

Abstract

Elephants often impose costs on the people who share their range, including threats to life and the destruction of property. Incidences of conflict between humans and elephants, in particular crop destruction crops are increasing in Africa, undermining efforts to conserve biodiversity and food security. This study analysed the impact of crop raiding by African elephants to food security in Baringo District, Kenya. The study area covering 390 km² was divided into three blocks Kamailel, Mochongoi and Kimoriot. A total of 120 households, 40 per block, were interviewed and data analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Our results show that human-elephant conflict (HEC) in the study area had reduced by 15%, 20%, and 29% for 2006, 2007 and 2008. Despite reduction in HEC, crop destruction by elephants influenced both household food security and cash income. About 65.5% of the losses were associated with maize, followed by beans (32.8%) and lastly cabbage (1.7%). Crop damage to households was on average KShs.104,225 per household per annum, equivalent to six months household loss of food while the household cash income was reduced by 11.3%. HEC is common among communities living adjacent to protected areas. This often destabilizes communities and undermines their normal livelihood strategies, thus contributing to increased food insecurity.