

Challenges and perspectives for saving the last forest elephants of DRC

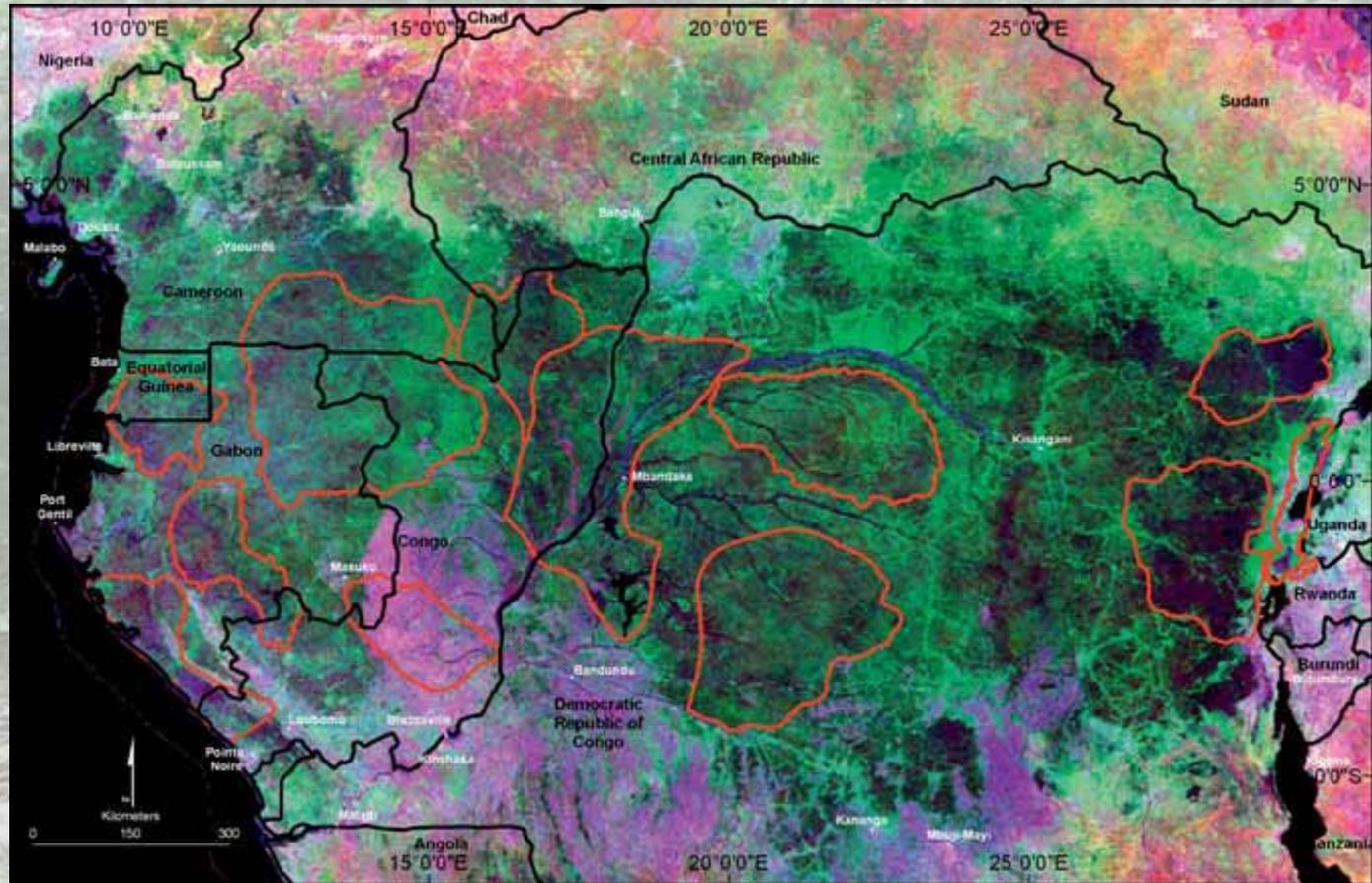
by

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