

EN

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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(22.11.2024)

1. The Commission's analysis on the wolf published in December 2023¹ shows that the status of the wolf in Europe has improved significantly over the last decades, both in terms of range extension and increasing population size. The EU wolf population has almost doubled in ten years. A potential downlisting of the wolf under the Bern Convention and subsequently in the Habitats Directive² (*i.e.* moving the species to Annex V), would allow for a more flexible population management, but would not remove the objective of wolf conservation, as Member States would still be obliged to achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for the species.

2. and 3. Nature is the best ally against climate change. Nature regulates the climate, and nature-based solutions are essential for emission reduction and climate adaptation. The Commission considers that its current species conservation policy is already supporting the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the commitments of the Global Biodiversity Framework. The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030³ complemented the legal framework of the nature directives with specific commitments and targets to step up action at EU and international level. This includes, amongst others, targets for avoiding further deterioration of protected species and restoring their populations. The new EU Nature Restoration Regulation⁴ is building on these targets, as it requires restoring habitats on which these species depend, while also considering objectives of climate adaptation and mitigation. Finally, the Commission plans to adopt by the end of 2024 a major update of its Guidance on Natura 2000 and climate change.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/env/items/813295/en>

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7–50.

³ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

⁴ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-law_en