TD 5: Amphibians and Reptiles

1. Amphibians:

*The method consists of surveying the breeding site several times during the amphibians' mating season.

* This route can be carried out using monitoring plots whose location (marked on the ground with permanent markers) will allow for the exploration of the main habitats present.

*All contacts with amphibians are recorded on the map, thus allowing the determination of the territories of different species. It is done either by:

1) Visual detection of species: particularly those that do not have a powerful song and spawn. This research (through field surveying) will primarily be crepuscular and nocturnal, but may also include daytime visits. We retain the highest number of individuals or spawn observed.

2) Auditory detection: of male singers of species with more powerful songs. The

research will primarily be crepuscular and nocturnal, but it may also

associate daytime visits. Only singing males will be counted. In

3) Amphicapt Traps: The trap used, the Amphicapt, consists of a bucket featuring 3

peripheral entrances. So that the animals can enter but not exit, bottles are cut and inserted into the openings to form small funnels. To attach the Amphicapt to the bank and keep it more or less in the desired spot, a string is needed whose material does not shrink in water, as natural fibers like raffia do (figure 1).

Figure 1: Amphicapt Trap

2. Reptiles

* The inventory and monitoring of reptile populations is hardly easy to undertake because these animals are generally under-detected, especially in comparison with other taxonomic groups.

* The standard method recommended to optimize the detection of reptiles involves placing refuge plates (Fig. 2) (asbestos, plastic plates, metal sheets, etc.) in sites

potentially favorable to reptiles, making at least four visits during the animals' active period under certain weather conditions, and searching for reptiles directly exposed as well as those present under the refuge plates.

* These are large flat objects, of various natures, that accumulate heat and are favored by reptiles. It is also added that the systematic search for plates of various origins (abandoned shelters, ruins, clandestine deposits, etc.) should be conducted.

*The surveys will preferably take place between 10 AM and 6 PM, under weather conditions favorable for observing the target species: mild weather, a mix of clouds and clear spells, light or no wind, high humidity.

* When reptiles were encountered, the age class, sex, and any other morphological characteristics allowing for individual identification were noted in order to estimate the minimum number of individuals of each species observed at the different sites.

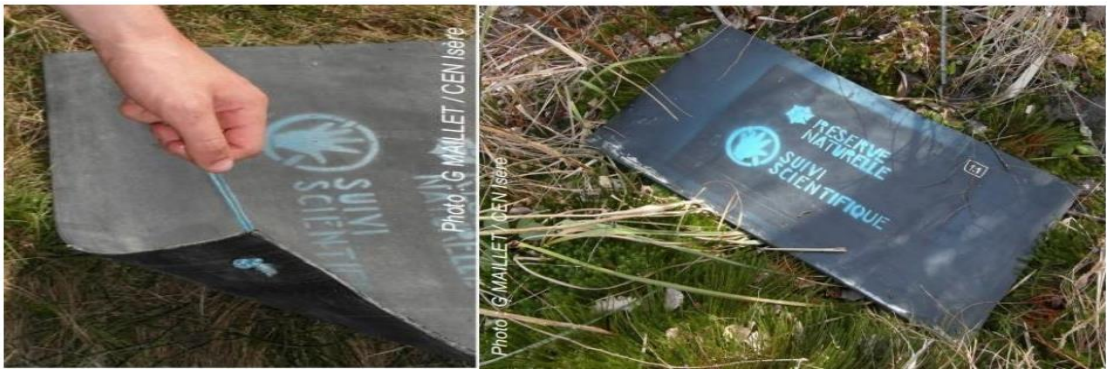

Figure 2: Refuge Plates