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Dear PLoS ONE editor,

I would like to submit our manuscript "**Testing for individual discrimination in adult banded mongoose (*Mungos mungo*)**" by David A.W.A.M. Jansen, Michael A. Cant, and Marta B. Manser for publication as research article in PLoS ONE.

The ability to discriminate between conspecifics is seen as a key precondition for the evolution of complex animal societies. Previous work has shown that banded mongoose pups (*Mungos mungo*) are able to discriminate between the individually distinct close calls of their escort and a non-escorting group member. In this study we used the recently proposed violation-of-expectation paradigm and conflict-class recognition playback experiments to test whether adult banded mongooses use the individual signature of close calls to distinguish between group members. Although our results did not show that the individual signature in the close calls is used in the tested context on a day-to-day basis among adult banded mongooses, we believe that our findings and the discussion of them are of interest to the readers of PLoS ONE. The study highlights the importance of understanding the function of a signal (e.g. the expected response), timing (e.g. sensitivity period) and the biology of the species when designing and performing playback experiments.

Please find attached our manuscript. All co-authors have seen the final version and agree with the contents of the manuscript, and there are no competing interests to report. We certify that the submission is original work and is not under review at any other journal.

We suggest Dr. Isabelle Charrier, Prof. Sarah Frances Brosman and Dr. Sue Healy as Academic editors and recommend Prof. Julia Fischer, Dr. Benjamin Pitcher and Dr. Sandra Steiger to review the paper. We do not oppose to any potential reviewers.

Sincerely yours,

David A.W.A.M. Jansen*, Michael A. Cant, and Marta B. Manser

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