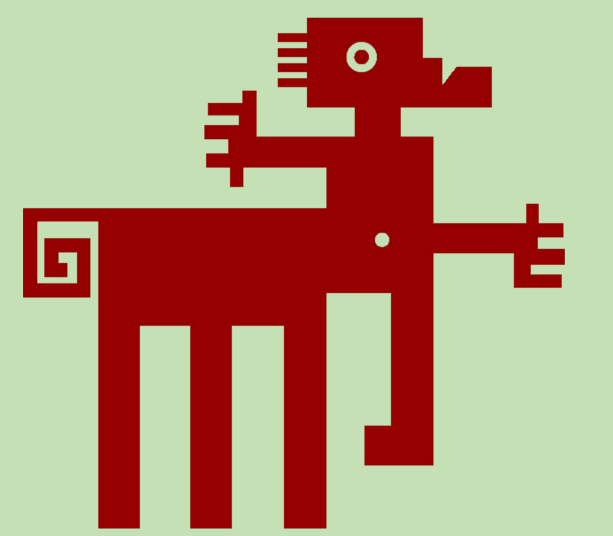





EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN UGANDA



Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

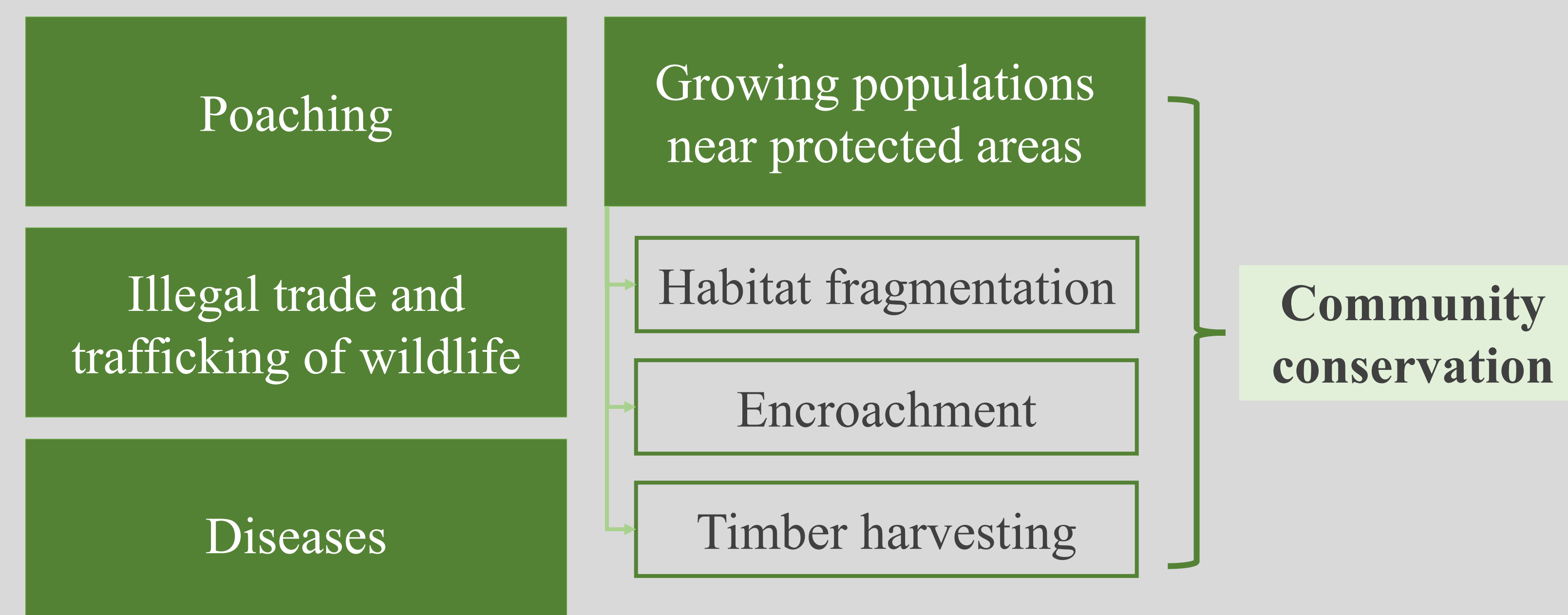
Pau Benet Moya
June 2021

Objectives

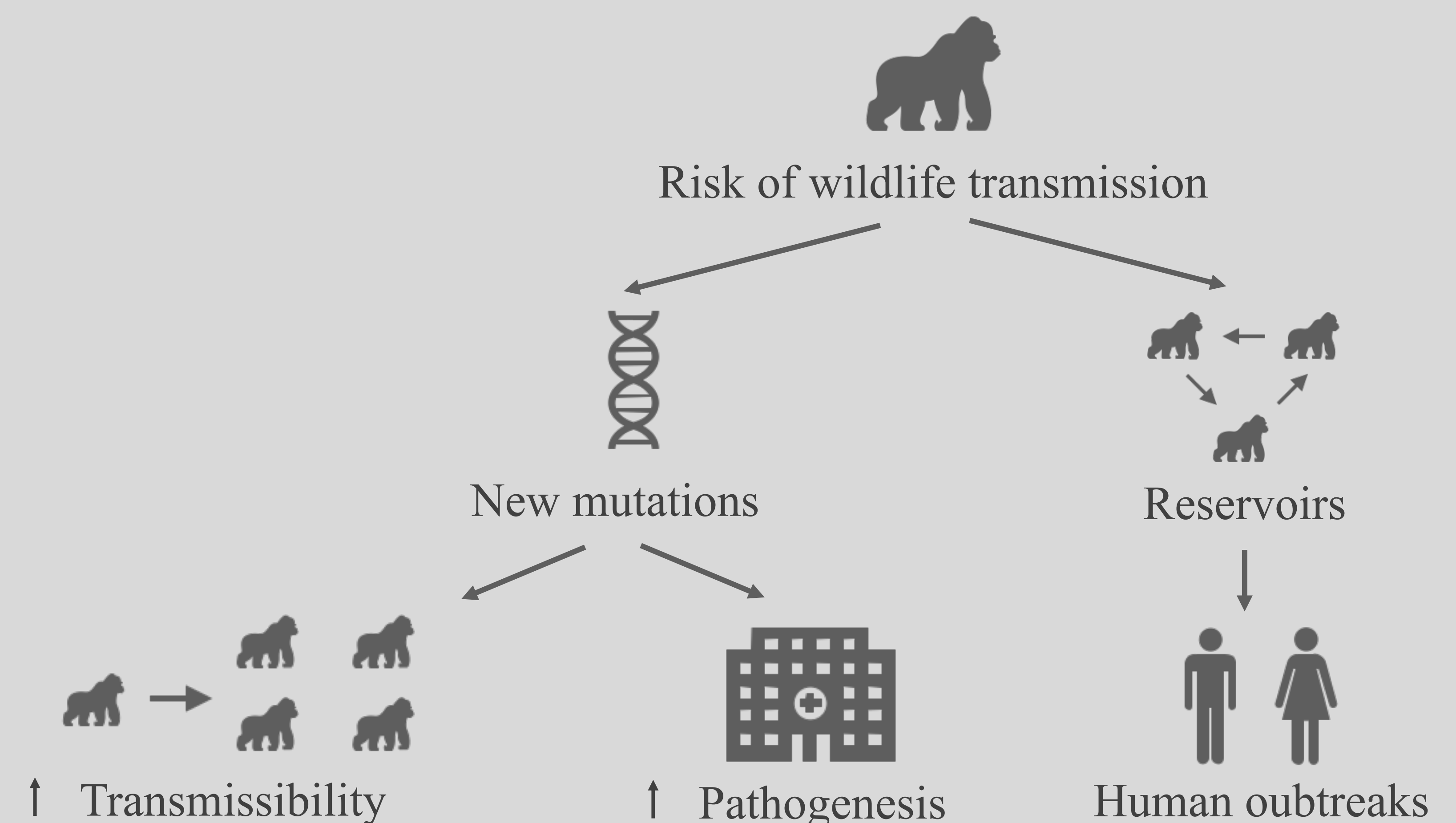
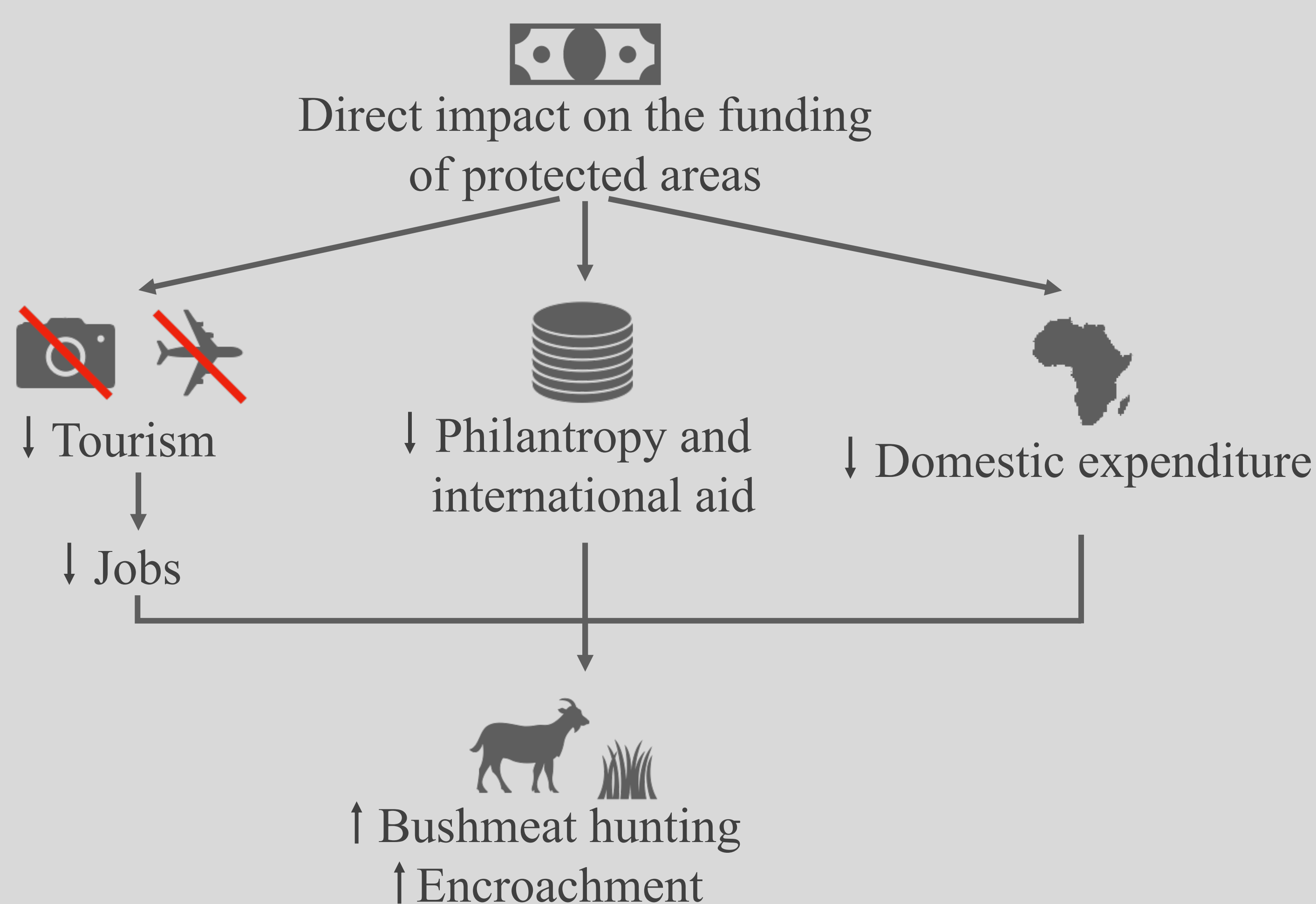
-  Which were the main threats on wildlife conservation in Uganda? How were they being faced?
-  Have these threats shifted with the COVID-19 pandemic?
-  New measures to assess these new threats?

