

PLATFORMS' MEETINGS PROCEEDINGS BOOKLET

Deliverable E.3



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Action E3

Developing participatory approach
and regional stakeholders' platforms

LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972



Project LIFE18 NAT/IT/000972 - LIFE WolfAlps EU

“Coordinated Actions to Improve Wolf-Human Coexistence at the Alpine Population Level”

Action E3 – Developing participatory approach and regional stakeholders' platforms

Deliverable: **Platforms' meetings proceedings booklet**

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Life Wolf Alps EU and the participation of stakeholders

The [LIFE Wolf Alps EU project](#) contributes considerably to the wider societal objectives of biodiversity conservation – according to the 2015 and 2019 Eurobarometer (Eu Commission, [2015](#); [2019](#)) – 80% of Europeans consider biodiversity loss a serious problem in Europe and their own country, 50% think projects damaging nature should not be allowed for economic reasons versus only 7% who prioritize economic development. The LIFE Wolf Alps EU project foresees high levels of stakeholder participation and facilitation of networking between stakeholders from different countries, especially through Action E3. This directly contributes to building and strengthening of social capital, enabling better and more inclusive decision making. According to the [2019 Eurobarometer](#), 60% of Europeans expect environmental decisions to be taken jointly; therefore, the population level and transboundary approach taken by this project contribute to this important objective. In this action, the project partners used a participatory approach, through thematic platforms and local meetings, to periodically bring together the main stakeholders (farmers, hunters, environmental protection associations) to highlight critical issues and needs, identify and facilitate solutions and share relevant project results with each stakeholder.

E3.1 Thematic Platforms

These participatory meetings function as “antennas” to detect consensus on the project and to understand the issues and problems on which to intensify efforts. The platforms are also an opportunity to disseminate the project vision, mission and results. All partners periodically organized local different thematic platforms for discussion according to the local context, urgent issues and needs of the participants. The platforms are strictly aligned to the [EU Regional to local large carnivore platforms](#) concepts. All the proceedings of the meetings are published on the project website and collected and published in this booklet as Annex.

E3.2 Meetings with Stakeholders

Thanks to this sub-action, meetings were organised at local level with each of the key stakeholder categories to discuss the relevant issues for each category and to inform about the results of the project. In each country of the project, meetings were organized with:

- livestock farmers, to discuss predator damage and prevention systems.
- hunters, to share the results of the evaluation of the prey-predator-hunter dynamics.
- environmental protection associations.

1.2. Specific project aims and needs

A participatory approach involving and engaging key stakeholders (farmers, hunters and environmentalists) is functional to a lower conflict level acting in two directions: increasing the knowledge of stakeholders on wolves and considering their needs and suggestions. Through thematic platforms and local meetings tailored for each stakeholder, the consortium makes them true actors in the process of building wolf-human coexistence in the Alps. They become messengers for the project results, helping us to gain and maintain support for the project among different types of publics.

A key output of the project is the organization of the Stakeholders Dialogue Platforms. In the previous LIFE WOLFALPS project these participatory meetings proved to be extremely useful “antennas” to disseminate project vision, mission and results, and to “detect” firsthand the general project consensus, the themes on which to intensify local efforts and any issue emerging during the project life cycle. Smaller, focused platforms could perform better in terms of participation and inputs received in relation to a certain topic. Thus, as set out in the Stakeholders Engagement Map (Deliverable E2.1.) the partners organize a set of different “Thematic Dialogue Platforms” according to the local stakeholders, challenges, and needs. Each Thematic Platform run on a periodic basis during the project (at least once a year for 3 years). All the Platform's meetings proceedings are published in progress on the website and on a digital booklet by the end of the project.

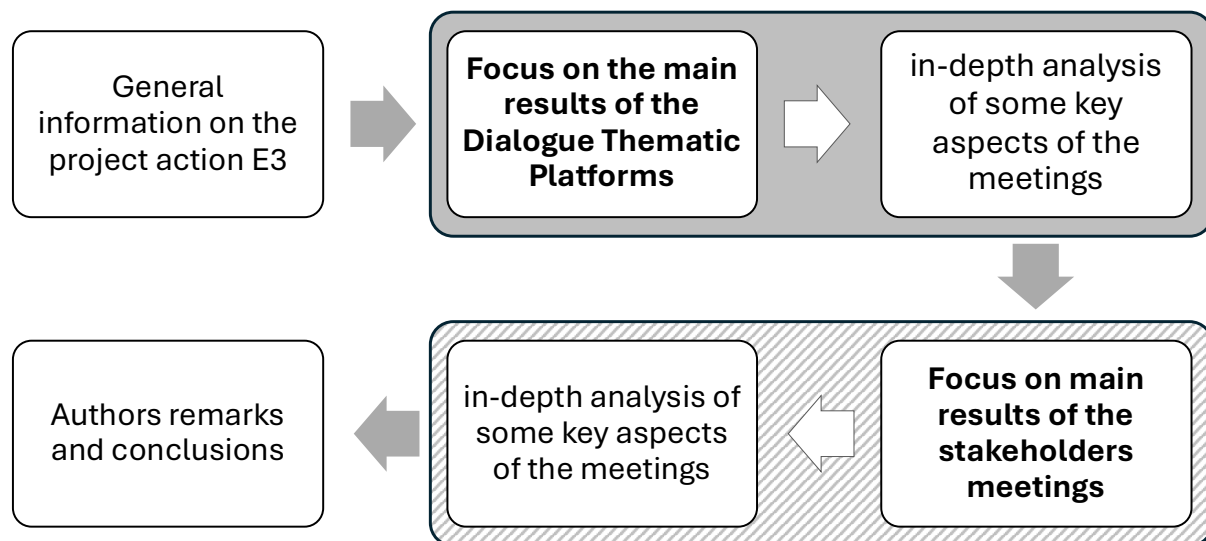
The partnership defined the strategy for the thematic platforms in each project area. According to the results of Action E2.1 and the strategy (E1.1), a steering group guaranteed harmonization, coordinate and organize a set of local stakeholders' platforms in each project area for the duration of the project. The partners designed each specific intervention and ensured its running. Each platform was designed as a participatory process, making use of innovative approaches that include dialogue and conflict resolution techniques aiming to support the stakeholder platform in converging to a set of potential actions to be implemented for an improved and more widely accepted management of wolves. The group involved an external professional facilitator for the elaboration of guidelines and supporting tools. Each local platform took in at least 2 stakeholders' workshops. Therefore, a total of 11 different platforms of which 7 in Italy, 1 in Austria, 2 in France and 1 in Slovenia, were scheduled.

