



THE BUSHMEAT CRISIS: LONG TERM SOLUTIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

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SUMMARY POINTS

- Interventions must have a clear focus and goal, be well-coordinated and realistic.
- Interventions need to identify and address the correct institutional level.
- Interventions that are formulated in the developed world and targeted narrowly on technical issues while ignoring the larger historical, cultural and social context are unlikely to be successful.
- It is necessary to develop national wildlife policies in Africa.
- It is necessary to develop Indices of Faunal Integrity.
- It is important to utilize the Yaoundé Declaration.
- It is necessary to campaign against the arms of war.
- It is necessary to assess the potential for the privatization of protected areas.
- It is important to work with logging companies and other extractive industries.
- Food security and poverty reduction are important factors in the reduction of the bushmeat trade.
- It is important to develop a Strategic Action Plan.
- Environmental education has a role to play.
- Land-tenure reform is important.
- It is important to promote community-based resource management.
- It is important to introduce a wildlife component into forest management plans.
- Transport issues (logging trucks) need to be addressed.
- Markets and commodities are important.
- It is essential to monitor policy effectiveness.
- Environmental governance issues are important.
- There are three over-arching issues: environmental governance, resource access and economic and developmental factors.
- Consultation and institutional processes must be as comprehensive and all-inclusive as possible.
- It is important that policy on refugee camp siting vis à vis protected areas be clarified and agreed to with UNHCR.
- It is important to capitalize on the inter-Parliamentary union of Central Africa.
- Wildlife exploitation must be brought out of the informal sector of the economy.
- It is important to assist in the development of National Wildlife Policies.
- It is important to develop community wildlife management capacity.

- It is important to work with logging companies and other extractive industries to develop codes of conduct
- It is important to assure food security and poverty reduction in rural areas
- It is important to ensure land-tenure and resource access reform.
- Priority areas for actions are the countries of Central Africa principally affected by logging.
- It is important for BCTF to develop a long-term strategic document for policy implementation.

BACKGROUND

Bushmeat is another word for the meat of wild animals. It has been estimated that between 30% and 80% of rural Africans depend on it as a primary source of protein. In rural Africa it is often the only available source of protein and much cheaper than the meat of either domestic animals or imported cattle (Wilkie & Carpenter, in press) that are in any case usually unavailable. Bushmeat is obtained either through trapping, usually with wire snares, or hunting with shotguns or arms of war. The majority of bushmeat is smoked and dried, especially if it is to be sold in urban markets. A minority of it is eaten fresh or transported frozen or alive. Most bushmeat is comprised of artiodactyls, (even-toed ungulates) such as duikers, bushpigs, antelope, chevrotain – characteristically over 70% and sometimes as much as 90% of the bushmeat offtake is of this type of animal. Primates usually comprise less than 20% of offtake and gorilla and chimpanzee usually less than 1%. However, the impact of hunting on large bodied animals such as apes and monkeys and the larger antelopes can be severe and cause local extinction of species.

Over the past decade or so two phenomena have occurred in Central Africa that have greatly increased the impact of bushmeat hunting on wildlife populations. The first of these is the great expansion in logging activity. Logging opens up forests and provides access to hunters; it provides a ready market in terms of the population of the logging labor camps, and it provides transport for meat in the form of logging trucks connecting these distant areas to the urban centers. The second important phenomenon is increased unemployment and uncontrolled urbanization. In much of Africa the last decade has seen a massive explosion in urbanization. The urban centers provide important markets for bushmeat, and here, unlike in the rural areas, the prices of bushmeat may be higher than those for domestic animals or beef. Bushmeat has become big business; more than \$22 million per year in Gabon alone. But despite the economic importance, it is still essentially part of the informal and uncontrolled sector of national economies of the region. Bushmeat is treated as a free resource both by all sectors of society.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The principal ecological consequences of these phenomena have been severe reduction and even local extinction of wildlife populations in the affected areas. This basic factor has different resonances at different levels of society and presents different problems to different groups of people. In forest villages, the major consequence may only be the inconvenience of having to go further and further afield to hunt. The bushmeat trade is important to those who have few economic alternatives since the fall in value of their principal cash crop, cocoa. To African governments there are powerful

constituencies; entire populations for whom bushmeat is a staple of existence and who could not be deprived of this resource without the risk of severe social unrest. There are economic and cultural interests who do not wish to see the trade curtailed. On the other hand, governments are subject to pressure by the international community, through the media and diplomatic channels, and there is no doubt that the whole subject can be of extreme political sensitivity. For the international community, the principal concern is that this trade will lead to widespread extinctions and more particularly to those of man's closest relatives, the gorillas and chimpanzees. A major problem for the international community is the sovereignty issue which precludes direct action and which makes it imperative that any solution devised from outside is both acceptable and accepted by African governments and by local communities.

