

# IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS FOR LARGE CARNIVORE CONSERVATION: A TRANSFER OF BEST PRACTICES



## FINAL REPORT

### Annex V

### Report of action C2

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# The Human Dimensions Experience: "good practices" to share decisions, responsibilities and achievements in environmental conservation

## 1. Introduction: From conflict to consensus

In the project areas, the first stakeholder analysis action (A5) of conflict and attitudes, drew attention on the presence of tensions and situations creating complex conflicts, while showing a degree of consensus and positive attitudes towards the large carnivores issue.

The analysis was conducted with different methodologies in the various partner countries, due to their different nature (Institutions, NGO), with different levels, ability to act and decision-making power.

The Italian Parks are public bodies, with financial autonomy, planning ability and a very strong decision-making power; these characteristics allowed to apply an innovative methodology in order to manage the conflicts observed during cooperation procedures, negotiation procedures and mitigation of conflicts, through ad-hoc meetings between institutional and non-institutional actors, mediated by facilitators; these meetings came to concerted solutions, which took into account investments and direct interventions on the ground, involving Park technicians.

In the case of the other partners we could observe the limits of their decision-making power; nevertheless, they skillfully provided to decision-making bodies (ministries, national professional organizations, public bodies etc.) the essential knowledge of attitudes and conflicts in the buffer zones, with respect to the presence of the large carnivores, gained through survey methodologies and local meetings between communities and technicians, in order to raise awareness and mitigate the evident conflicts.

In spite of different methodologies, the key element of the HD project actions, common to all our partners, is the creation of new communication channels between institutions and local communities; these communication channels were developed during the whole project towards a common objective: to mitigate conflicts, to assess and to manage the experienced tensions without interrupting the interaction process. So, even beyond the project, all the partners, at different levels, will not stop this process that now seems irreversible.

## 2. Italy

Each Italian partner has a well-defined institutional history, as well as peculiar features concerning its nature, its settlement and the socioeconomic aspects. Thus, as regards specifically the large carnivores, especially wolves, we can observe a quite general ambivalence in the stakeholders: on the one hand, openness and willingness, on the other hand, reservations and even open hostility. However, we can understand from other monitored issues that both consensus and conflicts lead to a remarkable variety of situations. An important result was obtained influencing with "best practices" this framework, characterized at the beginning by conflict, unmet expectations and poor or unclear information, along with more clearly identifiable interests. These good practices were based in large part on the sharing of information and on the stakeholder engagement in decision-making processes. This reflects a dual objective: neutralization of the stadial model, as regards nature, intensity and dynamics of disputes and increasing consensus around the involved Parks: not only and not so much with regard to their individual actions, but also as stable institutions serving environmental protection and stimulating regional potential.

We have to keep in mind that a stadial model of conflict entails a three-level system: tensions, conflict, networking. In its upward dynamic, the stadial model prefigures an initial disagreement, due to very different motivations, degenerating into a permanent tension. If its causes, effects, procedures and time frame are not properly identified, and if it is not appropriately managed within the relationship between stakeholders, it can evolve into a real conflict. The conflict, in turn, requires an accurate diagnosis in order to put in place proper mitigation and management strategies.

Otherwise, the arising dispute could spread, or connect to other previously existing disputes, of any kind, so creating too many conflicts. This event can exacerbate the feelings, creating a generalized climate of suspicion, if not preconceived hostility.

The identification of the different positions and the conflict diagnosis did not exclude, but rather clearly indicated the opportunity to go a step further in the analysis of the general framework. Under these conditions, our priority was to neutralize the upward dynamic of the stadial model, by channeling it towards a virtuous circle: to manage conflict and tensions, stopping any potential networking.

The following figure summarize the main results of the analysis (see also "GRANDI CARNIVORI TRA CONSENSO E CONFLITTO NEI PARCHI APPENNINICI-Human dimensions-analysis Stakeholders Report" Oct 2010)

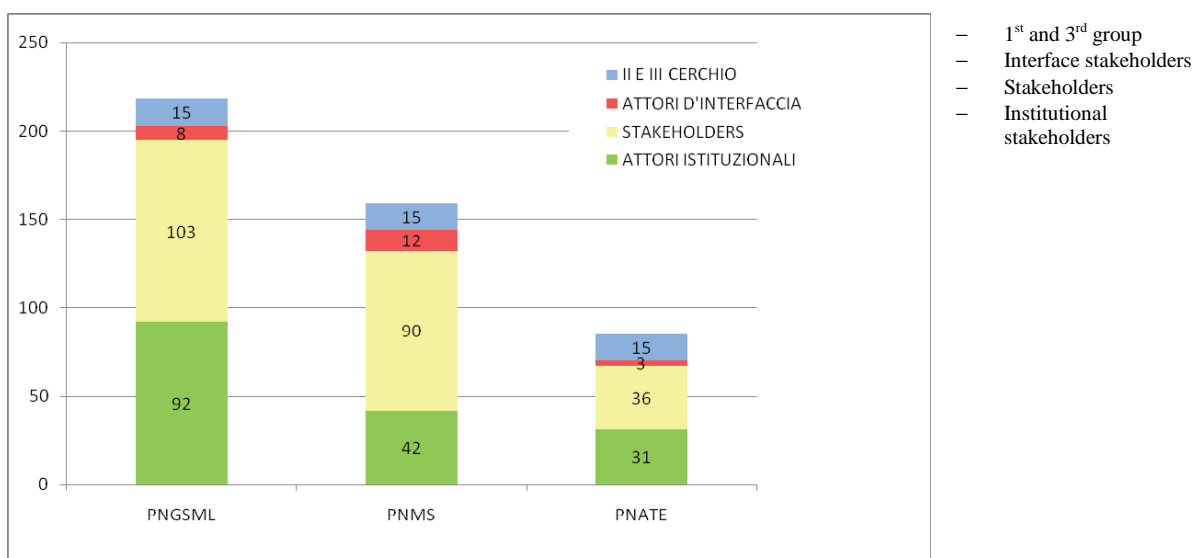
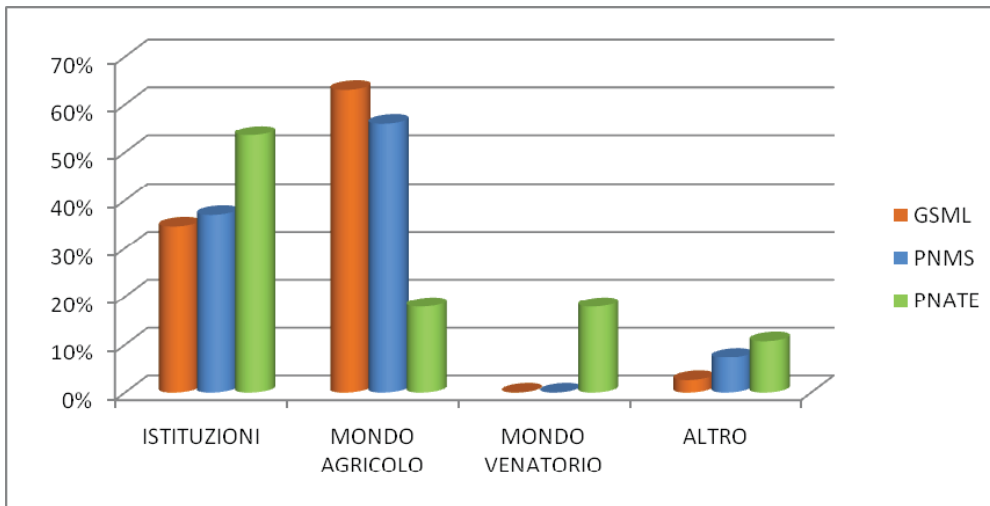