1.3. Methodology and structure of the report

1.3.1. Short description of methodology

After collecting the report of each meeting formatted using the template provided by the project to each partner (see Annex 1), the main data from these reports were organized into a database on MS Excel. Date, time, location, type, mode of execution, number of participants, organizing partner, and fields related to the main topics indicated by the project to be collected were organized. Subsequently, using both text analysis software and direct analysis by researchers, the main useful information for this report was extracted. The data were analysed, clustered where possible to obtain easily readable results. In some cases, they were processed in graphical form. The report, following the main European guidelines on usability, is designed to be readable by visually impaired persons and, if a hard copy is needed, it can be printed in black and white.

1.3.2. Report structure



2. Main results of Thematic Platforms

2.1. Overview of the LIFE Wolf Alps EU Thematic Platforms

The project scheduled a total of 11 Platform and 23 meetings. By October 2024, a total of **11 platforms** were concluded with **42 meetings** organized by the partners. 1 platform and 5 meetings were conducted as additional and useful activities by APAP+UL partners. The meetings were concentrated shortly after the start of the project and following training on the organisation and operational management of the meetings (2020), and after the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2022 (Chart 1).

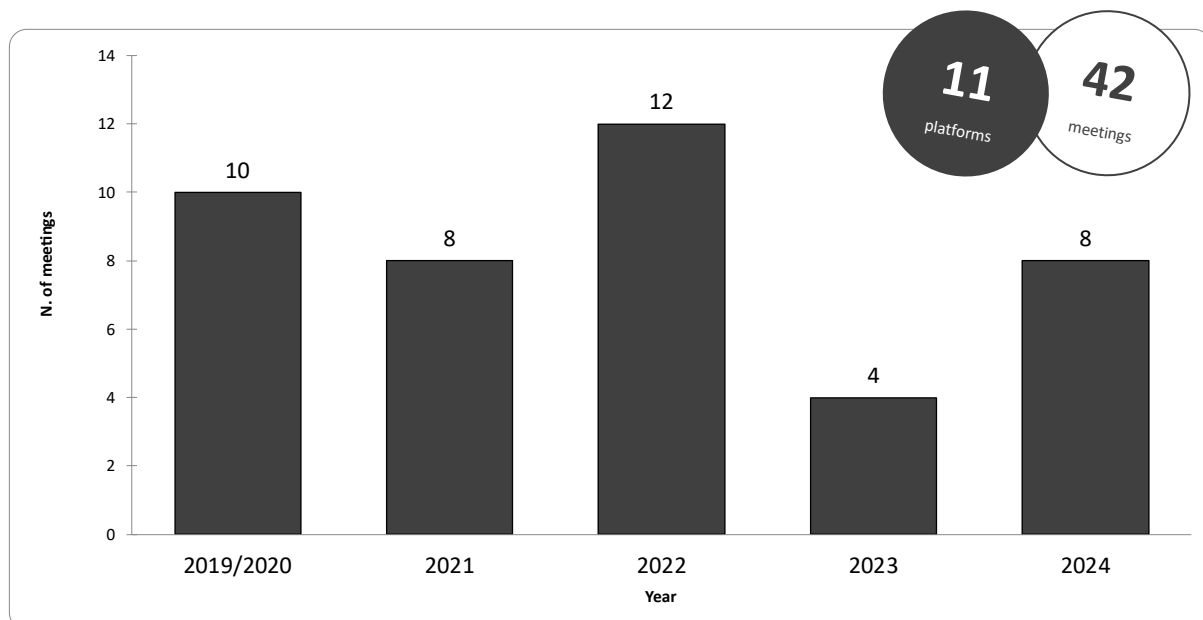


Chart 1. Number of the platform's meetings held per year.

Since the platform meetings involve a plurality of both public and private entities and the platforms were essentially activated thanks to the direct involvement of local authorities, the most part of the meetings have been held primarily in the mornings (Chart 1). This might also reflect a tendency towards early starts and morning productivity and the opportunity of the presence of public servants. Afternoons are also notable but to a lesser extent, while evenings seem to be the least focused on. With 31 out of 42 meetings being in-person, it's clear that face-to-face interaction was highly preferred by the organizers. This was due to the benefits of direct communication, such as better engagement and fewer misunderstandings.

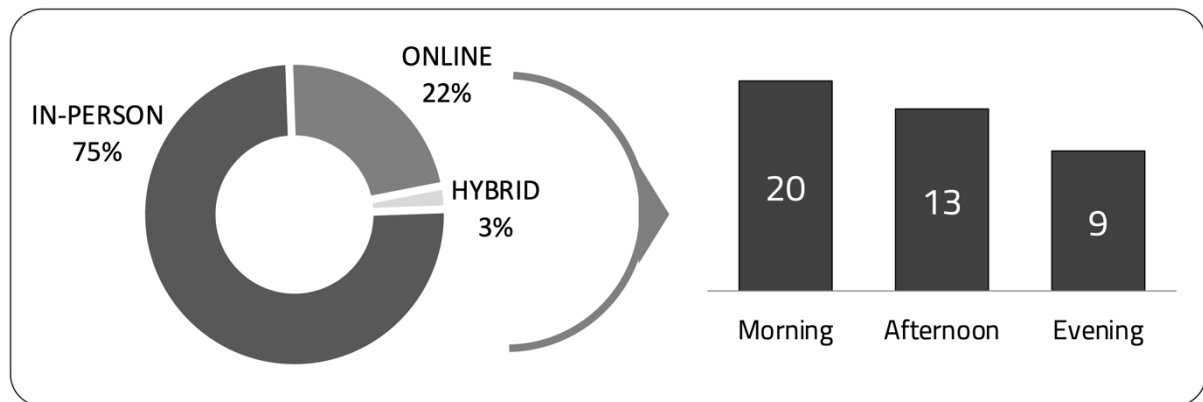


Chart 2. Platforms' meetings format and preferred day time slot.