GOAL/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In the long-term, effective solutions must address the root causes of the problems in a systematic and systemic manner: this will often involve an extensive phase of problem definition and analysis. The solutions must be comprehensive and address the different levels of concern and of problem perception. Because of the mandate of the working group, most of the solutions are necessarily institutional in nature. They can be divided into three principal problem areas:

- Environmental governance
- Resource access, control and use policies
- Socio-economic and developmental factors

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Environmental Governance

In pre-colonial Africa, exclusive ownership of land was unknown; use of land was allocated to individuals according to social need. Independent African states nationalized land and established statutory systems of ownership that have rarely been effective in rural areas but which have destroyed traditional land-use systems and the confidence in them. This loss of confidence and the consequent uncertainty have been instrumental in leading to short-term attitudes and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. This has been particularly the case with wildlife which is still largely seen as part of the informal sector and is effectively unregulated and uncontrolled. In order to bring rationality to wildlife exploitation, it is important that it is brought into a system of formal control. The most logical way of doing this is through the development of national wildlife policies. A national policy would bring coherence to the exploitation of wildlife and would define access rights and responsibilities. It would change the status of wildlife from a common good without formal value to a resource of a known value with a set of rules and guidelines to regulate its use. It is important that all administrative and economic linkages should be included in the development of these policies. The consultation processes must be comprehensive. It is important that national wildlife policies should have a monitoring component. Development of national wildlife policies was seen by African representatives at the workshop as the most important priority.

In most countries of the region, land nationalization involved not only the land itself, but all resources under the soil (minerals, oil) etc. and above it (trees, wildlife) all

of which are regarded the property of the State which grants only usufruct rights at best. In addition, certain areas such as forest reserves, national parks and wildlife reserves became the private property of the state and access to them and exploitation was strictly forbidden. There is a great deal of uncertainty in rural areas about access to resources, what is allowed and what is forbidden and a general attitude of skepticism about claims of state ownership. While it is clear that governments are likely to retain major rights to, for example, forest exploitation, it is equally clear that land-tenure reform that gave real control to communities and which permitted access to natural resources such as wildlife under recognized and transparent rules, would be an effective reform. Confidence and transparency in land-use and land-tenure processes would strengthen the hand of rural communities against external exploiters and would assist in the strengthening of rural communities and help to alleviate rural poverty. Land-use reform must be achieved in order to rationalize natural resource exploitation.

Resource Access, Control and Use Policies

Under current conditions, access to timber, mineral and other resources is controlled by government. While operating conditions are being tightened up and exploitation contracts becoming more demanding in terms of management plans and higher technical standards of operation, the welfare of wildlife inside logging concessions has not been a concern of governments. Indeed, for most logging companies, the concession has been also a resource from which its labor was provided with meat. There is no reason why management of wildlife populations should not be part of the management responsibilities of logging companies, and the ultimate goal would be to see such provisions incorporated into national laws. In the meantime, however, it would seem to be a useful option to engage logging companies and encourage them to develop and to abide by, codes of conduct respecting wildlife.

Socio-economic and Developmental Factors

Two socio-economic factors that have strong impact in the region and its resources are war and poverty. Arms of war are an important export of the developed world and their effects have both immediate and long-term effects on wildlife. In Cameroon, arms from the Biafra war (1967-70) are still being used in the forests of south-east Nigeria and south-west Cameroon for hunting of wildlife. The arms of war are extraordinarily persistent and exceptionally dangerous to wildlife. They are increasingly used in the wildlife trade particularly to kill larger species; a campaign to curtail this trade is envisaged. The final action concerns poverty and in particular food security. In most areas where bushmeat is harvested, income is less than \$1 per day and there is very little food security. In fact poverty has been identified as a root cause of biodiversity loss (Sikod, *et al.*). Government attention to food security and to economic improvement in rural areas should become a principal concern of governments and their economic partners.

