



# Human-large carnivore conflict in African: northern Cameroon

Dr Pricelia Tumenta

Coordinator CEDC, Maroua  
University of Dschang, Cameroon

# Background

- Human-wildlife conflict occurs when wildlife requirements encroach on those of human populations, with costs both to residents and wild animals (IUCN, 2005).
- Human-wildlife conflict has been in existence for as long as humans and wild animals have shared the same landscapes and resources

# Background

- HWC occurs all over the world but agro-pastoralists in Africa are especially vulnerable
- A host of wildlife species are responsible for HWC including insects, rodents, crocodiles, elephants, hippopotamus, baboons, lions, hyenae etc
- In terms scale and impact of HWC on humans, it is the smaller animals, occurring in vast numbers, that have the greatest impact

# Background

- However, the larger herbivores (elephants, buffalo and hippopotamus), large carnivores (lions, leopards, cheetahs, spotted hyenas and wild dogs), and crocodiles are traditionally seen as the animals representing the greatest threat to humans and responsible for the majority of human-wildlife conflicts.

# The case of Cameroon

- Cameroon has an extensive network of protected areas, 19.2% of the national territory, hosting a rich wildlife diversity
- PA are located within multi-functional landscapes, generating conflicts between different land use forms and also between humans and wildlife
- Several wildlife species are implicated as problem animals including large carnivores such as lion, leopard and hyena

# The case of Cameroon

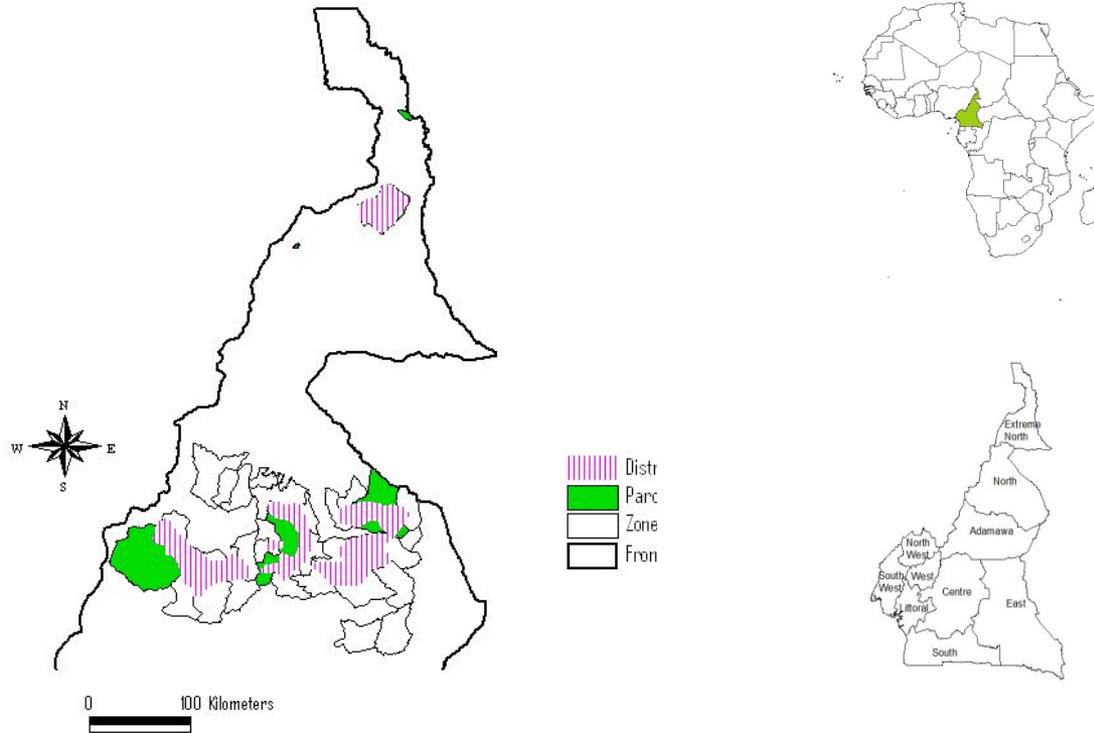
- Large carnivores are apex animals that play an integral role in maintaining ecosystems as regulators of food webs
- Conserving large carnivores promotes the protection of natural biological systems upon which many other species depend
- Large carnivores are flagship species that provide revenue through photographic tourism and sport hunting in northern Cameroon

# The case of Cameroon

- Predation on livestock by large carnivores is a widespread problem in Africa causing human wildlife conflicts, undermining conservation efforts in many protected areas.
- As wildlife range becomes more and more fragmented confining wildlife into small pockets of suitable habitat, humans and wildlife are increasingly coming into contact and in conflict with each other.

