

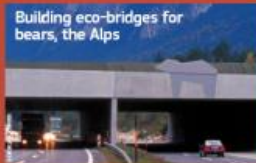


European
Commission

The EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores

Humberto Delgado

Meeting of the EU Nature Directors
Slovakia 10-12 October 2016



EU Large Carnivore Initiative

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/index_en.htm



DG Environment's approach to LCs

Since landscapes serve MULTIPLE FUNCTIONS in Europe

-> conservation of LC as integral part of European ecosystems and biodiversity heritage

together with people and human activities

We aim to

- identify practical approaches to help ensure the maintenance or achievement of the favourable conservation status of European large carnivores, and
- secure their long-term coexistence with humans by increasing their acceptance ("social carrying capacity") and preventing / reducing conflicts



The history of the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores

- After over 2 years of preparation, it was launched on 10th of June 2014 under Commissioner Janez Potočnik's patronage
- **AIM:** to provide a structure for constructive dialogue to find solutions to human – large carnivore conflicts (4 LC species)
- **ENTRY TICKET:** Signing an agreement stating the key principles of engagement
- **MISSION:** to assemble knowledge and good practices, to exchange experiences among different stakeholders with a view to finding commonly agreed solutions to human – large carnivore conflicts
- To facilitate voluntary partnerships for possible joint projects (e.g. on key actions at the population level)



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Agreement to participate in the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores

In recognition of the challenges arising from the conservation of large carnivores in the European Union, the European Commission has established a Large Carnivore Initiative. Following discussions with stakeholders, it has been decided to establish a dedicated EU Platform on Large Carnivores in order to provide a framework for structured dialogue among stakeholders on the issues arising from co-existence of people and large carnivore. This will be a voluntary grouping of main stakeholder organizations with an interest in large carnivore issues. The species of concern are the brown bear, the wolf, the Eurasian lynx and the wolverine: the highly endangered Iberian lynx is not part of this initiative.

The mission of the platform is to PROMOTE WAYS AND MEANS TO MINIMIZE, AND WHEREVER POSSIBLE FIND SOLUTIONS TO, CONFLICTS BETWEEN HUMAN INTERESTS AND THE PRESENCE OF LARGE CARNIVORE SPECIES, BY EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE AND BY WORKING TOGETHER IN AN OPEN-ENDED, CONSTRUCTIVE AND MUTUALLY RESPECTFUL WAY.

The organizations listed below agree to the following core principles:

1. Working within the EU legal framework: *The EU's Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) is the overarching legal instrument for the conservation and sustainable management of Large Carnivore species at a favourable conservation status in the EU.*
2. Ensuring the necessary knowledge base: *Any management of large carnivores must be determined on the basis of sound scientific evidence using best available and reliable data.*
3. Recognition of socio-economic and cultural considerations and concerns: *Human societies have the right to use their natural resources and preserve cultural heritage in a sustainable way within multifunctional landscapes, of which large carnivores are an integral part. The contribution of economic activities to the values of those landscapes has to be recognised. The need to ensure public safety should also be recognised.*
4. Solutions to conflicts through constructive dialogue among stakeholders: *Finding solutions arising from conflicts with large carnivores and facilitating human-large carnivore coexistence is best achieved through constructive dialogue among key stakeholders at local, national and EU levels. These solutions should be adapted to local and regional conditions.*
5. Engagement in trans-boundary cooperation: *The vast majority of the populations of large carnivore species in the EU have ranges that cross national borders. Therefore national solutions will not work in isolation without meaningful stakeholder dialogue involving trans-boundary cooperation within the EU, and where appropriate, with neighbouring countries, taking into account, inter alia, the Guidelines for Population Level Management Plans for Large Carnivores.*

The undersigning organizations commit themselves to the EU Platform on Large Carnivores. By doing so, they undertake to work together to find solutions to conflicts arising from the coexistence of humans and large carnivores by

- 1) sharing their experiences and expertise in addressing the challenges of human and large-carnivore coexistence;
- 2) listening to, and discussing other stakeholders' experiences and views;
- 3) engaging in dialogue for consensus seeking and accepting that solutions may at times involve compromise;
- 4) being open to accept examples of good practices for successful coexistence of humans and large carnivores;
- 5) expressing willingness to transfer and test those examples of good practices;
- 6) ensuring their capacity to fully engage in the work of the platform.