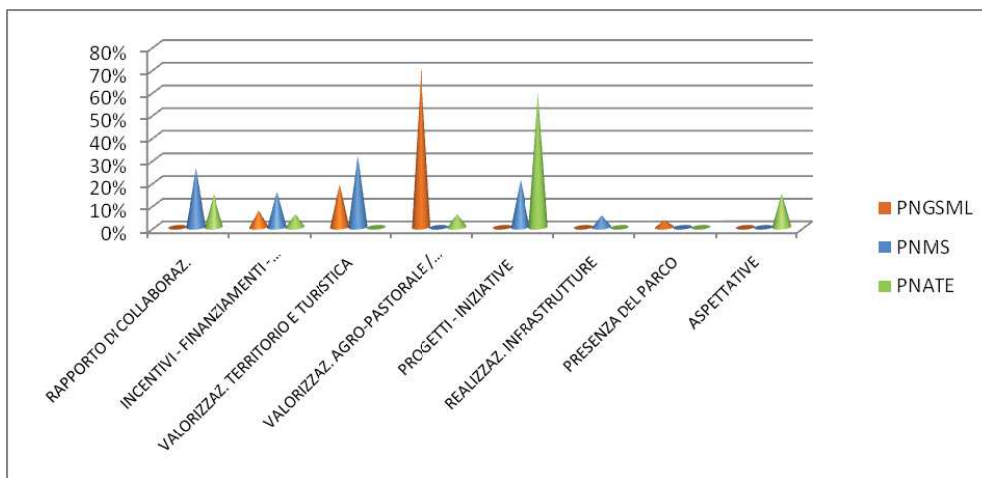
Figure 1. Stakeholders interviewed in the three Parks, distinguished on the base of different groups and typologies



- Institutions
- Agricultural world
- Hunting world
- Other

- GSML
- PNMS
- PNATE

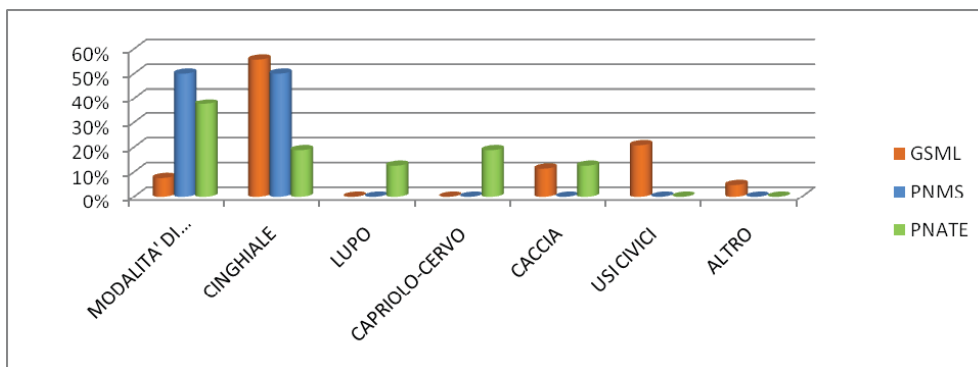
Figure 2. Tensions related to the wolf presence according to the typology of stakeholders



- Cooperation
- Incentives/Funds
- Territorial and tourism development
- Agro-pastoral development
- Initiatives and projects
- Infrastructure construction plans
- Presence in the park
- Expectations

- PNGSML
- PNMS
- PNATE

Figure 3. Consensus building



- Procedure
- Wild Boar
- Wolf
- Buck/Deer
- Hunting
- Civic uses
- Other

- GSML
- PNMS
- PNATE

Figure 4. Information based on the different conflicts (Percentage of total tensions recorded in each Park)

## 2.1 Feedback meetings

Before publication, the analysis results were communicated to the stakeholders who were interviewed during local meetings, in order to evaluate them. These feedback meetings, managed through participatory techniques as an introduction for action C2, were the following:

- PNGSL 16 November 2010 Valle Castellana - 50 participants
- PNGSL 17 November 2010 Isola GS - 13 participants
- PNGSL 18 November 2010 Assergi - 20 participants
- PNMS 23 November 2010 Visso - 60 participants
- PNATE 25 March 2011 Cervarezza T. - 20 participants

Below are the main issues that emerged from the feedback meetings, discussed in the following participatory workshops:

- Wildlife management
- Regional tourism development
- Vacancy of institutional bodies: the Board of Directors - Community Park
- Support services in the territory
- Listening to citizens' concerns (the proper strategy to achieve some of these major goals)

So the Park decides to perceive itself as one of the interlocutors of the participatory action, a stakeholder like the others. In that capacity, it represents its interests without imposing them - maybe by legislative provision, but through dialogue, discussion, negotiation, always ready to hear stakeholders' requests. This effort leads to the resulting action, which is negotiated with other stakeholders.

