MANAGEMENT OF BOLD WOLVES

Policy support Statement of the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe

Large Carnivore
Initiative for Europe

IUCN/SSC WORKING GROUP

Document prepared within the LCIE based on the previous work done by
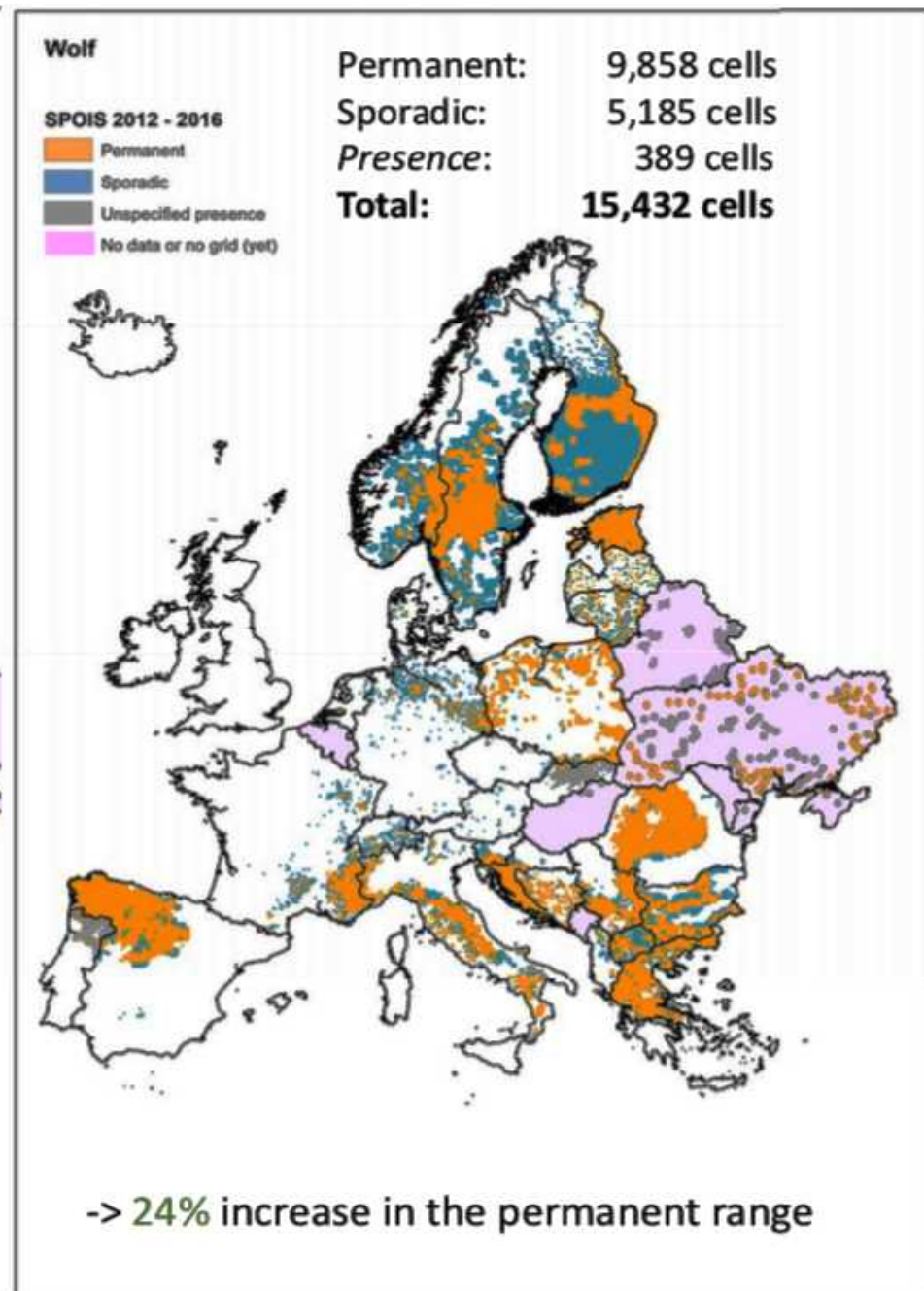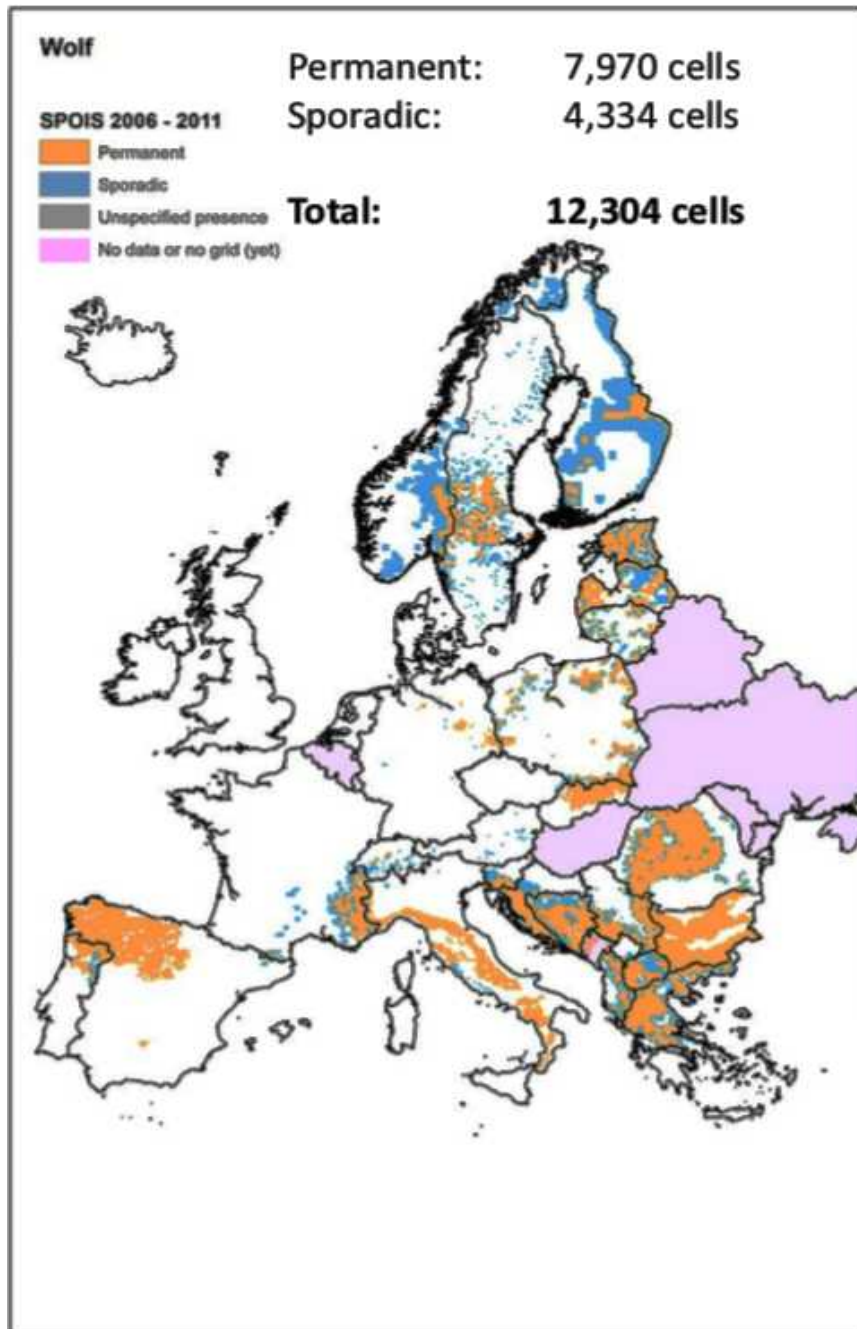
Ilka Reinhardt (lupus NGO, DE)
Petra Kaczensky (NINA, NO)
Jens Frank (SUAS, SE)
Felix Knauer (VetMed, AT)
Gesa Kluth (lupus NGO, DE)

