Importance of forest income to the livelihoods of households adjoining protected areas in Cameroon

By

Julius Chupezi TIEGUHONG (*Consultant, FAO-NWFP, Yaounde, Cameroon, Julius.Tieguhong@fao.org, chupezi@yahoo.co.uk*),

Ousseynou NDOYE (*Regional Coordinator, FAO-NWFP, Yaounde, Cameroon, ousseynou.ndoye@fao.org*),

Eric Mathurin NKAMGNIA (*Consultant; Technical Training and Research Centre for Development-TTRECED, Yaounde, Cameroon, n_kamgnia@yahoo.fr*

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Objectives

Overall objective: To quantify current and potential contributions of forest resources in protected areas to the local livelihoods in the Congo Basin.

Specific objectives:

- Evaluate sources of income and determine the forest-household dependency
- Determine cash and in-kind incomes of households
- Make recommendations on pathways to conservation & development outcomes

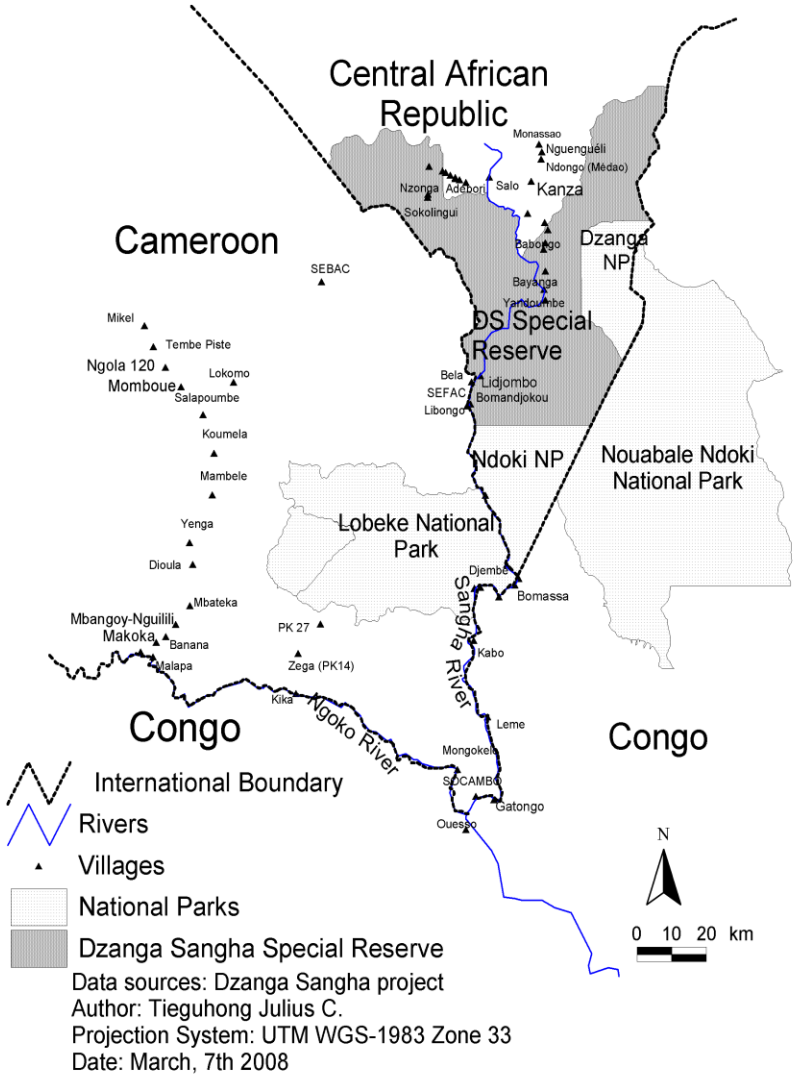
Research question: What are the income portfolios of households adjoining the TNS & to what level are households dependent on forest-derived income?

