

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

Rohit Raj Jha

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The manuscript "Stakeholders' Perception of Socioecological Factors Influencing Forest Elephant Crop Depredation in Gabon, Central Africa" raises an important issue of human-wildlife conflict in a habitat of high biodiversity importance. First of all, I would like to thank the authors for picking the issue. Human-elephant conflict, in particular, is an issue of concern even in the Asian region, and most of the protective measures are not as effective as they were thought to be in assisting in escalating the issue. I personally feel the manuscript should be accepted but after a thorough revision.

I find the abstract a tough one to get along with. It needs a major revision with distinct motivation, method, result, and discussion & implication sections. In the present draft, the abstract is more like a section of results.

Introduction needs a detailed literature review of the issue and the method used. At present, the introduction misses the detailed literature review of the issue raised. Also, the method, in its present form, fails to clearly mention the objectives behind carrying out this study. The two broad objectives mentioned in the final paragraph of the introduction sound similar. A paragraph or two explaining the broad objectives in detail would help in achieving clarity.

Method

The method section mentions talking with old people (above 65 years of age) about a particular situation (ban of elephant hunting) that existed prior to 1981. How did the authors ensure that the information and situations that old respondents mentioned were true? Most information comes from memory, and dragging five decades back and extracting information based on memory is a tough job. Also, I suggest grouping participants in more than two groups. Although one group of above 65 years is fine, grouping people of 18-64 in 2 or 3 groups could have helped know more about why they say or believe a particular thing. I personally feel Focal Group Discussion would have helped explore newer insights.

There are issues with the results and discussion too, which are already mentioned by other reviewers. Considering the relevant suggestions/comments would definitely make this a great research article.

