

MESSAGE TO GABONESE PEOPLE: « ARE YOU READY TO EAT INSECT-BASED FOODS LIKE A WESTERNER? »

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Introduction

Disguising insects in familiar foods (*i.e.* pasta, cracker, etc.) is one of the strategies used by insect industry to ease the introduction of this food in the Western food habits. Such strategies could be used in other countries like Gabon where entomophagy is not as familiar as in other African countries and where the original consumption of insects is threatened by Westernization.

Objectives

- ❑ Assess two parameters relative to insect-based foods:
 - Willingness to eat (WTE).
 - Willingness to pay (WTP).
- ❑ Increase knowledge about entomophagy in Gabon.

Results

- ❑ 56.97% of respondents would accept to eat insects (= potential eaters).
- ❑ 81.86% of potential eaters had already consumed edible insects.
- ❑ 57.73% of insect eaters consumed them once/year or less frequently.
- ❑ 15.19% of potential eaters refused to eat both insect-based foods (Figure 1).

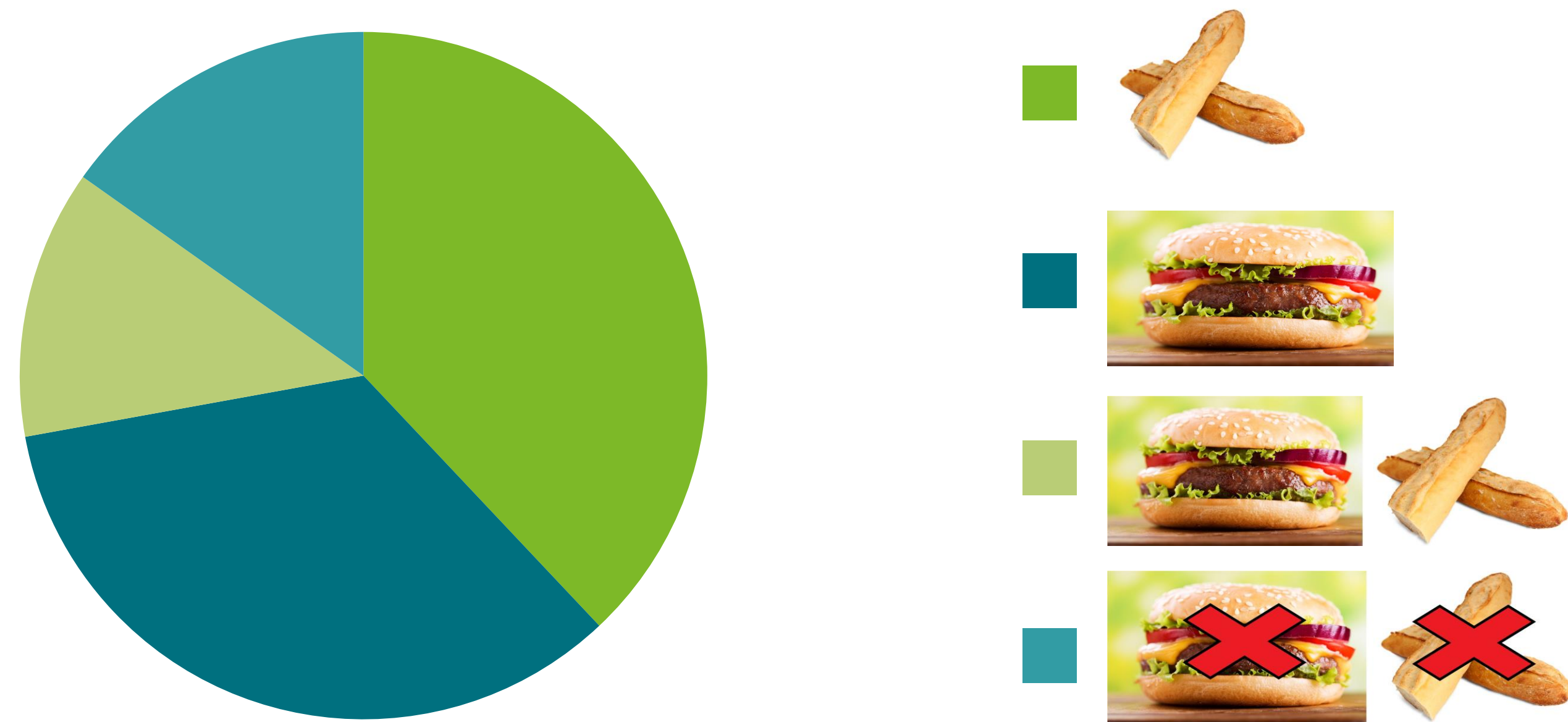


Figure 1. WTE for insect-based foods.

