

Development of conservation strategies for the Balkan and Carpathian lynx

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1. Background – CMS listing and concerted action proposal
2. Lynx on continental Europe
3. The approach
4. State of work and next steps





CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.1/Rev.1
23 November 2023
Original: English

14th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12 – 17 February 2024
Agenda Item 31.4

PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE EURASIAN LYNX (*Lynx lynx*)
IN APPENDIX II AND BALKAN LYNX (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*)
IN APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION*

Summary:

North Macedonia as proponent, Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania as co-proponent have submitted the attached proposal for the inclusion of the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in Appendix II and Balkan Lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*) in Appendix I of CMS.

A revised version of the supportive statement to the listing proposal has been submitted by the proponent on 29 September 2023 to address the comments of the CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC6 UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.1/Add.1). This has resulted in amendments to the supportive statement relating to:

- Whether the species has a conservation status that would benefit from international cooperation.
- The migratory behaviour of the species, taking into consideration aspects of the cyclical and predictable nature of movements, as interpreted in UNEP/CMS/Resolution 13.7 Guidelines for Preparing and Assessing Proposals for the Amendment of CMS Appendices.
- The proportion of the global population of the species that are transboundary populations.

1. Background – CMS listing and concerted action proposal



EU statement to the Listing Proposal at CMS COP 14:

“The EU and its MS would like to thank the Governments of North Macedonia as proponent, and Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania as co-proponents, for submitting this proposal.

The EU and its MS support the inclusion of the Eurasian Lynx in Appendix II of the Convention, and of the Balkan Lynx in Appendix I as this subspecies is facing a serious extinction risk nowadays.

The conservation status of the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) as a whole would benefit from international cooperation. Given that several Eurasian Lynx populations are isolated and fragmented, international cooperation under CMS could result in improving habitats and connectivity for this species. Increased connectivity would also help address inbreeding problems for those populations.”

→ Supported by other Range States and international organisations and consensually accepted at the COP.



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.4
12 June 2023
Original: English

14th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 12 – 17 February 2024
Agenda Item 32.3

PROPOSAL FOR A CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE EURASIAN LYNX (*Lynx lynx*) PROPOSED FOR LISTING ON APPENDIX II (AND I for *L. l. balcanicus*) OF THE CONVENTION*

Summary:

The Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) has a large, continuous and stable population in the boreal forest belt of the Palearctic region. Its four southern subspecies however are either threatened or in need of more reliable information to assess their conservation status. This CA proposes to develop, in cooperation with the Range States, explicit conservation plans for the European subspecies *L. l. balcanicus* and *L. l. carpathicus*. For the Asian subspecies *L. l. isabellinus* and *L. l. dinniki*, robust baseline surveys are foreseen, combined with building range-wide conservation cooperation and training of local experts to advance future conservation activities. *L. l. isabellinus* is suggested to be included in CMS CAMI.

Proponents: IUCN SSC (Cat Specialist Group) and Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention



1. Background – CMS listing and concerted action proposal



EU statement to the CA Proposal at CMS COP 14:

“The EU and its MS support the approval of the Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) [...]

We acknowledge the importance of this conservation initiative under the CMS in Europe to promote transboundary cooperation that is essential for a wide-ranging species as the Eurasian Lynx with mostly transboundary populations.

We believe that the implementation of this Concerted Action [...] will contribute to the recovery of their populations, including through improved cooperation between the Range States and more focused conservation efforts of all stakeholders. [...]

The EU and its MS appreciate the work and efforts undertaken so far by IUCN Specialist Groups, several universities, and other scientific institutions, as well as national authorities and the engagement of several large conservation organisations and expect that additional funding will be provided to support the activities promoted by this Concerted Action in the various Range States.”

→ Supported by other Range States and international organisations and consensually accepted at the COP.

