

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.

Elephants damaging crops in Gabon are a real and increasing problem, and this article does outline perceptions of why this is occurring. A most useful study, but I found that it was only when I read Appendix S3 that I really understood the details of the drivers: the table giving the percent response for each Driver/subdriver was clearer to me than the graphs and mentioning of subdrivers in the text. Why not include the table in the main document and reduce the need for so much text?

The results of the interviews were most useful: villagers who were interviewed emphasized increased elephant foraging and lack of effective protection for their crops. But professionals emphasized the broader picture of the protection of elephants, leading to their numbers increasing at the same time as their normal foods declining, either due to climate change (national parks) or selective logging of older trees that have the fruits elephants feed on (unprotected forests), and so elephants have found village crops a ready food source. The interviewing technique is a very useful way of finding out villager and professional perceptions of the causes of the problem, and the article compares these perceptions with what previous studies have found as causes as a basis to improve the situation.