Introduction

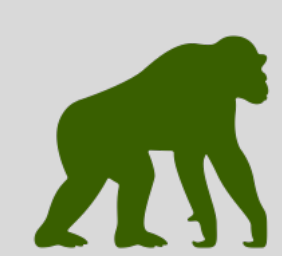
MAIN THREATS TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN UGANDA



Wildlife Conservation and the COVID-19 pandemic



Examples in Uganda:



Budongo Forest Reserve (May 2020):

- ↑ Communities accessing the forest
- ↑ Charcoal burning
- ↑ Snares recovered (with 2 chimpanzees being wounded, one of them dying from the injuries)

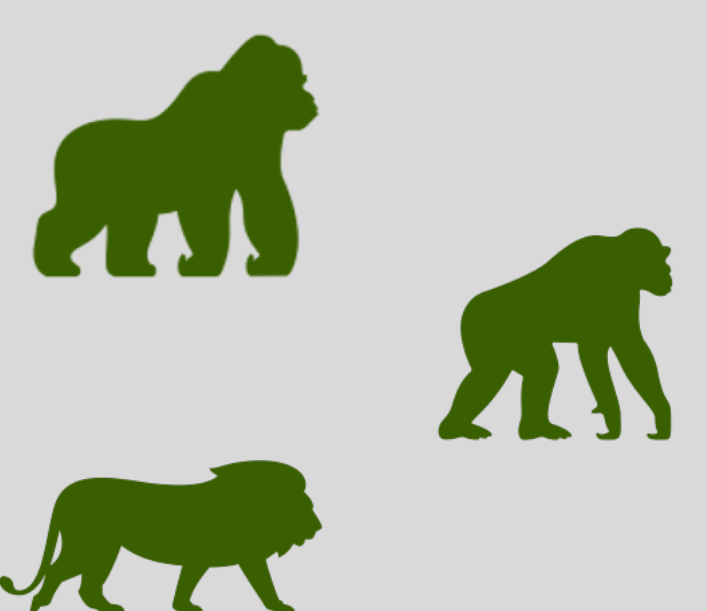


Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (June 2020):

- Death of a silverback by poachers hunting for bushmeat

Species at special risk in Uganda:

- Mountain gorillas (*Gorilla beringei beringei*)
- Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*)
- Lions (*Panthera leo*)



Measures to minimize transmission to wildlife

- Not trekking when being sick
- Washing hands, taking body temperature and wearing facemasks
- Maximum group of 8 persons to trek gorillas and 6 for chimpanzees
- 10 meters distance between humans and animals



Conclusions

- ❖ With the loss of tourism, the funding of protected areas has been put at risk. The money generated from tourism also helped as a revenue to local communities, which increased trust in wildlife tourism and protected areas. With the loss of trust, local communities felt back on accessing resources from protected areas.
- ❖ The possibility of reservoirs enforces the idea that a One Health approach should be taken in order to control the pandemic, with surveillance on wildlife.

- ❖ Disease transmission was the main threat to some endangered species, even before the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has helped, indirectly, to make people understand better the objective of sanitary measures in order to reduce the risk of pathogen transmission to wildlife. In the future, these measures are bound to stay and still be applied.
- ❖ Vaccination of the population should be prioritized, in order to achieve the return to normality and the reactivation of tourism.