

Wild meat hunting and use by sedentarised Baka Pygmies in southeastern Cameroon

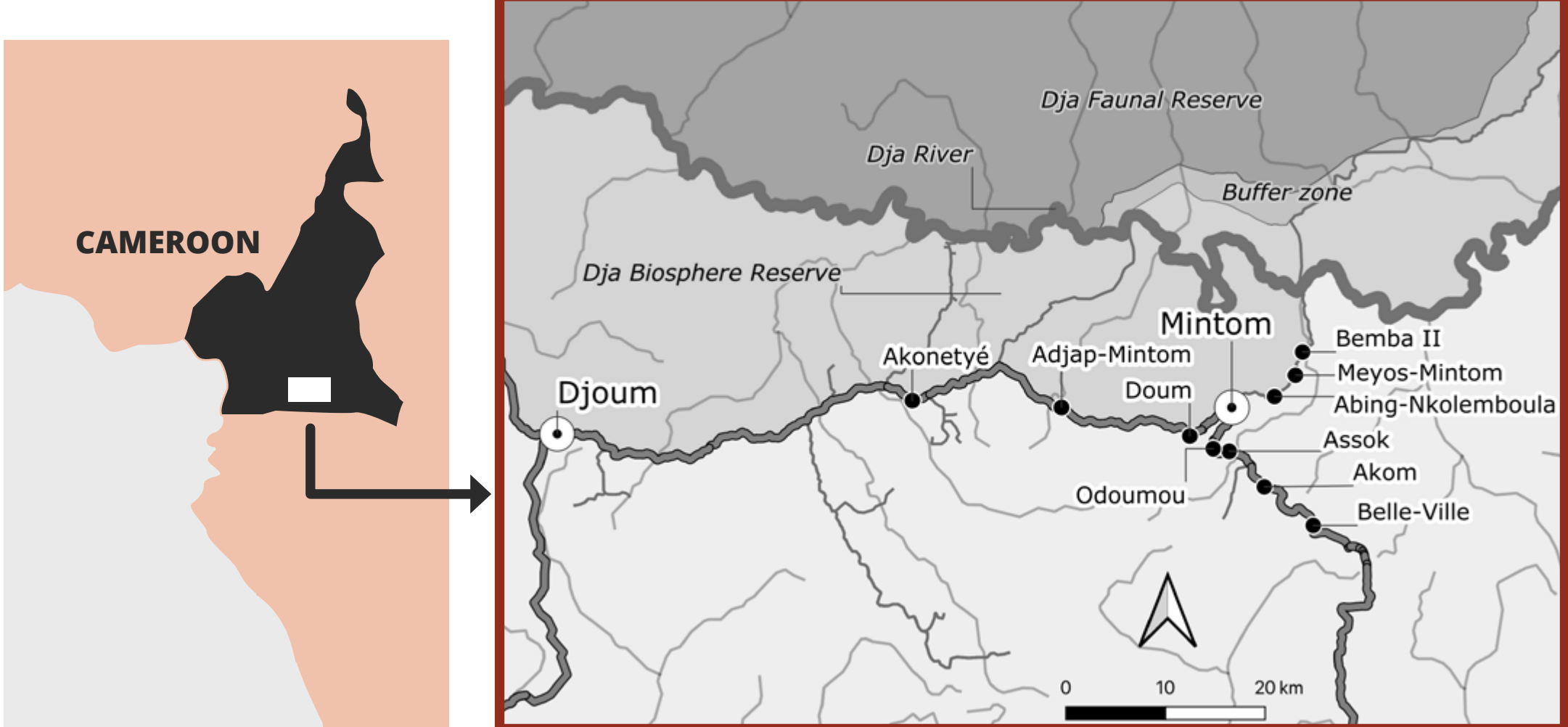
INTRODUCTION

Having lived an almost exclusive hunter-gatherer lifestyle for millennia, Baka Pygmy populations have become settled in roadside villages in the forest zones in south-eastern Cameroon. With the participation of **121 hunters in 10 study villages**, our research documented the hunting of wildlife by these populations.