Brussels, 10 June 2014

Bernard Lozé, President
CIC – The International Council
for Game and Wildlife Conservation

Pekka Pesonen, Secretary General
COPA-COGECA
European Farmers and European Agri-cooperatives

Christoph Büren, President
ELO - European Landowners' Organization

Thomas Hansson, President
EUROPARC Federation

Gilbert de Turckheim, President
FACE – The European Federation of
Associations for Hunting and Conservation

Anne Ollila, Director
Joint representative of Finnish and Swedish
Reindeer herders

Luc Bas, Director
IUCN – International Union for Conservation
of Nature, European Union Representative Office

Tony Long, Director
WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature
European Policy Office

I would like to convey my appreciation for and extend my warm congratulations to the organizations listed above on the signature of this important Agreement, which I wholeheartedly welcome. This represents a major step forward in the EU Large Carnivore Initiative, which the Commission has promoted for the past two years, and is the fruit of our joint efforts to address issues arising from the coexistence of humans and large carnivores in the EU in a constructive spirit of cooperation and dialogue.

Janez Potočnik
European Commissioner for the Environment



copa*cogeca
european farmers european agri cooperatives





Key principles:

- 1. To work within the EU legal framework, the Habitats Directive*
- 2. To ensure the necessary knowledge base*
- 3. To recognize socio-economic and cultural considerations and concerns*
- 4. To find solutions to conflicts through constructive dialogue*
- 5. To engage in trans-boundary cooperation*



Commitments:

- 1. To share experiences and expertise in addressing the challenges of human - LC coexistence;*
- 2. To engage in dialogue for consensus seeking and accepting that solutions may at times involve compromise;*
- 3. To express willingness to transfer and test those examples of good practices;*
- 4. To listen to, and discuss other stakeholders' experiences and views;*
- 5. To be open to accept examples of good practices for successful coexistence of humans and LC;*
- 6. To ensure their capacity to fully engage in the work of the platform.*



EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores

- **Membership:** at launch limited to 8 key European umbrella organizations of stakeholders representing farmers, livestock producers (incl. reindeer-herders), landowners, hunters, scientists and conservationists. Unfortunately COPA/COGECA left.
- **Future expansion:** with the agreement of the founding members
- The Commission committed to provide logistical support for the work of the Platform for the initial 2 years (now extended for another year)
- Member States are invited to follow the work of the Platform and to assist in whatever way they can or find appropriate
- First working meeting elected Mr Thierry de l'Escaille of the European Landowners' Organization to co-chair the Platform with the European Commission, and agreed on terms of reference and a workplan



- **Members:**

- **ELO - European Landowners' Organization**
- **Joint representatives of Finnish and Swedish reindeer herders**
- **FACE – The European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation**
- **CIC – The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation**
- **IUCN – The World Conservation Union, European Union Representative Office**
- **WWF – Worldwide Fund for Nature, European Policy Office**
- **EUROPARC Federation**



What the Platform is not:

- **It is not an expert group/advisory group to the Commission**
- **It is not a discussion forum for interpreting the Habitats Directive**
- **It is not a new EU funding instrument for LC conservation**



NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

EU Biodiversity Policy

EU Nature Legislation

Natura 2000 Network

Species protection

Introduction

Wild Birds

Species under Habitats Directive

Introduction

EU Species Red Lists

EU species action plans

EC Guidance on species protection

Large Carnivores

Introduction

Status and distribution of large carnivore in Europe

Towards a population level management

Building a dialogue with stakeholders

Promoting best practices

EU Platform on Large Carnivores

Communication materials

Media resources

Green Infrastructure

Invasive Alien Species

Farming for biodiversity

Global biodiversity

Wildlife Trade

Animal welfare

Forests

Climate Change

Large carnivores in the EU - the Commission's activity on large carnivores



What's new ?

[Key actions for Large Carnivore populations in Europe](#) prepared by Boitani *et al.* under contract for the European Commission has been published. The technical report covers the most urgent actions necessary at the population level for four species of large carnivore protected under the EU's Habitats Directive.

See subpage "[Building a dialogue with stakeholders](#)" for new documents produced by "Pilot actions" in 2013-2014.


