

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002313/24**  
**to the Commission**  
**Valentina Palmisano (The Left)**  
(30 October 2024)

*Subject:* Conservation status of wolves — proposal for downgrading

At the Coreper meeting on 25 September, the Council adopted a decision to submit a proposal to change the conservation status of the wolf from strictly protected species (Annex II) to protected species (Annex III), ahead of the 44th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Berne Convention in December 2024.

This request is based on estimated data rather than meaningful population studies, and data on predators' activities can often not be attributed to wolves since, as scientific publications have pointed out, they are not certified by forensic veterinarians. Nor have adequate deterrence and damage compensation systems been set up or provided with EU funding.

Downgrading of the status of wolves, a key species for the balance of ecosystems, would be an open door to bloody containment policies that would compromise the species.

In light of the above:

1. What scientific evidence and data has justified the Commission's support for downgrading the wolf's conservation status?
2. How does the Commission intend to promote a science-based policy on the use of methods of deterrence, prevention of predation and compensation certified by specialised forensic veterinarians to promote coexistence between wolves and human activities?
3. How does the Commission intend to ensure the conservation of the species in a manner compatible with the objectives of the European Green Deal?

Submitted: 30.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission**  
(5 January 2025)

1. The Commission would refer to the in-depth analysis of the wolf situation in the EU <sup>(1)</sup>. This study has collected and assessed the available and most updated information and data <sup>(2)</sup> and has shown that the conservation status of the wolf in Europe has significantly improved over the last decades, both in terms of population increase and range expansion.
2. For many years, the Commission has been supporting <sup>(3)</sup> the design and implementation of effective and appropriate solutions, including to prevent and reduce livestock depredations by wolves and other protected species <sup>(4)</sup>. Specific measures have been supported through Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funding to the Member States that have planified these in their CAP Strategic Plans <sup>(5)</sup>.

The details of such measures, including the involvement and role of veterinarians, need to be defined by the relevant Member States' authorities and stakeholders. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to large carnivore management and therefore measures have to be tailored to the local circumstances. Since 2014, good practices have been collected under the EU Platform on coexistence between people and large carnivores <sup>(6)</sup>.

3. As the change of the protection status of the wolf under the Bern Convention <sup>(7)</sup> was adopted, in order to implement this change internally, the Commission intends to modify accordingly the regime of the wolf under the EU Habitats Directive <sup>(8)</sup>. Member States would be free to keep the strict protection of the species. Furthermore, they will remain obliged to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status of the wolf on their national territory, in line with the recent rulings of the Court of Justice of the EU <sup>(9)</sup> and the international commitments on biodiversity agreed by the EU and its Member States.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Published by the Commission in December 2023: <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/env/items/813295/en>

<sup>(2)</sup> Including data reported by national authorities from Member States.

<sup>(3)</sup> Through EU funding instruments.

<sup>(4)</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/eu-funding-and-large-carnivores\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/eu-funding-and-large-carnivores_en)

<sup>(5)</sup> [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/cap-my-country/cap-strategic-plans\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/cap-my-country/cap-strategic-plans_en)

<sup>(6)</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/best-practice\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/eu-large-carnivore-platform/best-practice_en)

<sup>(7)</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/berne-convention>

<sup>(8)</sup> 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.

<sup>(9)</sup> E.g. Case C-436/22 on wolf hunting in Spain: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-07/cp240118en.pdf> and Case C-601/22 on derogations to kill wolves in Austria: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-07/cp240111en.pdf>