
The Status of Forest Elephants in the South East of the Republic of Cameroon

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A chronic lack of data made it difficult to appraise the impact of logging activities and ivory poaching on forest elephants in the South East of Cameroon. In response to this situation, Wildlife Conservation International and the World Wildlife Fund, sponsored by the European Economic Community, undertook a series of surveys in the region in 1990 and 1991. An area of 5,594km² was studied in three different sites: Lac Lobeke, Mangokele and Boumba-Bek. A total of 290 km of non randomly distributed line transects measuring 5.0km in length and 4.0 x 10⁻³ km in width was surveyed. An additional 117 km of logging roads were also studied incidental to moving between

transects. A full description of the study area, methodology and preliminary results is given by Stromayer & Ekobo (1992). The final results of these surveys suggest that the Lac Lobeke, with 4.65 elephants per km², holds the highest density of forest-dwelling elephants yet surveyed in Africa. A total population of 18,163 elephants was estimated in these three areas. Regardless of the ivory poaching and logging activities, these populations still appear both large and healthy and promise excellent and perhaps unparalleled conservation potential. The following table presents an update of the results presented by Stromayer & Ekobo . (1992).

Table 1: Summary of results from the survey in three sites of Cameroon's tropical rain forest

SITE	TOTAL AREA(km ²)	NO. OF TRANSECTS	AREA SAMPLED (km ²)	(DUNG PER km ²)	ELEPHANT PER km ²	NUMBER OF ELEPHANTS
LAC LOBEKE	2,414	28	0.56	3318.11	4.65	11,225
MONGOKELE	850	10	0.2	3126.50	4.38	3,723
BOUMBABEK	2,330	20	0.4	984.20	1.38	3,215

Reference

Stromayer, K. and Ekobo, A. (1992). The distribution and number of forest dwelling elephants in extreme southeastern Cameroon. *Pachyderm* (15):9-14

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