Therefore, 6 online meetings were organized, which suggests some flexibility in accommodating remote participants, in particular during the first two project years characterized by Covid-19 restrictions which imposed postponement of some meetings or the choice to hold them online, using a mix of innovations and (new for that period) instruments such as Skype, Zoom and direct multi users phone calls. This was useful for the continuation of the project activities and for those who might be working from different locations or have scheduling conflicts. Only one meeting was held in hybrid form, combining both in-person and online elements. This format was chosen for ensuring inclusivity and flexibility, allowing participants to join in the way that suits them best.

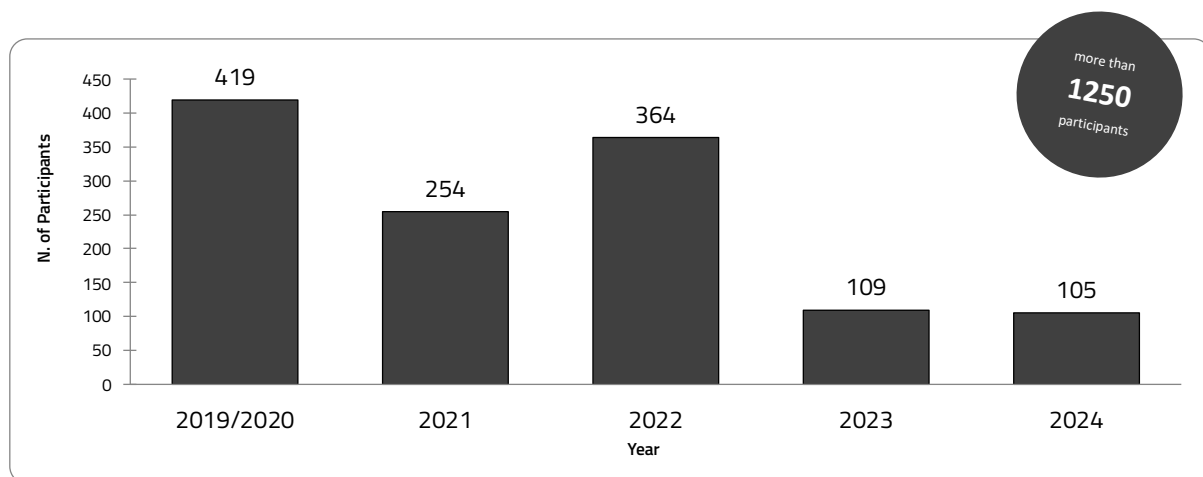


Chart 3. Number of the platforms' participants per year.

Thanks to the efforts, the flexibility and the excellent management of the partners, the meetings made it possible to involve all key stakeholder, with more than **1250 participants** in total and in all project countries (Chart 3) and with **80** (minor or major) decisions taken during the meetings (in total).

2.2. Common discussion points and results

Main common discussion points

The participants in the meetings discussed often very different topics. However, it was possible to aggregate many of these, identifying **10 common themes** and points for most of the meetings, and highlighting a multidisciplinary and integrated approach of the platforms organizing partners to put the managing of the coexistence between wolves and human activities at the centre of the discussion.

