

Report Workshop 2 at the EUROPARC Conference in Leeuwarden

Date: 04.10.2023

Authors: Tasos Hovardas, Eva-Maria Cattoen

Within the frame of the EUROPARC conference in Leeuwarden, a workshop was held on 4 October 2023, from 14:00-17:00 local time, with the title: "The return of large carnivores: a toolkit to facilitate coexistence." The workshop was led by Federico Minozzi, Managing Director at EUROPARC Federation. The structure and content of the workshop was adapted to the needs and desires of participants who had completed an online survey.

Tasos Hovardas, Human Dimensions Expert of Callisto, presented the toolkit developed by the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores focusing on supporting the establishment and operation of local/regional platforms on large carnivores. Eva-Maria Cattoen presented the Erasmus + project titled "New European training curricula for facilitating environmental conflicts" (Erasmus +; KA210-ADU - Small-scale partnerships in adult education), where partners developed tools and methods to facilitate/mediate environmental conflicts and training modules based on these methods.

After these two presentations, two interaction sessions followed, where participants had the opportunity to work in groups and use tools and methods included in the EU Platform toolkit and the intellectual outputs of the Erasmus + project. The workshop was concluded with a plenary discussion on potential uses of these tools/methods as well as current issues in European Protected Areas with a primary concentration on human-carnivore conflict and stakeholder tension referring to human-carnivore conflict. There were more than 30 participants, including former Presidents of EUROPARC Federation, who were quite engaged in the interactive sessions and who contributed with their own experiences to plenary and group discussions.

The main challenges in coexistence with large carnivores (LC), the participants observe in their countries are:

- (Economic) losses due to livestock and domestic animals predation
- Difficulties in changing agricultural systems
- Coexistence with tourism when Livestock guarding dogs are used
- Costs for prevention tools, lack of personal
- Unprepared farmers
- Loss of biodiversity
- Quick solutions are needed
- Less prey for hunters
- Wildlife attraction
- Fear and danger, especially from wolves and bears
- Dysfunctional ecosystems without LC

Regarding the conflict escalation, the participants described different happenings which refer to level 1 (tension, debate) up to level 7 (limited destruction, e. g. destroyed infrastructure) from the conflict escalation scale of Friedrich Glasl.

In the final discussion about good practices, the participants mentioned besides participatory processes the following examples:

- Native/ old livestock races with experience/ training in coexisting with LC
- Training of, subsidies for and use of LDGs
- Value to use a set of measures in the same time (e. g. compensation payments for losses as well as per hectare, in case LC are present, LDG, etc.)
- Grazing management and night enclosures
- Men and wolf center (local tourist attraction)
- GPS-tracking combined with alarm system
- Volunteer program PASTURS
- Legal hunting and population management for LC
- Use of deterrents
- Transparent, but careful communication (also with media)
- Education and sensibilization