*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-000102/25**
**to the Commission**
**Sebastian Everding (The Left), Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Anja Hazekamp (The Left), Emma Fourreau (The Left), Niels Fuglsang (S&D), Annalisa Corrado (S&D), Martin Hojsík (Renew), Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE), Krzysztof Śmiszek (S&D), Sigrid Friis (Renew), Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE), Michal Wiezik (Renew)**
*(13 January 2025)*

*Subject:* Targeted amendment of the Habitats Directive to downgrade the protection status of the wolf

Following the Bern Convention decision to downgrade the protection status of the wolf, the Commission announced that it would propose a targeted legislative amendment to the annexes to the Habitats Directive to allow Member States 'additional flexibility' in managing their local wolf populations. It is stated that this amendment would need to be adopted by Parliament and the Council.

However, Article 19 of the Habitats Directive, which predates the Treaty of Lisbon, requires a unanimous decision of the Council to amend its annexes. This procedure bypasses Parliament.

In view of this, can the Commission provide clarification on the following:

1. What legislative procedure does it intend to use to transfer the wolf from Annex IV to Annex V of the Habitats Directive?

2. Will the transfer apply to all EU wolf populations presently in Annex IV, regardless of their conservation status?

3. Can the Commission offer the assurance that any adjustment to the annexes will be made on a scientific basis and that changes to Annex IV may only be adopted if supported unanimously by the Council, as prescribed by Article 19?

Submitted: 13.1.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission**
*(14 March 2025)*

The decision of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention ([1]) on the protection status of the wolf will come into effect on 7 March 2025 after the 3-month objection period elapses, at which point it will be possible for the EU to reflect that change at EU level.

In the EU, this change would require the wolf to be moved from Annex IV (strict protection) to Annex V (protection) of the Habitats Directive ([2]).

The Commission will put forward a legislative proposal amending the protection status of the wolf while ensuring that the integrity and ambition of the directive are maintained.

A change of the protection status of the wolf in the Habitats Directive ([3]) would not remove the obligation for Member States to reach or maintain good conservation status of wolf populations.

It will provide additional flexibility to the Member States that need it, without obliging other Member States, to change the protection status of the wolf at national level.

---

([1]) https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/institutions
([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]) i.e. moving the species to Annex V of 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.