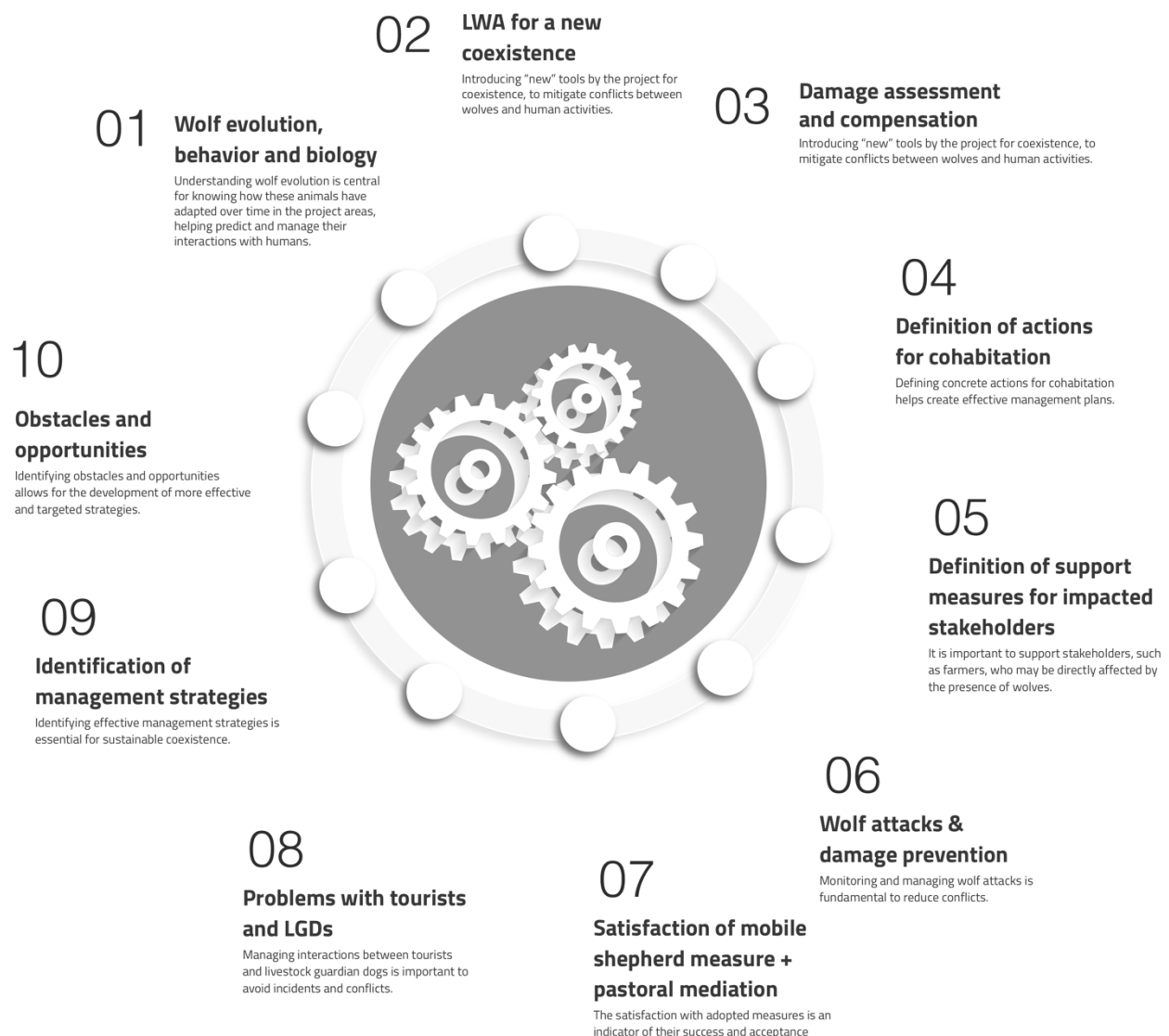


Figure 1. Infographic of the 10 most relevant discussion points during the LIFE WolfAlps EU platform's meetings.

Main results

Grouping similar results' themes could help identify areas of common interest and focus efforts on specific aspects, such as damage prevention and improving communication. The following scheme resume the 10 most relevant and frequent results coming from the platforms meetings. They can provide a solid foundation for developing more effective and targeted management strategies for the coexistence.

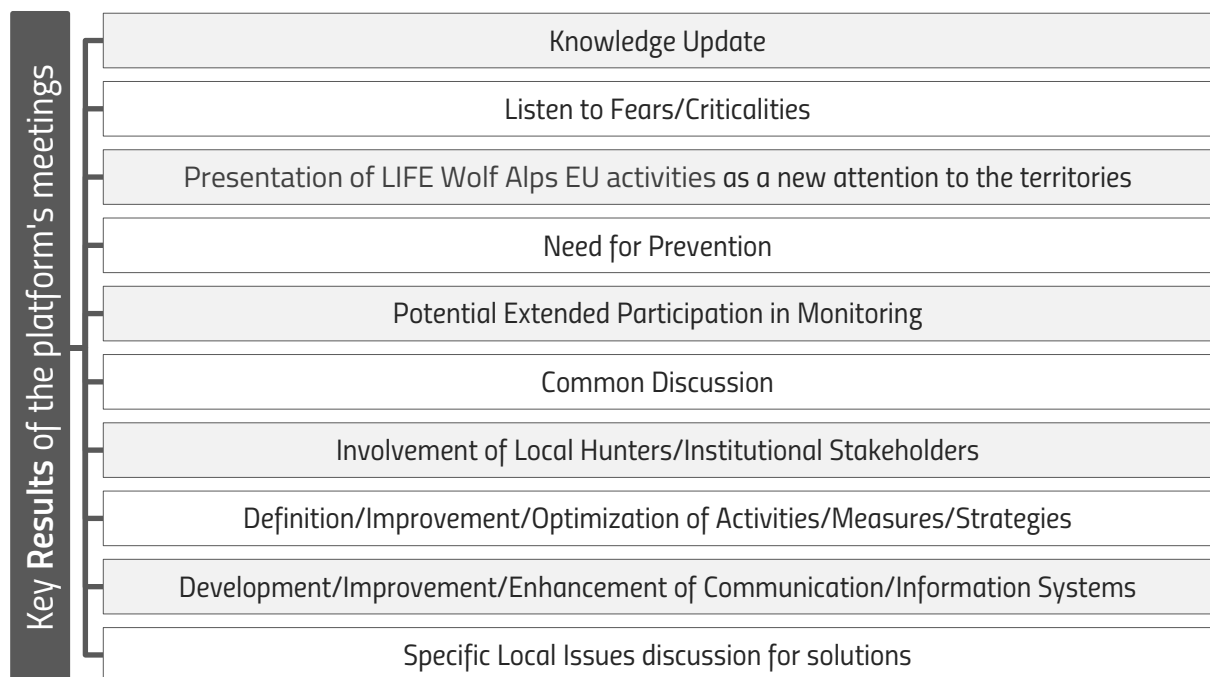


Figure 2. Infographic scheme of the main results of the LIFE WolfAlps EU platform's meetings.

The results show a clear trend towards several main themes, such as updating knowledge, listening to concerns and issues, and presenting the LIFE Wolf Alps EU as opportunity for the territories. These topics are fundamental for improving wildlife management and coexistence with wolves. It is interesting to note the attention towards involving local hunters and other key stakeholders and the need to improve communication and cooperation among various stakeholders. This indicates an inclusive and multidisciplinary approach of local stakeholders and partners addressing the challenges related to coexistence with wolves. Overall, it seems that during the meetings there was a significant commitment for the creation of a collaborative environment and developing effective strategies that consider the diverse needs and concerns. The need to improve communication and information systems has clearly emerged, suggesting that better dissemination of information could facilitate collaboration and understanding among the involved parties.

2.3. Common feedback to the project

Resuming the feedback provided by the platform's meetings participants to the project, the main points emerged during the discussions:

1. Strengths:

- **Meetings as a useful starting point:** Repeatedly mentioned as effective for correct dissemination and involvement of local stakeholders.
- **Pastoral mediator measures:** Appreciated, with a positive influence on the behavior of hikers and tourists.
- **Working in smaller groups:** Perceived as constructive.
- **General satisfaction:** Regarding the work of the **Wolf Prevention Intervention Units**.
- **New 'support shepherd' formula activated in some areas:** Viewed positively compared to the mobile shepherd.
- **Tourism operators:** Happy to better understand the problems faced by breeders with tourists and LGDs.

2. Challenges:

- **General lack of knowledge:** Highlighted as an issue (not only referred to the project).
- **Scepticism towards institutions:** Present among some stakeholders.
- **Strong opposition:** From some stakeholders before and during the meeting.
- **Lack of mutual trust:** Despite the overall positive feedback.

3. Positive feedback:

- **Interventions by pastoral mediators:** Positive and influential.
- **Satisfaction with the work of the Wolf Prevention Intervention Units:** Expressed multiple times.
- **Tourism operators:** Happy to participate and better understand the issues.

