

## **Habitat destruction in Ghana, a crucial danger for the endemic cichlid species *Limbochromis robertsi***

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Habitat destruction due to road building, illegal gold mining using mercury and increase of farming activities in the region of Kyebi (Ghana, Eastern Region) destroyed big areas in this region, bringing a middle sized river, the Birim River, to nearly total disappearance. Remaining water pools are mostly polluted by mercury, fertilizers and other chemicals in use for farming.

As a result, most fish species and specimens in this river as well as in lower parts of small tributaries of the Birim disappeared too. Just few creeks in surrounding hills, which are range for the endemic cichlid *Limbochromis robertsi*, are still existing, but under strong influence of farming and deforestation. Additionally, new fish species (*Coptodon* sp.) entered upper parts of these creeks where the formerly did not occur, increasing pressure on this unique cichlid.

The presentation will give information about about the taxonomic and phylogenetic position of *Limbochromis robertsi* within the group of chromidotilapiine cichlids and will explain why this species is a very unique one.

The current habitat situation is compared with the one in the middle of the 90ies of the last century, using tools of Remote Sensing as well as results from former and recent terrestrial explorations of the sites around Kyebi, demonstrating the high risk of extinction for *Limbochromis robertsi*.