



Connecting People & Parks  
since 1973



# *The return of large carnivores: a toolkit to facilitate coexistence*

*Led by Federico Minozzi, managing director  
at EUROPARC Federation*

**EUROPARC Conference 2023 – Tribute to our landscape**  
Where nature and people meet in harmony

# Toolkit: Supporting the establishment of regional/local platforms on large carnivores

## EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores

Tasos Hovardas

CALLISTO – Wildlife and Nature Conservation Society; EU Platform, Secretariat  
Research in Science and Technology Education Group, University of Cyprus

[hovardas@ucy.ac.cy](mailto:hovardas@ucy.ac.cy)

Registered Mediator

# THE EU PLATFORM ON COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND LARGE CARNIVORES

Toolkit:  
Supporting the establishment of  
regional/local platforms on large  
carnivores



# The EU platform on coexistence between people and large carnivores

Minimizing  
conflicts

Finding  
Solutions

## Mission

“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“



Large Carnivore  
Initiative for Europe



IUCN/SSC Specialist Group



# Typology of platforms

Minimizing conflicts

Finding Solutions

	INFORMATION PLATFORMS	CONSULTATION PLATFORMS	COOPERATION PLATFORMS	DECISION MAKING PLATFORMS
<b>LEVEL OF STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION</b>	Low	Medium	High	High
<b>CHARACTER OF STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION</b>	Closed-ended	Closed-ended	Open-ended	Open-ended
<b>TANGIBLE OUTCOMES FROM STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION</b>	Not expected	Not expected	Expected	Expected
<b>TIME FRAME OF INTERACTIONS OF STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION</b>	Dependent on the topic	Dependent on the topic	Dependent on the outcomes of stakeholder interaction	Dependent on the outcomes of stakeholder interaction
<b>FACILITATOR'S ROLE</b>	Facilitate a top-down process	Facilitate a top-down process	Facilitate a bottom-up process	Facilitate a bottom-up process
<b>STAKEHOLDER OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS</b>	Low	Low	High	High
<b>ALTERNATIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION/ ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIATION</b>	Not applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable
<b>FLOW OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND INTERACTION</b>	Vertical and unidirectional, from organiser to stakeholders	Vertical and bidirectional, from organisers to stakeholders and the reverse	Horizontal, between stakeholders	Horizontal, between stakeholders
<b>POTENTIAL FOR SOCIAL LEARNING</b>	Non-existent	Non-existent	Existent	Existent
<b>RULE-SETTING POWER</b>	Non-existent	Non-existent	Non-existent	Existent



# What are dialogue platforms on large carnivores?

## Types of platform



Minimizing  
conflicts

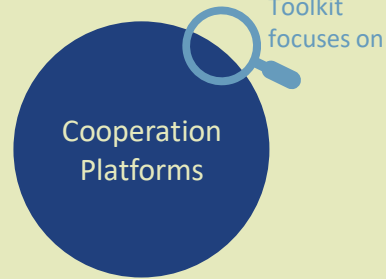
Finding  
Solutions



Administrators inform stakeholders of their decisions



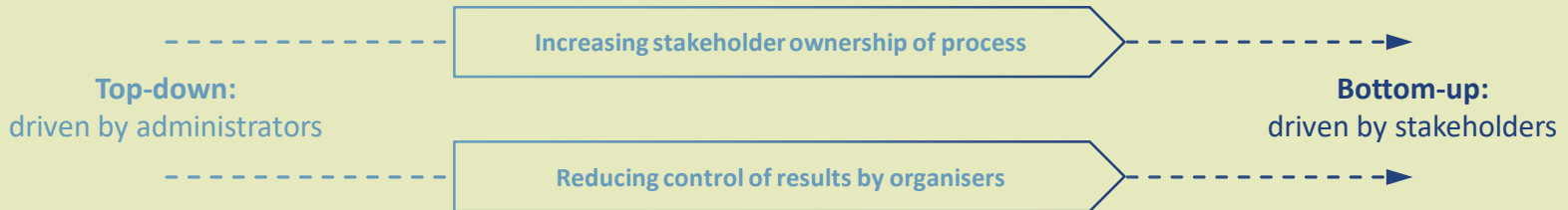
Administrators consult stakeholders before they make a decision