## 2.2 Consensus workshop

Following this first step the following target was had to increase the consensus around the Parks actions, by changing the traditional way of stakeholder engagement in the Park individual initiatives or policies and by introducing, according to the objectives of the Project, "good practices" in order to strengthen the large carnivores conservation, especially as regards wolf and bear. The core of these practices has been consensually identified, by the Scientific Research and by the Parks operators, with the launch of participatory strategies including:

- joint identification of actions to be encouraged in relation to the needs of the territory and, in particular, of the stakeholders, based on the principle that, given the limited standards of human, material and financial resources "we could not do everything";
- joint identification of the methods and time frames to achieve the identified objectives, based on a fundamental principle of reflexivity : "we try to understand what we do when we do it, and not later, when it may be too late to right the mistakes ";
- verification of partnership functionality, through regular and finalized meetings, based on the principle that "the agreements have to be respected; if something did not work we have to try to understand why it didn't";
- implementation of agreements to boost the participatory practice at the end of the project and let it continue in the future, also through a more secure communicative transparency, based on the principle of promotion and dissemination of good practice, which is one of the objectives of the Project.

The above mentioned goals were achieved through the *Ateliers partecipativi* (PW - Participatory Workshops), organized in two steps (see also "*Rapporto linee guida per lo svolgimento degli Ateliers partecipativi*" - April 2011):

PW – step 1: creation of the first two goals, by identifying the range of "things that we can and that we want to do together," some very interesting or urgent issues and, within them, some concrete priority actions;

PW – step 2: achievement of subsequent goals, with verification of the results of previous agreements and stipulation of new agreements.

The first and the second PW are therefore were not generic "meetings", but two "consensus workshops" for the development of inclusive decisions and participatory actions. These consensus workshops did not work independently of each other; on the contrary, they were closely and explicitly related, and this was shown by the Parks experience. PNMS, PNGSL and PNATE recalled in the second PW the issues emerged in the first PW, and they publicly explained which goals have been achieved, those which have been partially achieved, those subject to further assessments and finally those that were not achieved.

These consensus workshops could rely on an empowerment which was developed in three steps over the course of the Action C2:

- Ex ante, through the development of guidelines specifically tailored for the conduct and evaluation of the PW;
- Ongoing, through analytical reports in order to provide the first synthetic elements for the PW evaluation and to use these assessments to optimize the next PW and the practices related to it; in addition, between the first and the second PW, an Intermediate Seminar took place to compare the three actions.
- Ex post, through citizen satisfaction (Action E3) which will be discussed below, which provides a very important assessment in relation to what has been done; at the same time, it offers some elements to optimize meetings, actions and future "best practices", even after the Project.

*First set of PW:*

PNATE May 10th, 2011 Bagnone - 15 Participants

PNMS Visso 13 May 2011 - 27 Participants

PNGSL 17 May 2011 Assergi - 100 Participants

PNATE Cervarezza 29 June 2011 - 12 Participants

*Results of the first set of PW:*

After the first set of participatory meetings the initial hatred and distrust have given way to cordiality and mutual respect, because the stakeholders understood that they were engaged on the same grounds and with very similar goals. During the three experiences, in particular, we could observe that: the Park must become a significant opportunity for all those who live and work there; thus it has not to be perceived as an "enemy" that imposes restrictions and constraints, but as a subject that defines the framework within which different stakeholders can build feasible possibility of existence. It is interesting to underline how, in some cases, the Park has been seen as the guarantor of the participatory process. In fact, its role is simple: it has to ensure the opportunity for various stakeholders to meet.

Between the first and the second set of AP, thematic meetings were held, aimed at strengthening and preparing the second event, in particular with more active stakeholder groups, which presented an higher conflict level

*Intermediate thematic meetings:*

- PNGSL Assergi May 30, 2011 - 20 farmers
- PNGSL Assergi June 9, 2011 - 10 farmers
- PNGSL July 2011 to direct discussions with farmers in 24 holdings
- PNGSL July 28, 2011 Assergi farmers and Authorities - 10 Participants
- PNMS November 11, 2011 meeting with breeders Cupi-Visso
- PNATE nor Castelnuovo Monti (RE) 13 October 2011

*Second set of PW:*

PNMS Visso December 5th, 2011 - 16 Participants

PNGSL: December 13, 2011 morning - 40 livestock raisers

PNGSL: December 13, 2011 afternoon -30 stakeholders of other sectors

PNATE: May 08, 2012 Bagnone - 40 Participants

*Results of the second set of PW :*

For each experience, it is evident that at the beginning of this journey (November 2010) the participants questioned on this surprising attitude of the Park (propensity to "listening"), expressing strong doubts about the true good intentions on the part of the institution and on the concrete ability to carry out such a major commitment. It is now clear to all those who took part into the participatory process, the commitment that the park has maintained over time and the transparency of its proposal. While the Park has been able to keep alive the logic of participation and discussion along the way, it is even true that stakeholders confirmed, with their active presence, their will to put into play their skills and find the best solutions through the instrument of dialogue.

Concretely, the actions they proposed retrace, once again, the participatory practices supported by LIFE project: "round tables", connection between the comparison among the different stakeholders / interests and the opportunity to co-build responses to situations of tension / conflict, everyday occurrences in the project areas.

For stakeholders, the Park is not only a privileged interlocutor, but also a facilitator for participatory processes, simple guarantor of the encounter among stakeholders, or between them and the actors who create some difficulty in the Project area.

## **2.3 Main results in the three parks**

### *PNGSL*

With regard to the initiatives put in place by PNGSL after the Atelier, several actions have been developed, many of which resulted from the discussions in the second PW of December, 13<sup>th</sup>. The following are the main ones:

1) Between March and May 2012: low-impact pesticides were delivered to about 30 livestock breeders who were interested in the anti-parasite treatment, as announced in the announcement presented during the Atelier.

2) July-August 2012: distribution of materials to build permanent collective fences for about fifteen farmers in order to protect calves born in the pasture, to prevent damage from wolves, as announced in the further announcement presented during the Atelier.

Moreover, as the head of the PNGSML appropriately emphasized, beyond the distribution of what was agreed in the last AP, opportunities to meet individual breeders have achieved something even more important as regards "best practices", such as that of building trust between the Park technicians and the farmers. In fact they communicated and fulfilled all the expectations.

3) May and July 2012: PNGSML launched a participatory practice even with farmers. In fact, three meetings were held in Amatrice for the problems caused by wild boars; after previous meetings, farmers expressed the will to manage the supply chain (capture, transport, slaughtering, processing and marketing) of the wild boar with a collective, cooperative legal entity, being set up on the



territory.