Context: Congo Basin countries



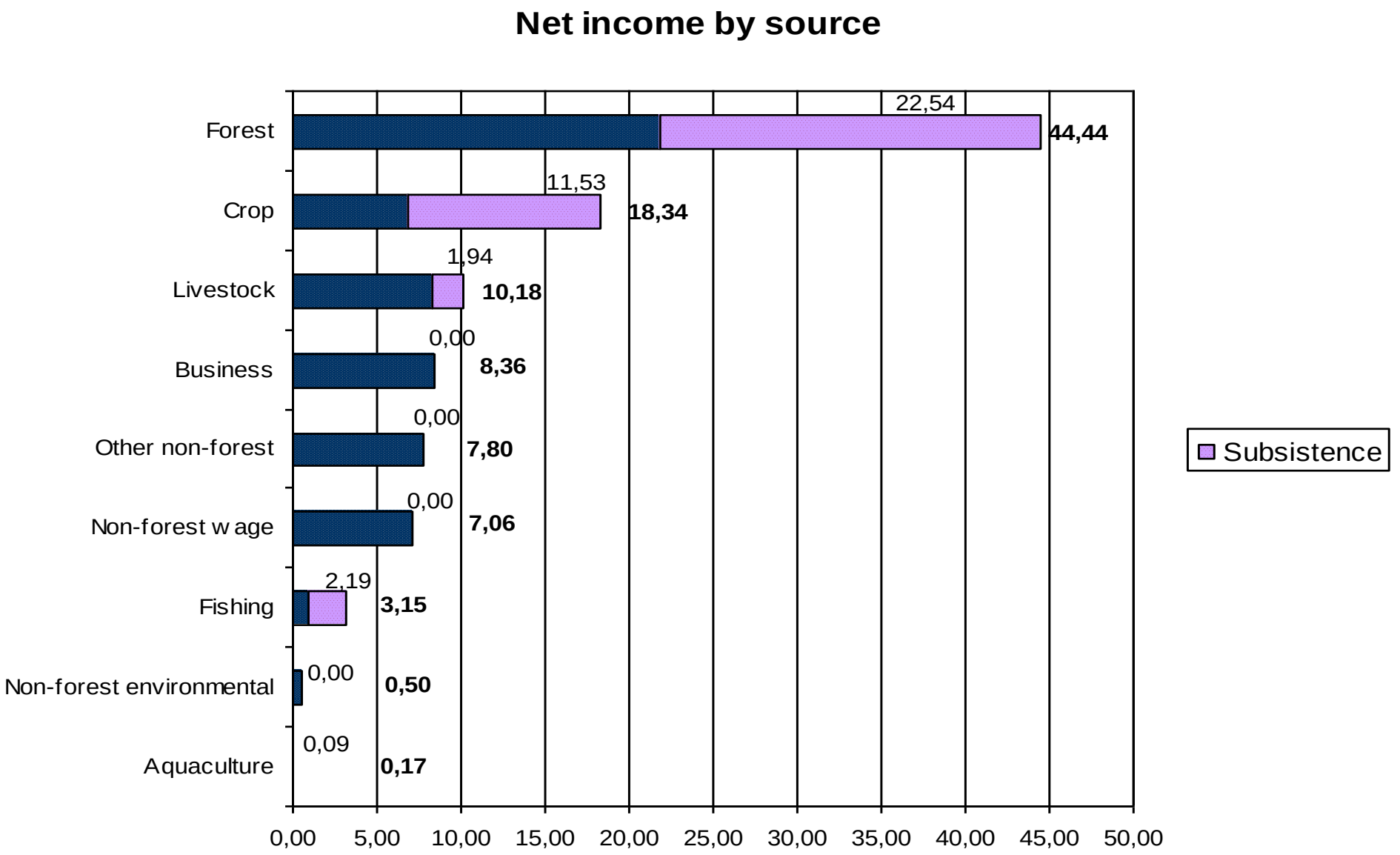
- Six countries: Cameroon, CAR, Rep. of Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea & Gabon
- Congo Basin's forest: 228 Million ha (57.2%) and Protected areas (14.4%)
- Forest area per capita: 2.9 ha
- Net deforestation rate is -0.19%
- High political interest expressed by governments through regional processes: COMIFAC, CBFP
- Active presence of many national & international NGOs
- No previous in depth study on forest-dependency

