



**To: All Media Agencies**

**Release Date: 8<sup>TH</sup> July, 2021**

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **Another New Species to Science discovered in Atewa Range Forest Reserve**

A newly discovered critically endangered frog species found nowhere else in the world beyond the Atewa Range Forest Reserve has been described and published. With the common name Atewa Slippery frog, the new species has been named *Conraua sagyimase* after the community of Sagyimase at the foot of the Atewa Forest that has supported work on the frog. The Akan common name for the new species is “kwaεε mu nsutene apɔnkyerεne”, meaning the frog of the forest streams

This discovery comes on the back of the recent global designation of Atewa Forest as an Alliance for Zero Extinction site (AZE), a designation that means the area is now a ‘No-Go Area’ for companies and banks adhering to the International Finance Corporation’s Performance Standards for project financing. Earlier this year, another new frog species named Afia Birago Puddle Frog gave rise to this AZE designation.

The *Conraua sagyimase* is found only in five streams in the northern part of the Atewa Range Forest Reserve. The scientists, who include Ghanaian Scientist Dr Caleb Ofori-Boateng from the CSIR-Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (CSIR-FORIG), highlighted that the new frog species occupies relatively pristine upland evergreen forest habitats within an elevation range of ~ 500–750 meters above sea level. It occurs in rocky, clear, generally fast-flowing streams and waterfalls, although some individuals have also been recorded in slow-flowing streams.



*Photo: Conraua sagyimase, Atewa Slippery Frog. Photo Credit: Dr Caleb Ofori-Boateng*

In the published paper, Dr. Caleb Ofori-Boateng said “the name of the new species has been chosen in order to honor the people of the Sagyimase community. This small community has supported the research of scientists as well as the anti-mining campaigns during 2006–2007. Something they continue to do so even now. We hope that the naming of this endemic species will further encourage this community in their fight for an intact Atewa Range.

The discovery once again highlights the importance of the Atewa Range Forest Reserve as a critical conservation area within the Upper Guinean biodiversity hotspot, lending further support to the national and international advocacy campaign to make Atewa Range Forest a National Park in its entirety.

The new frog species adds to the more than ten other species of wildlife, including butterflies and other insects, frogs, spiders, plants and trees, found nowhere else in the world other than the Atewa Forest.

In November 2020, IUCN Resolution 087 was passed asking for global action to make Atewa Forest a National Park to secure this invaluable collection of biodiversity as well as its crucial water provisioning services for over five million Ghanaians.

More than ever before, it is evidentially clear that the Atewa Range Forest Reserve needs to be managed as a National Park to preserve its biocultural assets, as reiterated by the Okyenhene Osagyefo Amoatia Ofori Panin II in a recent meeting with the CEO of the Ghana Tourism Authority.

Signed

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#### **Notes for the Editors**

The names of the other endemic species are *Aframomum atewae*, *Monanthotaxis atewensis*, *Rinorea kibbiensis*, *Ochna kibbiensis*, *Anthene Atewa*, *Mylothris Atewa*, *Anansus Atewa*, *Ricinoides Atewa*, *Pseudoneureclipsis Atewa*.