While there are some challenges such as lack of knowledge and scepticism towards some public institutions involved in the LIFE Wolf Alps EU project, the overall feedback is positive, with appreciation for the measures taken and the work done during the project lifetime. There is recognition of the value of meetings and new support formulas, as well as a positive impact from the interventions of Wolf Prevention Intervention Units.



2.4. Common highlighted problematic issues

Recurrent problematic issues

Several issues emerged clearly many times during the meetings, indicating their significance and the frequency of the issues faced. The main recurring problems are:

- **Inefficient reimbursement process for damages:** This issue is mentioned repeatedly in the platforms' reports, highlighting significant problems with the current compensation mechanisms in all the regions involved, slow and bureaucratic, causing frustration among farmers. Improving the efficiency of these processes could help alleviate some of the discontent and build trust in the institutions responsible for compensation.
- **Incompatibility of depredation prevention methods with lowlands:** The incompatibility of depredation prevention methods with lowland areas, along with the extra costs and work for farmers, is a significant concern. This indicates a need for more adaptable and cost-effective solutions tailored to the specific conditions of lowland regions.
- **Lack of trust among stakeholders:** Trust issues are a common thread, indicating poor cooperation and communication among specific stakeholders. This could be addressed through initiatives aimed at building trust and improving communication different stakeholders.
- **Difficulties in finding good shepherds:** This problem was mentioned several times, suggesting a shortage of skilled labour in the pastoral sector. The difficulty in finding qualified shepherds is a problem that could threaten the long-term sustainability of pastoralism. Training programs and incentives could help mitigate this issue by attracting and retaining skilled labour in the sector.
- **Problems with Livestock Guarding Dogs (LGDs):** Issues related to LGDs, such as aggressive behaviour and the responsibility of owners, are important concerns. Balancing livestock protection with public safety is crucial, and clear guidelines and training for LGD owners could help address these issues.
- **Misunderstanding of LIFE Projects:** There is a lack of understanding about LIFE projects and their goals, which could be improved through better communication efforts.
- **Stress and Pressure on Shepherds:** The constant presence of wolves and the inefficiency of preventive measures create a stressful environment for shepherds.
- **Infrastructure and Funding Issues:** The lack of adequate infrastructure and limited access to funding are significant barriers for many farmers, especially those in small and non-professional settlements.
- **Public Knowledge and Communication:** There is a general lack of public knowledge about the shepherd's job and wolf attacks, as well as ineffective communication between stakeholders.



2.5. Main ideas and suggestions

The main ideas that emerged during the meetings to solve the problems that arose have been clustered below in seven macro themes. The ideas presented by the participants cover a comprehensive range of actions and / or strategies for managing wildlife conflicts, supporting pastoral activities, and engaging the public. By combining financial support, education, monitoring, public communication, preventive measures, and economic development, these “strategies” can create a balanced and effective approach to managing human-wolf conflicts in mountainous regions.

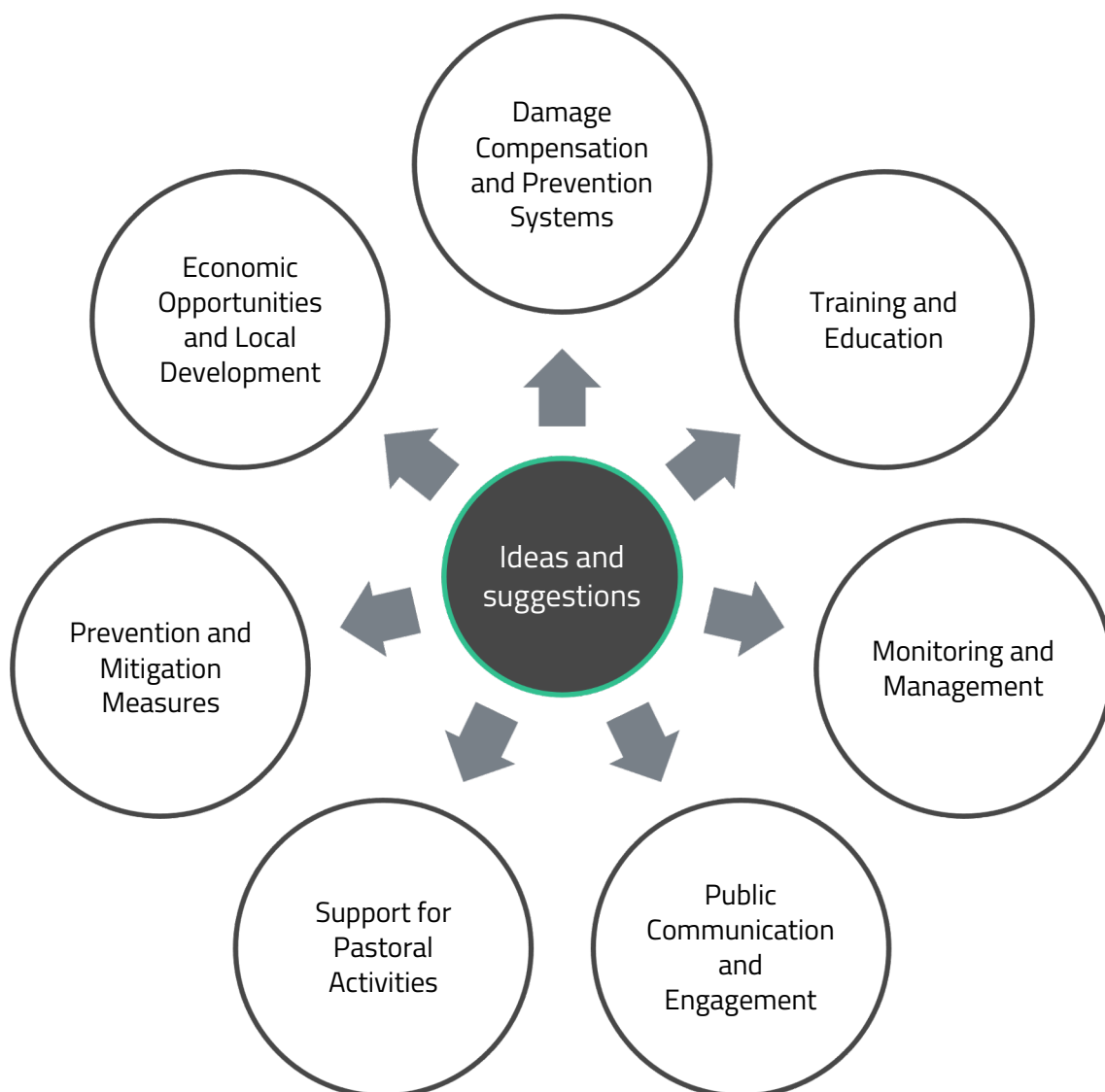


Figure 3. The main 7 thematic areas of ideas and suggestions given by the participants in the platform's meetings.

