

Review of: "Stakeholders' Perception of Socioecological Factors Influencing Forest Elephant Crop Depredation in Gabon, Central Africa"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The issue of conflicts between people and elephants is a common threat to elephant survival throughout their range. As such, better understanding the roots and underlying causes of these situations is important. Thus, this article is worth publishing. I have a few comments though:

1. The authors state that elephants are common in Gabon because of the creation of National Parks, which is far-fetched. Indeed, one of the reasons why elephants are common in the country is mostly the result of the low human density throughout the country, as opposed to most neighboring countries.
2. The authors state that the removal of large trees in the forest reduces food availability for the elephants. It would be interesting to give an example of these trees that are simultaneously logged and serve as elephant food sources. Indeed, one recommendation could be to stop logging some of these species to retain elephant food sources. Actually, logging operations per se might be a possible cause of disturbance and avoidance of the area by elephants (as stated by the authors in the next section of their article). The indirect effects may be the most important variable to consider, at least in the short term.
3. The language and syntax are very good.
4. It would be very useful if the authors were proposing a few potential recommendations to ease this issue in their conclusions. A lot of experience is available from Africa and Asia to deal with HEC, and it would be a nice way to conclude the article by listing a few possible and practical ways forward.