4) Meeting in July with the Coordinamento Territoriale Ambientale (CFS - Regional Coordination for Environmental) for the correct implementation and possible amendment of the Park Regulations for wildlife damage control. The current inconsistent implementation by CTA / CFS has led to an increase in tensions among some breeders. In continuation, a meeting with farmers, technicians and CTA / CFS for the amendment of the Regulations for wildlife damage control is set for 2012

5) Also by 2012 there will be meetings between technicians and farmers in the presence of a facilitator, in order to face other objectives derived from the participatory process put in place. In order to integrate more and more inclusive decision-making processes in the normal operating conditions of PNGSML, some selected technicians will be trained on participatory methodologies, in order to create new facilitators.

6) Synergy between LIFE projects. Finally, a "good practice" has already called for in the Guidelines. In fact, EU should approve the LIFE PRATERIE Project, announced during the II Participatory workshop. This project provides for additional interventions in support of good husbandry practices and of harmonization of grazing regulations of municipalities and ASBUC - Amministrazione Separata Beni di Uso Civico.

### *PNMS*

Following the II PW discussions on last 5 December, very activities were launched, including:

1) Co-funding opportunity announcement for electric fence. 16 electric fencing systems were financed through an announcement published on 02/24/2012. 19 companies applied. The available resources, € 13.000, allowed to co-finance the first 16 farmers in the ranking. The Parks did not receive any comments or criticisms on the criteria adopted.

2) Approval of RECANDO program and announcement publication. On 08/03/12 the RECANDO program was approved (this is a network of interchange of shepherd dogs) which will improve the quality of breeders' shepherd dogs. The program will last three years and will consist of:

- i. information/training activities and awareness-raising among farmers (but also among tourists);
- ii. motivated selection of companies, interested in the improvement of the packs of shepherd dogs. The selected companies will become a reference point for qualified dogs;
- iii. sale of purebred puppy of Maremma Sheepdog;
- iv. business consulting in order to evaluate the dogs and improve their defensive attitude.

On 08/08/2012 the Park issued a public notice to ask the engaged companies to endorse the program. Fixed deadline for 09/20/2012. The first activity will start in October.

3) Carnaio of Gualdo (Castelsantangelo sul Nera - MC).

The approval process of the "Carnaio" project funded by Regione Marche has ended and now the execution phase started. It involves the building of the structure by the autumn of 2012. Some local livestock breeders were already contacted to organize the butchery management.

4) Synergies between LIFE projects. This particular "good practice" was identified and launched also from PNMS, which promoted a meeting with farmers involved in the Life Coornata project on 05/11/2012. It is a group of 18 farmers who lead their flocks towards potential habitats of Apennine chamois; with these farmers, a fruitful collaboration for prophylactic treatment of domestic livestock was launched. Many of them were already involved in the LIFE + EX-TRA project and applied for the co-funding announcement for the electric fencing system.

## PNATE

After the workshop was set up, PNATE launched different actions, some of which derived from the PW concerted action. Below are the main:

After the first PW concertation of Castelnuovo ne 'Monti of 13 October 2011:

- 1) On 12/12/2011, the Resolution of the Board of Directors nr. 34 approved the "Regolamento stralcio per la gestione della popolazione del Cinghiale (Sus scrofa) nel Parco Nazionale dell'Appennino tosco-emiliano tramite catture, girata e abbattimenti selettivi"<sup>1</sup>;
- 2) On 01/24/2012, the Resolution of the Board of Directors nr. 34 approved the "Programma di gestione del cinghiale nel Parco"<sup>2</sup>.
- 3) On 10/12/2012 Castelnuovo ne 'Monti (RE) hosted a specific meeting with the leaders of the wild boar hunting in ATC RE4 Montagna, in order to define operating and shared procedures regarding wildlife management and to arrange cooperation procedures between ATC RE4 Montagna and the National Park.
- 4) On 10/23/2012 the executive decision nr. 308 approved the "Procedure operative per la gestione della popolazione di Cinghiale (Sus Scrofa) nel Parco nazionale dell'Appennino tosco-emiliano tramite girata"<sup>3</sup>
- 5) On 12/09/2012 the first wild boar control measure took place in the National Park. Hunters of ATC RE4 Montagna directly participated, using the "girata" technique, they were expressly authorized by the Park and worked under the direct supervision of the Forestry Service. These actions continued throughout the month of December and if necessary will continue in 2013.
- 6) Between the months of October and December 2012 4 "corrals" were installed in the protected area of Castelnuovo ne'Monti (RE) in order to control wild boar population. This action was concerted with ATC RE4 Montagna.
- 7) As specifically shown during the second PW concertation in Bagnone - June 8, 2012: On 12/17/2012 a negotiated procedure for the implementation of winter monitoring of the wolf in the national park during 2013 was launched.
- 8) On 01/02/2013 the executive decision nr.5 assigned the charge for the implementation of winter monitoring of the wolf in the national park during 2013.

Finally, since during the workshops the participatory procedures were identified as "good practice" and positive behavioral pattern of the Park, public meetings were implemented in order to illustrate the specific objectives of the National Park and to listen to the opinion of stakeholders. In particular: 1 - on 12/05/2012 there was a public meeting with Tuscan stakeholders in the town council of Villa Collemandina; 2 - on 12/13/2012 a public meeting with park stakeholders was organized in the multipurpose room of Cervarezza Terme (RE) 3 - on 12/17/2012 a meeting with Park stakeholders took place at the headquarters of the Comunità Montana di Langhirano (PR).

## 2.4 How to continue the participatory process

- 1) Make the participatory process with all stakeholders permanent;
- 2) Promote regular meetings on the two strategic issues for relations with stakeholders, that's to say:
  - Possible conflicts with breeders and farmers, to publicly face the tension, in order to make a correct conflict diagnosis and find common solutions; for example, a common draft for a wildlife damage compensation program, negotiation procedures and methods to improve the quality of human activities management, damage evaluation through reciprocal agreements that obligate the parties to protect their respective interests;

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1 "Regulation excerpt for Wild Boar (sus scrofa) management in the Parco Nazionale dell'Appennino tosco-emiliano through trapping, "girata" and culling techniques"

2 Wild boar management Program

3 "Operation procedures for wild boar management in the Parco Nazionale dell'Appennino tosco-emiliano through the "girata" technique

- Economic and social development of the territory: it's important to understand that conservation and development are two sides of the same coin.

