

Ethnozoological Knowledge of Buffalo (*Syncerus Caffer*, Sperman, 1779) in the Garamba National Park (Haut-Uélé, DRC)

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1 ABSTRACT

Ethnozoological knowledge is essential for understanding the relationship between local populations and wildlife, thus contributing to the conservation and management of buffalo and their habitat. The aim of this study was to determine the ethnozoological knowledge of local people about buffalo in Garamba Park. The methodology consisted of a survey of the local population. Conducted in French and local languages using the Kobocollect application, the interviews involved 429 people, including 153 women (35.7%) and 276 men (64.3%). The results showed that the buffalo is essential to local communities, offering food, medicinal and mystical uses. Its meat is a vital source of protein, while various by-products (skin, bones, fat and viscera) are used for remedies. Although 69% of participants saw the buffalo as a tourist attraction, 24.5% considered it to be aggressive. Ecologically, 6.8% valued its role in dispersing seeds. Knowledge is mainly transmitted orally (84%). These results underline the importance of local knowledge for the conservation of the buffalo and sustainable biodiversity conservation.