Research site and methods

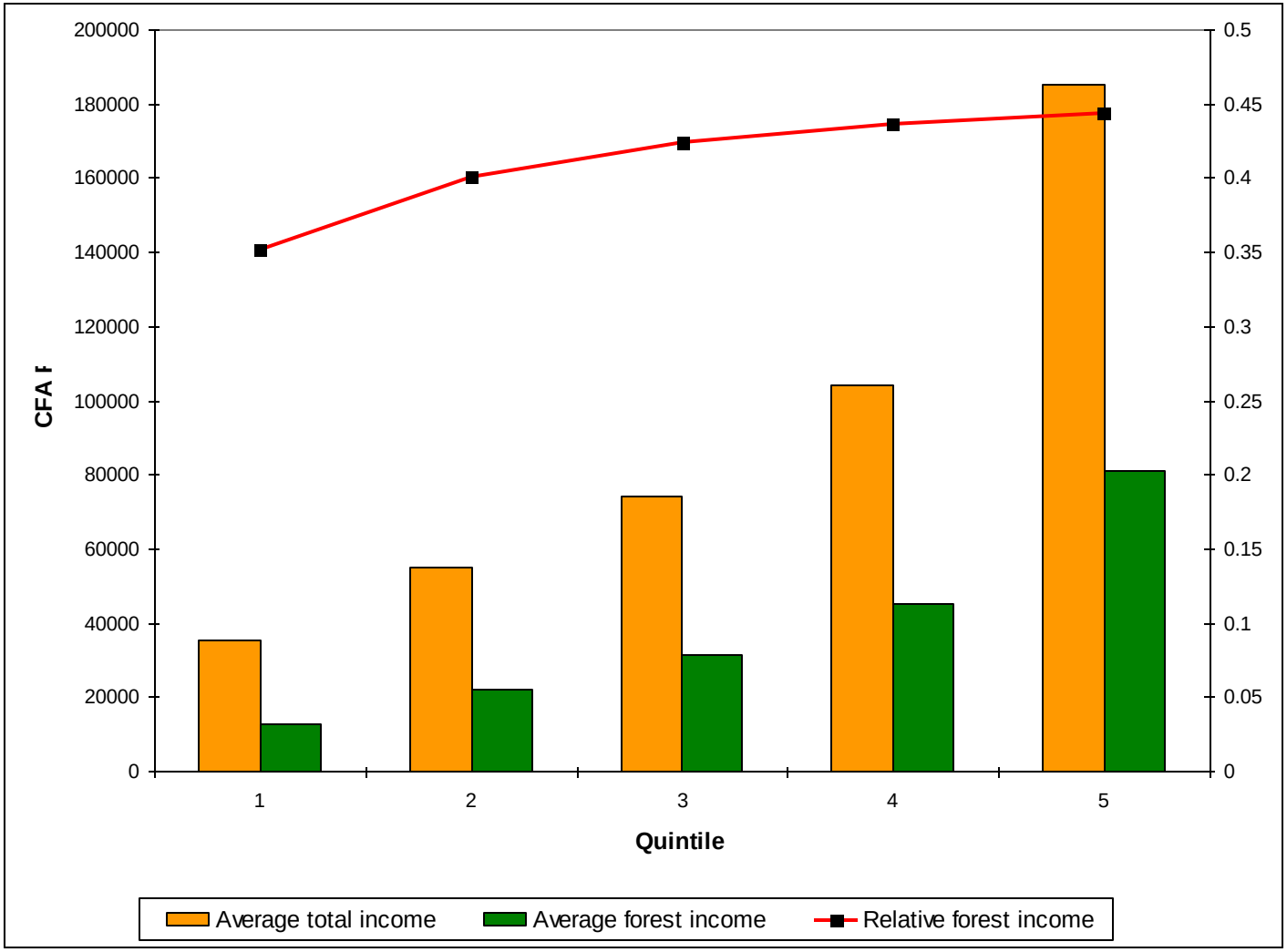


- Sangha Tri-National Park (TNS) of 28000 km^2 (7500 km^2 core area)
- Lobeke NP (Cameroon), Nouabale-Ndoki NP (Rep. of Congo) & Dzanga-Ndoki NP (CAR).
- 5 out of 14 random villages (Koumela, Libongo, Mambele, Socambo & Zega) in Cameroon
- 22-23 random households in each village
- Quarterly questionnaire administered for one year
- Data input and analysis with MS Excel & Access, STATA 8 & SPSS 12

