



Strasbourg, 12 December 2025

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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

45th meeting

Strasbourg, 8 - 12 December 2025

**Terms of Reference
of The Group of Experts on Large
Carnivores - Revised**

Document prepared by the Secretariat

Mandate of the Group

1. to review the conservation status and challenges of large carnivores in the territory of Contracting Parties and observer States of the Convention;
2. to advise on appropriate conservation actions with the aim of maintaining and/or restoring the populations of large carnivores at the level prescribed in Article 2 of the Convention and in line of the specific requirements of its Chapter III;
3. to propose ways and methods to manage or mitigate economic and social conflicts regarding large carnivores to promote co-existence between large carnivores and humans;
4. to facilitate transboundary, intersectoral dialogue and peer exchange between decision makers, academics, civil society and other stakeholders regarding large carnivores, knowledge about them etc.;
5. to identify and address potential gaps in conservation of large carnivores within Bern Convention Party geographical scope;
6. to propose draft recommendations and other relevant instruments to the Standing Committee in the field of conservation of large carnivores;
7. to promote public awareness, engagement and access to information on large carnivores and their conservation;
8. to assist the Standing Committee on any matters related to large carnivores, including any changes to the protection status of large carnivore species, and to make any science-based proposals related to large carnivore conservation.

Within this scope, the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its Bureau may entrust specific tasks to the Group, with deliverables aimed to support the compliance with the Bern Convention.

Main deliverables

Based on proposals made by the Group in June 2025 and further discussed on 30 September, and on feedback from the Bureau in September 2025, the draft Work Plan for Group of Experts on large carnivores is to be proposed for the Standing Committee's consideration in December 2025. To timely advance with the implementation of the tasks requested by the Standing Committee in 2024, some of the work stipulated underneath has been done in 2025.

#	Deliverable ¹	Timeline
1	A guidance tool on management of protected and strictly protected populations of large carnivores in Europe	December 2025
2	Proposed scope of a survey to monitor the situation of the wolf after its downlisting.	December 2025
3	The survey to be addressed to the Parties of the Bern Convention concerning the changes in the legislation or on administrative level, resulting from the downlisting of wolf	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft survey proposed to the Parties 	January – February 2026
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting the survey, collecting results 	March - April 2026
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the survey, complemented by desk analysis and commented by the Group of Experts and the Bureau 	May - September 2026

4	Drafting of a recommendation/guidance tool on managing bold individuals	by November 2026
5	Updating selected recommendations concerning large carnivores	by November 2027
6	Drafting a new recommendation/guidance tool on other topics given priority by the Group and the Standing Committee	by November 2027

¹ *Some or all the above-mentioned actions could be done in collaboration with LCIE: a proposal for a joint set of activities could be submitted under a clear mandate from the Bureau/Standing Committee.*

The role of the Group is also to bring issues related to the conservation and management of large carnivores to the attention of the Standing Committee as they consider needed.

Composition:

The Group will gather experts nominated by the Parties to the Convention and the Observers of the Standing Committee for their expertise in conservation and management of large carnivores.

Representatives of the Parties

Parties to the Convention may designate one representative with the relevant expertise regarding large carnivores.

The Council of Europe will bear the travel and subsistence expenses of one representative from Parties whose attendance costs may be covered, as defined in the yearly work plan.

Observers

Observers to the Bern Convention Standing Committee may send representatives with relevant expertise regarding large carnivores, without defrayal of expenses, unless stated explicitly otherwise.

President

The Group will elect its President from among the Party representatives by consensus. The President may represent the Group in front of the Standing Committee or on other relevant occasions.

Duration of the mandate

The Group is given a mandate with specific deliverables for the term of 3 years, renewable by the Standing Committee according to needs.

Working methods

The Group will meet once a year, interchangeably – in person/in a hybrid mode and online.

Thematic sub-groups may advance their work independently, informing the Secretariat as needed.

The Group may decide to invite to its meetings experts with relevant expertise to help advancing the work of the Group.

Rules of procedure, consistent for all groups of experts to the extent possible, will guide the other aspects of the functioning of the Group.