The European Union is home to five species of large carnivore. These include the brown bear, the wolf, the wolverine and two species of lynx, the Eurasian lynx and the Iberian lynx. Historically these species have all suffered dramatic declines in numbers and distribution as a consequence of human activity. Due to increases in their prey and forest cover and favourable legislation the last few decades have seen a positive response, with most populations stabilizing or increasing again. A result has been the return of these species to many areas from which they have been absent for decades. At least one of these species is currently found in 21 EU countries.

However, while this recovery can be viewed as a great conservation success it has resulted in controversy in some areas. In response the Commission has initiated a range of measures to encourage cooperation between member states, engaging in dialogue with stakeholders and promoting best practices in management methods. These pages provide an introduction to the Commission's activity on large carnivores.


For more information on large carnivores

- [Conservation status](#)
- [Towards population level management](#)
- [Building a dialogue with stakeholders](#)
- [Promoting best practices](#)
- [EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [Photos and maps](#)

Communication materials



EU PLATFORM ON COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE & LARGE CARNIVORES



The four European large carnivore species (brown bear, wolf, Eurasian lynx and wolverine) are among the most symbolic but challenging groups of species in terms of conservation and management in the European Union (EU). This is because they have large transboundary ranges and their needs can create conflict with human activities such as farming, hunting and recreation.

Recognising both the importance of these socio-economic issues, as well as the importance of large carnivores, the European Commission and a group of representative stakeholder organisations agreed to work together. In June 2014, the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores was officially launched.

The mission of the Platform is to promote ways and means to minimise, and wherever possible find solutions to, conflicts between human interests and the presence of large carnivore species, by exchanging knowledge and by working together in an open-ended, constructive, and mutually respectful way.

Environment



THE PLATFORM'S CORE PRINCIPALS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF LARGE CARNIVORES

- Working within the EU legal framework:** The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) is the overarching legal instrument for the conservation and sustainable management of large carnivore species at a favourable conservation status in the EU.
- Ensuring the necessary knowledge base:** Any management of large carnivores must be determined on the basis of sound scientific evidence using best available and reliable data.
- Recognition of socio-economic and cultural considerations and concerns:** Human societies have the right to use their natural resources and preserve cultural heritage in a sustainable way within multifunctional landscapes, of which large carnivores are an integral part. The contribution of economic activities to the values of those landscapes has to be recognised. The need to ensure public safety should also be recognised.
- Solutions to conflicts through constructive dialogue among stakeholders:** Finding solutions arising from conflicts with large carnivores and facilitating human-large carnivore coexistence is best achieved through constructive dialogue among key stakeholders at local, national and EU levels. These solutions should be adapted to local and regional conditions.
- Engagement in transboundary cooperation:** The vast majority of the populations of large carnivore species in the EU have ranges that cross national borders. Therefore national solutions will not work in isolation without meaningful stakeholder dialogue involving transboundary cooperation within the EU, and where appropriate, with neighbouring countries, taking into account, inter alia, the Guidelines for Population Level Management Plans for Large Carnivores.

- Conflicts with humans include the predation of livestock and various problems for hunters.
- A variety of practices (such as the use of guard dogs and electric fences) have been adopted to minimise impacts on human activities.
- The situation varies considerably between Member States but sometimes, especially where carnivore numbers have recently increased, serious conflicts can occur.
- Large carnivores also have positive socio-economic effects, such as being a valued game species where legislation allows it, providing an attraction for tourists and facilitating ecosystem services (e.g. herbivore management).


LARGE CARNIVORES IN EUROPE

- Large carnivore numbers have been historically significantly reduced by humans, reaching their lowest population size between the 1950s-70s.
- Most populations are in the process of recovering.
- One third (1.5 million km²) of Europe's area is now populated by at least one species.
- Recovery has been made possible by improvements in habitat quality, availability of prey species, legislation and public support.
- Rural communities' management (e.g. grassland and forest) can provide valuable habitats as well as maintaining cultural landscapes.
- Today large carnivores are present in areas which have been modified by human activities and near human habitation, not only in remote areas.
- The conservation status of large carnivore species vary: while some populations are healthy and increasing in size, others are still critically endangered.