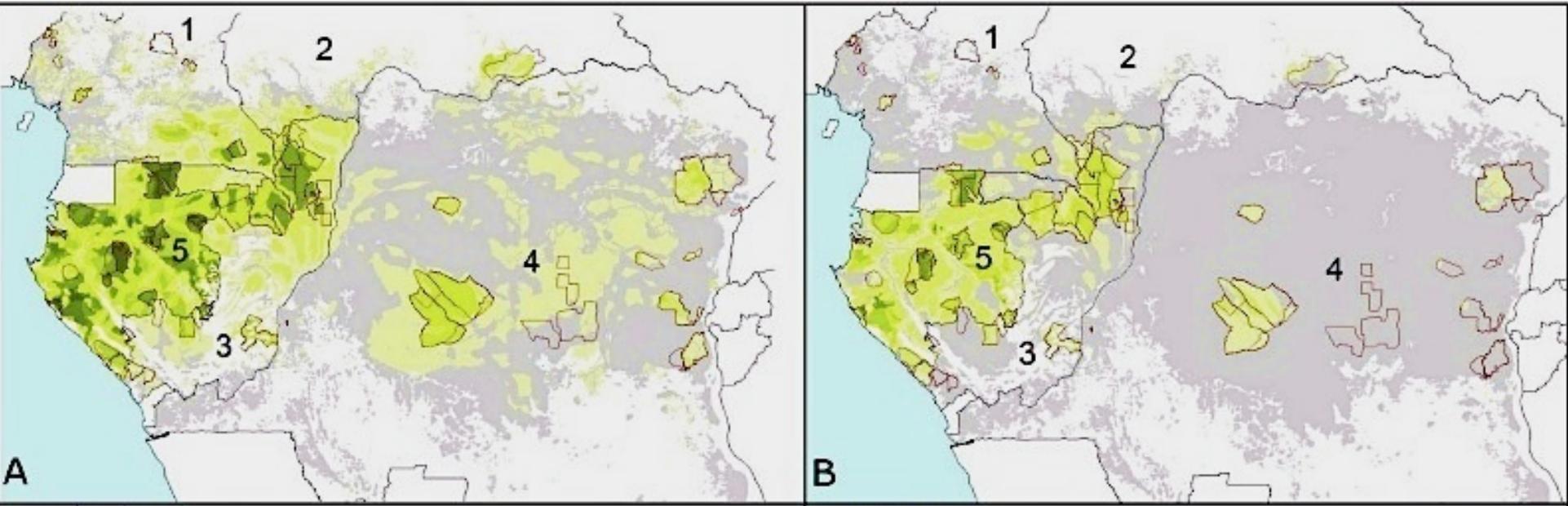
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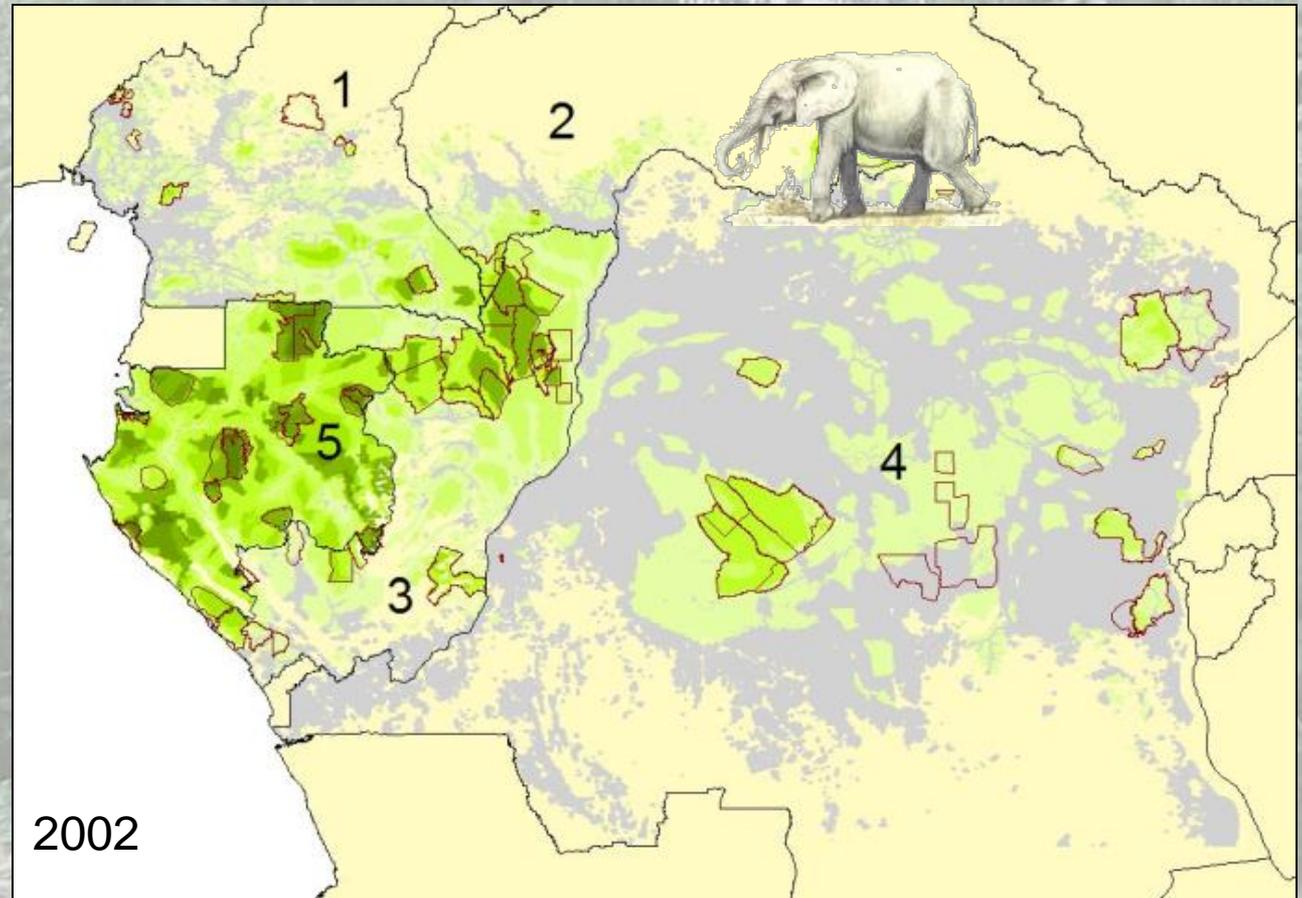
Central Africa Overview