PRIORITY AREAS

The priority area for all these actions is Central Africa, and in particular those regions where logging is of economic and social importance. The main countries are

Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The principal expected outcome is a diminution in the bushmeat trade in the medium to long term through synergistic actions catalyzed and initiated by BCTF and accepted by the Central African countries that will assist them in formulating and implementing a number of appropriate actions and policies. These actions will bring the wildlife sector under effective general control in the formal sector of the economy; they will reform and clarify rural land tenure and access to natural resources, including wildlife, by local communities and others. They will introduce new and stricter rules and codes of conduct for extractive industries in respect of wildlife protection on their concessions and provision of protein to their workers. They will assist to achieve food security, poverty reduction and real development in rural areas. An international campaign against the international trade in arms of war will be launched. These actions will result in a reduction in the informal and illegal exploitation of the region's wildlife resources and will address the concerns of all sectors of society and the different concerns of the various actors at local, national and international levels.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Most of these initiatives are projects that will take several years to complete and it is not possible at this stage to outline ultimate costs; most will be undertaken in collaboration with other agencies yet to be identified. In the initial stages, what is needed is project development funds and staff time. Development of full project proposals for the five actions outlined here could be achieved for less than \$400,000.

STRATEGY

The basic strategy for these long-term institutional issues is to canvas support from those institutions (bilateral and multilateral) likely to have most influence on affecting policy development in the countries concerned (World Bank, IMF, European Union) and also work through regional initiatives such as the Yaounde Declaration to capitalize on the commitments made there. There will be direct negotiations with the logging companies and with institutions such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees on specific issues. The campaign against arms of war needs to be coordinated with other agencies already engaged in similar issues. BCTF needs to develop a long-term policy strategy document that will guide interventions.

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION

The working group discussion was intense and far-ranging. A preliminary list of possible actions had been drawn up from comments received on the original discussion paper. A brainstorming session then added many more. When the list was complete, discussion began and several of the points were rejected as being inappropriate for this particular group. Others, such as the possible privatization of protected area systems, development of a policy on refugee settlement *vis à vis* protected areas, and development of strategic action plans, were seen as subsets of more general issues and as discussion proceeded, it became clear that many specific actions could be folded up under the

general rubrics of environmental governance, food security and economic and developmental constraints. After lengthy and at times heated discussion, a list of five priority actions was agreed on. These were all considered as important and are not listed in order of priority. The list is given below.

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

Priority Action	Lead Actor	BCTF Role	Hotspots (focus)
Assist in the development of national wildlife policies	Government	Lobby World Bank, IMF, European Union	West, Central and Eastern Africa
Campaign against the arms of war	BCTF	Coordinate and document – establish collaborative framework	Africa
Work with extractive companies (logging, mining, oil) and construction	Private sector and international agencies	Lobbying and influencing	Central and West Africa
Food security and poverty reduction	Governments and donors	Linkages, awareness raising, lobbying and information	Africa
Land-tenure and resource access reform	Governments and donors	Lobbying and facilitating	Africa

REFERENCES

Wilkie, D.S. & Carpenter, Julia F. (in press) Bushmeat hunting in the Congo Basin: an assessment of impacts and options for mitigation. *Biodiversity Conservation*.

Sikod, F., Lisinge, E. Mope-Simo, J., and Gartlan, S. (2000). *Socio-economic Root Causes of Biodiversity Loss*. In: A. Wood, P. Stedman-Edwards & J. Mang. Earthscan, London.

POLICY DISCUSSION SUMMARY [Transcript]

NIGEL HUNTER:

We had an active and constructive working group and did achieve the aim of identifying five priority areas of work. It's probably worth saying though that these are listed are not hierarchically in terms of the matrix they are just the five items that we thought most important. The first priority was assisting in development of the national wildlife policies. These, of course, are national wildlife policies that incorporate into them how those departments and governments will manage their bushmeat issues. Because the matrix is small, when completed it will also highlight the need to harmonize these wildlife policies with the other policies such as fiscal policies, land tenure policies,

but also to harmonize in those regions that have agreed to do that across boundaries. So you have policies that harmonize say between Cameroon and Gabon.