3) Give prompt and public notice of the progress of the undertaken actions and, where necessary, of their accomplishment, systematically enhancing the LIFE spirit which led to those actions.

4) Take advantage of EU projects to promote synergies among the partners: setting up shared experiences and learning from each other would be very valuable "good practices".

The whole phase C2 in Italy, ultimately, can be considered as a reflective process, a coordinated set of best practices that, in a context of free flow of information and transparent communication, improves itself through the implementation of agreed actions, their verification and evaluation.

### 3. Romania

#### 3.1 Introduction

Romania is a country with large carnivore populations but also with old traditions in terms of agriculture, cattle grazing and hunting. The large forested landscapes provide good habitat for wild animals as well as for human activities and settlements. Conflicts and damages are common. Besides damages to agricultural crops and domestic livestock, some deadly accidents happened along the time (more often in the last years, the most recent in October 2012). Since 1989, the social, economic and natural environment has undergone dramatic changes. Ownership restitution, infrastructure development, competition on an international market but also joining the EU and enforcing the EU regulations are only few of the main factors which have influenced the life of humans and also of wildlife. The relationship between humans and wild carnivores has changed and is likely to continue to change in the future. Therefore, there is an important need to manage efficiently the relationship between the two, in this new economic, social and political framework, if maintenance of rich populations of carnivores is wanted. The so-called human dimensions of the natural resources become a very important field to be explored in the country.

In terms of attitudes of people from local communities inside bear habitat, the study explored four directions:

- Interactions with large carnivores (If they experienced or not; the kind of conflict; if they received compensation)
- Solutions for conflicts (What should happen to the animal which produced a damage?)
- Perception of the large carnivores (suffering or not; needed for natural equilibrium; valuable as a species; threat to humans or vice-versa; use of lethal methods for defense)
- Feelings about carnivores (how would they feel if they would meet them in the wild – fear, freezing horror, curiosity, hate, indifferent, sympathy).

#### 3.2 Details of meetings in Romania

Date	Place	Number of participants	Description of topics discussed	Results
<b>8 meetings with farmers, hunters etc.</b>			Discussions on the issues of damage (prevention, compensation), conflicts, management (hunting vs. culling), conservation, problem bears, complementary feeding etc.	Main topics to be covered by interviews under actions A5 and A6 were identified. Subjects for trainings on shepherd dog use for prevention and damage identification were also selected. Key issues for an efficient BET protocol were revealed during discussions.
1) 15 Sept 2009	Batani	6	Presentation of the project activities related to damages prevention and donation of LGD. Discussion with livestock breeders regarding donation of LGD and livestock damages in the area	Inform the stakeholders about the next project steps. Start the selection procedure for selection of the livestock breeders involved in the donation of LGD.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Description of topics discussed</b>	<b>Results</b>
2) 27 Oct 2009	Baraolt	8	Presentation of next project activities and discuss the implementation of the actions in the area of Natura 2000 site Herculian.	Preliminary agreement on the activities to be implemented together in 2010. Selection of livestock breeders to be involved in the LGD donation program.
3) 03 Nov 2009	Dalnic	5	Information about project activities in Dalnic area and discussion regarding damages on livestock.	Selection of the livestock breeders to be involved in the LGD donation program and exchange of information regarding livestock damages in the area of Dalnic.
4) 09 Feb 2010	Bucharest	3	Discussion with representatives of Ministry of Environment about BET implementation in Romania.	Planning of the activities related to BET in 2010.
5) 10 Feb 2010	Ciucas	6	Discussion with livestock breeders regarding donation of LGD and livestock damages in the area	Keep contact and relation with the local livestock breeders. Discuss the cooperation during year 2010 in Ciucas area.
6) 12 Feb 2010	Sacele	4	Present the project activities for 2010 and highlight the cooperation possibilities with the forest and wildlife managers from Ciucas area. Discussions regarding wildlife management, problem bears and complementary feeding.	Exchange of information with the forest and wildlife stakeholders from Ciucas area.
7) & 8) July – August 2010	Baraolt	20	Discussions within the consultation process regarding the elaboration of the Management Plan of the Natura 2000 site Herculian (one of the three project areas). This management plan is focused on large carnivore conservation.	Close cooperation with the Natura 2000 site custodian (Forest Office Baraolt) and WWF Romania.

Date	Place	Number of participants	Description of topics discussed	Results
+ 5 meetings to present and discuss result of stakeholder analysis and of analysis of attitudes about coexistence with large carnivores				
9) 27 jul. 2011	Brasov	11	The most important conclusions of studies from actions A5 and A6 were presented to the main stakeholders. In terms of attitudes of people from local communities inside bear habitat (A6), conclusions were framed in 4 directions: <u>Interaction</u> with large carnivores; <u>Solutions</u> for conflicts; <u>Perception</u> of the large carnivores and <u>Feelings</u> about carnivores. In terms of institutions dealing with large carnivore issues (A5), the study looked at responsibilities of the institution on large carnivores conservation/management, overlapping responsibilities, expectations, partnerships or conflicts, legislation aspects, threats, opportunities, best practices for carnivores	Owners are aware prevention is better and compensation is still hard to get and does not solve the situation. Institutions are aware of overlaps and conflicting opinions. Their representatives acknowledge the need for legislation adjustment, scientific evidence for reaching a common opinion on most important issues (population level at national level, management or conservation, solution for problem bears etc.), faster reaction in case of conflict and damage.
10) 8 sept. 2011	Bodoc	12		
11) 30 sept. 2011	Bucharest / Anual Forum of Local administration	130		
12) 11 oct. 2011	Baraolt	17		
13) 6 mar. 2012	Bran, Brasov	13		

### 3.3 Results and discussion

The first 8 meetings had the role of investigating the environment in the project area in terms of people attitudes, feelings and institutional framework linked to large carnivore issues. They were very useful in building the questionnaires for interviews to be used in actions A5 and A6 and also for preparing trainings on shepherd dog use and the bear emergency protocol.

The next round of meetings aimed to bring together key players (environmental protection agency, hunting associations, land owners, forest administration units, game management control agency, NGOs, local administration) to discuss the results and conclusions of the surveys on public attitudes (A6) and institutional framework (A5) and to underline potential solutions for improving conservation status of large carnivores in the future.

