

Illegal hunting and bushmeat trade in a semi-arid savanna: implications for conservation

Josephine Zisadza, Admire T. Mrewa, Amanda Khosa, Simbai A. Mutematemi, Justice Muvengwi



Introduction

- Illegal bushmeat harvest poses a threat to biodiversity conservation.
- Animal trade is valued at between US\$7–23 billion (Coad et al., 2019).
- Over 300 sp. listed as threatened by IUCN (Ripple et al., 2016).
- 5 million tons harvested annually, globally.
- One in four mammal species considered threatened with extinction.

Cont...

- Bushmeat poaching is a common environmental crime in Africa.
- Dynamics of bushmeat trade are under appreciated in Southern Africa.
- Save Valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe is among the most affected PAs.

August 2001 to July 2009 (Lindsey et al., 2011)

4,148



84,396



6,454



2,126

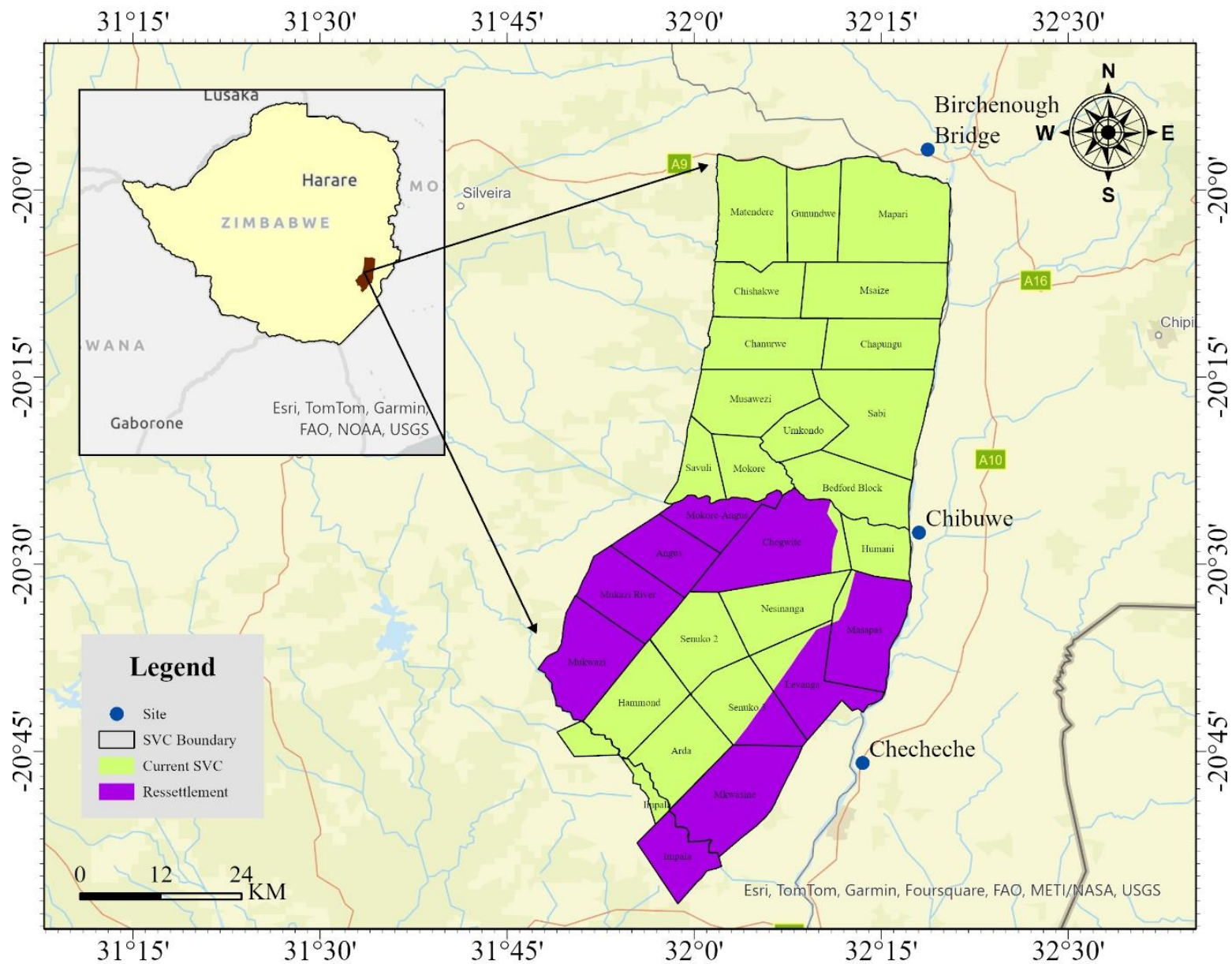


Loss in revenue ~ \$USD 1.1 million per annum

Research question

- Characteristics?
- Motivations?
- Methods?
- Sources of income?
- Species targeted?
- Perceptions on wildlife law enforcement?

