**6.4) Research Objectives.**

The goal of this study was to look at essential components of food plants available to elephants across the study area vegetation types (strata) and time (year cycle) as a starting point for understanding forage selection by elephants in Mwea national reserve. The research questions listed below were addressed.

1. What are the different plants species used by elephants for food in Mwea national reserve?
2. How does the availability pattern of elephant food plant species within the different vegetation strata vary seasonally?
3. What is the relationship between the occurrence of Elephant food species and plant diversity indices in different vegetation strata?

What are the preference rates of the different food plants that are used by Elephants in Mwea National Reserve and what nutrients determine seasonal preferences