The results show that although most of the people perceive the bear as an intrinsic value and important for nature equilibrium, a quite large percentage of people (21%) consider the bear must be killed if it attacks humans, almost 47% say it should be removed far from the area and 12% say it should be put in a zoo or sanctuary for the rest of its life. Those who had encountered the bear have a less positive attitude towards the animal. The most prevalent feelings when meeting the animal in the wild are fear (45%) and horror (20%). Therefore, if tolerance towards carnivores is important to maintain, damages and conflicts must be carefully managed (prevention rather than compensation). In terms of institutions dealing with large carnivore issues (environmental protection agency, hunting associations, forest administration units, forest research institute, game management control

agency, local administration), the study explored the following directions: responsibilities of the institution on large carnivores conservation/management, identification of other institutions addressing the issue of large carnivores (overlapping responsibilities, expectations, partnerships or conflicts), legislation aspects (efficiency, overlaps, gaps), threats for carnivores, opportunities, best practices. The results revealed conflicting opinions among institutions (conservation vs. hunting; current population level; density above vs. below optimum; lethal – non-lethal methods for problem bears; complementary feeding; threats for carnivores) and overlapping responsibilities among them. Beside these, the legislation is unclear and inefficient (hard to apply, small effects) and the institutions have an intricate structure and long distance from top to bottom of the hierarchy. On top of everything the institutional framework is highly unstable (political influence, changing too often leaders and strategies). All these problems make the reach of a consensus, tolerance maintenance and an efficient conservation of the species hard to acquire.

The political instability makes reaching a common ground among all key players a goal hard to reach. Institutional framework but also legislation must change in order to become efficient and flexible and thus to be able to deal with sensitive issues like conflict mitigation, damage prevention and compensation, conservation of powerful and harmful carnivores.

The actions within the LIFE project brought into light for the first time in Romania the new emerging domain of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources. The presentations at local level but also the one at the Large Carnivore Working Group meeting, revealed the importance of people attitudes and beliefs and also of institutional functionality, as key players besides the ordinary ones (habitat requirements, hunting, agriculture, poaching). The interest is high for continuing the exploration of these relationships in order to reveal the problems and find solutions for the dynamic economic and social situation in a country with some of the largest carnivore populations in Europe. Transilvania University of Brasov (through both the faculty of Silviculture and the Faculty of Sociology) intends to develop further projects in this area continuing the tradition of education and research in the field of wildlife biology and management.

## 4. Bulgaria

### 4.1 Introduction

In Bulgaria the main problem faced by this action that the presence of bears causing damage on human activities, and even attacking humans, have posed a serious problem during the years of the project. Especially the case of a person killed by a bear in May 2010 caused an extreme conflict and strong negative feelings and fear of the local communities.

The objective of the meetings made in the frame of the action was to calm these acute negative attitudes, by replying to basic questions of people and by showing them that they were not left alone.

### 4.2 Details of meetings carried out in Bulgaria

Date	Place	Number of participants	Description of topics discussed
24-lug-2009	Gabrovo, Central Balkan Directorate	60	Meeting with National Park rangers, farmers, foresters and local municipality representatives to discuss management and use of resources in National Parks.
22-set-2009	Kalofer-Central Balkan	22	Monitoring of bears, why and how, cooperation between Forestry and Ministry of Environment
30-set-2009	Apriltsi Central Balkan	11	Meeting with foresters and livestock breeders, about bear population size and damage management
22-ott-09	Kalofer	16	Meeting with Foresters and Park rangers about the reliability of bear monitoring and discussing how to improve
24-ott-09	Gabrovo	27	Meeting with Foresters and Park rangers about the reliability of bear monitoring and discussing how to improve
23-ott-10	Plovdiv	46	Meeting with local people after bear caused dead of human and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
24-ott-10	Sofia	27	Meeting with local people after bear caused dead of human and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
19-lug-10	Kutela	25	Meeting with local people after bear caused dead of human and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
20-lug-10	Petkovo	16	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
20-lug-10	Vievo	21	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
20-lug-10	Slaveyno	32	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.



<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Description of topics discussed</b>
20-lug-10	Malka Arda	12	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
22-lug-10	Ryaka	8	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
22-lug-10	Selishte	11	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
22-lug-10	Taran	36	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
26-lug-10	Turyan	30	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
27-lug-10	Stoykite	34	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
27-lug-10	Shiroka Laka	29	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
28-lug-10	Mugla	22	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
29-lug-10	Smolian	35	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
03-ago-10	Starnitsa	6	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
03-ago-10	Zagrajden	20	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
03-ago-10	Davidkovo	7	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
04-ago-10	Malevo	15	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.

Date	Place	Number of participants	Description of topics discussed
04-ago-10	Pavelsko	17	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
04-ago-10	Hvoyna	5	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
02-ago-10	Trigrad	12	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
02-ago-10	Yagodina	16	Meeting with local people after bear killed man and injured another person. Discussions about preventive measures, proper behaviour, BET interventions and local management of populations.
13-mag-10	Plovdiv	45	Meeting with National Forestry board, Local Forestry units, Ministry of Environment and local structures. Discussions about Large Carnivore management on national level. Damage compensation and management, use of preventive measures and stimulating farmers to use them.
30-giu-10	Vlahi	17	meeting with hunters and livestock breeders, presentation about best practices.
14-apr-11	Vlahi		Presentations on alternative tourism as way of benefiting wildlife with local hunters and livestock breeders
06-mag-11	Oreshaka	11	Meeting with livestock breeders and huntres, discussion about use of preventive measures.
07-mag-11	Troyan	15	Meeting with livestock breeders and huntres, discussion about use of preventive measures.
09-gen-12	Bankia	53	Meeting with National Forestry board, Local Forestry units, Ministry of Environment and local structures. Discussions about Large Carnivore management on national level, control of populations.

### 4.3 Results and discussions

Initially during the meetings people were very critical towards the presence of NGOs and MOEW. But during time, as the meetings continued, the effect was positive because most of the local and national media and local people were citing the advises concerning appropriate behavior with bears. The conflicts also decreased because the people felt that they were listened to and they started to follow the advises of BWS and MOEW about adequate behaviors in the forest.

Furthermore, the local communities have shown a big level of satisfaction due to the fact that they now know whom they can to address to when they have a doubt or when a conflict situation appears.

As can be read in the report of action E5 for Bulgaria the conflicts between different institutions (as reported in action A5) still exists but due to the legal changes made in 2010 the management of bears is now equally distributed between the Ministry of Environment and the Executive Forestry Agency.

