

Almost all (91 %) of animals captured in zone 3 are smoked, differing from zone 1 where all the animals captured were consumed or sold fresh.

The proportion of game meat sold in relation to that consumed, differed across the 3 zones. Approximately 64 % of animals killed in the village environs (zone 1) went for domestic consumption. In contrast 65 % of the hunted individuals in zones 2 and 3 were destined for the market. It appears that commercial gains versus subsistence motivates the hunting in areas farther from the village.

Although the data collected during the study period are doubtless a conservative estimate of animals killed in the region because : (1) It was not always feasible to follow every hunter, particularly when several left to visit their snares simultaneously ; (2) A few hunters were reluctant to cooperate and provided us sporadically the needed informations ; (3) Zones 2 and 3 were most likely hunted by non Mekas hunters (hunters from other villages in the Western DR and external hunters), the harvest rates of *Cephalophus dorsalis*, *Cephalophus spp.*, *Cercopithecus pogonias* and *Atherurus africanus* in zone 1 indicate that they are respectively 6, 3.5, 8 and 1 times higher than the local populations can support.

#### CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Wildlife in the Western DR is under a high hunting pressure from unregulated firearm hunting and snares trapping. For sustainable utilisation of wildlife resources in this sector, it is paramount to implement some management measures in collaboration with villagers aiming on reducing the hunting pressure on the mammalian fauna :

- Reduce or cancel, if possible, the poaching from the external hunters ;
- Adopt the zonation plan of the DR following the Biosphere reserves model of zonation (UNESCO/MAB, 1990). The hunting should be contained to the area 15 km walking distance from the villages. This will reduced the economical and nutritional wastage. The forest beyond the hunting zone (between 10 km and 25 km) would serve as a « source », an area where populations can reproduce without