Study site



Methods

Primary data collection

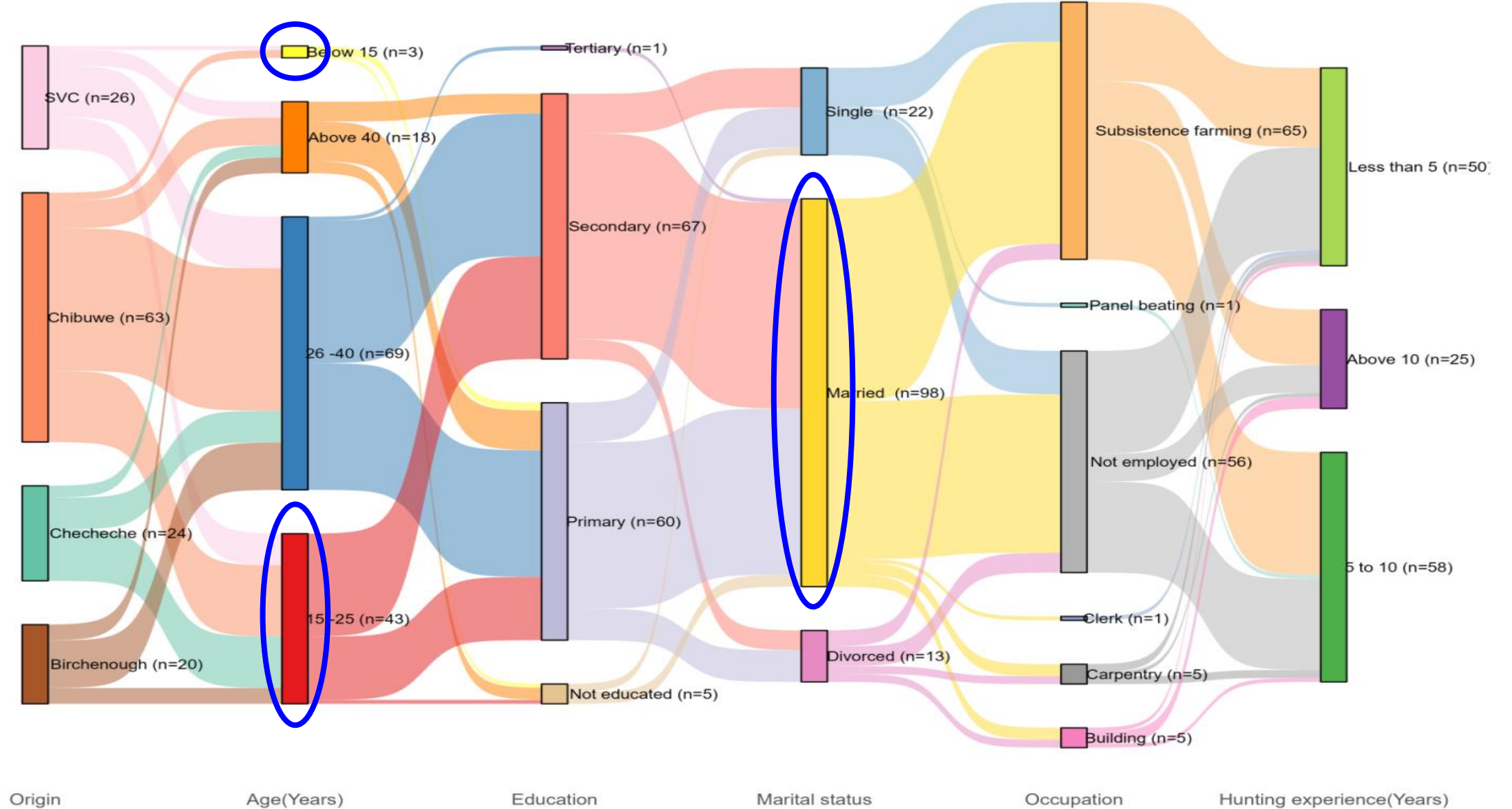
- Semi-structured questionnaire with illegal hunters and field rangers.

Secondary data collection

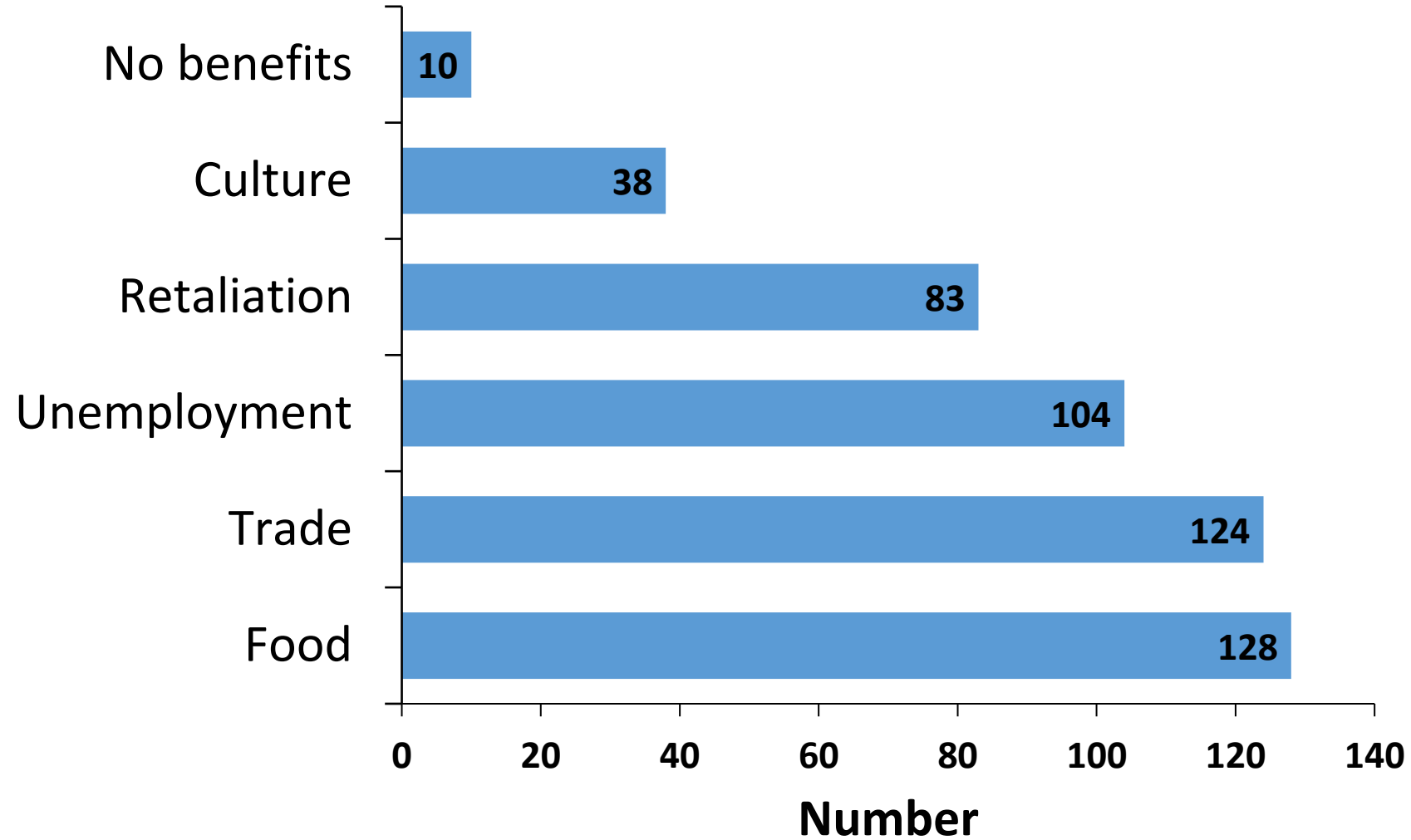
- Collected records of wildlife related crime court cases from Mkwesine Police Station.