 BROWN BEAR (<i>Ursus arctos</i>)	 WOLF (<i>Canis lupus</i>)	 EURASIAN LYNX (<i>Lynx lynx</i>)	 WOLVERINE (<i>Gulo gulo</i>)
22 countries in Europe 10 populations (ACR/2WU/1MT/3LC) around 17,000 individuals	28 countries in Europe 10 populations (ICR/4EN/1WU/1MT/3LC) around 12,000 individuals	23 countries in Europe 10 populations (ECR/3EN/4LC) around 9,000 individuals	Siberia, Finland, Norway 2 populations (WU/1 no information) around 1,250 individuals

OR - Creatively Imaged, IN - Infographic, VU - Visualize, TT - Near Finalized, CC - Clean Canvas

Figures from Chapman et al. (2014) Science 346, 1531, and Kuznetsov et al. (2012) for the European Commission.



THE FUTURE


While the recovery of large carnivore species is a conservation success story thus far, for this to continue, the potential impacts of their coexistence with humans need to be addressed. One-size-fits-all solutions across Europe are not possible, so innovative approaches are needed to solve conflicts while benefiting large carnivore conservation. To this end an open dialogue between different interest groups is needed to ensure that people and large carnivores can coexist in harmony in the future. The EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores exists to ensure this dialogue takes place.

PLANNED WORK

The Platform will seek practical solutions to minimise conflict through the collection of case studies from across the EU. In order to give stakeholders an opportunity to share their experiences and discuss problems and potential solutions, meetings and workshops will be organised. The work of the Platform can be followed on its website:

www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/coexistence_platform.htm