General expansion of wolf in Europe

Wolf

SPOIS 2006 - 2011
- Permanent
- Sporadic
- Unspecified presence
- No data or no grid (yet)

Permanent:	7,970 cells
Sporadic:	4,334 cells
Total:	12,304 cells

Wolf

SPOIS 2012 - 2016
- Permanent
- Sporadic
- Unspecified presence
- No data or no grid (yet)

Permanent:	9,858 cells
Sporadic:	5,185 cells
Presence:	389 cells
Total:	15,432 cells

-> 24% increase in the permanent range

Kaczensky et al 2017

General expansion of wolf in Europe

Increased visibility

General expansion of wolf in Europe

Human reactions of fear

1. Situations where wolves really act in unusual manner

2. Situations where human expectations of "normal" wolf behaviour not satisfied (bold / hybrids)

Definition of Terminology

- **Habituation**

Animals get used to repeatedly occurring stimuli (either negative or positive)

Habituated wolves have learned that humans pose no threats, thus human presence is not a danger

BUT

Strong habituation (tolerance to immediate presence of humans) may be problematic

Definition of Terminology

- **Close encounters**

Distance to *humans* <30mt.

Not in cars or other features

Arbitrary distance (max working distance for deterring rubber bullets)

Definition of Terminology

- **Positive Conditioning**

  Behaviour reinforced through positive stimulus

  Food conditioning

Definition of Terminology

- **Negative Conditioning**

  Behaviour or situation linked to a negative experience

  Deterrents

Definition of Terminology

- **Bold Wolf**

"A wolf that repeatedly tolerates recognisable humans within a distance of 30mt or even actively approaches people within such distance."

Prerequisite: strong habituation

Reinforced by positive conditioning

The context – wolves in cultural landscapes

Attractants: easy accessible sources of food, dogs

Boldness has genetic component, may not be sufficient to have negative experiences

Guiding principles for management of bold wolves (case specific)

1. Prevention

Prevent wolves becoming strongly habituated and/or positively conditioned due to human behaviour

Do not approach / do not feed!

Guiding principles for management of bold wolves (case specific)

2. Documentation

Case name	A case is defined by a individual animal, group of animals, or territory									
Opened by	Name of manager			Opened date	Date when opened					
Date when reported to VSC		Date when the case was sent to institution responsible (VSC in Sweden, DBBW / LUPUS)in Germany)								
Events-reports from the public, observations or interventions from rangers in direct response to report										
ID	Date	Time of day	Next village	Coordinates	Who observed	Circumstances	Type of location	No. of wolves	Identity of wolf	Dog involved

Document cases of bold wolves in a manner that allows for future pan-European analyses

Open a case file each time a tolerant wolf is reported, insert first hand information

Every report should be verified in the field and analysed by experts

Guiding principles for management of bold wolves (case specific)

3. Intervention

Search for and remove attractants if found

If not successful consider deterrent measures for providing negative conditioning (document accurately every step taken)

Final option: removal of wolf

Guiding principles for management of bold wolves (case specific)

4. Information

Inform the public form the very beginning about assessment process and logic behind procedures

Inform that expected and real wolf behaviour may differ (adaptability to changing world)

Priorities for supporting implementation of management policies

- Accumulate case files

- Further investigate role of genetics, personalities, age

- Assess effect of hunting management regimes

- Assess effectiveness of deterring measures

Guiding table

Behavior	Assessment	Recommendation for action	
Wolf passes close to settlements in the dark.	Not dangerous.	No need for action.	🟢
Wolf moves within sighting distance of settlements / scattered houses during daylight.	Not dangerous.	No need for action.	🟢
Wolf does not run away immediately when seeing vehicles or humans. Stops and observes.	Not dangerous.	No need for action.	🟢
Wolf is seen over several days <30m from inhabited houses (multiple events over a longer time period).	Demands attention. Possible problem of strong habituation or positive conditioning.	Analyze situation. Search for attractants and remove them if found. Consider aversive conditioning.	🟠
Wolf repeatedly allows people to approach it within 30m.	Demands attention. Indicates strong habituation. Possible problem of positive conditioning.	Analyze situation. Consider aversive conditioning.	🟡
Wolf repeatedly approaches people by itself closer than 30m. Seems to be interested in people.	Demands attention / critical situation. Positive conditioning and strong habituation may lead to an increasingly bold behavior. Risk of injury.	Consider aversive conditioning. Remove the wolf if appropriate aversive conditioning is not successful or practical.	🔴
Wolf attacks or injures a human without being provoked.	Dangerous.	Removal.	🔴

Document available

Text downladable from:

www.lcie.org

- Translations welcome (will be made available on the LCIE website after check of coherence by LCIE members)

LIFE Project Proposal

LIFE Lupus Urbi

Portugal – Spain – Italy – Slovenia – Croatia – Sweden – Greece

Award Criteria	AW1	AW2	Pass Score*
Max. score and Min. passing score	20 (pass 5)	30 (pass 10)	50 (pass 15)
Final scores	11	15	26

Please note that the threshold for being invited to submit a Full Proposal was:

- 29 points under the priority area *Nature and Biodiversity*

Main actions:

1. Classification of behaviour

2. Establishment of intervention teams

3. Community involvement

4. Assessment of effectiveness

→ International workshop in collaboration with EU platform?