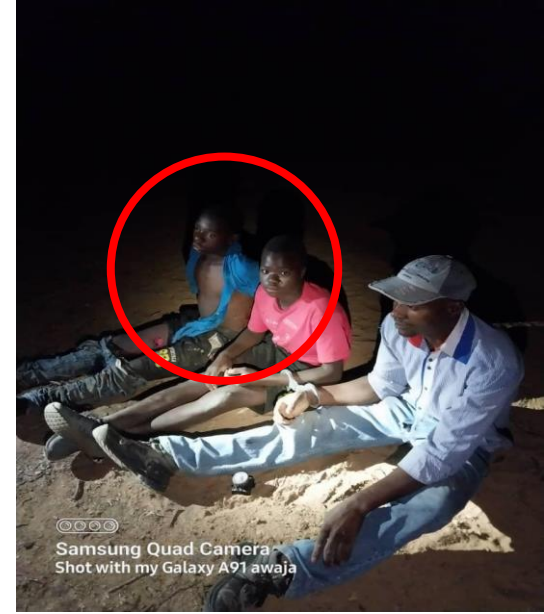
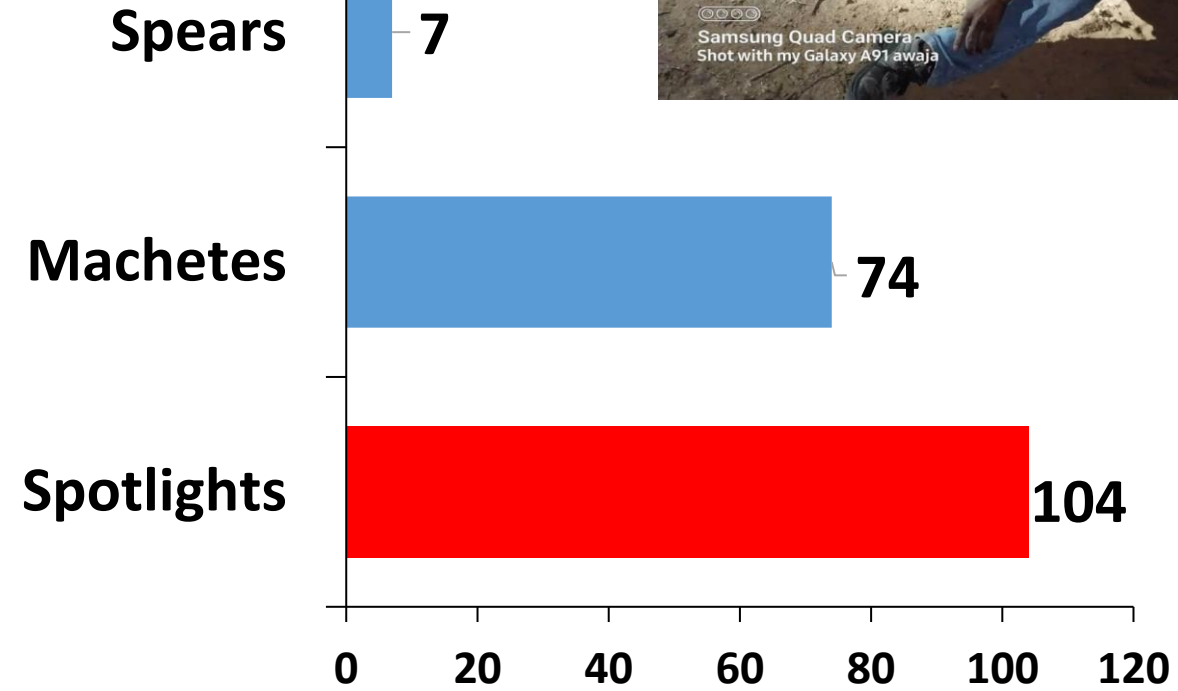
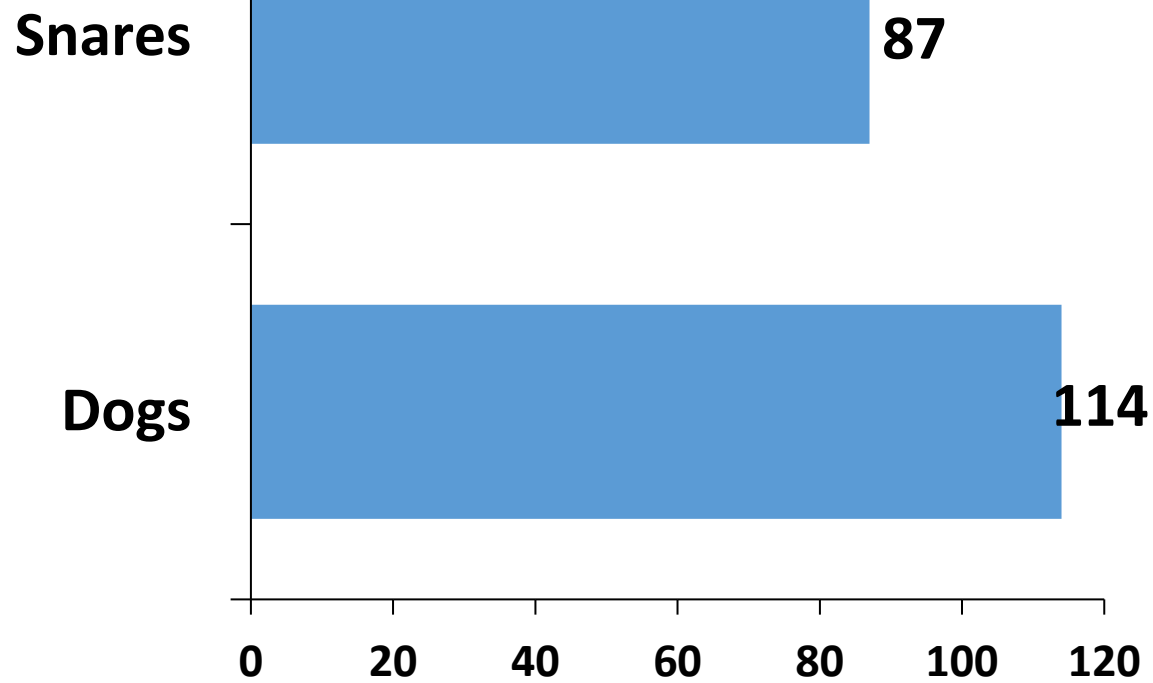
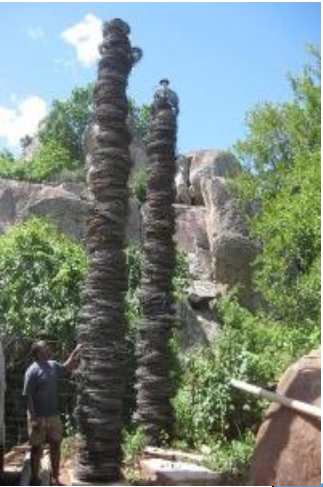
Results- characteristics



