

Convention on the Conservation
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Recommendation No. 173 (2014) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 5 December 2014, on hybridisation between wild grey wolves (*Canis lupus*) and domestic dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*)

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aims of the Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and its natural habitats;

Recalling in particular Articles 2, 3, 6 and 7 of the Convention;

Recalling its Recommendations No. 74 (1999) on the conservation of large carnivores, No. 82 (2000) on urgent measures concerning the implementation of action plans for large carnivores in Europe, No. 115 (2005) on the conservation and management of transboundary populations of large carnivores, No. 137 (2008) on population level management of large carnivores populations, No. 162 (2012) on the conservation of large carnivores populations in Europe requesting special conservation action, and No. 163 (2012) on the management of expanding populations of large carnivores in Europe;

Recalling also the “Action Plan for the Conservation of the Wolves (*Canis lupus*) in Europe” [“Nature and Environment Series” No. 113] and the “Guidelines for Population Level Management Plans for Large Carnivores” [document T-PVS/Inf(2008)17];

Aware of the challenges posed to the conservation of wolves (*Canis lupus*) by hybridisation between wild wolves and domestic dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*);

Noting the need to address these challenges through effective preventive and mitigation measures, including the detection of free-ranging wolf-dog hybrids and their government-controlled removal from wild wolf populations exclusively by bodies entrusted with this responsibility by the competent authorities;

Noting, at the same time, that it is in the interest of effective wolf conservation to ensure that the removal of any detected wolf-dog hybrids is conducted exclusively in a government-controlled manner;

Noting that several Contracting Parties already adopted measures to prevent wolves from being intentionally or mistakenly killed as wolf-dog hybrids;

Taking note of document T-PVS/Inf (2014) 15, analysing the scope and substance of relevant legal obligations under the Bern Convention in respect of the problem of wolf-dog hybridization;

Wishing to clarify the meaning of the provisions of the Convention in respect of the problem of wolf-dog hybridisation,

Recommends the Contracting Parties to the Convention to:

1. Take adequate measures to monitor, prevent and mitigate hybridisation between wild wolves and dogs, including, as appropriate, effective measures to minimise numbers of feral and stray (free-ranging) dogs, and the prohibition or restriction of the keeping of wolves and wolf-dog hybrids as pets;
2. Take action to promote the detection of free-ranging wolf-dog hybrids, and to ensure government-controlled removal of detected wolf-dog hybrids from wild wolf populations;
3. Ensure that the government-controlled removal of wolf-dog hybrids takes place after government officials and/or the bodies entrusted by governments for this purpose and/or researchers have confirmed them as hybrids using genetic and/or morphological features. Removal should only be carried out by bodies entrusted by the competent authorities with such a responsibility, while ensuring that such removal does not undermine the conservation status of wolves;
4. Adopt the necessary measures to prevent wolves from being intentionally or mistakenly killed as wolf-dog hybrids. This is without prejudice to the careful government-controlled removal of detected wolf-dog hybrids from the wild by bodies entrusted with this responsibility by the competent authorities.

Footnote: Reminder of prohibitions under second sentence of Article 6

The following will in particular be prohibited for these species:

- a all forms of deliberate capture and keeping and deliberate killing;
- b the deliberate damage to or destruction of breeding or resting sites;
- c the deliberate disturbance of wild fauna, particularly during the period of breeding, rearing and hibernation, insofar as disturbance would be significant in relation to the objectives of this Convention;
- d the deliberate destruction or taking of eggs from the wild or keeping these eggs even if empty;
- e the possession of and internal trade in these animals, alive or dead, including stuffed animals and any readily recognisable part or derivative thereof, where this would contribute to the effectiveness of the provisions of this article.