YOUNG BAKA HUNTER WITH DOGS RETURNING WITH PREY

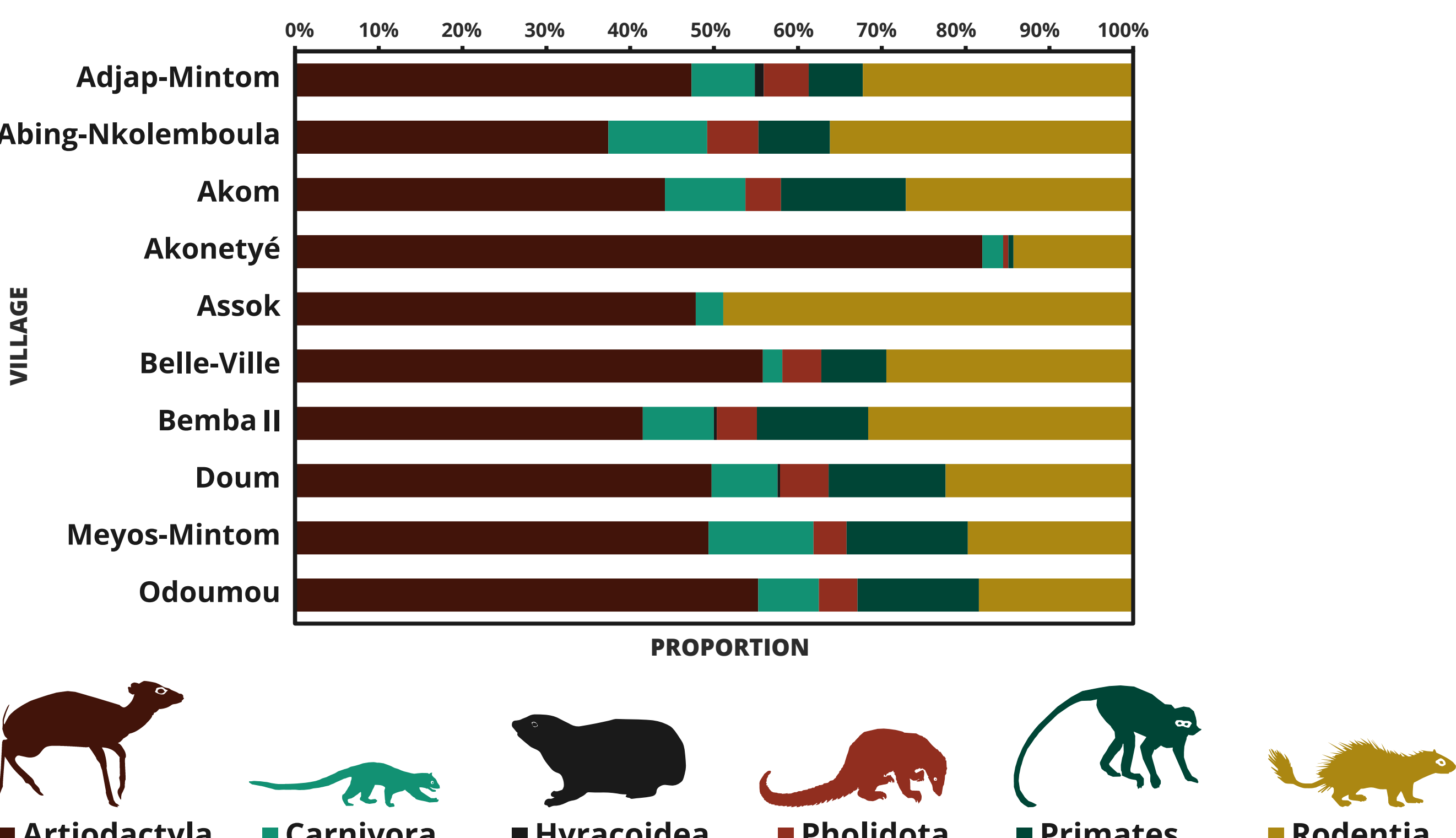
THE STUDY VILLAGES



RESULTS

1. A total of **2,245 carcasses** of **49 species** of **24 animal families** were hunted during our study.
2. Most hunted animals were mammals, with **ungulates constituting the highest proportion**.