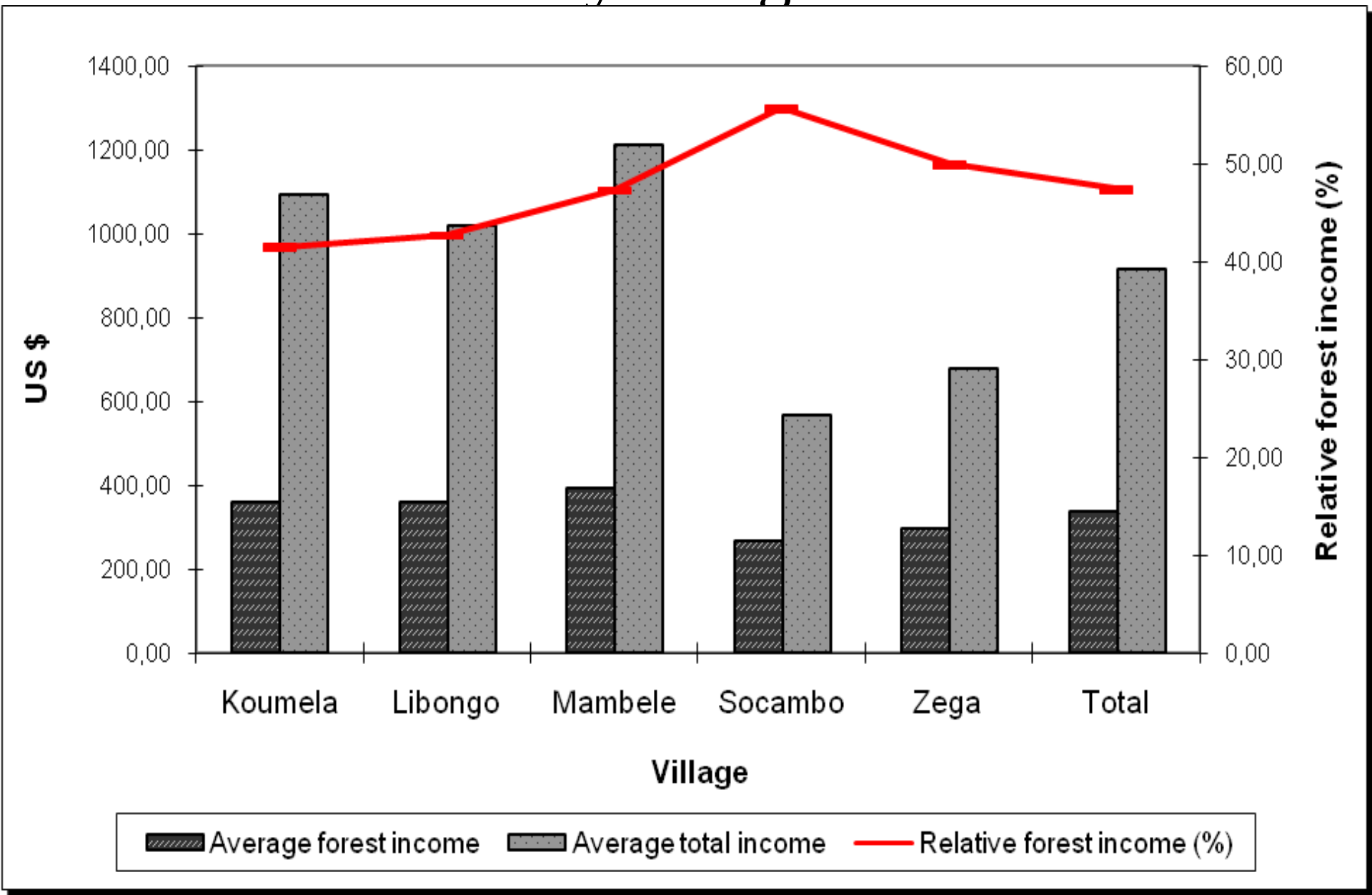
Key results: Forest and Non-forest income