Elephant crisis in Central Africa

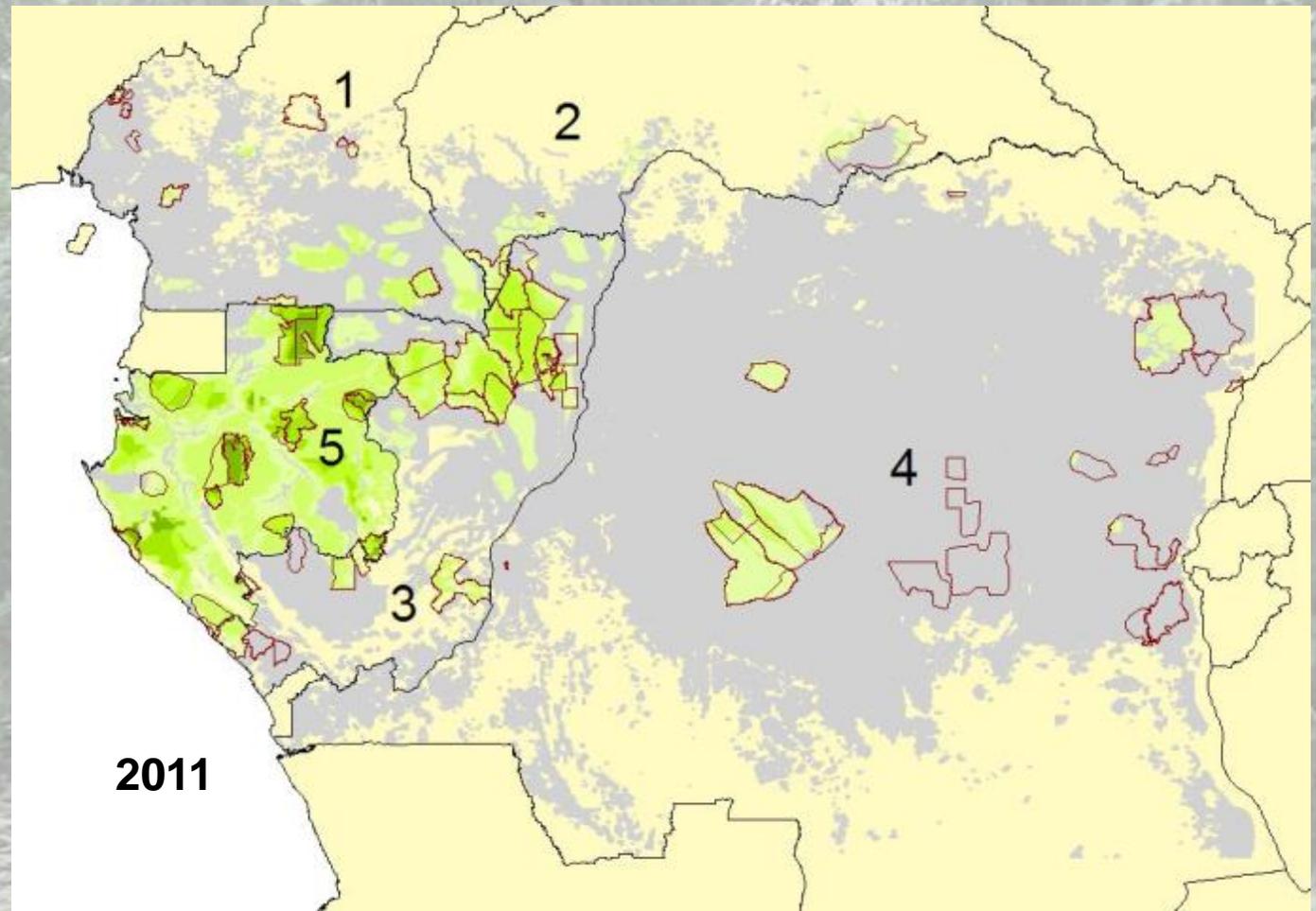


Elephants collapse



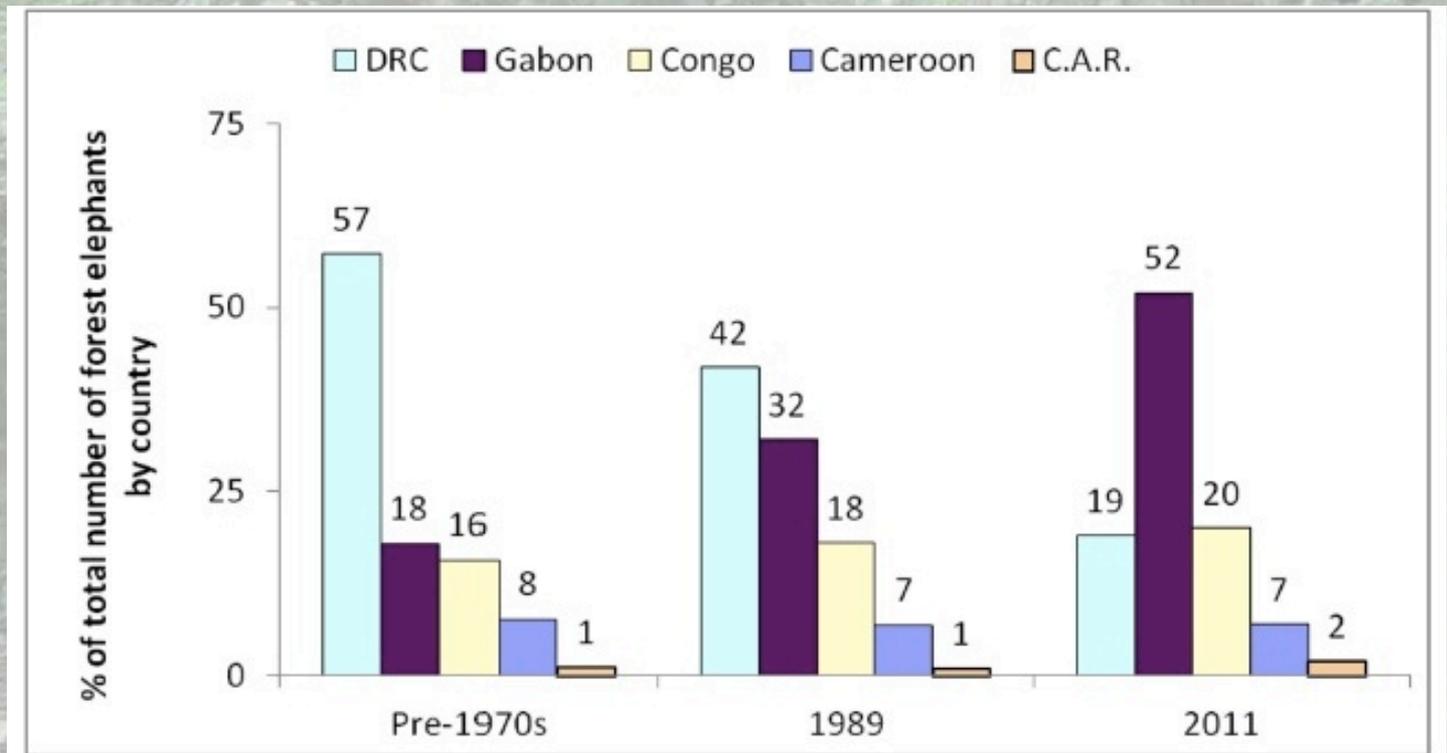
