



## Project description

### **Niche differentiation of two sympatric colobines (*Simias concolor* & *Presbytis potenziani*) on Siberut**

The coexistence of the pig-tailed langur (*Simias concolor*, *Sc*) and the Mentawai Island Leaf Monkey (*Presbytis potenziani*, *Pp*), both endemic to the Mentawai archipelago, represents an unusual ecological situation in that both species are sympatric over their entire, but limited, distribution range. The aim of the present study is to characterize the niche differentiation of these leaf eating monkeys by comparative investigation of ranging behaviour, habitat use and food preferences. Data have now been collected continuously for > 12 months in a mixed primary forest in northern Siberut (SCP core study area). A combination of scan and focal sampling was used to collect data on three habituated and three semi-habituated groups of *Sc* as well as one habituated and one semi-habituated group of *Pp*. Results so far show that home ranges of both species overlap completely, but the average home range for *Sc* is one-tenth (4 ha) that of *Pp* (40 ha). *Sc*, however, seems to compensate for this smaller horizontal range with a greater use of the vertical strata.

Furthermore our data show that *Sc* prefers young leaves and flower buds, while *Pp* feeds predominantly on fruits and seeds. In addition, the more abundant *Sc* shows greater dietary diversity than *Pp*, feeding on a much wider range of plant families.

Collectively these findings indicate clear species differences in use of space and a more generalistic and effective use of food resources by *Sc* compared to *Pp*. The results will also be useful in developing future conservation strategies for these primates.