

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000812/26
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (ECR)
(26 February 2026)**

Subject: In excess of EUR 1 million of public money spent on establishing whether large carnivores — bears and wolves, in particular — can co-exist alongside human activities: to what end?

Through the Biodiversa+ consortium, the Commission has co-financed a number of activities intended to preserve European flora and fauna. In particular, under the 2021-2022 BiodivProtect action, with a budget of around EUR 1.2 million, the TransWILD project ⁽¹⁾ was launched with the aim of researching coexistence between humans and wild animals by analysing their interactions. Five project partners reportedly carried out an email survey of the local population, leading to ‘selection bias’. From an IT perspective, the platform they used ⁽²⁾ could not provide a representative sample because it was not restricted to the geographical area and because users could complete the survey more than once. What is more, neither previous analyses nor local associations as promoters of the survey were taken into consideration.

1. Given the need to prevent resources being wasted on obtaining potentially distorted results, does the Commission believe that it should check whether the research method used meets criteria on good statistical research?
2. Does the Commission plan to spend EUR 1.2 million to retrieve data that national authorities already have ⁽³⁾?
3. Given the increasing distribution and often uncontrolled proliferation of the *Canis lupus* species, Parliament and the EU Council have lowered its level of protection from ‘strictly protected’ to ‘protected’ species. Why does the Commission consider it appropriate to continue unnecessarily funding research seeking a form of co-existence that has already proven unattainable?

Submitted: 26.2.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(23 April 2026)**

The Commission does not check itself the implementation of projects funded by co-funded partnerships like Biodiversa+ ⁽¹⁾ but ensures that mechanisms are in place to meet criteria for excellent research, including for statistics.

The implementation of TransWILD ⁽²⁾ is being supervised by the relevant Biodiversa+ Call Steering Committee, while the Research Executive Agency ⁽³⁾ oversees the implementation of Biodiversa+ under the supervision of the Commission.

Co-funded partnerships pool resources from different partners to achieve common objectives, avoiding duplication of efforts. Biodiversa+ is co-funded by national research funding organisations (70%) and by Horizon Europe ⁽⁴⁾ framework programme (30%).

The EU contribution to the budget of TransWILD amounts to a maximum of EUR 360 000. While the Commission cannot precisely comment on the details of statistical methodologies applied, using existing data is relevant for research activities.

The TransWILD project was selected through a competitive and independent process and awarded under the 2021-2022 call on ‘Supporting the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems across land and sea’.

While the change to the Habitats Directive ⁽⁵⁾ entails greater flexibility for the management of the wolf, the species remains protected. Member States have to adopt the necessary measures to ensure that the wolf achieves and maintains favourable conservation status. Therefore, investments in appropriate prevention measures remain essential to reduce livestock predation.

¹ Link to the project: <https://www.biodiversa.eu/2023/04/19/transwild/>.

² The survey is freely accessible from all over Europe. Changing browser makes it possible to vote multiple times. https://nina.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8faSdpjMegXFci.

³ Press conference, Italian Senate. Presentation of scientific survey on carnivorous/human predatory cohabitation. Sample, 45 000 residents, Province of Trento. <https://youtu.be/lzdNYVl9uRo?si=GS57t-N7TVUFm4xN>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.biodiversa.eu/>.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.biodiversa.eu/2023/04/19/transwild/>.

⁽³⁾ https://rea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/horizon-europe_en.

⁽⁵⁾ 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.

The Commission continues to help Member States and stakeholders in the design and implementation of such measures through funding and other forms of support ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁶⁾ Including Common Agricultural Policy interventions (https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy_en), research projects funded by Horizon Europe (e.g., <https://cocoproject.eu/>) and the EU programme for the environment and climate action (e.g., <https://www.lifewildwolf.com/>) that develop strategies for coexistence and prevention measures.