As a result of the stakeholder consultation process the Ministry of Environment also speeded up the procedures for compensation payments (from 6 months to about 20 days). This very important improvement has led to a decrease of the negative feelings of the local communities towards the Ministry.

## 5. Greece

### 5.1 Background information

Stakeholders engaged in bear conservation, such as farmers, beekeepers, hunters, foresters, NGO'S etc, determine to a considerable extent the outcome of wildlife conservation efforts. Public involvement diminishes negative attitudes towards bears, while in the same time; this process increases stakeholder groups' level of awareness concerning the targeted species and the ways of coexistence.

Negative attitudes towards bears and lack of knowledge concerning the targeted species and the ways of coexistence (preventive measures and compensation measures) consisted one of the main existing problems provoking conflicts in the project area, a problem that has been also enhanced by the lack of communication and trust between breeder associations, local authorities, Forestry District Departments and environmental NGOs.

Forestry District Departments were not dealing properly with wildlife management issues although this was mainly their responsibility and this caused agriculture professionals' and local people's disappointment, feeling abandoned by the state and the authorities, while they were also usually blaming environmental NGO's for their problems with wildlife.

The extensive but illegal use of poison baits has been also a major problem. The lack of communication and the reluctance of both stock breeders and hunters to discuss and find ways to solve this problem was one of the issues that needed to be addressed through the stakeholder involvement meetings.

### 5.2 Details of the meetings

Date	Place	Number of participants	Description of topics discussed	Results
1/12/2009	Cultural Centre of Kalampaka	Approximately 40 participants including the Majors of local Municipalities, representatives of local Agricultural Cooperatives and of the Kalampaka Forestry District Department, the President of the Hunters Association of Kalampaka, as well as farmers, livestock breeders, and members of local NGOs	Dr. Tasos Hovardas, PhD Biology presented the actions of the project LIFE EX-TRA while Alistair Bath, Professor of Environmental Sociology in New Foundland University, Canada gave a lecture on the minimization of conflicts between large carnivores and humans worldwide. The wildlife-reintroduction myth was also discussed.	Discussion on the topic. At the end of the meeting questionnaires related to the surveys on «Stakeholder analysis» & «Analysis of attitudes about coexistence with large carnivores» were handed to the audience. This was made in order to intensify the project efforts on these surveys

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Description of topics discussed</b>	<b>Results</b>
10 May 2010	Trikala and Kalampaka	10 livestock breeders (including representatives of their local association) plus the Heads of the Local Forestry District Departments (2 more persons)	Presentation of the project actions and discussion on several bear conservation issues including the wildlife-reintroduction myth, the compensation system, etc.	Improved relations with animal breeders and the Forestry Service in the project area
29/11/2010	Greek Organisation of Agriculture Insurance (ELGA) Regional Office in Thessaly, at Larissa	5	Compensation paid by ELGA for bear damages at livestock and agriculture /The re-evaluation of compensation measures due to the economic recession in Greece	Thessaly ELGA offices suggested a positive improvement at the evaluation procedure of compensation system.
30/5/2011	Kalampaka, Trikala Municipality	11	The use of poison baits and their impact on the ecosystem/ Targeted stakeholder groups: livestock raisers, hunters, foresters, representatives of other environmental NGO's, representatives of local authorities, Forestry Service staff.	The stakeholder groups targeted at this meeting had the chance to discuss the major problems that derive from the use of poison baits. While they all seemed to condemn poison baits, the discussion which followed the presentations revealed their different views concerning this issue, while they all agreed that it is a problem that can be solved only if they work cooperatively and if they take certain initiatives by committing their members on a series of issues concerning poison baits.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Description of topics discussed</b>	<b>Results</b>
2/12/2011	Hunting Association of Kalampaka, Trikala Municipality	15	Repercussions of the use of poison baits in the project area/ livestock breeders' attitude concerning this issue (based on a research conducted in the frame of another LIFE project, LIFE Pindos/Grevena (LIFE 07NAT/GR/00291)/ Targeted stakeholder group: Hunters	As mentioned above.
22/5/2012	Trikala	60	Bear and Human. Struggle for co-existence. The role of environmental education/ The educational CD which has been produced by the PNGSL through the LIFE EXTRA project, has been presented and disseminated to the teachers of the Greek project area/ Targeted stakeholder group: Teachers	Many teachers of the project area have been informed concerning the project's actions. The meeting's purpose is for primary and secondary school teachers to act as multipliers of knowledge concerning bear conservation actions which have been carried out through the project. Furthermore, this thematic meeting was also designed in order for the educational CD which has been produced by the PNGSL through the LIFE EXTRA project, to be presented and disseminated to the teachers of the Greek project area. Teachers were very enthusiastic concerning the material included at the educational CD and they will definitely use it with their students.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Description of topics discussed</b>	<b>Results</b>
31/7/2012	Kalampaka Forestry Service offices	7	Bear Emergency Team interventions and the role of Forestry Services staff/ BET protocol use/ Targeted stakeholder group: Forestry Services staff	Forestry Services staff learned about the BET protocol and what actions they should undertake in order to deal with unusual bear situations. They have agreed on contributing with their staff in every case that a BET intervention is necessary in order to get familiar with the appropriate techniques used from the project's Bear Emergency Team. The final reason for that is for the Forestry Service to be able on the long term to deal with every unusual case that bears are involved. After this meeting a bear incident in the project area, activated this process., because of a bear that repeatedly caused damages. Project's BET and forestry service staff stayed for 3 days and nights in the area cooperating in dealing with this situation.
28/9/2012	Pyli, Trikala Municipality	9	Human-Bear conflict management/ The effectiveness of preventive measures regarding bear damages/ Management of bears approaching human settlements/ Targeted stakeholder group: Representatives of local authorities	The meeting's purpose was informative concerning the preventive measures available and at the same time local authorities' representatives agreed on putting pressure on the State concerning subsidies for electric fences purchase, while they have also agreed on distributing informative brochures that were produced through the project.

