

## Assessment of Progress towards Resolving the Bushmeat Crisis On Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea

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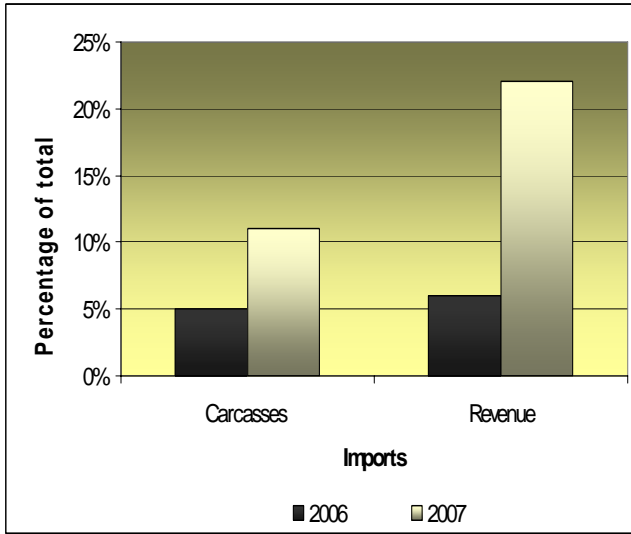
This is a 9 month update on the joint report of UNGE and BBPP “*Monkeys in Trouble: The Rapidly Deteriorating Conservation Status of the Monkeys on Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea* (2006),” available for download from the website [www.bioko.org](http://www.bioko.org). The aim of this report is to evaluate the extent to which the trend of decline in wild monkey and duiker populations is continuing. We focus on Bioko’s seven species of diurnal monkey and the larger of the two duiker species, Ogilby’s duiker, as these eight species are facing the most severe threat of extinction.

**During the most recent three months (July through September 2007) further unsustainable extraction of and decline in the numbers of Bioko’s seven monkey species and Ogilby’s duiker continued at an alarming rate.**

It is urgent that immediate progress be made towards resolving the bushmeat crisis by ceasing the overexploitation of endangered larger animals on Bioko Island.

### Malabo Bushmeat Market

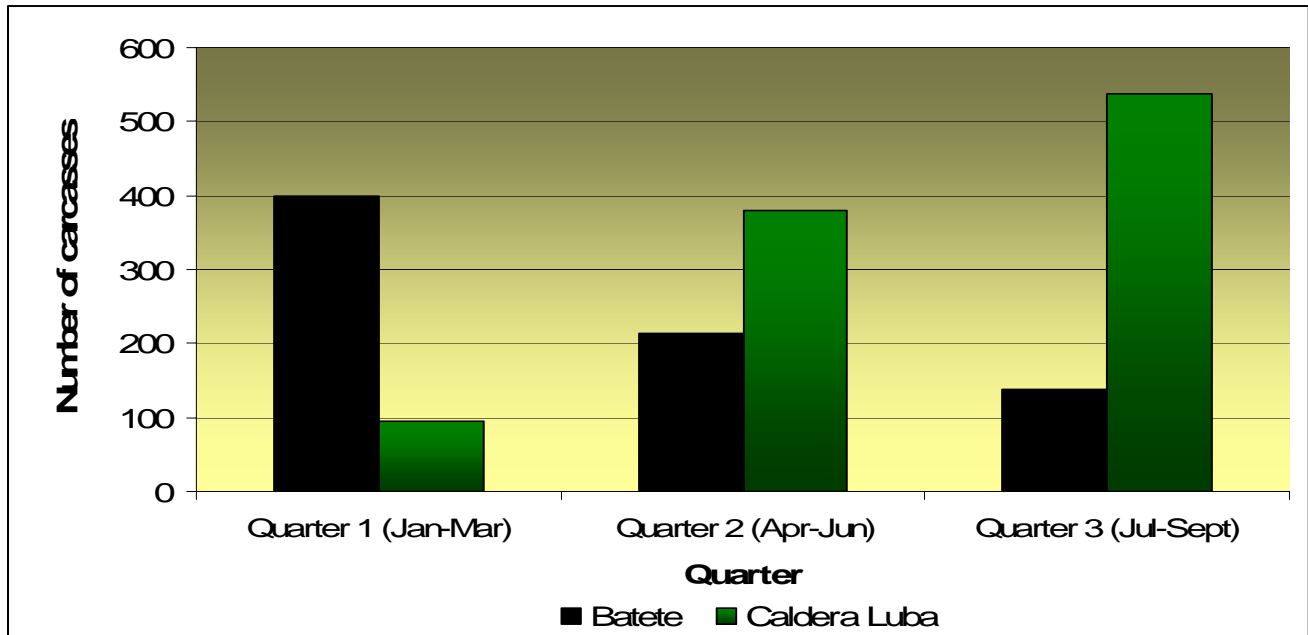
The number of wildlife carcasses now arriving at the Malabo bushmeat market from Rio Muni and Cameroon is significantly higher relative to the first nine months of 2006 (Figure 1). There was a 213% increase in the number of carcasses imported from the mainland and a 383% increase in revenue from imported carcasses from 2006 to 2007 at the Malabo market. That people on Bioko are beginning to rely more heavily on bushmeat imported from the mainland is an obvious and worrying sign of depletion of the island’s wildlife. Photo 1 depicts a giant pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*) from Rio Muni at a Malabo market stall.