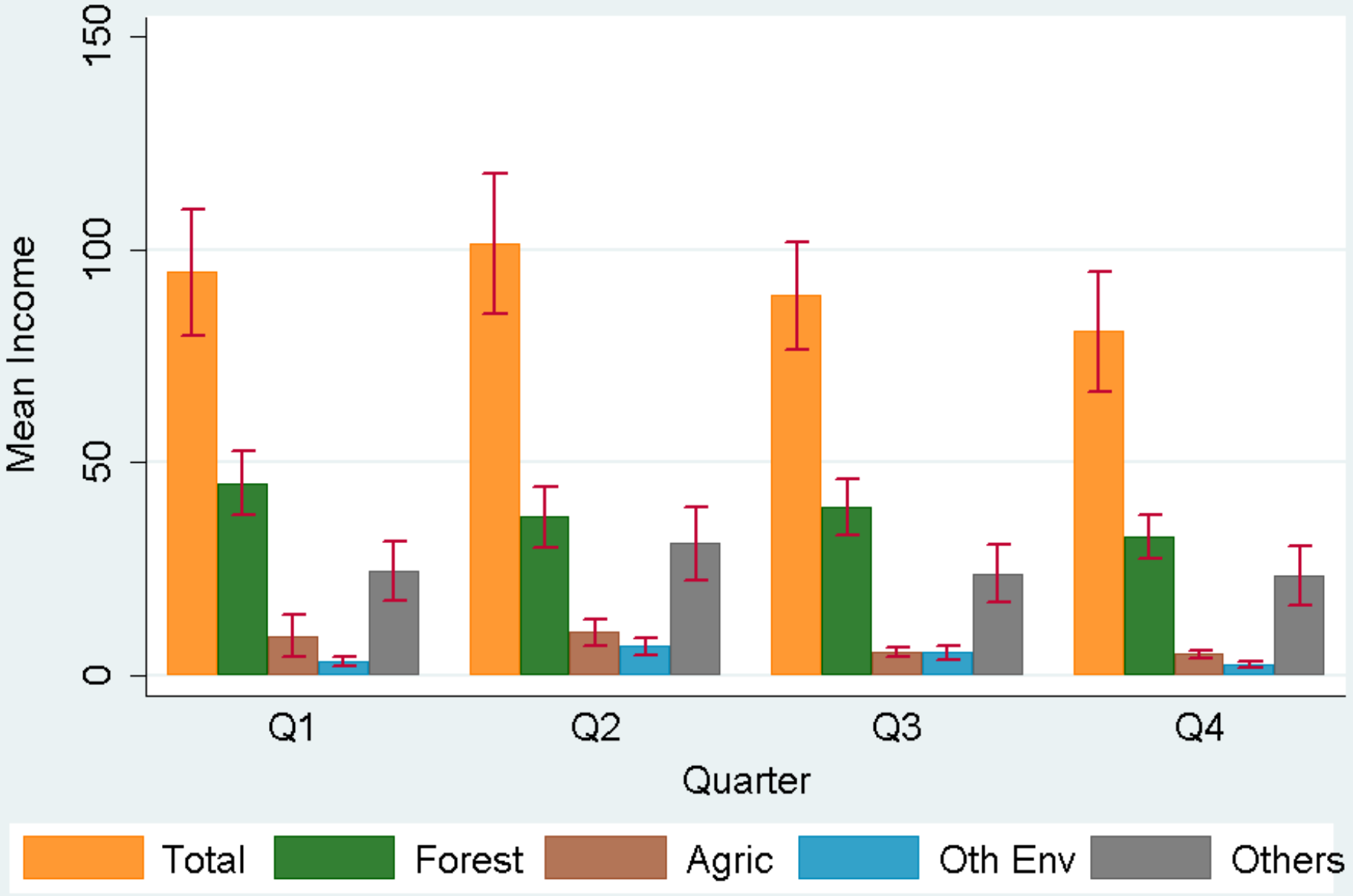
Results: Income quintiles & forest income



