bamboo habitat of Nyungwe, with an investigation of the current status of threats. This project was developed after realizing that past conservation efforts, actions and incentives lacked an evaluation to know their impacts in addressing the problem. The project approach was based on documentation on conservation actors and other existing conservation efforts, interviews to different groups of people, field surveys for current threats, field surveys on bamboo planting as incentive mechanism, and awareness workshops. The project started in August 2017 is ongoing, with data not completed only for the two last activities. Achieved work indicated that significant conservations efforts were put in place resulting in at least 5 operational cooperatives, bamboo planting in the community, and revenue sharing funds received by some groups, but people’s information and observations indicated that illegal bamboo harvesting was ongoing despite conservation awareness and influence of leaders among the communities. The results indicated that bamboo was not growing well within communities’ woodlots and all attempts to provide bamboo for the communities have mostly been characterized by a lack of sustainability or complete failures. Information from the people indicated that about most did not know about the initiative of bamboo propagation, and some were aware after such projects had ended. For the threats in the bamboo habitat of the Park, we could notice that many places are much disturbed and some bamboo cuts are recent, but we could not notice any sign of the Hamlyn’s monkeys during six days of survey in the forest. We found also that some significant patches of undisturbed and robust bamboo are present but almost no shoots are apparently sprouting, therefore regeneration is another problem that can be aggravated by continuing human-driven habitat disturbance.

**Biography of Mr Methode Majyambere**

Mr Methode Majyambere is an assistant lecturer, in Biology department, college of Science and Technology, University of Rwanda. His main academic and research field is biodiversity and conservation, with focus on zoology and tropical ecosystems. He hold a MSc degree in ‘Biodiversity conservation’, one of the graduates from the first cohort in the 2011-2012 Master’s program in ‘Biodiversity conservation’ in biology department, University of Rwanda. He has been contributing to research in Nyungwe since 2008. His BSc memoir work was conducted on chimpanzees in Cyamudongo forest and master’s thesis on small mammal communities in Nyungwe forest. He worked also as assistant to a USFWS-funded project that examined threats to chimpanzees in Nyungwe in 2013.

In 2014 he collaborated with his MSc colleagues to inaugurate the activities of an organization called Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability Trust (BEST), under which he applied for project funding in 2018. He was funded by the Rufford Foundation Small Grants program for the mentioned project. With that project, he is working with a permanent field assistant, and three students from Biology department whose he is the supervisor. He is currently a Research Associate to the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management (CoEB), with appointment on 27th Dec 2017.