# Conflict area

Figure 3 : Aires de distribution actuelle des lions au Cameroun



# Large carnivores of Cameroon



# Large carnivores of Cameroon

- Large carnivores are in decline in Cameroon
- Despite their reduced populations, large carnivores still cause problems for farmers (pastoralists)
- Predation on livestock by large carnivores is a serious conservation problem

# Population status

- IUCN red list, vulnerable
- About 32,000 lions in Africa
- About 200-300 in Cameroon
- Benoue complex 250
- Waza NP 100 in 1962, 50-60 in 2003 & 14-21 in 2010

## ☐ Declining due to

- Human population growth
- Habitat loss, fragmentation & degradation
- Human-lion conflict (Retaliatory killing)
- Depleted natural prey population

Bauer & Nowell, 2004; Bauer, 2003; Flizot, 1962; Schultz and Turk, 2002; Nowell & Jackson, 1996; Scholte et al., 2007; Longh et al, 2004, Tumenta et al; 2010, Riggio et al, 2013, Bauer et al; 2015

# The case of Cameroon

- Human-large carnivore conflict is mainly due to livestock depredation by large carnivores, occurring more frequently in the savannah where pastoralism is the main source of livelihood to most people.
- Livestock losses to wildlife have significant impact on the livelihood of small-scale herders and usually provokes the retaliatory killing of large carnivores by herdsman.

# Causes

- Human factors
  - Competition for declining space and resources
  - Migration of peoples for reasons of security or food safety (Boko haram insurgency in Cameroon)
  - Perception of wild animal as pest
  - Increasing presence of humans in PAs
- Ecological factors
  - Habitat loss
  - Prey depletion

# Causes

- Inherent factors
  - Droughts, bush fires, climatic changes and other unpredictable natural hazards can contribute to a decrease in suitable wildlife habitat and therefore affect the occurrence and extent of human-wildlife conflicts
  - Wildlife behaviour

# Consequences

- On humans
  - Human injury and loss
  - Food insecurity
  - Economic cost (The shooting of cattle in Bouba Ndjidda National Park)
    - Waza NP pastoralists lose about €260 - €520 (price level 2010) (Tumenta, 2010).

# Consequences

- On wildlife
  - Retaliatory killing leading to decline (The retaliatory killing of a female lion within the Benoue complex alleged to have attacked some road users)
  - Waza National park half of sample size lost, 2007 to 2009
- Conservation challenge
  - Kalfou lion killed after conservation action to relocate

# Consequences

- Waza carnivores are facing serious threats from
  - Illegal killing of lions provoked by depredation on livestock
  - Road accidents, the case of the very rare striped hyena



# Management

- Legal framework and institutional capacity for managing human large carnivore conflict are weak
- Prevention
  - In the pipeline in elaborated action plan
- Mitigation
  - communities are very often helpless when faced with human wildlife conflicts and often take protection of livestock into their own hands
- Compensation
  - Does not exist

# Conclusions

- Human large carnivore conflict is a threat to both conservation of wildlife as well as to human livelihood.
- Human-lion conflict is the main factor contributing to the decline of large carnivores in Cameroon, coupled with the depleted natural prey base

# Perspectives

- There are a host of issues to be addressed including lack of interest by decision makers, lack of collaboration between government ministries, lack of funds, lack of expertise, lack of institutions and infrastructure, poor organization or none execution of species conservation plans.
- Clear policies are needed that deal with human-wildlife conflict to help set up the options that can be implemented by the public services, the wildlife authorities, the farmers, communities and the private sector

# Perspectives

- Immediate and effective conservation efforts needed to save large carnivores and other wildlife
- Awareness, education and encouraging the use of preventive measures including non-lethal deterrents and good livestock husbandry practices

Thank you