Damage Compensation and Prevention Systems

- Modify system for damages compensation
- Support purchase/use of damage prevention system
- Ensuring (financial) support for damage prevention/compensation

These ideas emphasize the need to improve financial mechanisms for compensating damages and supporting preventive measures. This approach can help mitigate conflicts by providing immediate relief and reducing future incidents.

Training and Education

- Training for journalists, veterinarians, and new monitoring operators/communicators
- Vademecum for breeders
- Develop awareness actions (mountain guides, tourism office, LGD spots...)
- Improve knowledge of wolf behaviour to adapt breeding practices
- Local associations could start environmental education trials

Education and training are crucial for effective conflict management. Training various stakeholders ensures they are well-informed and capable of implementing best practices. Awareness actions and educational trials can help the broader community understand and support these efforts.

Monitoring and Management

- Include trained hunters in monitoring
- Engage a local expert moderator
- Include all stakeholders in monitoring
- Work on the new regional wildlife management plan

Effective monitoring and management require the involvement of trained professionals and local experts. Including hunters and other stakeholders in monitoring efforts can provide valuable insights and foster a collaborative approach to wildlife management.

Public Communication and Engagement

- Communication to the public (film and spots) on pastoralism
- App to inform tourists about LGD presence/behavior
- Personalized billboard on the presence of LGD and shepherds on the mountain pastures
- Develop radio information
- More promotion in large cities, touristic areas
- Connections with influencers
- Creation of group and email list for better communication and networking
- Short videos, photos about the label



Public communication and engagement are essential for raising awareness and fostering positive attitudes towards pastoralism and wildlife management. Utilizing various media channels can reach a wide audience and promote understanding and cooperation.

Support for Pastoral Activities

- Creation of a fund for farms aimed at hiring labour for the surveillance of mountain pastures
- Change in flocks' management by encouraging associationism
- Maintain the support shepherds
- Improvement of the comfort of pastoral huts
- Improvement of water access outside the PNM core area
- Further develop pastoral activity and 'esprit parc' label

Supporting pastoral activities through financial aid, improved infrastructure, and community initiatives can enhance the sustainability of pastoralism. Encouraging associationism and developing labels like 'esprit parc' can also promote a sense of community and shared responsibility.

Prevention and Mitigation Measures

- Improve mobile shepherd measure
- Increase prevention measures and support from public authorities
- Institutional investment in protection dogs, community shepherds, and electrified fences
- Support in dog introduction and adequate training in their management
- Possible allocation of funds for the setting up of night shelters in mountain pastures

Investing in preventive measures such as protection dogs, electrified fences, and night shelters can significantly reduce the risk of wildlife-related damages. Public authorities' support and adequate training for managing these measures are crucial for their success.

Economic Opportunities and Local Development

- Reflection on possible local economic opportunities
- To take inspiration from nearby Switzerland regarding the management of mountain pastures
- The strategy devised by the Region for internal areas can be used to relaunch some activities

Exploring local economic opportunities and learning from successful models in nearby regions can help develop sustainable practices that benefit both the community and the environment. Strategic planning and regional cooperation are key to achieving these goals.



2.6. Key decisions taken

The working groups collectively made over 80 decisions, both minor and major. Most of these were focused on operational issues to keep the platform and the sharing channels activated among stakeholders, also in view of the upcoming meetings. The decisions reflect a comprehensive approach to addressing various aspects of compensation, training, communication, collaboration, and incident reporting. By clustering these decisions, it becomes evident that a multi-faceted strategy is being employed to tackle the challenges faced by stakeholders. The emphasis on financial support, education, effective communication, and systematic monitoring highlights a well-rounded and proactive approach to achieving the desired outcomes. The main themes of the decisions were clustered as follows:

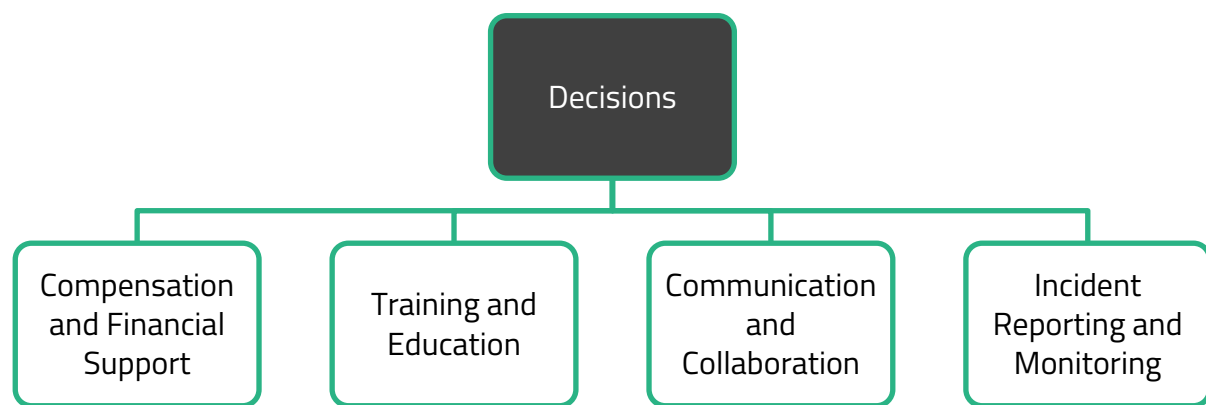


Figure 4. Scheme of the main four areas of the decision taken during the LIFE WolfAlps EU platform's meetings.