**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.32.3.4

12 June 2023

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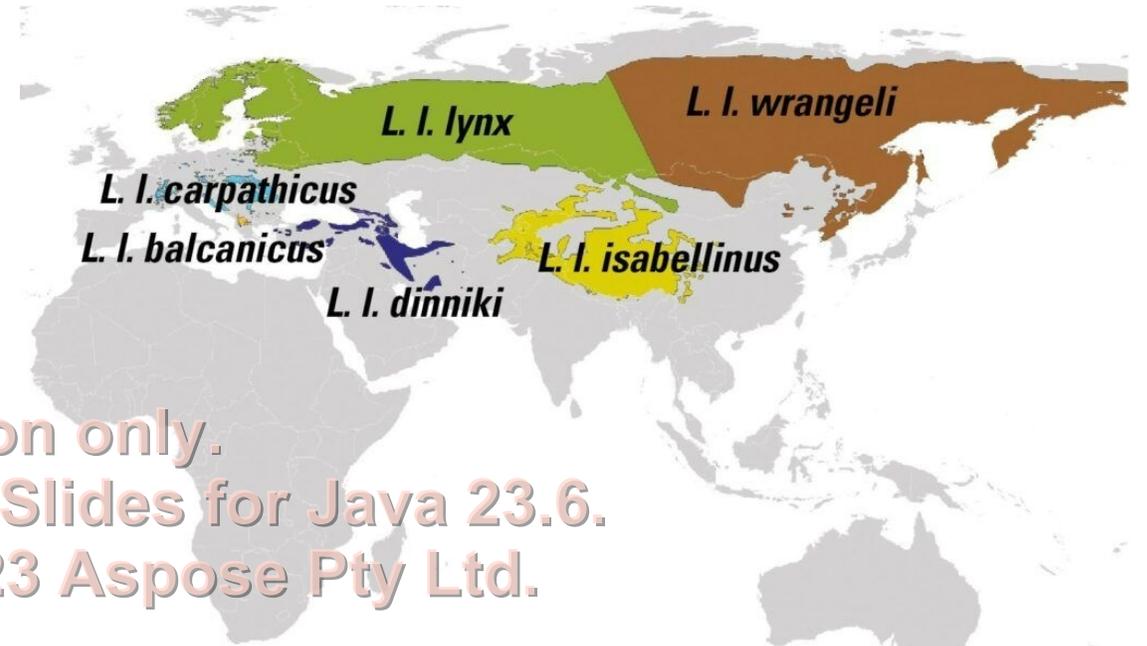
Agenda Item 32.3

**PROPOSAL FOR A CONCERTED ACTION FOR
THE EURASIAN LYNX (*Lynx lynx*) PROPOSED FOR LISTING
ON APPENDIX II (AND I for *L. l. balcanicus*) OF THE CONVENTION***

Summary:

The Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) has a large, continuous and stable population in the boreal forest belt of the Palearctic region. Its four southern subspecies however are either threatened or in need of more reliable information to assess their conservation status. This CA proposes to develop, in cooperation with the Range States, explicit conservation plans for the European subspecies *L. l. balcanicus* and *L. l. carpathicus*. For the Asian subspecies *L. l. isabellinus* and *L. l. dinniki*, robust baseline surveys are foreseen, combined with building range-wide conservation cooperation and training of local experts to advance future conservation activities. *L. l. isabellinus* is suggested to be included in CMS CAMI.

Proponents: IUCN SSC (Cat Specialist Group) and Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention



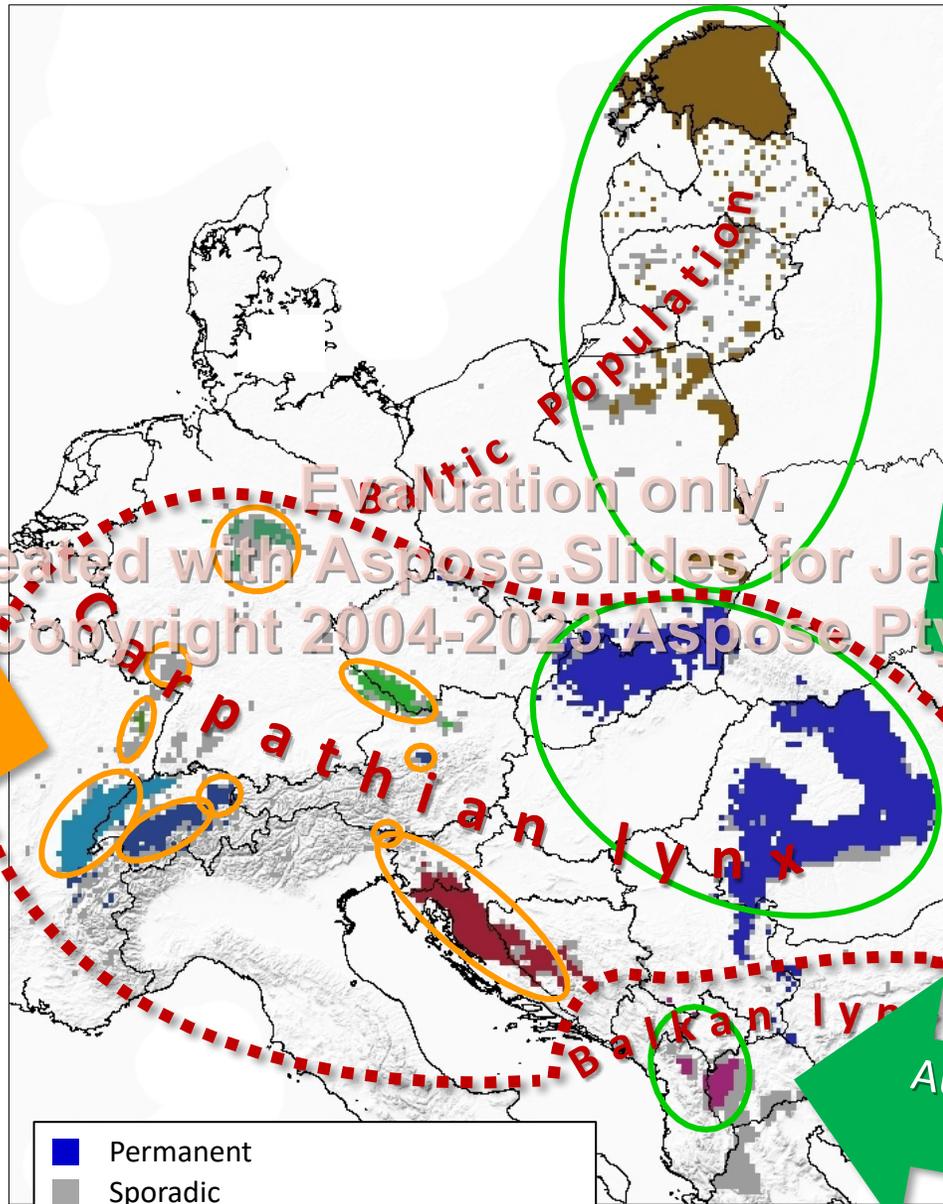
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Expected results from Concerted Action project:

1. Red List and Green Status of Species assessments for *Lynx lynx* and all six subspecies
2. Conservation strategy for *L. l. balcanicus*
3. Conservation strategy for *L. l. carpathicus*
4. IUCN SSC Guidelines for reintroduction in the “Realm of the Carpathian lynx”

“Realm”



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Reintroduced populations of Carpathian lynx

Autochthous population of Carpathian lynx

Autochthous population of Balkan lynx

IUCN Guidelines

Conservation Strategies

Development of Conservation Strategies for the Balkan lynx and the lynx in the Carpathians

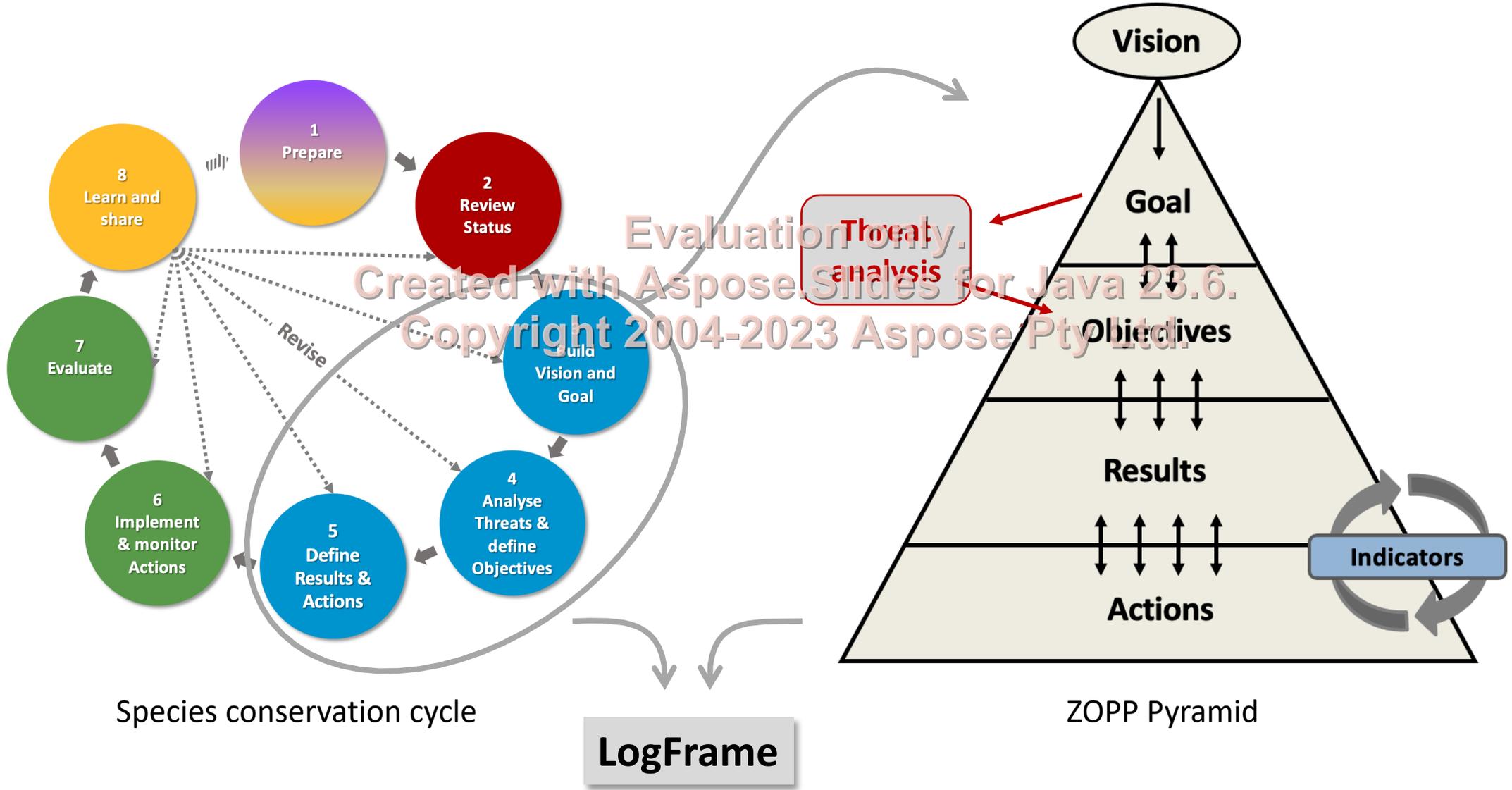
Objective: To develop range-wide strategies as a basis for international/transboundary cooperation and for National Action Plans

