

AN INDIGENOUS CONCEPT OF LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT FOR CHIMPANZEE CONSERVATION AT BOSSOU, GUINEA

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This paper describes the forest clearing by villagers in chimpanzee habitat, which expanded in 2002 with the establishment of a government research institute in the village of Bossou, Republic of Guinea. The village has been portrayed as a place where people and wild chimpanzees coexist peacefully, and although the forest clearing campaign was ostensibly conducted to secure land for slash-and-burn agriculture, it is thought that the true motive was to maintain village autonomy concerning chimpanzee management over government organizations. Even after the general civil disobedience in 2002, forest clearing and cultivation by a few households continued, likely because of a desire to restore the vegetative landscape of the village to its state before the increase in academic research. An understanding of the landscape, which is in the background of this movement, is supported by a conservation model based on indigenous knowledge, a model that differs from those introduced by outsiders. The indigenous conservation model of Bossou presented here is a rational way to prevent zoonotic diseases and chimpanzee attacks, when compared to outside conservation models, which are based on a general knowledge of conservation ecology. Although it is impossible to conclude which model is better, future conservation measures should be based on a consideration of both types of models.

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