Compensation and Financial Support

Decisions:

- To improve the compensation system (listed twice)
- More funds for prevention systems
- PNM will see what it is possible to do with public service in charge of the financial of mobile shepherd measure
- Seek more funds for protection measures
- Commitment of the PNM to contact municipalities for public funds
- Attention should also be paid to the forms of financing
- To study methods that allow access to financing also for non-professional breeders

These decisions focus on enhancing financial support and compensation mechanisms for stakeholders, ensuring that both professional and non-professional breeders have access to necessary

funds. This cluster highlights the importance of financial stability in promoting effective prevention and protection measures.

Training and Education

Decisions:

- Training courses
- Training for hunters
- Work on the involvement of farmers
- Work on supporting small farmers
- Work on the new generations
- Work on exchange of good practices between farmers
- Re-evaluation of the figure of the professional shepherd
- Attention to young people starting new agricultural and livestock activities

This cluster emphasizes the need for continuous education and training for various stakeholders, including hunters, farmers, and young people entering the agricultural sector. By focusing on knowledge sharing and skill development, these decisions aim to foster a more informed and capable community.

Communication and Collaboration

Decisions:

- Vademecum for decision-makers
- Vademecum for breeders
- PNM will provide the phone number of people to call according to the needs
- Continuing collaboration between LIFE Eurolargecarnivores and the LIFE Wolf Alps EU
- Strategy draft will be based on ideas/suggestions from the workshop (listed twice)
- Seek the support of local authorities also in terms of the active presence of technicians in the alpine pastures
- Continue the Wolf Prevention Intervention Units mission
- Continue to build relationships of trust
- Creation of stakeholders mailing list
- Stay in touch to implement the decision as far as PNM skills and power task
- DINA centre starts actively promoting the label on their social media and event
- BF UL will prepare clear communication messages about criteria on how to obtain the label
- Continue the Wolf Prevention Intervention Units (pastoral mediators) mission
- Continue to build relationships of trust between stakeholders
- Maintain the end of the season meeting
- Welcoming mediators at the beginning of the season



- Involvement of local organizations and trade associations
- The methods of communication must be modulated and calibrated with respect to the recipients
- Need to give a voice to shepherds
- Need to provide recognition to those working on prevention
- It is necessary to start working together

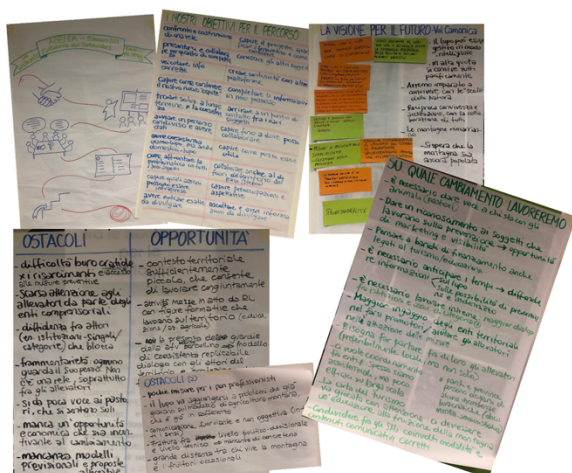
Effective communication and collaboration are crucial for the success of any initiative. This cluster includes decisions aimed at improving communication channels, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and ensuring that all voices are heard and recognized. The emphasis on trust-building and continuous interaction underscores the importance of a cohesive and cooperative approach.

Incident Reporting and Monitoring

Decisions:

- In case of LGD bite, report the incident to public service in charge of the data collection on this topic and fill the form (listed twice)
- Wolf monitoring methods will be reviewed in the context of the new National Action Plan
- A specific working group will be launched in early 2022 on this topic
- Results sent to responsible beneficiaries in the damage prevention field

This cluster focuses on the importance of systematic incident reporting and monitoring. By establishing clear protocols for reporting incidents and reviewing monitoring methods, these decisions aim to enhance data collection and ensure that preventive measures are based on accurate and up-to-date information.



Posters used for discussion in Thematic platform organised in Valcamonica area in January 2023 - Example of the intense activity carried out by the partners involved in the action such as the Lombardy Region (RELO), which organised dozens of meetings with stakeholders and collected a lot of useful information for activities in its territory and for the improvement of regional sectoral policies.

3. Main results of Meetings with Stakeholders

3.1. Introduction

The project scheduled a total of 75 meetings with key stakeholders, 25 with farmers and breeders (or their representative), 44 with hunters and hunters' associations and 6 with environmental associations. By October 2024, a total of **157 meetings** were held by the partners. In addition to the foreseen meetings, the partnership organised **82 additional** meetings, 50% with key stakeholders and 50% conducted with other stakeholders such as public authorities' representatives, schools, local cultural or societal associations.

As for the Platforms meetings, the stakeholders' ones were concentrated shortly after the start of the project and following training on the organisation and operational management of the meetings (2020) (Chart 4). Even for these focused meetings, the partnership decided for some flexibility in accommodating in-person participants and remote participants (see chapter 2.1).