Steps:

1. An expert group including range country representatives develops, in several online workshops, a draft conservation strategy
2. The draft strategy is submitted to the range states authorities in charge and reviewed and discussed in a physical meeting between the range states representatives and the experts
3. The final draft strategy is submitted to the Conventions (CMS, Bern Convention, Carpathian Conventions) and to the respective Range States bodies for review and comments
4. Second revision and resubmission
5. The final draft strategy is discussed and endorsed by the respective bodies of the Convention and the Range States
6. The strategy is implemented (e.g. through National Action Plans) and reviewed and adopted as needed

Development of Conservation Strategies for the Balkan lynx and the lynx in the Carpathians

According to IUCN SSC (2017): Guidelines for Species Conservation Planning



CONSTRAINT

DRIVER

THREAT

Biology of the lynx

Genetics & isolation

Small population size

Isolation of the population

Genetic impoverishment

Socio-economic development

Socio-economic constraints

Livelihoods

Climate change

Beyond this strategy...

Political climate

Attitudes, norms & ignorance

Research & awareness

Lack of knowledge

Poor legislation and management

Weak law enforcement

Habitat quality & fragmentation

Infrastructure development

Unsustainable logging

Unsustainable hunting

Illegal logging

Infrastructure & roads

Lack of passages & signalisation

Poaching (of prey species)

Forest fires

Illegal killing

Illegal killing of lynx

Disease & contaminants

Disease transmission livestock to wildlife or between wildlife

Habitat destruction & fragmentation

Road mortality

Prey availability

Low prey abundance

Stray dogs

Diseases?

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Overview	Balkan lynx (entire range)	Carpathian lynx Carpathians	“Realm”
	In review	In preparation	In preparation
	In review	In preparation	In preparation
Strategic Planning	Expert draft: Done	In preparation	In preparation
	Review meeting: Done	In planning	n. a.
	Submission: In preparation	---	---

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Schedule: Finish all tasks except guidelines for the “Realm” until mid-October 2025 to be submitted to Bern Convention Standing Committee and CMS Scientific Council (deadline 24 October 2025)



Overview of the Suggested Objectives and Results under the Draft Balkan lynx range-wide CMS Strategy

Vision: The long-term existence of a viable BLx population in harmony with and supported by local communities

Goal: By 2040, the BLx is down-listed at least to Endangered based on IUCN RL criteria, with increasing population and expanding range

Legislative and institutional changes	Mitigation of threats and drivers	Enhance knowledge	Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in SEA/EIA legislation/spatial/management plans • National Action plans • Financial mechanisms to support especially local people's needs • International support and stronger transboundary cooperation • Capacity building + strategy coordination committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and mitigation of the drivers of illegal killing • Sufficient prey across the BLx range • Prevent and mitigate habitat degradation • Minimize habitat fragmentation (current and future infrastructure developments and ensuring connectivity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disease prevalence and mitigation/control of outbreaks • Mitigate effects of inbreeding through genetic rescue • Awareness raising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain demographic, health and genetic monitoring • Monitoring results made publicly available



Overview

Balkan lynx
(entire range)Carpathian lynx
Carpathians

"Realm"



In review



In review

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Strategic
Planning

Expert draft:

Done

Review meeting:

Done

Submission:

In preparation

Thank you for your attention!