Drivers of illegal hunting

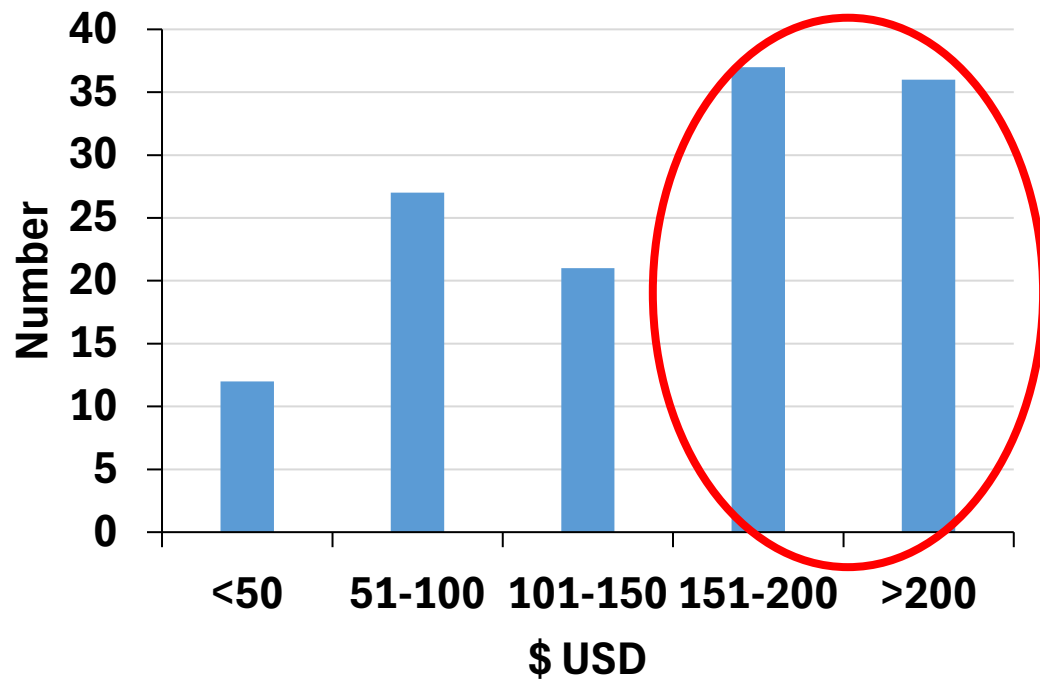


Methods of hunting



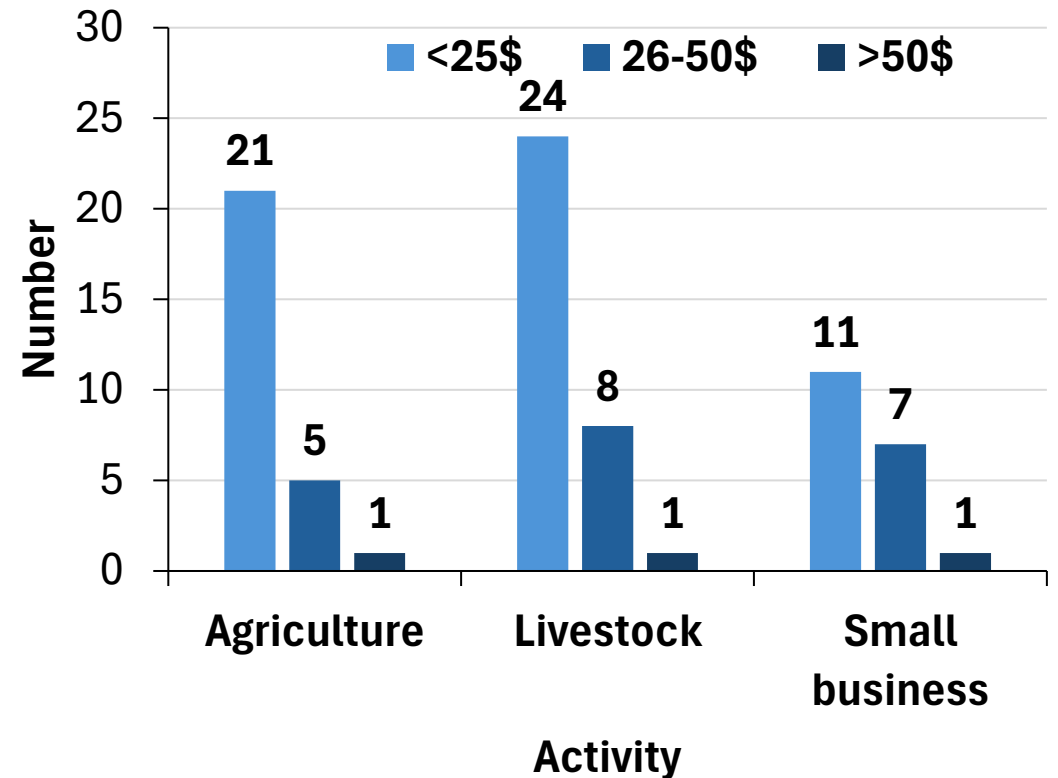
Sources of income

Bushmeat earnings per month

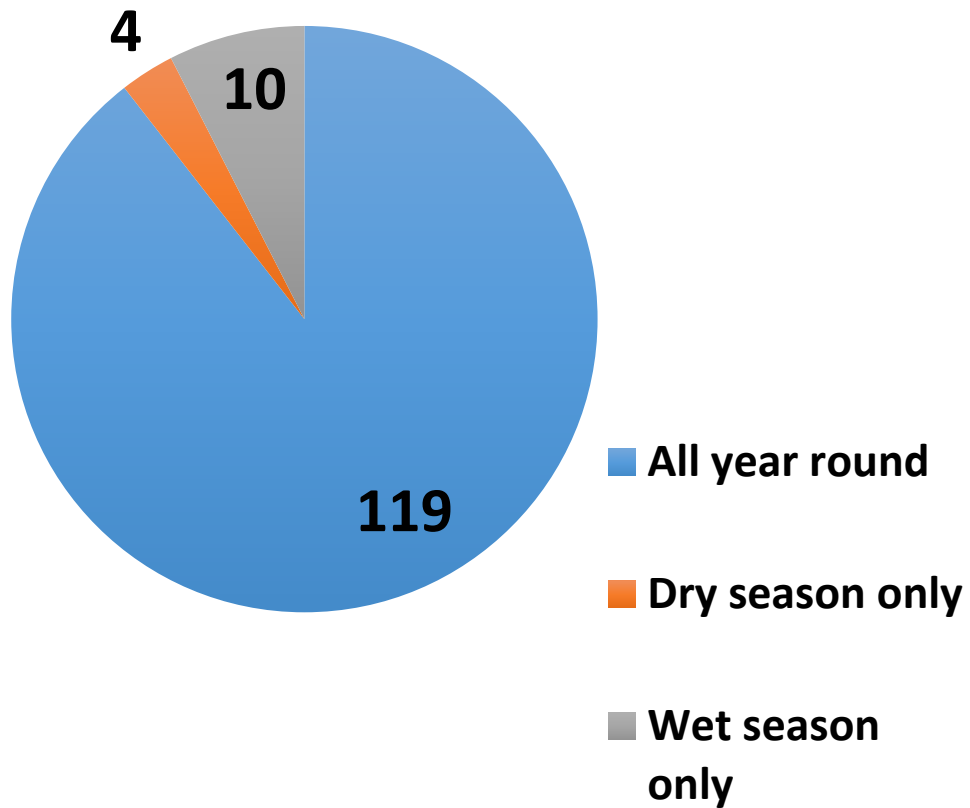


55% earned more 150 \$USD

