



Summary of the exchange on wild ungulate monitoring on the WISO meeting

14.10.2020

INTRODUCTION

On the second WISO meeting, which was held online on 13th and 14th of October 2020, the second day was dedicated to the discussion about wild ungulates. Members of the WISO platform or invited experts from the member states presented wild ungulate management with the emphasis on monitoring methods. During and after the presentations, a debate developed within which we discussed on which aspects of wild ungulate management the WISO platform should focus in the future mandates. Following the discussion, we prepared this short overview of the key indicators which are followed in ungulate management by the member states of the Alpine convention.

PRESENTERS on the meeting

Presenters: France - Mr. Eric Marboutin, Italy - Mr. Piero Genovesi, Liechtenstein – Mr. Olivier Nagele, Germany Ms. Wibke Peters, Austria - Mr. Georg Rauer, Slovenia - Mr. Matija Stergar.

Short summary prepared by Rok Černe, Matija Stergar and Gregor Simčič.

MONITORED INDICATORS IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT IN THE MEMBER STATES

Although WISO member states differ in their hunting and wildlife management systems, they all rely on monitoring and apply different monitoring indicators when managing wild ungulates. Regardless of socio-political environment of individual state/region, those indicators are based on scientific (ecological) background and are thus suitable subject for experience exchange between WISO member states.

At the meeting each member state presented the monitored indicators which are summarized in the tables below.

SLOVENIA

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Body mass
Antler mass
Hunting statistics
Health status
Damages in agriculture
Browsing and debarking intensity
CHAMOIS, IBEX
Observation census

FRANCE

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Hunting statistics
Changes in performance of individuals (body mass, breeding efficiency, survival...)
Browsing and debarking intensity
Transects census

AUSTRIA

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Hunting statistics
Browsing and debarking intensity
Pellet counts*
Track counts*
IR photography by helicopter (military areas)*

*locally

LICHTENSTEIN

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Hunting statistics
<i>RED DEER</i>

Headlight census
<i>CHAMOIS, IBEX</i>
Observation census

ITALY

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Hunting statistics
<i>RED DEER</i>
Vantage point census
Transect census
Spotlight census
<i>ROE DEER</i>
Vantage point census
<i>CHAMOIS</i>
Block count census
<i>IBEX</i>
Observation census

GERMANY

INDICATORS
<i>ALL UNGULATE SPECIES</i>
Hunting statistics
Browsing and debarking intensity
indicators of ecological change
Count on feeding stations
Observation census
<i>RED DEER</i>
Spotlight census (project based)
Pellet count (project based)
Camera trapping (project based)

CONCLUSION

A conclusion was brought by WISO member states that ungulate management should be considered in the following WISO mandates. WISO platform could and should be used as a valuable platform for experience/knowledge exchange in the field of ungulate management between member states.

Based on the overview of the key indicators which are used for monitoring and ungulate management, members of the WISO platform concluded that some indicators of wild ungulate populations and their environment used in ungulate management by the member states are widely used and essentially very similar (such as browsing and debarking intensity). Others differ and are country specific. Therefore, the future debate and experience/knowledge exchange between member states should develop in two directions:

- 1) Widely used indicators, shared among several member states. Good practices on use of those indicators should be shared among states with the aim to improve and (if possible, but not necessarily) harmonize the use of existing monitoring indicators.
- 2) Some of the member states expressed the need to improve their ungulate monitoring systems including expanding/updating the range of currently used indicators. In doing so the states need experiences and support of other member states.

Additional to the monitoring indicators, the debate also focused on how to consider wolf and lynx presence in ungulate management plans. Currently this practice is developed and used only in Slovenia and other member states showed interest on this topic and agreed that it should be further discussed in the future meetings.

When working on these topics, the results of other working groups and bodies such as the report of the ALP BIO NET project (Wildlife Management within the EUSALP perimeter) should be taken into account.