

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000151/26
to the Commission
César Luena (S&D)
(14 January 2026)**

Subject: Monitoring of the Slovakian Government's plan to cull 350 brown bears

In May 2025, I raised the issue before the Commission of Slovakia's plan to cull up to 350 brown bears, despite the fact that this species is protected under the Habitats Directive. In its response of 30 June 2025, the Commission stated that it was assessing the Resolution, that it had asked the national authorities for more information and recalled that national authorities are responsible for implementing EU law.

Since then, the Slovakian Government has put the plan into action, with over half of the authorised quota culled. In the meantime, environmental organisations have lodged complaints with the Commission about the possible breach of the Habitats Directive and the risk it poses to the conservation status of the bear, including cross-border populations.

In light of the above:

1. What specific steps has the Commission taken since 30 June to verify the compatibility of this plan with EU law?
2. Has the Commission had access to an impact study and has it received sufficient data showing that killing up to 350 bears does not compromise the species' conservation status?
3. Will the Commission ask Slovakia to suspend the plan while finalising its assessment?

Submitted: 14.1.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(27 February 2026)**

The exchanges between the Commission and Slovakia since 30 June 2025 have aimed at ensuring that any culling of brown bears in Slovakia is based on derogation decisions which meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive ⁽¹⁾.

Slovakia explained to the Commission the methodology used for estimating its bear population and that it was launching a DNA-based bear census which will provide up-to-date information on the country's bear population. The Commission continues to closely follow the situation in Slovakia.

During these exchanges the Commission has received reassurance by Slovakia that any further culling of bear specimens required for the protection of human life and health would be done in full compliance with the provisions of the relevant EU legislation.

⁽¹⁾ Council Directive 92/43/EEC, of 21 May 1992, on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj/eng>), OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.