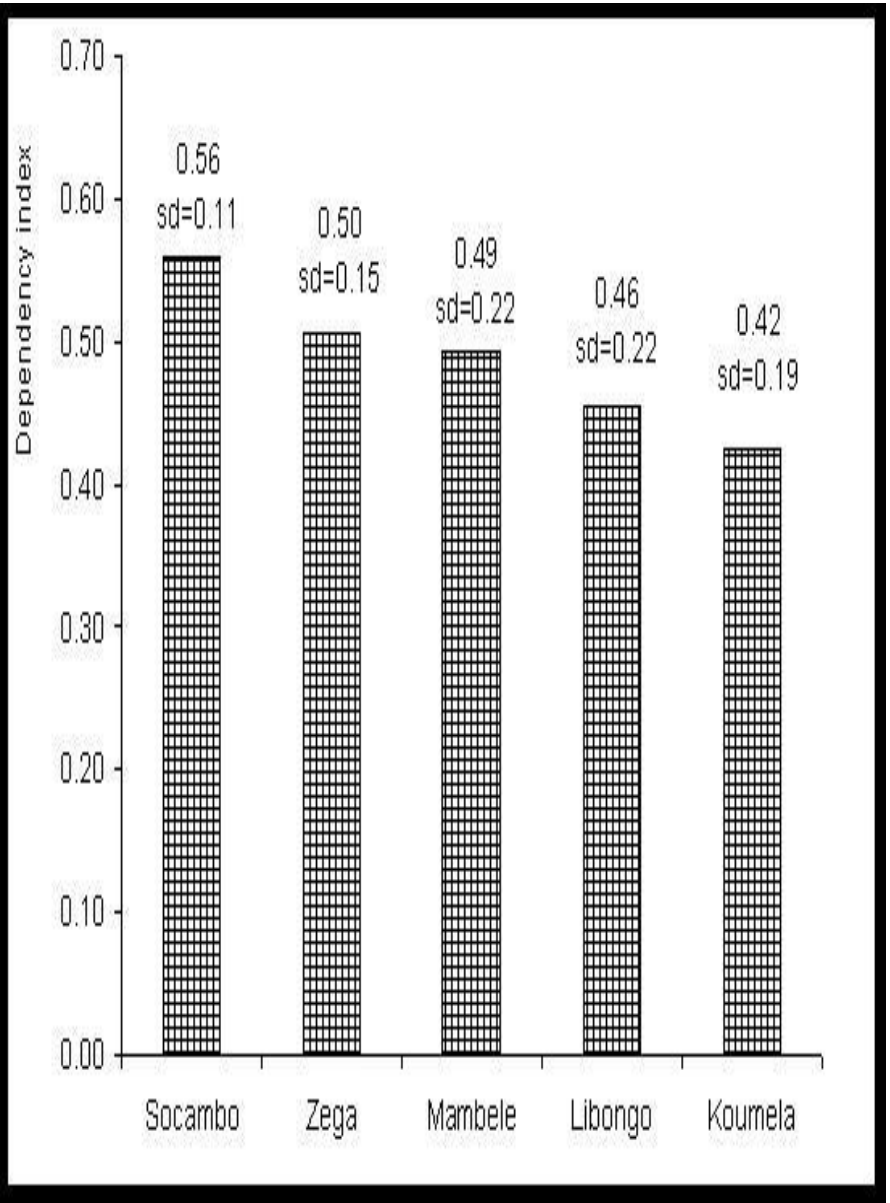
Results: Average total income & forest income by village



Seasonality: Income shares by quarter



Results: Household Forest dependency indices by village



- HH Forest dependency = forest-derived values/total values derived by HH from all sources.
- HH forest-dependency varied from 0.1 to 0.82 (mean=0.49; SD=0.18)

- Can forest-dependent households abandon harvesting forest products?
- Poverty will grow with limited access to forests & absence of other opportunities

Conclusions

- Forest contributes an unaccounted additional US$ 2602 million to the livelihoods of the rural people in the Congo Basin per year

- Effective forest conservation must contribute to achieving MDGs by creating and stimulating income & livelihood opportunities

- Funding agencies (e.g. UNFF, EFI, GEF, World Bank, AfDB etc) should consider budget lines for concrete measures against poverty for forest-dependent peoples

National parks are not free of people and conservation would be Difficult to achieve without meeting local needs and aspirations

Acknowledgements





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Thank you for listening