Maisels, Strindberg, Blake *et al.* 2013. Devastating Decline of Forest Elephants in Central Africa. PLoS One 8, e59469.

Elephants collapse



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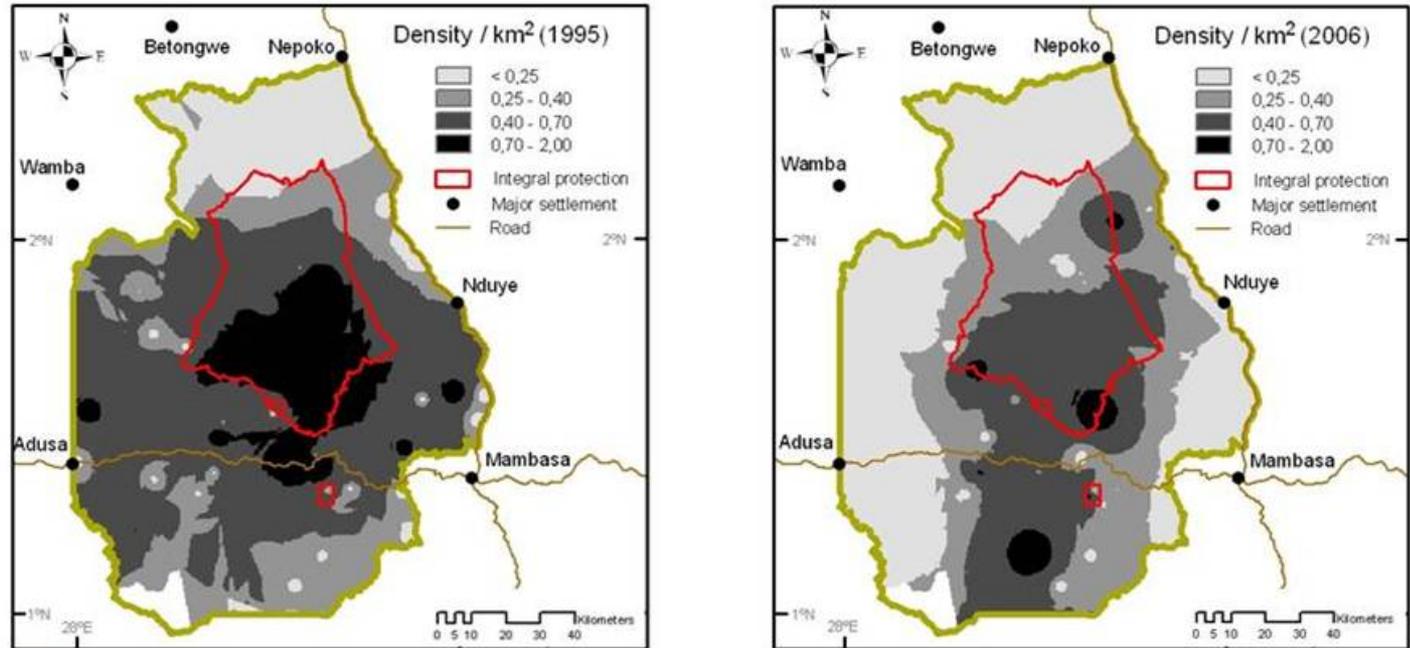
Elephants across Central Africa