Earnings from other activities



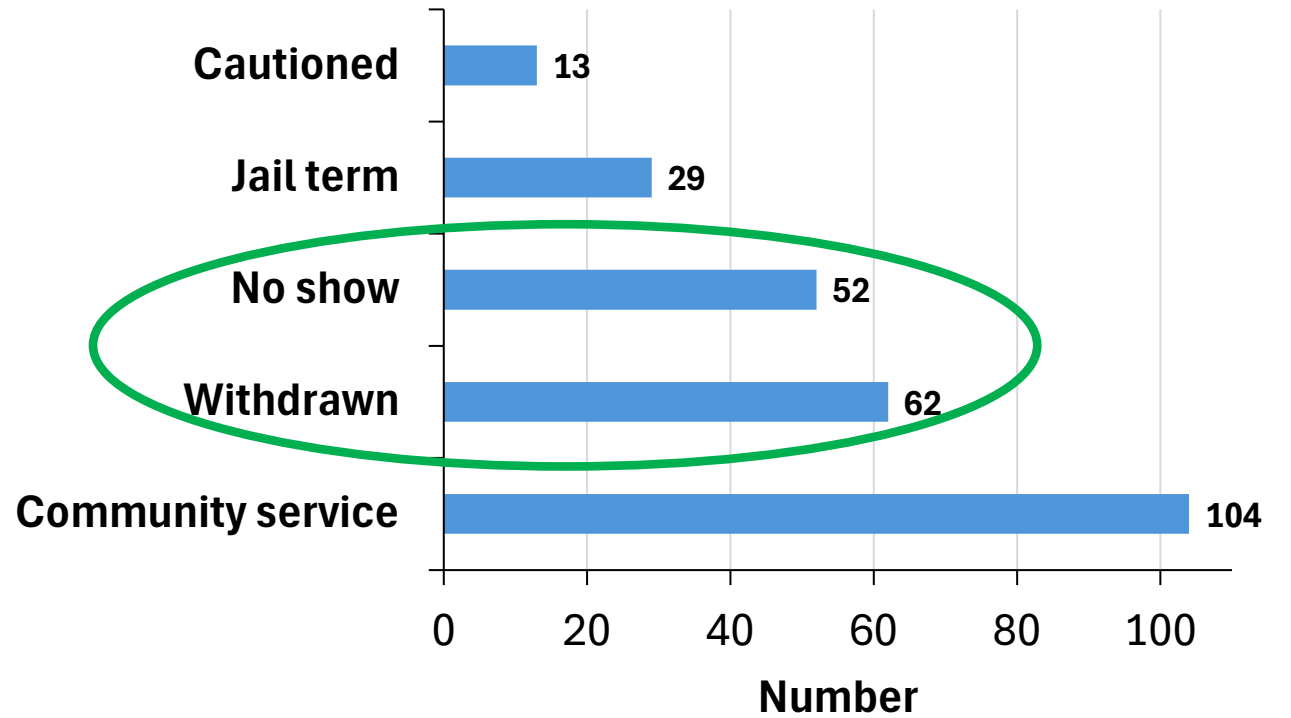
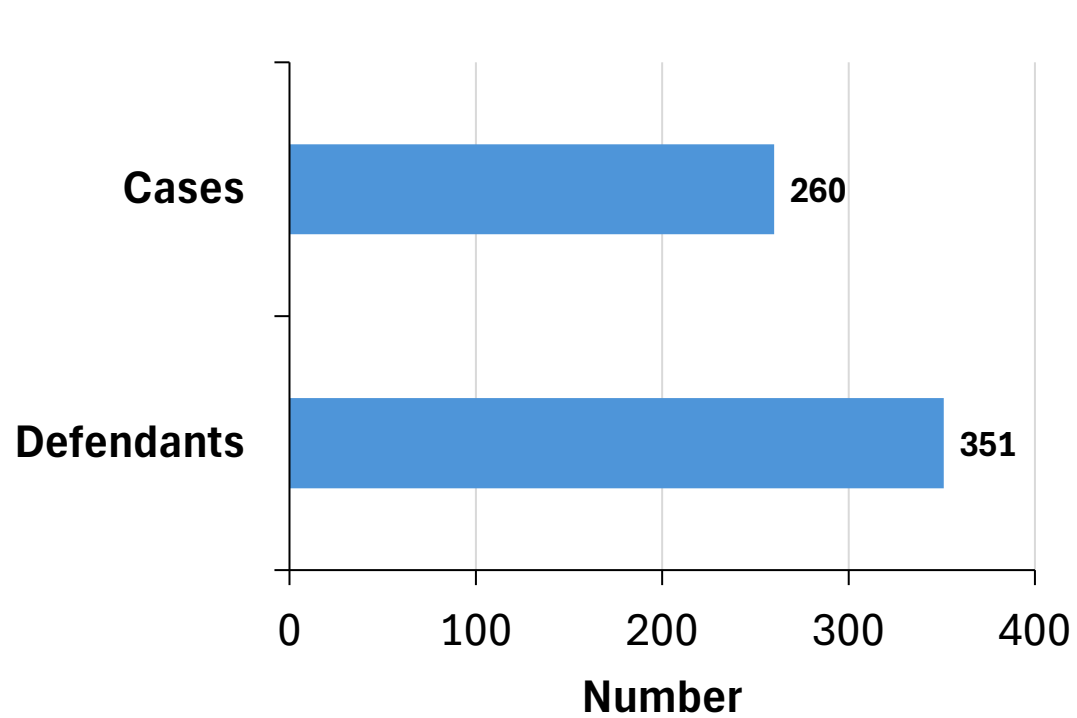
Targeted animals & seasonality



Animal	Number	Percent
Impala	128	96
Warthog	98	73
Bushpig	95	71
Duiker	74	56
Wildebeest	71	53



