



LARGE CARNIVORES AND WILD UNGULATES
(WISO – Wildlife and society)

PLATFORM Workshop, 2 - 3 February 2010, Congress,
Rennweg 3, Innsbruck



faunaalp.org

Expectations of alpine hunters towards governments concerning large carnivores and wild preys

Presented by
Marco Giacometti
Director of

JagdSchweiz
ChasseSuisse
CacciaSvizzera
CatschaSvizra

Content

1. LC status worldwide and in Europe
2. Conditions of LC return in the Alps
3. Conflict of LC > wild preys
4. Aims and expectations of hunters in the Alps



Based on positions of the national hunter's associations and of



1. LC status worldwide



Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*):
population trend: stable

Least concern



Grey wolf (*Canis lupus*):
population trend: stable

Least concern



Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*):
population trend: stable

Least concern



1. LC status in Europe

EU Guidelines PLMP for LC 2008



Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*):

10'000 resident eurasian lynx



Grey wolf (*Canis lupus*):

17'000 wolves



Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*):

25'000 brown bears



Conclusions: status

Large carnivores living in the Alps
(Eurasian lynx, wolf and brown bear) are
not endangered as species
Their overall status in Europe is favourable

2. Conditions of LC return in the Alps

Carpathian Eurasian lynx:

**Translocated and re-introduced
(clearing up: local scale only)**



Italian wolf:

**Natural immigration. Translocations?
(genetic monitoring: inconsistent)**



Dinaric brown bear:

**Translocated and re-introduced
(clearing up: local scale only)**



Conclusions: LC return in the Alps

The return of previously endemic species such as lynx, wolf and brown bear is an enrichment of the alpine fauna.

However, LC encounter a highly populated and fragmented alpine area and may influence its biodiversity as well as traditional and modern activities of man.

In the Alps, LC genotypes are not unique. Therefore, the Alps do not play a predominant role in maintaining particular LC (sub)-species.

Population definition is inconsistent.



3. Conflict of LC > wild preys

Hunters in the Alps are worried about the impact of depredation by LC on wild species, e.g. on ungulates and birds breeding on the ground. This is particularly the case in fragmented habitats, locally leading to a negative impact on biodiversity.

This is also the case where hunters contributed to the return and increase of wildlife populations. If LC density increases to a non tolerable level, hunting bag drops dramatically.



4. Aims and expectations of alpine hunters

LC impact on wild prey (biodiversity, use) and on private property must be kept at a tolerable level, which requires a pragmatic approach.

This may include lethal control.

Hunters do not support translocations of LC. Natural colonisation offers a much better possibility to implement measures necessary to integrate LC in the alpine landscape.



Legal considerations

EU LC guidelines (2008) indicate the instruments to implement a pragmatic approach towards LC:

- Damage caused by LC (including on wild preys) must be prevented (not only solved)
- Large scale international cooperation is needed, which must be improved (field data, genetic studies, definition of goals, delimitation of populations)
- Distinction between FRR and connectivity areas
- Derogations for strictly protected species



Expectations of hunters 1

- When conducting geographical assessments for habitat quality (to define favourable reference range for LC), susceptibility of wild preys to predation must be considered
- In most parts of the Alps, maintaining connectivity should be most common tool used for LC conservation
- Potential ecological carrying capacity is not an option in many alpine regions; societal carrying capacity is the LC density to strive for



Expectations of hunters 2

- Favourable reference ranges (FRR) should be delimited in agreement with local people
- Delimitation of populations (in term of genetic unities) must consider natural displacements (lynx: Alpine-Jura-population; wolf: Apenninic-Alpine-population; bear: Dinaric-Alpine population)
- Legal status of wolf should be downgraded from strictly protected to protected



Expectations of hunters 3

Hunters ask the Governments to

- correctly inform people in Alpine Countries, including towns, about the effective status of large carnivores
- to actively inform people and institutions about legal and technical considerations for population level management plans

To consider acceptance of people in rural areas towards LC is they key to integrate these species in the Alps