- ❑ WTP responses were more homogenous for the insect-based baguette (Figure 2).
- ❑ The median WTP for baguette made of insect flour was similar to the average price of a conventional baguette ($W = 2482.5$, $p = 0.574$; Figure 2).
- ❑ Most respondents wanted to pay less for a hamburger with insects ($W = 980.0$, $p < 0.001$; Figure 2).

Conclusion

Entomophagy is not common in the food habits of Gabonese people. However, many of them are ready to eat insects, including insect-based foods. The price of these foods must not be higher than the price of related foods without insect. The growth of the edible insects market in Gabon requires insect-based foods at reasonable prices.

Methodology



Interview

Insect-based foods used in this study:

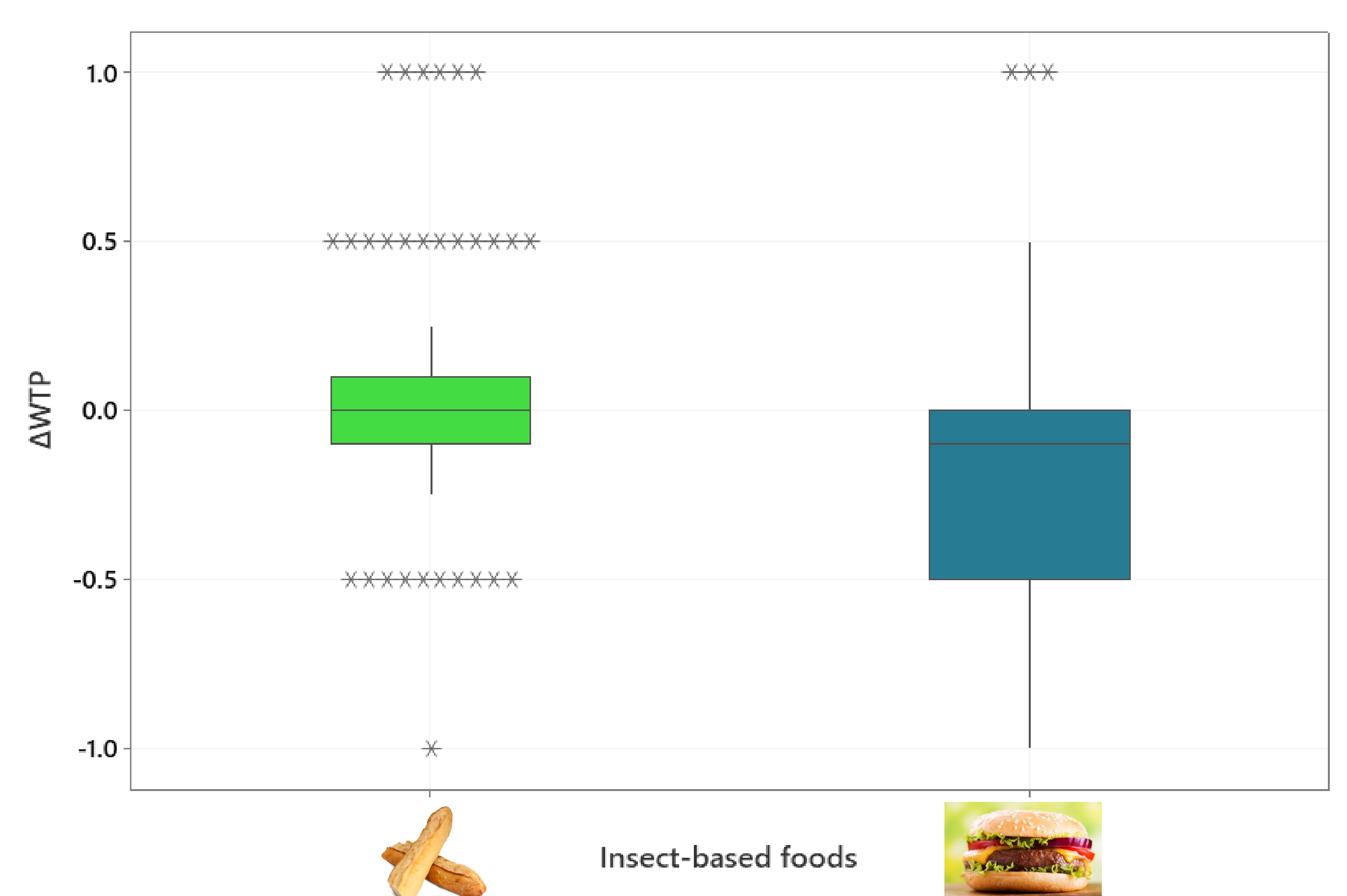


Figure 2. Boxplot of ΔWTP (%).

ΔWTP consisted of difference between WTP of insect-based foods and the average price of conventional foods, expressed in %. Asterisks represent outliers.