Court records



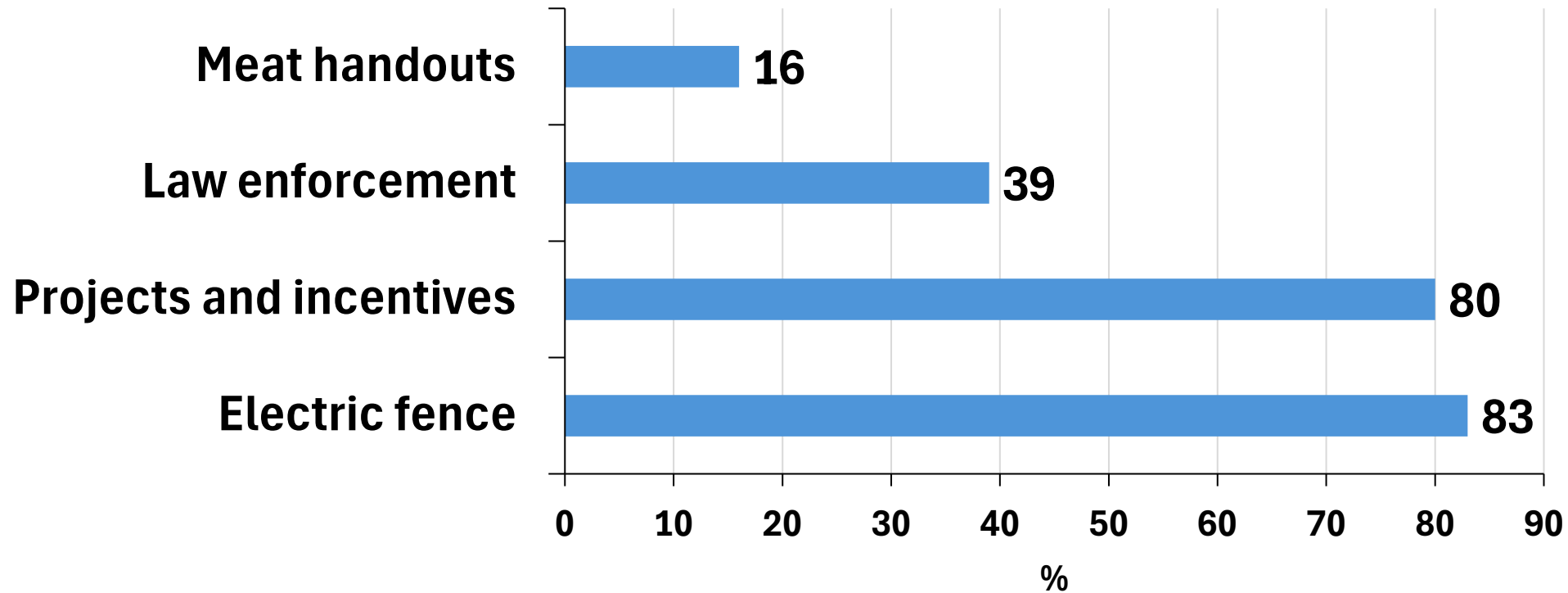
Illegal hunters perceptions

- 61%, n=81 illegal hunters perceived SVC anti-poaching units as ineffective.
- Reasons being few field rangers who are underequipped.
- Some rangers were alleged to be involved in poaching syndicates.