### **5.3 Main Results**

- Improvements in the quantity and quality of information stock breeders get for compensation systems and damage prevention methods.
- Relations between CALLISTO, KENAKAP, the local Forestry District Departments, farmers, stock-breeders and hunters have been substantially improved in the project area. Forestry District Departments are willing to endorse management techniques concerning wildlife (e.g. during the project there was close cooperation between CALLISTO's project team and Forestry District Departments in two cases: a) a bear trapped in a wire loop at Oxyneia (Trikala Municipality) and b) a bear that repeatedly caused damages at Prodromos (Trikala Municipality)). The National Competent Services (Ministry of Environment, Forestry Service, etc.) understood the need to manage properly human/large carnivore conflicts. The adoption of the BET protocol is a very important step forward.
- The Greek Organisation for Farmers Insurance (ELGA) understood the need of prevention methods and has started to plan application – financial support to such measures (LGDs, electric fences).
- Improvement of trust and cooperation between stakeholder groups (stock breeders associations and hunter clubs in the area)

### **5.4 Difficulties encountered and lessons learned**

Although local authorities and Forestry District Departments understood the need for a more effective wildlife management, they don't always have the resources in order to respond in every problematic case that a bear is involved.

Although people do appreciate the process of their involvement in decision making and they want to take part at the solution of their problems, this is a very long and time consuming method. All stakeholder groups are sceptical in the beginning and only when meetings and interest for their problems lasts, they begin to cooperate. Stakeholders have to commit to participate in order from this method to be successful and this is the case after the end of this project at least in two cases because of the BET Protocol that is under adoption and because of ELGA commitment to support financially preventive measures.

### **5.4 How the action will be implemented after the end of the project**

The action will be continued by CALLISTO and KENAKAP, as well as the Forestry Service/Ministry of Environment. The latter has been committed to undertake specific consultation activities in the framework of implementing the Bear Emergency Protocol during the meeting held in Athens, 4 December 2012.

## **6. General conclusions**

### **6.1 Discussion of methods**

One of the first lessons was that whereas in the planning phase of the action the plan had been to use a common method in all the project areas, it was rapidly seen that this was not feasible. In fact, the socio-economic, legal, naturalistic and geographical conditions were so different between the four project countries that it became immediately clear that in each country a common approach had to be adapted to local needs. Once this was understood, the help of specialists in each country has helped to adequately point out specific problems to be faced in the consultation process.

Another important lesson was that the concrete time planning of a stakeholder consultation process is almost impossible. This is due to the fact that before the beginning of the process the real extent of different problems experienced by the stakeholder groups is not known. It is likely that during the consultation process new problems appear, which cannot be ignored. The same is to be said for the participation. It cannot be estimated in advance how many people will want to get involved in the process, representing how many stakeholder groups etc. And since the timing of consultation meetings is strongly influenced by the willingness of the stakeholders to participate, also this cannot be planned ahead.

Finally, one more thing that cannot be foreseen in the outcome of the process. In past experiences it has happened repeatedly that meetings with stakeholders were planned in order to agree on damage prevention strategies, but then in the discussions it came out that the real, more urgent problems for the local groups were other ones, such as lack of grazing infrastructures. Therefore, in order to mitigate conflicts the final solutions were different than was initially planned.

All these uncertainties suggest that a stakeholder consultation process should be faced with sufficient flexibility in order to allow the adequate participation and solutions to develop.

In Italy, an analytical and operational method, based on qualitative factors, allowed to move towards the institutionalization of the participatory process and the formal engagement of stakeholder groups. Through a methodology based on public debate at an informal level, it was possible to implement concerted and institutionalized agreements. Thus, all involved parties could acquire more skills aimed at a coexistence between the human activity, carried out in the protected areas, and conservation needs, in particular as regards the wolf.

In Romania, the partner has chosen more traditional participatory practices for the economic and institutional stakeholders, in order to create new communication, information and discussion channels. Here too, this methodology has led to a dissemination of good practice as regards agriculture and breeding management and prevention, which promote coexistence with large carnivores such as bears. It is very important to continue to research and to implement new scientific methods regarding a participatory wildlife management.

In Bulgaria, the partner played a fundamental educational and inclusive role - mainly to local communities, involving the main stakeholders in the bear management (formalizing working groups in BET) and creating new communication channels with the Ministry of Environment, in relation to such issues as compensation measures and prevention measures.

In Greece, a complex scientific method, based mainly on the analysis of quantitative data, allowed a more concrete involvement of national and local institutions, as well as of local stakeholder groups, ensuring a permanent negotiating table in order to face the most complex and conflicting issues, by opening new communication channels, facilitated and promoted by Greek partners.

These different methodologies were applied by subjects with different legal status that led to very similar overall results. The non-standardization of the scientific method in the Human Dimension



stems from the social, legal, legislative and economic complexity of those who promote it and of the communities that implement it. The assessment method goes in the same direction. The common factor remains the inclusiveness, the listening, the high ability to interact and to aim at environmental governance strategies.

## **6.2 Added value of the partnership in the Human Dimension**

Despite the diversity of the methods applied and tested in the project activities related to the Human Dimension, the partners reached one sole objective: conflict analysis and difference of opinions among the different stakeholder groups (economic, social, institutional, etc. ) and the consequent opening of inclusive and effective communication channels related to the participatory wildlife management, as well as the promotion of a new level of communication and relationship among the different stakeholders.

In all the countries, the most satisfactory result was the launch of a process which is unlikely to halt, because of its strategic importance in the large carnivores conservation.

The added value of the partnership is therefore the intense dialogue for the verification of the different methodologies and of the results.

The stakeholder analyses were very useful and are a novelty in project areas. The possibility to extend such studies also at regional or national level would be strongly desirable, not only to know the attitudes of people across the entire country but also to assess the maximum accepted carnivore population level by the human population. But it is clear that modern sociological research methods should be used in terms to assess the potential for conflict on different management strategies and policies in the field of large carnivore conservation.

## Annex – sample lists of participants



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Progetto Comunitario LIFE 07/NAT/IT/000502 "Improving the conditions for large carnivore conservation – a transfer of best practices" – EX-TRA

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## II PARCO NAZIONALE DEL GRAN SASSO E MONTI DELLA LAGA



Nell'ambito del percorso partecipativo avviato

**organizza**

il terzo incontro

de

**IL PARCO IN ASCOLTO**

il giorno

**13 Dicembre 2011, dalle ore 15.00 alle ore 18.00**

Presso la sede dell'Ente in via del Convento ad Assergi

*Per la promozione di momenti di dialogo e partecipazione attiva a favore della valorizzazione del territorio*

*Facilitatore: Davide Tamagnini*

*Interverranno il Presidente del Parco Dott. Arturo Diaconale, il direttore dott. Marcello Maranella ed i funzionari dell'Ente*