Big loss is in Democratic Republic of the Congo

Elephant Density- OFR in Ituri 1996-2006

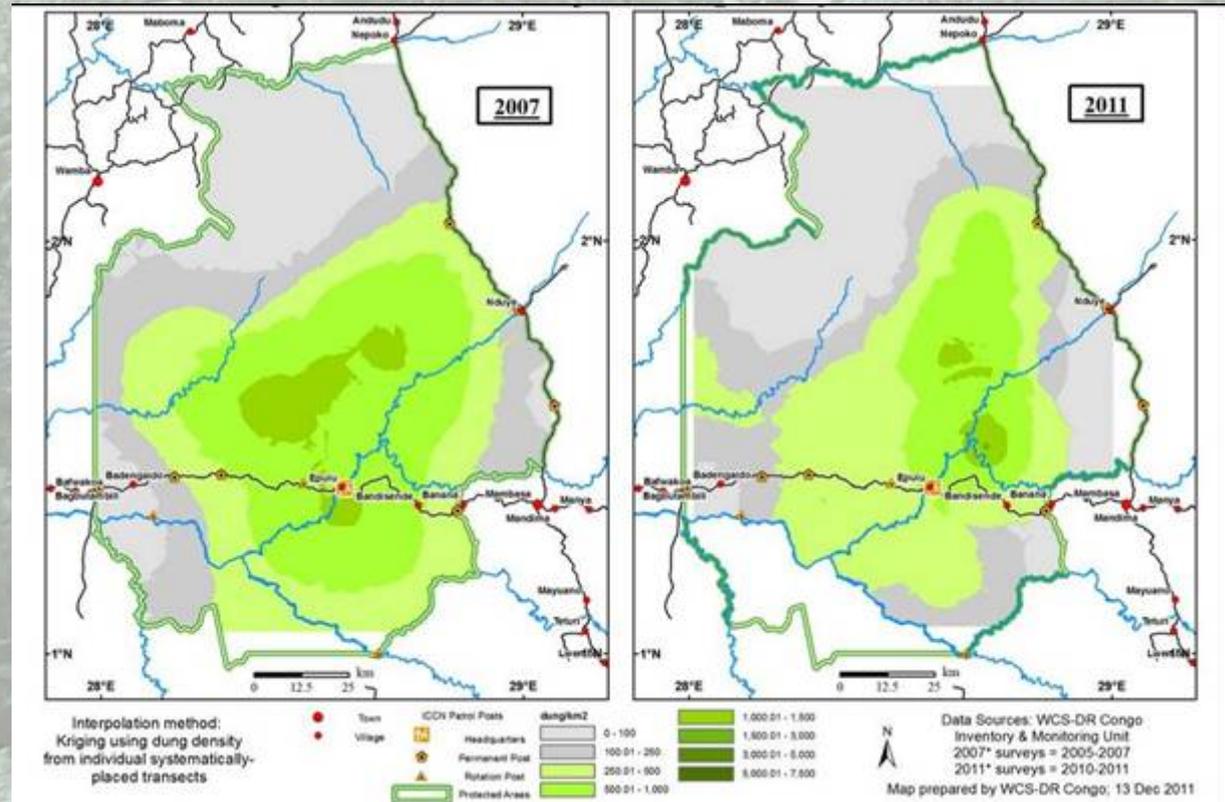
Réserve de Faune à Okapis - Elephant



Source: Rene Beyers PhD Thesis 2008 Field data: WCS - IMU 2007 Projected: UTM 35N - WGS84 1:2.000.000



Elephants in Ituri- 2007-2011



Are we seeing the unfolding of a Faunal crisis in DR Congo?



Current situation: 2011-2015

?

crisis in OFR: insecurity, armed poaching and illegal activities.

Suspension/Reduction of the law enforcement activities.

Need to assess the status of fauna



**WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY**

Challenges to conserve elephant

- **Weak (corrupt) Government institutions**
 - Local government
 - Provincial Government
 - Traditional authorities.
 - Police
 - Army
 - Justice
 - ICCN



Political and socioeconomic environment

- International demand for ivory.
- Insecurity in the region due to the presence of militia activities.
- Wildlife protection is not a priority for a post conflict country



Limitations of the traditional approaches followed by conservation NGO (by WCS):

- Biomonitoring: animal census over the last 25 years providing information on the status of fauna and flora.
- Livelihoods activities for building constituencies with local communities to the protection of the wildlife.
- Capacity building with Government, Civil Society and local communities.
- Education and sensitization of communities on the value of biodiversity.



Lost opportunities: Species extinctions in motion

- White rhinoceros in Garamba
- Parrots
- Pangolins
- What lessons have we learnt/ are we learning with elephants?



WCS New Vision for OFR

- **Amendment of the MOU to include Law Enforcement:**
 - *Implementation of the surveillance and security strategy ,*
 - *Advise the Reserve managers on LE,*
 - *SMART.*
- **Link law enforcement to biomonitoring.**
