(English version)

Question for written answer E-002717/24
to the Commission

Sebastian Everding (The Left), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE), Martin Hojsík (Renew), Michal Wiezik (Renew), Carolina Morace (The Left), Delara Burkhardt (S&D), Emma Fourreau (The Left), Sigrid Friis (Renew), Lukas Sieper (NI), Niels Fuglsang (S&D), Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE), Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Catarina Martins (The Left), Jutta Paulus (Verts/ALE), Krzysztof Śmiszek (S&D), Per Clausen (The Left), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left), Friedrich Pürner (NI), Sibylle Berg (NI), Martin Sonneborn (NI), Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE), Gabriele Bischoff (S&D), Maria Noichl (S&D), Anthony Smith (The Left), Romana Jerković (S&D), Annalisa Corrado (S&D), Manuela Ripa (PPE)

(2 December 2024)

Subject: Potential downgrade of the protection status of the wolf

1. What measures does the Commission consider necessary to ensure the long-term survival ([1]) of the European wolf population and to respond to future declines ([2]) in their numbers?

2. Is the Commission committed to preventing any further changes to protection statuses, particularly of predators such as seals and bears?

3. What scientific arguments ([3]) supporting the current wolf protection status have been examined, which recent invitations from relevant organisations to the permanent conference of the Bern Convention have been appropriately acknowledged ([4]), and on the basis of which criteria were the scientific arguments for maintaining this status deemed insufficient?

Submitted: 2.12.2024

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission

(18 February 2025)

1. Member States are bound by the obligation to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for all protected species, irrespective of their listing under Annex IV or V of the Habitats Directive ([1]). Furthermore, for species listed under Annex V, if the surveillance of the species reveals it is necessary, Member States may also implement temporary or local prohibition of hunting, regulation of the periods and methods of hunting, or the establishment of a system of licences or of quotas. In addition to strengthening the financing and implementation of prevention measures to ensure coexistence, for wide-ranging species as the wolf, it is essential for Member States also to enhance coordination on monitoring, conservation and management of cross-border wolf populations, including with non-EU countries.

2. The Commission does not intend to propose amendments to the international or EU legal protection status of species other than the wolf.

3. The in-depth analysis study of December 2023 contains the most up-to-date scientific data on the wolf ([2]). This includes the data published by the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe. The Commission proposal to amend the species' protection status under the Bern Convention ([3]) carefully considered all available data against the criteria contained in Recommendation No. 56 (1997) ([4]). The Commission consistently promotes a science-based approach in its policy on coexistence with large carnivores.

---

1 [1]taking into account, among other things, the necessary genetic diversity and other cross-border phenomena and conditions.

2 [2]especially due to the increase in (including illegal) hunting.

3 [3]see Recommendation No 56 (1997) of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention concerning guidelines to be taken into account while making proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention and while adopting amendments.

4 [4]why, for example, was the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe not invited?

([1]) 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.

([2]) https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/env/items/813295/en

([3]) https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-council-decision-position-be-taken-eu-bern-convention_en

([4]) Recommendation No 56 (1997) concerning guidelines to be taken into account while making proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention and while adopting amendments, adopted by the Standing Committee on 5 December 1997: https://rm.coe.int/168074680c