

## **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<sup>1</sup>. This will be a voluntary grouping of main stakeholder organizations with an interest in large carnivore issues.

**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.*

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<sup>1</sup>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.

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

- sharing their experiences and expertise in addressing the challenges of human and large-carnivore coexistence;
- listening to, and discussing other stakeholders' experiences and views;
- engaging in dialogue for consensus seeking and accepting that solutions may at times involve compromise;
- being open to accept examples of good practices for successful coexistence of humans and large carnivores;
- expressing willingness to transfer and test those examples of good practices;
- ensuring their capacity to fully engage in the work of the platform.

Signed  
Organization1  
Etc.

Signed  
Organization2

Brussels, X June, 2014