

RELATIONSHIPS OF SCINCID LIZARDS, *MABUYA* (REPTILIA: SCINCIDAE) FROM SÃO TOMÉ, PRÍNCIPE AND ANNOBON ISLANDS BASED ON MITOCHONDRIAL AND NUCLEAR DNA SEQUENCES

Jesus, J.¹; Brehm, A.¹ & Harris, D.J.²

¹Centro de Estudos da Macaronésia (CEM), Universidade da Madeira, Penteada, 9000 Funchal, Portugal, jesus@uma.pt

²Centro de Investigação em Biodiversidade e Recursos Genéticos (CIBIO/UP), Instituto de Ciências e Tecnologias Agrárias e Agro-Alimentares (ICETA), Campus Agrário de Vairão, 4484-661 Vila do Conde

Background: The volcanic chain of islands in the Gulf of Guinea was formed during the late Tertiary. The largest island is Bioko. Smaller and more isolated islands, São Tomé, Príncipe and Annobon lie in a chain of volcanic buildings extending into the Atlantic Ocean. These islands have never been connected to each other and have well known geological histories. It is assumed that their herpetofauna includes six species of geckos, four species of skinks and five species of snakes. Many of these species are endemics, but some may have been introduced.

Material & Methods: Partial sequences from three mitochondrial genes (cytochrome b, 12S and 16S) and one nuclear gene (C-mos) were used to estimate the phylogenetic relationships between skinks of genus *Mabuya* distributed over the three islands.

Results & Conclusions: The results show that in each island predominates one taxa of *Mabuya*. The three main clades are clear and very well supported. The colonization events are discussed. Due to the amount of divergence between Annobon and the remaining populations we proposed that the former represents a new taxa.