The lead group obviously is government. Their role and one of the roles identified with BCTF is to help lobby the World Bank, IMF and the EU to understand the need for and to support the development for wildlife policies and not just sublimate them to other initiatives. And I imagine there may well be roles for members of the BCTF to collaborate in developing policy. West and Central Africa were certainly thought of as important areas but this does not, of course, mean there aren't other areas in Africa, but those can come up in due course.

Another area of priority is the issue that was raised in the discussion paper that was fully supported by the working group, is raising a campaign against the arms of war and examining what impact war has on bushmeat in particular. The campaign of course is not just trying to get out and lobby in a restricted sense but also awareness raising, looking at the issues and providing the information. And it was thought that the BCTF could be a lead group in this context. The roles being, of course coordinating, collaborating, networking and providing the documentation that gives evidence as to why this is a key issue and why it is a major pressure. And obviously this is not restricted to any region of Africa--it's not even restricted to Africa at all but the BCTF mandate stops at Africa at the moment.

The issue of working with logging companies is not new. What we did was to recognize that with the emphasis being on logging that you've got other extractive industries, mining, oil sectors and others. And all of these need to be worked on in terms of trying to bring sympathetic and harmonized practice so that you get "win-win's," in other words there is nothing against these activities as long as they don't put at risk or harm the wildlife and bushmeat opportunities.

Obviously in this you are working on the private sector and the international agencies who often help in the financing of forest extraction and again the role of the BCTF is lobbying and influencing. And Central and West Africa are primarily the key areas because that's where most of the logging in Africa takes place.

There was a lot of discussion on this and it was given real priority – the food security and poverty reduction. A lot of the emphasis is coming from the wildlife point of view. But it's not linking that wildlife aspect to the poverty and food security issues. In fact as the Director of Wildlife from Gabon showed, a lot of this bushmeat flows into the major urban areas like Libreville and you've got to think about that end of it. You've also got to understand that some of the value of this bushmeat, and I'm not saying that this is a definitive figure but it sort of indicates perhaps we've been underestimating this for Ghana, that has been quoted in this room, something like over 200 million US dollars per annum. That is a huge economic factor and if you ignore all that you may well find that working on the protected areas and law enforcement is fine. But it doesn't actually eliminate or create a beneficial and proactive process. So linking to food security and poverty reduction is vitally important. The lead groups are obviously the governments and the donors. And the role of the BCTF is awareness raising, lobbying, providing information and helping with linkages. For example there's the CITES convention, the CBD, FAO, they all come in at slightly different entry points regarding bushmeat. FAO would be a particularly useful agency in looking at food security, and bushmeat linkages. So that's something that BCTF can help with and obviously this relates to Africa. Food

security is as much of an important issue in Eastern/Southern Africa as it is in Central or West Africa.

The fifth area was land tenure and resource access reform. Particularly important because it's about involving stakeholders and empowering them and helping them to make a sustainable legitimate trade and if you ignore this you're never really going to make the progress you need. And it is a big issue. Are governments prepared to give up powers of responsibility and access to communities on state land? So it also includes protecting the rights of indigenous people or local people.

Again the lead groups are governments primarily and the donors who interact with them on these sorts of issues. The role of the BCTF is lobbying and facilitating this sort of work. And again it's relevant to the whole of Africa, some of course will put more thought and effort into it, some less so.

One thing that came out in all these priority areas is the very important need to list the assumptions you are making because we don't have a perfect knowledge base and then to have those assumptions analyzed and validated, and finally, if necessary, to have the courage, if the assumptions prove wrong, to adapt. So even policy development should be a dynamic process and you should be allowed to come back and evolve. You do it and then you leave it and think, and then ten years later you revisit it because suddenly it's all gone haywire.

And secondly underlying all that is to try and continue to have a solid database and one that, of course, can be applied. So I think with that sort of a final underpinning, that's a summary of what our working group did.

BCTF POLICY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE [August 2001]

- Formation of BCTF Sub-Committee on Policy
- Creation of BCTF Policy Development Meetings, Conferences and Workshops Table, available from <http://www.bushmeat.org/html/PolicyTable2001.htm>, to coordinate strategies and a unified message for raising the profile of bushmeat at meetings, conferences and workshops globally
- Discussion and planning for raising the profile of the bushmeat crisis in the CBD process

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