West African forest frogs: ecology, evolution, and conservation
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Citation for published version (APA):

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Annika Hillers was born on 22 November 1977 in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Up to the age of 13 she grew up in a village in the Black Forest, together with her three brothers and her sister. After getting the German-French university-entrance diploma in Freiburg in 1997, she studied Biology at Mainz University. From 1999 to 2000, after completing the first degree (Vordiplom), she got an Erasmus grant to study one year at the University Aix-Marseille III where she focused on Population Biology and Ecosystems. Back in Mainz in autumn 2000, she chose the options Zoology, Botany, Microbiology, and Communication Sciences. In 2002 she started her Diploma thesis on frogs in Taï National Park in Côte d’Ivoire, West Africa, and in 2003 she finished her studies (Diplom). From 1998 to 2003 Annika was holding a student scholarship from the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation. Together with PD Dr. Mark-Oliver Rödel (now curator of herpetology at the Natural History Museum in Berlin), and Prof. dr. Michael Veith (now head of the Biogeography Department at Trier University) she wrote a proposal for a PhD project on West African Frogs. During the writing and the time waiting for a decision about this proposal, from 2003 to 2005, Annika had several scientific part time jobs at the Ecology Department at Mainz University and went on with her studies in Communication Sciences and Ethnology (with a focus on Africa). In June 2005, she started her PhD on West African frogs at Mainz University, funded by the German Research Foundation. In November 2005, Annika’s project (and Annika herself) was transferred to the Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED), University of Amsterdam, where she went on with her PhD and where Steph B.J. Menken became her promoter after her supervisor Michael Veith had left. Some of the results of Annika’s PhD project are presented in this book. Besides her employments at Mainz and Amsterdam Universities, Annika participated as amphibian (and reptile) specialist in several research trips to West Africa, e.g. in two Rapid Assessment Programs of Conservation International. Since 2007, together with PD Dr. Mark-Oliver Rödel, she is responsible for an amphibian monitoring project at Mts. Nimba in Guinea.