



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/sami-finns-finland

FACE | The European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation

www.face.eu

CIC | The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation

www.cic-wildlife.org

IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature (EU Representative Office)

www.iucn.org/european_union

WWF | Worldwide Fund for Nature (European Policy Office)

www.wwf.eu

EUROPARC Federation

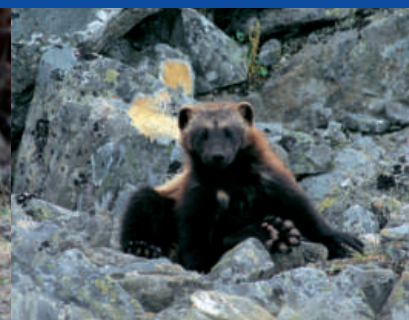
www.europarc.org

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EU PLATFORM ON COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE & LARGE CARNIVORES



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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.



Publications Office

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Environment



THE PLATFORM'S CORE PRINCIPALS

1) 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.

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 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.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF 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. of 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 (*Ursus arctos*)

22 countries in Europe
10 populations (4CR/2VU/1NT/3LC)
around 17.000 individuals



WOLF (*Canis lupus*)

28 countries in Europe
10 populations (1CR/4EN/1VU/1NT/3LC)
around 12.000 individuals



EURASIAN LYNX (*Lynx lynx*)

23 countries in Europe
10 populations (3CR/3EN/4LC)
around 9.000 individuals



WOLVERINE (*Gulo gulo*)

Sweden, Finland, Norway
2 populations (1VU/1 no information)
around 1.250 individuals