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INTEGRATING FIELD AND ZOO STUDIES ON LEMURS TO BENEFIT THEIR CONSERVATION

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Studies on wild and captive lemurs can be integrated in order to get the full picture of certain conservation-relevant aspects of a species' biology, such as taxonomy, general ecology, conservation and management needs. Zoos are keeping large reserve populations of endangered lemur species for possible future reintroduction. In order to successfully keep and breed these species, they rely on information on aspects such as diet and reproduction that can only be obtained from field studies. On the other hand, knowledge on the taxonomy and genetics of lemurs as well as lemur conservation medicine have greatly benefited from complimentary data obtained from studying captive individuals. This paper provides recent examples of conservation benefits derived from integrating field and captive studies on lemur biology and health, with special emphasis on nutrition. Data on the ecology and behavior of the blue-eyed black lemur *Eulemur flavifrons* were collected as part of the ongoing lemur ecology research programme of the AEECL in Sahamalaza, northwest Madagascar, from 2004 to present, and in different zoos within the framework of the European breeding programme for the species. Other data were taken from the literature. As a result from the combination of data from field and zoo studies on *E. flavifrons*, an obesity problem of the captive population was revealed and could be tackled by changing the captive diet to better reflect the species' diet in the wild. Captive studies on the species were indispensable for determining its taxonomic distinctiveness and status in relation to neighboring species.

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