PLATFORM MEMBERS

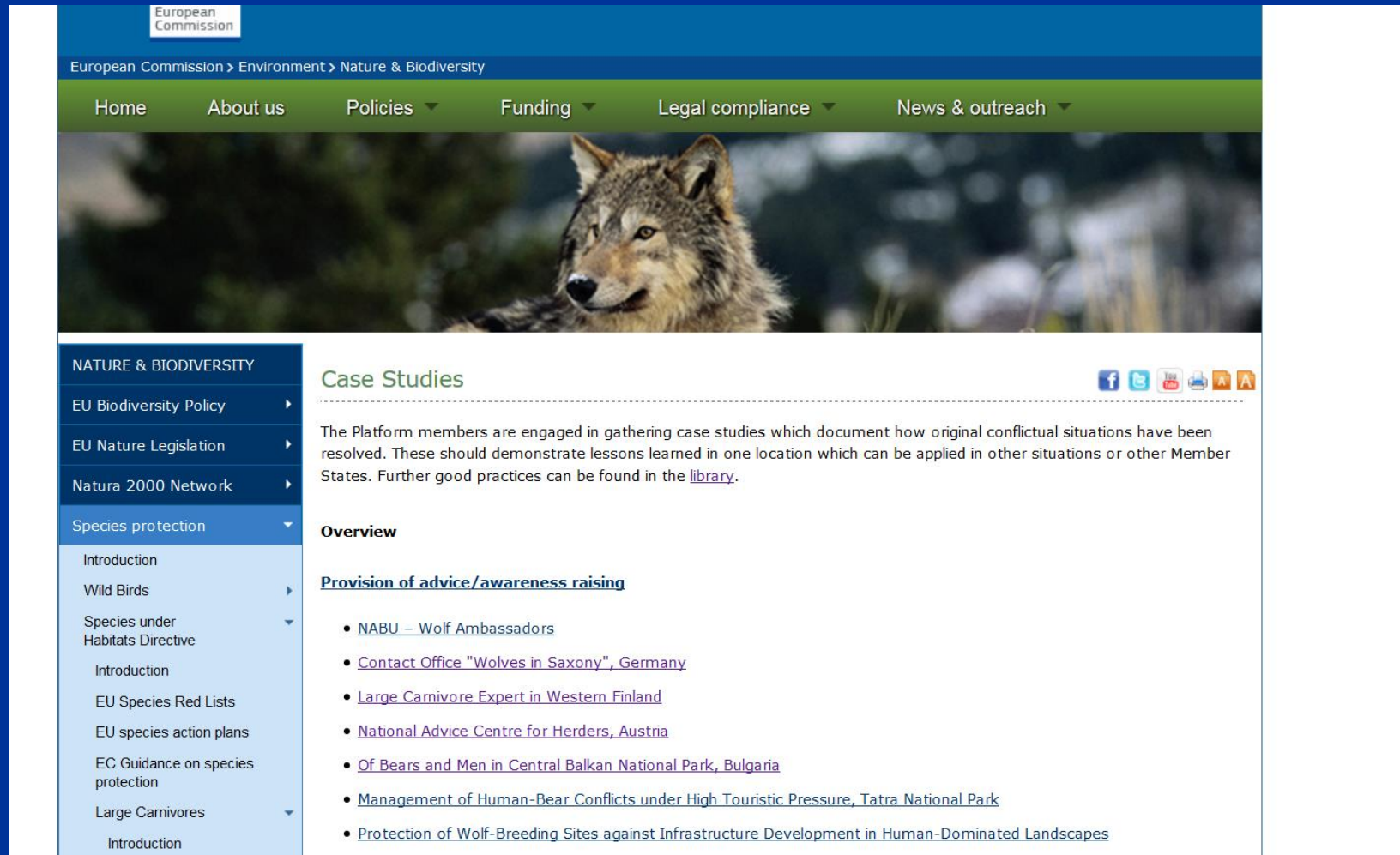


ELO | European Landowners' Organization
www.europeanlandowners.org
Joint representatives of Finnish and Swedish reindeer herders
www.reindeerherding.org/herders/wmf-finn/
FACE | The European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation
www.face.eu
IC | The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation
www.ic-wildlife.org
IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature (EU Representative Office)
www.iucn.org/for/europe/index
WWF | World Wildlife Fund for Nature (European Policy Office)
www.wwf.eu
EUROPARC Federation
www.europarc.org

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Publications Office

Resource centre




The screenshot shows the European Commission website's 'Resource centre' for Nature & Biodiversity. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'About us', 'Policies', 'Funding', 'Legal compliance', and 'News & outreach'. A large image of a wolf is featured below the navigation. The left sidebar lists categories under 'NATURE & BIODIVERSITY', with 'Species protection' expanded to show sub-topics like 'Wild Birds', 'Species under Habitats Directive', 'EU Species Red Lists', 'EU species action plans', 'EC Guidance on species protection', and 'Large Carnivores'. The main content area is titled 'Case Studies' and includes a paragraph about the platform's mission, a 'library' link, and a list of case studies under the heading 'Provision of advice/awareness raising'.

European Commission

European Commission > Environment > Nature & Biodiversity

Home About us Policies Funding Legal compliance News & outreach



NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

- EU Biodiversity Policy
- EU Nature Legislation
- Natura 2000 Network
- Species protection
 - Introduction
 - Wild Birds
 - Species under Habitats Directive
 - Introduction
 - EU Species Red Lists
 - EU species action plans
 - EC Guidance on species protection
 - Large Carnivores
 - Introduction

Case Studies

The Platform members are engaged in gathering case studies which document how original conflictual situations have been resolved. These should demonstrate lessons learned in one location which can be applied in other situations or other Member States. Further good practices can be found in the [library](#).

Overview

Provision of advice/awareness raising

- [NABU – Wolf Ambassadors](#)
- [Contact Office "Wolves in Saxony", Germany](#)
- [Large Carnivore Expert in Western Finland](#)
- [National Advice Centre for Herders, Austria](#)
- [Of Bears and Men in Central Balkan National Park, Bulgaria](#)
- [Management of Human-Bear Conflicts under High Touristic Pressure, Tatra National Park](#)
- [Protection of Wolf-Breeding Sites against Infrastructure Development in Human-Dominated Landscapes](#)



One major challenge:

Transmitting the discussed good practices and cooperation approaches to the local level (stakeholders coexisting with LC on the ground)

Similar groupings are needed locally, with appropriate links to the EU level (improving communication between governance levels) and with the involvement of the relevant authorities



Second Natura 2000 Seminar for the Boreal Biogeographic region (Vilnius, Lithuania, 5-7 October 2016)

- *Preliminary discussions on the possibility and interest to reinforce regional cooperation on LC management and conservation (population approach, to overcome fragmentation)*
- *First positive reactions but need to ensure coordination with EU LC platform, full stakeholders' involvement, 'involving the right people'*
- *Cooperation could cover monitoring, assessment of conservation status, coordination of management approaches to improve conservation and coexistence.*



Thank you for your attention!

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/coexistence_platform.htm