Rangers perspective

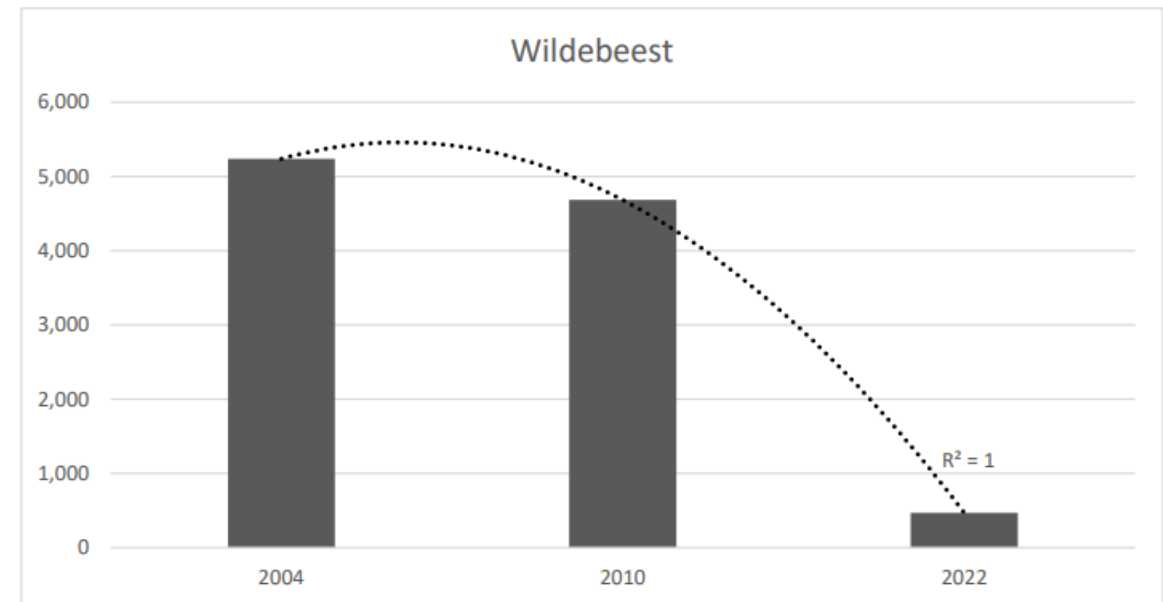
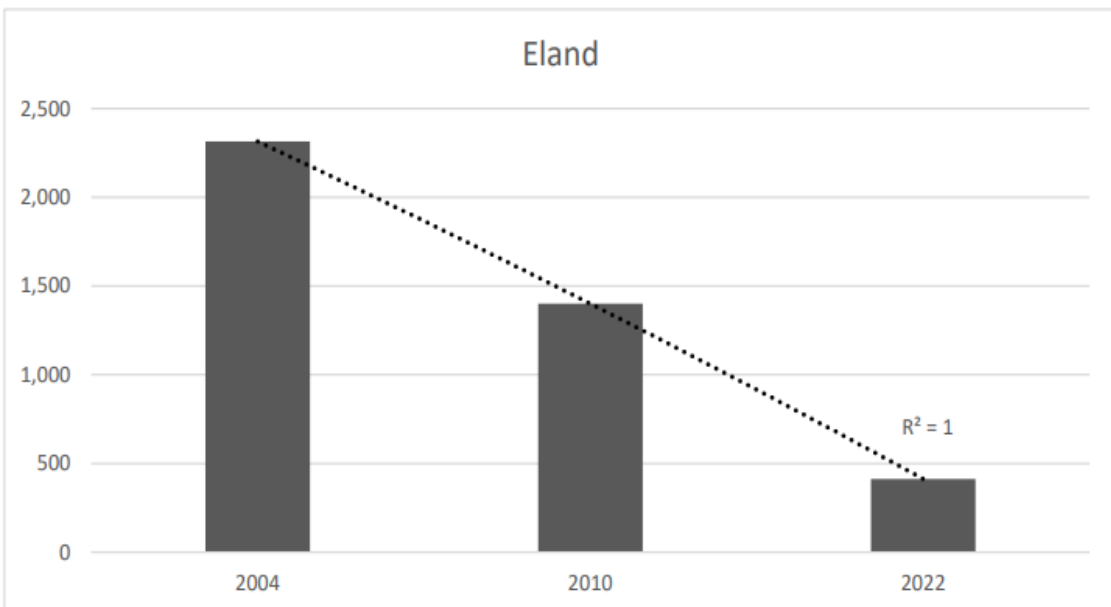
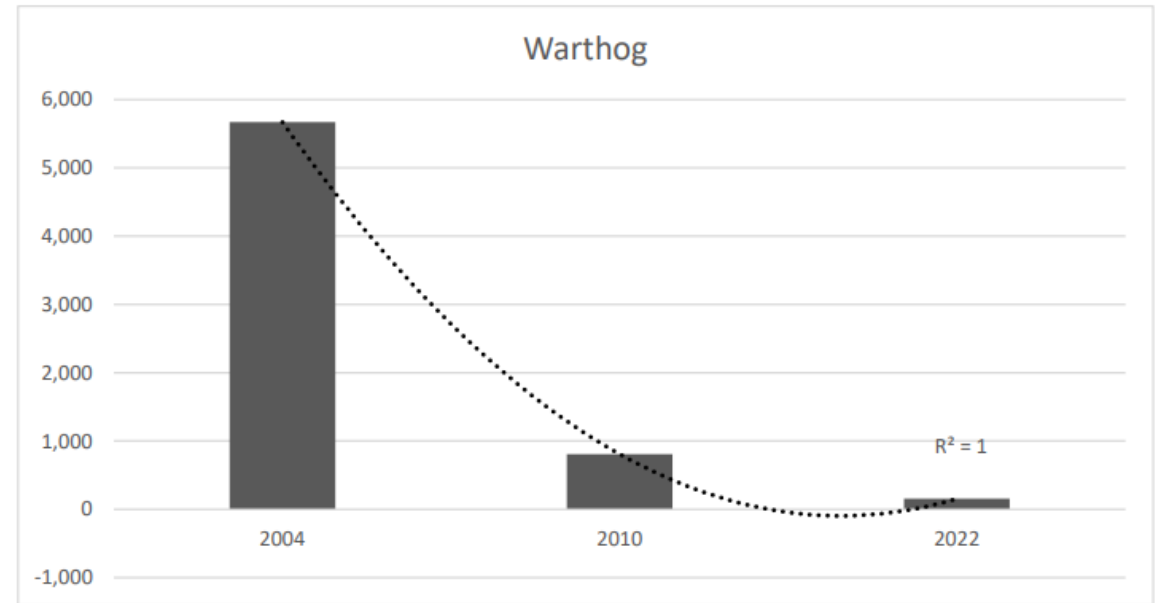
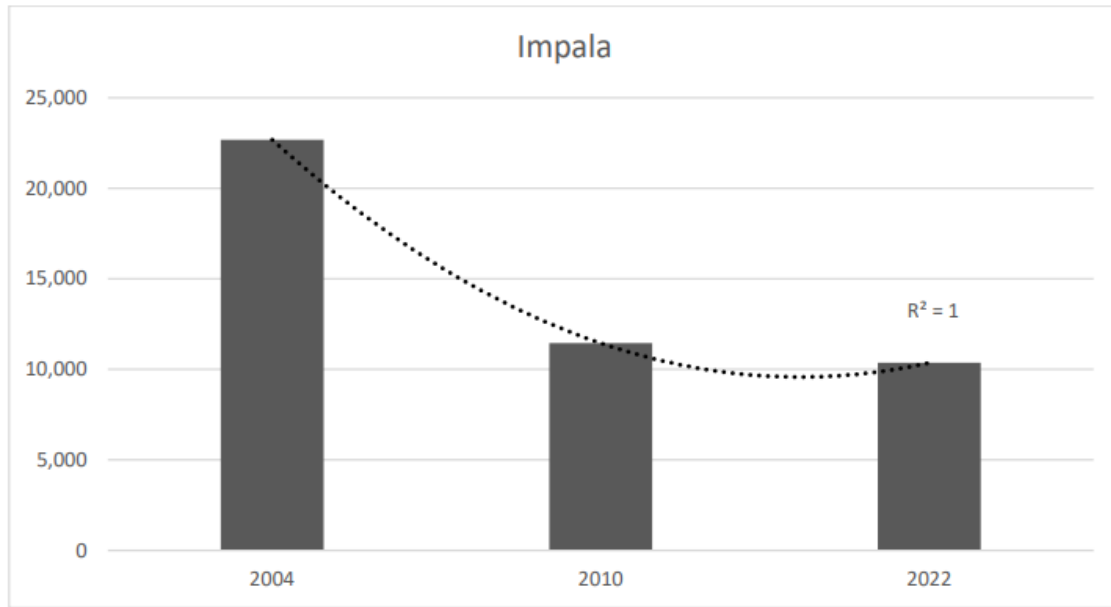
- All rangers acknowledged heavy poaching pressure.
- Understaffing and lack necessary equipment.
- Judiciary penalties were not deterrent enough to curb illegal hunting.

Ways to reduce poaching



Implication for conservation

Cooper 2022 aerial survey



Recommendations

- Improving anti-poaching measures.
- Implementing conservation incentives.
- Enhancing community education.
- Centralize the governance of the conservancy.



Thank you!