Administrators and stakeholders work together on solutions



Stakeholders make decisions within a system set up by administrators



# A definition of a cooperation platform



Minimizing  
conflicts

Finding  
Solutions

A support tool for minimising conflict by focusing on cooperation, where the topical focus of the dialogue is defined by participants

To reach a shared  
understanding of  
the issues  
(increasing trust)

AIMS

Propose concrete  
solutions and work  
on them together

# Key considerations



Minimizing  
conflicts

Finding  
Solutions

## **BENEFITS**

- Communication and cooperation
- Understanding; trust; recognition
- Solutions; good practices
- Legitimacy
- Empowerment
- Networking

## **WHEN A PLATFORM IS THE WRONG APPROACH**

- Previous efforts failed
- Local and regional administrations do not commit
- Local and regional administrations opting for full control
- Political situation highly dynamic
- Little local demand
- Key stakeholders refuse to engage
- Trust levels too low
- Approach culturally inappropriate
- Funding will run out during the process



# Establishing and operating a platform



Minimizing  
conflicts

Finding  
Solutions



## 1. GETTING STARTED

- Initiator; participants; goal
- Geographical scale
- Resources needed
- Roles and responsibilities (organisers; participants; facilitators)
- Mandate and decision-making power (Authorities)

## 2. PREPARING AND PLANNING

- Socio-cultural context
- Stakeholder mapping
- Evaluate conflict situation
- Power imbalances
- Representation



## 3. IMPLEMENTATION

- Group size
- Transparency
- Communication ground rules
- Expectations
- Facilitation needed
- Setting
- Organization

# Examples

## **EU Platform for Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores**

[https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform_en)

## **EU Regional large carnivore platforms**

[https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/eu-regional-large-carnivore-platforms\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/eu-regional-large-carnivore-platforms_en)

## **LIFE ARCPROM**

<https://lifearcprom.uowm.gr/>

## **LIFE Bear Smart Corridors**

<https://rewilding-apennines.com/life-bear-smart-corridors/>

## **LIFE WILD WOLF**

<https://www.callisto.gr/en/life-wild-wolf>

# Key takeaways

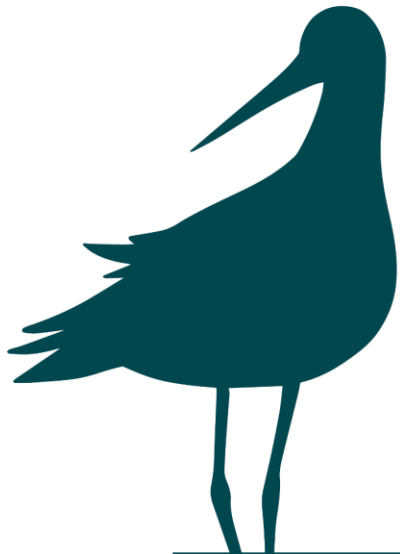
- From “communication” to participatory processes; facilitation/mediation
- Institutionalization of stakeholder interaction and joint action; platforms
- Stakeholder interaction/collaboration even under ongoing tension/conflict
- Varying degree of stakeholder ownership
- Varying degree of control of results by stakeholders
- Aim to let stakeholders interact and work together on the ground
- Social learning perspective; iterations
- Facilitation/mediation; scaffolding social learning
- Training programmes

Minimizing  
conflicts

Finding  
Solutions



**Connecting People & Parks**  
since 1973



# EUROPARC Conference 2023

TRIBUTE TO OUR LANDSCAPE

Leeuwarden | The Netherlands | 3-6 October 2023

**WHERE NATURE AND PEOPLE MEET IN HARMONY**

