

EN

E-000598/2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.3.2025)

Following the adoption of the EU proposal¹ to change the protection status of the wolf under the Bern Convention², after its entry into force, the Commission presented a targeted legislative proposal³ to implement this change in EU law and to modify accordingly the protection regime of the wolf under the Annexes of the Habitats Directive⁴.

While lowering the protection status of the wolf in the Habitats Directive by moving it from Annex IV to Annex V of the Directive offers Member States more flexibility in how they manage their wolf populations, it does not change the substantive obligation to ensure that the wolf is restored to and maintained at a favourable conservation status. Under Article 14 of the Habitats Directive, the taking of specimens of species listed in Annex V as well as their exploitation must be compatible with their being maintained at a favourable conservation status. This implies that any culling or hunting has to be carefully regulated by Member States, to prevent any negative impact on the conservation status of the concerned populations, in line with the recent rulings of the Court of Justice of the EU⁵. It would be for the Danish authorities to adopt the appropriate measures to that end.

After decades of absence following its eradication, the wolf returned to Denmark in 2012 and has re-established⁶ with the current population of approximately 22-42 adults and 38 pups⁷. Denmark did not report on the conservation status of the wolf for the period 2013-2018 as required by Article 17 of the Directive and the new report for the period 2019-2024 is due by August 2025.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_6202

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention>

³ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/document/8ec6689c-a7d8-422e-829d-c4231fc32872_en

⁴ 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.

⁵ Case C-436/22: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-07/cp240118en.pdf>

Case C-601/22: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-07/cp240111en.pdf>

⁶ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive/large-carnivores/large-carnivore-populations-across-europe_en#paragraph_9371

⁷ <https://sgavmst.dk/arter/artsforvaltning/beskyttede-arter/ulv>