



Strasbourg, 04 February 2025

T-PVS/Files(2025)2022-2\_compl

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

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**Standing Committee**

45<sup>th</sup> meeting

Strasbourg, 8-12 December 2025

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**Bureau of the Standing Committee**

8-10 April 2025

Strasbourg

**Complaint on Stand-by: 2022/02**

**Alleged violation of the Convention in relation to deliberate killing  
of *lutra lutra*  
(Austria)**

**- COMPLAINANT REPORT -**

*Document prepared by  
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Unfortunately nothing has changed for the otter in Carinthia. The new Carinthian regulation from December 12, 2024 (in the appendix) **allows the use of Conibear traps as before, including in fish ladders in nature reserves. Carinthia is 100% in the Alpine biographical region. In this region the conservation status of the otter is not favorable.**

The catch quotas in the Excel table come from a UIG request from the Austrian Nature Conservation Association to the authorities, so they are the official ones ( the number of unreported cases is much higher. )

Carinthia has now killed 232 fish otters from 2018 to 2024. 111 female otters and 116 males. The sex of 5 animals was not determined.

The protection of suckling otter mothers is still not being observed. Therefore, many orphaned otter children die; the number of young who died without a mother is missing from the Excel table. The number of unreported cases is high because otter mothers look after their young for more than a year. The otter children learn from their mothers, Without a mother they are lost in the wilderness. If they are still being suckled they starve.

179 otters were painfully killed in the cruel, non-selective Conibear traps. After these traps are also set underwater, many otters slowly suffocate underwater in a prolonged struggle for survival (they try to free themselves from the traps, but in vain).

We refer to the entire contents of our 2024 report. Everything is still up to date. We send you this report again in the appendix.

The text of the new regulation in Carinthia from December 2024 has also not changed compared to the old text. Here again the quoted paragraphs:

### *§ 3 Areas of intervention and quota*

*(1) Otters in all forms of development may only be caught by specially trained hunting protection bodies and specially trained hunters from 1 January to 31 December in the area of fishing waters, with the exception of waters pursuant to para. 3 and non-fenceable pond facilities, using trapping equipment that captures intact (live traps). From March 1 to October 31, only captured males, young otters, non-leading and obviously not pregnant females may be killed. From March 1 to October 31, captured leading and obviously pregnant females may not be killed, but must be released unharmed and immediately at the place of capture.*

*(2) From November 1 to the last day of February, otters in all forms of development may be caught or hunted and killed with long guns using permitted trapping methods by specially trained hunting protection bodies and specially trained hunters, but live traps are to be used as a matter of priority."*

*(3) The capture and killing of otters in the following waters is not permitted, except in the immediate vicinity of fish ladders: [...] Also not permitted, except in the immediate vicinity of fish ladders, are the capture and killing of otters in European protected areas in which the otter is designated as a protected species, in national parks, biosphere parks and in naturally standing waters.*

*(4) The maximum number of otters that may be taken in Carinthia is 50 per year. A maximum of 50 otters may be taken in the first and second year following the entry into force of the Ordinance (§ 9).*

### *§ 4 Trapping*

*(1) For trapping from March 1 to October 31, only traps whose functionality, design and size guarantee the integrity of the animals during trapping may be used. Only traps that are used for the capture of other marten-like animal species comparable in size under hunting law may be used. Otter*

*traps for live trapping must be designed in such a way that other game species cannot be caught with them. The live traps must be checked at least twice a day.*

*(2) For trapping from November 1 to the last day of February, all permitted trapping means and methods may be used, but live traps should be used as a matter of priority. When using conibear traps, only conibear traps with a side length of 30 cm may be used.*

#### *§ 7 Supervision [...]*

*(2) For the purpose of preserving evidence and monitoring, the killed otters (together with their bodies) must be made available to the provincial government upon request within 48 hours (from notification). The person authorized to hunt has the right to appropriate the captured and killed otters in accordance with § 1a para. 1 of the Carinthian Hunting Act 2000.*

#### *§ 8 Monitoring*

*To ensure that otter populations remain in a favorable conservation status despite temporary shortening of the closed season, the Carinthian provincial government must carry out regular monitoring of the population development and conservation status of the otter.*