

EU PLATFORM ON COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE & LARGE CARNIVORES

Minimizing
Conflicts

Finding
Solutions



Introduction to the EU Platform

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Regional Workshop, Venzone, 12-13 October 2017

Contents

- Background
- Platform events
- Platform outputs
- Next steps

Background: History of the Platform

- Launched on 10 of June, 2014
- **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;
- First working meeting elected Mr Thierry de l'Escaille of the **European Landowners' Organization** to co-chair the Platform with the European Commission. Elected for second term in May 2016.

Background: Members

7 Members who represent the different stakeholders who have an interest in or are affected by large carnivores:

- ELO - European Landowners' Organization
- FACE - The European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation
- Joint representatives of Finnish and Swedish reindeer herders
- 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

Background: the Agreement

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.

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

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

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

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

Brussels, 10 June 2014

Christoph Büren, President
ELO - European Landowners' Organization

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

Thomas Hansson, President
EUROPARC Federation

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



Background: 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.

Background: 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.

Platform events: Plenary Meetings

Four Annual meetings:

1. Platform agreement signature;
2. Communication plan and socio-economic issue focus agreed;
3. Focus on Rural Development fund use and how this can better support coexistence;
4. Focus on case study analysis and linking with regional platforms.

Minimizing
Conflicts

Finding
Solutions

Platform events: Regional Workshops

Four Regional workshops to date:

1. Bulgaria organised by CIC and Union of Hunters and Anglers of Bulgaria. Focus on transboundary cooperation, conflict and coexistence and key actions for large carnivores in the Balkans and the Carpathians regions;
2. Finland organised by the Finnish Reindeer Herders' Association. Focus on socio-economic aspects of co-existence in Nordic countries;
3. Germany organised by WWF Germany. Focus on communication and transboundary management.
4. Romania organised jointly between WWF, FACE, WWF Romania and General Association of Romanian Hunters & Anglers (AGVPS) and WWF Romania. Focus on conflict surrounding the use of hunting as a management tool.

Minimizing
Conflicts

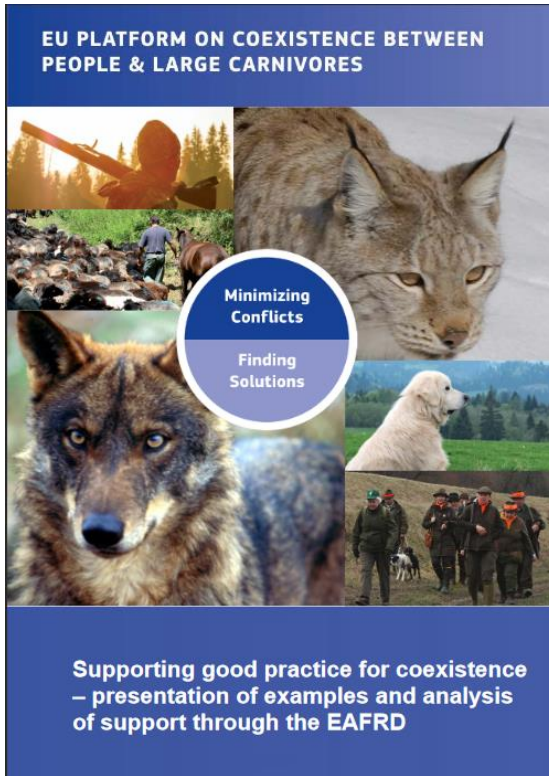
Finding
Solutions

Platform outputs: joint statements

- Positions agreed between the Platform members on the EU level;
- At each workshop, aim to agree the points discussed by participants to be taken forward by the Platform (will also be the aim at this workshop).



Platform outputs: Reports and studies



- Analysis of the use of Rural Development funds to support coexistence across the EU (presented tomorrow);
- Analysis of ten case studies in different locations demonstrating good practice in stakeholders working together just being finalised (discussed tomorrow).

Platform outputs: resource centre and communication materials



- Leaflet to present the Platform;
- Leaflet on Rural Development;
- Banner;
- Media visuals;
- Website and resource centre.

Next steps

- The EC will continue to support the Platform with a secretariat (included as part of the Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy following the Nature Directives Fitness Check);
- ELO continue to chair for 1 more year at least;
- Work plan includes:
 - Researching and making stronger links to local and regional platforms following on from input provided from regional Platforms at the last plenary meeting (the Commission is also funding a contract to establish further regional platforms);
 - Examining gaps in support mechanisms for preventing LC conflict (Rural Development programmes and national funding);
 - Gathering case studies on the issue of fear surrounding large carnivores.

Minimizing
Conflicts

Finding
Solutions

Thank you for your attention

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

Contact Platform Secretariat: LCPlatform@adelphi.de

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