

# Habitat loss and human–elephant conflict in Assam, India: does a critical threshold exist?

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APPENDIX Survey questionnaire used to conduct open-ended interviews.

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Survey ID	Village
Name	Monitoring block
Gender	Date
Occupation	Start time / End time

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## Background

How old are you?  
What is your occupation?  
How long have you lived here?  
How long has this village been here?  
How many households are there in this village?

## Agriculture

What crops are grown in this village?  
How often are they grown and in what seasons? How long have your village and the fields around it been cultivated?  
Do you cultivate all of the land area you own? Do you leave parts of your land fallow? If so, which areas? How often do you leave them fallow and for how long?  
Thinking back as far as you can remember, did you cultivate your land differently in the past than you do now? (What time periods were different, and how?)

## Introduce map

This is a map of an area in Sonitpur that Assam Haathi Project monitors. (Explain map: the area is bordered on the bottom (south) by the Brahmaputra, on either side by the Jia Bharali (east), and Jia Gabharu (west) and by dense forest (north). I'd like to ask you some questions about this area.

## Land use

I'd like to ask about changes in the land use here now compared to when you were young. From your childhood until now, did the following types of land cover rapidly increase, increase some, stay the same, decrease some, or rapidly decrease?

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	Time period	Rapidly increased	Increased some	Stayed the same	Decreased some	Rapidly decreased
Water bodies						
Land under cultivation						
Land covered by forest						
Land covered by tea gardens						
Elephant habitat						
Railroads						
Roads						
Buildings						
Power lines						

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## Elephant conflict history

Are elephants a problem in your village? (If yes) Thinking back as far as you can remember, when did wild elephants first begin to be a problem?

During what seasons do elephants crop-raid? Are certain areas raided more often than others? (Inquire about both crops and home gardens, as well as granaries.)

When you first saw elephants here (near your village), how many elephants came? Did you see individual elephants or groups of elephants? How many elephants come now? Do they come alone or in groups?

Thinking back as far as you can remember, how often have you seen elephants? (Every year/every few years/every month, etc.)

Can you show me on this map where elephants have crop-raided or caused damage in the last year or 2 years?

Thinking as far back as you can remember, can you show me on this map where elephants crop-raided or caused damage in the past? (Focus on different time periods and changes between them).

Can you show me other areas where elephants are found? Or where they move from or to?

Thinking back as far as you can remember, during the following time periods would you say the numbers of elephants in this area increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

Elephant population	Rapidly increased	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased	Rapidly decreased
1970s					
1980s					
1990s					
2000 until now					

Have you noticed elephants crop-raiding or causing damage more often after a certain activity, event, weather, etc.? (Such as: changes have been made in the amount of land cultivated, or in the type of crops grown, in the amount of forest nearby, presence of tea gardens or roads)

Have you ever noticed crop-raiding by elephants occurring less often at certain times or in certain years? Or after certain activities, events, weather, or changes in the way land is used?

Thinking back as far as you can remember, was there ever a time when the amount or type of conflict with elephants seemed to change suddenly? How did it change? Why do you think it happened?

Thinking back as far as you can remember, can you estimate how many injuries to humans have been caused by elephants over the last few decades?

Can you estimate how many elephants have been injured or killed in this area (your village and the fields around it)? How were they killed/injured?

Thinking back as far as you can remember, do you think the elephants have changed their behaviour?

Elephants have a right to move through areas that are inhabited by people.

Strongly agree

Agree

Don't know

Disagree

Strongly disagree

What do you think are the biggest causes of problems with elephants?

People and elephants could live together here without conflicts.

Strongly agree

Agree

Don't know

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Do you have any ideas or suggestions about what can be done to prevent problems with elephants in the future?