THE PROPORTION OF THE DIFFERENT MAMMALIAN ORDERS HUNTED IN EACH VILLAGE

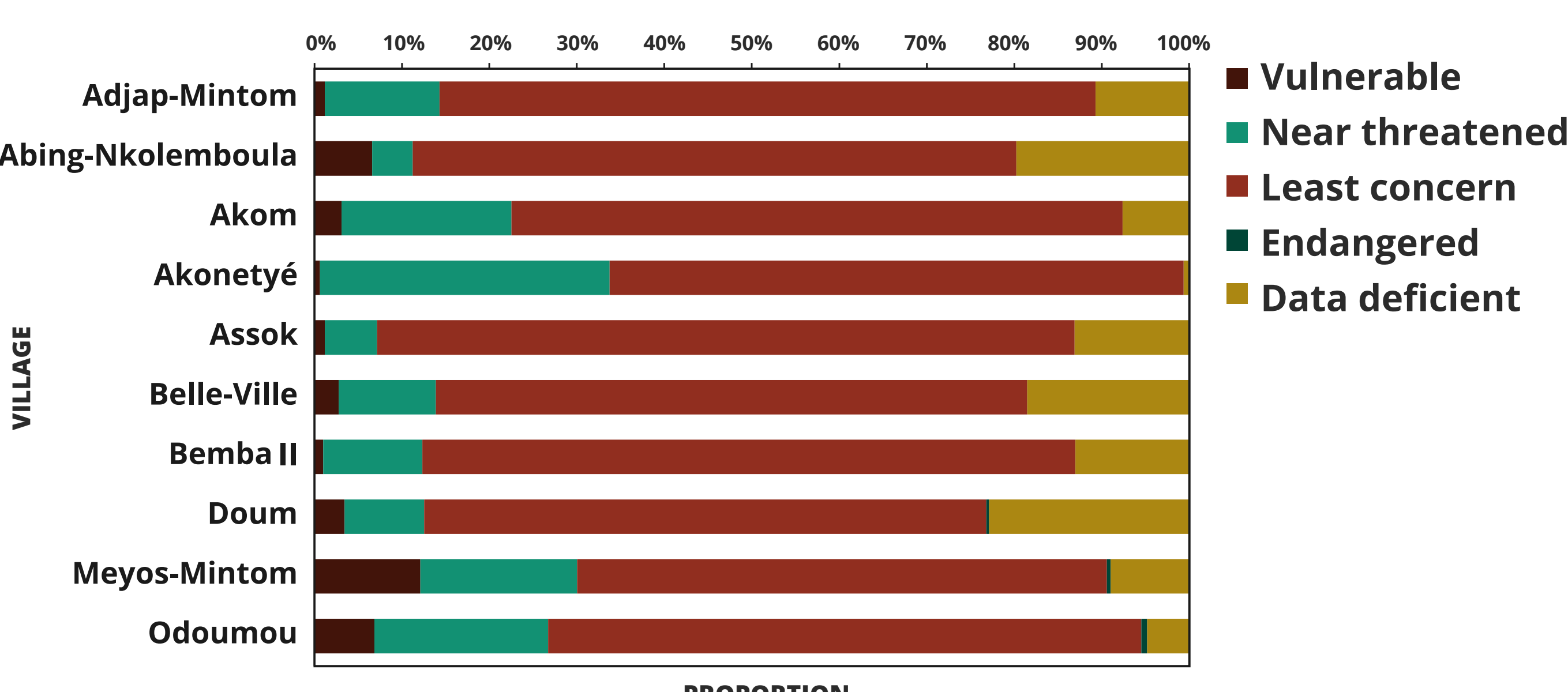


3. By species, just over **half of the animal biomass** extracted by all hunters in the study **belonged to four mammal species**.
4. **Most animals were trapped** ($65.77\% \pm 16.63$), shot with guns ($22.56\% \pm 17.72$), taken by other methods ($8.69\% \pm 6.96$), or hunted with dogs ($2.96\% \pm 4.49$).
5. A mean of **$7,569.7 \pm 6,103.4 \text{ kg yr}^{-1}$** ($2,080.8 - 19,351.4$) **were extracted per village**, giving $75,697 \text{ kg yr}^{-1}$ in total, which is equivalent to 123 UK dairy cattle.
6. In all villages, **$48.07\% \pm 17.58$ of animals hunted were consumed by the hunter and his family**, around $32.73\% \pm 12.55$, were sold, followed by a lower percentage of carcasses partially sold and consumed ($19.21\% \pm 17.02$).
7. **Between 60% and 80% of carcasses belonged to the “least concern” category**, followed by “near threatened”, “vulnerable”, and, rarely, “endangered”. The only endangered, protected species hunted was the chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*).



RED DUIKER FOUND DECOMPOSED IN A SNARE TRAP, ABOUT TO BE CUT UP BY A HUNTER

THE PROPORTION OF ANIMALS HUNTED IN EACH VILLAGE BELONGING TO THE DIFFERENT IUCN RED LIST CATEGORIES



CONCLUSION

We suggest that hunting is a critical activity that provides a vital source of food for the communities we studied and conceivably for most sedentarised, previous hunter-gatherers in Cameroon and other groups in the Congo Basin. **In our study, measured wild meat extraction levels are likely to be sustainable if hunter densities do not increase.**