**Figure 1. A.** Percentage of imported carcasses and their contribution to revenue generated in the first nine months of 2006 and 2007. Imports include bushmeat from Rio Muni and Cameroon. **B.** A giant pangolin at the Malabo bushmeat market. Photo by Wayne Morra.

Meanwhile, the off-take of both monkeys and Ogilby's duiker (*Cephalophus ogilbyi ogilbyi*) has remained steady. Monkeys and Ogilby's duiker comprised 18% of carcasses sold from July-Sept 2007 at the Malabo Bushmeat Market, similarly to the two previous three-month periods with 21% and 19%.

An alarming change is the notably higher number of monkey and duiker carcasses coming from the Gran Caldera de Luba in this quarter (Figure 2). The number of carcasses from Batete and Caldera in



**Figure 2.** Hunting of Ogilby's duiker and monkeys in the Gran Caldera de Luba for the first nine months of 2007. Hunting in the Caldera was 164% higher in July and August compared with January through June.

July through September was 677 compared with the lower number originating from these regions in the previous two quarters, January-March ( $n = 494$ ) and April-June ( $n = 592$ ). This increase may be indicative of (1) further depletion of large animals from areas closer to the capital city, such as Pico Basile; (2) hunters travelling over greater distances to capture large animals; and (3) hunter presence in the Caldera when BBPP patrol teams are not present. The lattermost is likely as BBPP patrol teams were unable to readily access the Caldera in this quarter due to rivers, and hunters were accessing the Caldera from the north. By September, the rivers were lower and the presence of the BBPP team curbed hunting, at least somewhat. The number of carcasses coming from the Caldera in the first quarter may be low due to BBPP's annual expedition to the Caldera in the month of January.

Finally, a relatively lower number of infants observed at the Malabo market may be a sign of hindered population replacement in the wild. An infant red-eared guenon was seen at the market in September (Photo 2a-b).



**Figure 3.** **A.** An infant red-eared monkey, *Cercopithecus erythrotis*, being examined by Tom Butynski at the Malabo bushmeat market in September 2007 and **B.** measurement of the infant. Photos by Katarzyna Nowak.

### Forest Census

Outside the Gran Caldera de Luba, BBPP's Roving/Exploration Team found evidence of a more northern access route into the Caldera than the one used by the BBPP Caldera forest patrols. They encountered hunters and hunters' camps while investigating, adding credibility to the bushmeat market information which shows increased off-take from the Caldera.

## **Official Support of BBPP Teams**

Hunters are becoming more familiar with the movement of BBPP teams thus entering the Caldera when BBPP teams are not present as well as increasingly disregarding BBPP patrols. Ideally, BBPP patrol teams would be granted official governmental support, in the form of training and identification, which would place them in the position to discourage hunters from entering protected areas when they are encountered in the forest. Such support would also facilitate BBPP patrol teams' collection of basic information upon encounters with hunters, including data on what animals are being hunted and/or have been encountered, distance walked by the hunter, his possession of a permit, normal occupation, and village of residence.

## **Status of Wildlife Protection by the Government of Equatorial Guinea**

The populations of the monkey species on Bioko Island continue to decline rapidly and the possibility of extinction of one or more species is increasing. Shotgun hunting must be banned if these species are to survive.

Hunting laws need to be enacted and enforced. The legally protected areas on Bioko Island (Pico Basile National Park and the Gran Caldera and Southern Highlands Scientific Reserve) need enforcement in the form of trained forest guards.

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