- **Include the justice in the law enforcement strategy .**
- **Is this enough for WCS in Ituri to save elephants?**



Current situation in Ituri



1. Presence of multiple partners providing law enforcement support to ICCN:
 - **GFA with KfW funds,**
 - **WCG with private donors money,**
 - **WCS**
2. No a leader among these partners

Other challenge

- WCS is providing information to save elephant



- In Ituri we want to shift from providing information to save - to effectively SAVE the elephants and to be in accordance with our mission i.e “ To save wildlife and wild places.”

Reasons for the shift

- Limitations of the traditional approaches followed by conservation NGO.
 - Biomonitoring
 - Livelihoods activities.
 - Capacity building
 - Education and sensitization

We (WCS) should therefore take our responsibilities and not assume that anyone else will care about the survival of elephants



How ?

- Be content with the amendment obtained from the ICCN to be involved in law enforcement.
- Move to the direct management of the protected area by signing with the Government a PPP.



OFR & Public-private partnership (PPP)

- The management of the OFR is currently the best option:
 - **New Law on conservation**
 - **Support from the Government to PPP (cfr Virunga, Garamba, potential PPP between ICCN and WWF for Salonga National Park.**



WCS is in position to succeed

- Existence of a baseline information on the status of the Reserve and the landscape
- Long anchorage in the site (over 30 years).
- Potential support from donors
- Internal consensus among partners
- WCS long-term site.
- Commitment of the Country Program



Ways forwards

- Negotiations underway with ICCN
- Take the lessons learned from Ndoki in setting up a PPP with an inclusive governance systems, so that ICCN is not cut out.
- Develop a new model of management arrangement meeting both ICCN's and WCS's needs
- What else?