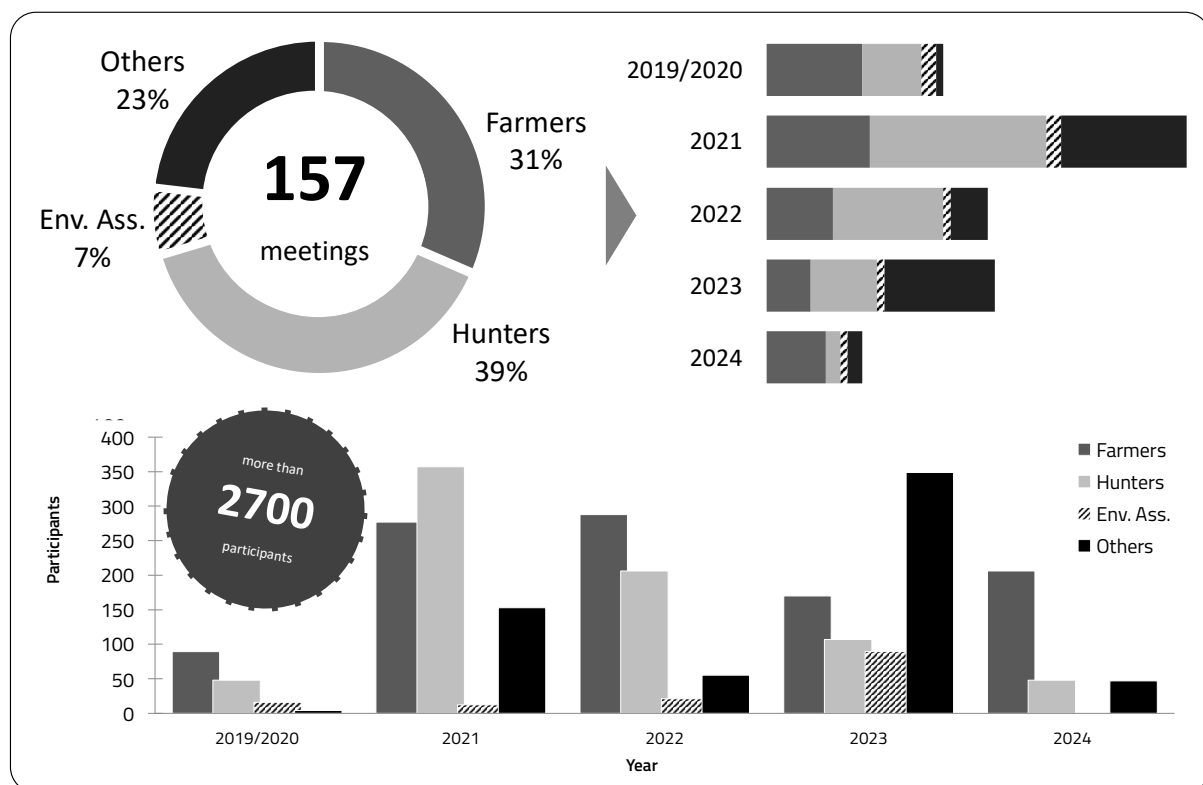


Chart 4. Number of meetings and participants per stakeholder group and year.

3.2. General overview

Thanks to the efforts, the flexibility and the excellent management of the partners, the project involved many stakeholder groups representatives, with more than **2,700 participants** in total and in almost all project countries. Summarising what emerged overall from all the discussions with the participants of the different stakeholder groups, **6 key common elements** can be highlighted: (a) the need for more correct and up-to-date information on the presence of the wolf and its behaviour; (b) the need for concretely dealing with the problem of attacks on livestock; (c) the request to put more effort on prevention and protection measures; (d) the request for more technical and economic support from the regional and national public authorities; (e) the need for more collaboration and communication between the different actors; (f) the willingness to continue the discussion even beyond the end of the project.

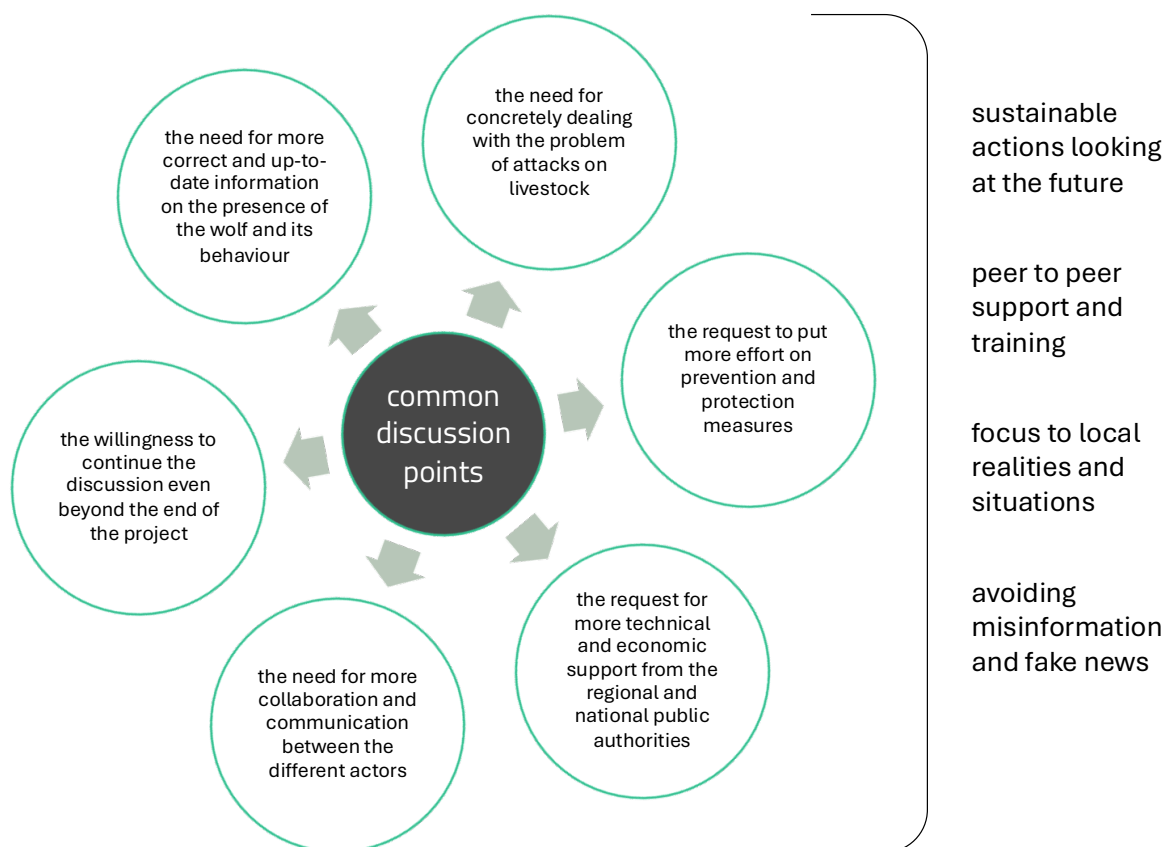


Figure 5. The main 6 cross-cutting discussion points in the stakeholders' meetings.

3.3. Meetings with Livestock Farmers

During the meetings with livestock farmers, several key discussion points emerged. The presentations of the LIFE Wolf Alps EU project provided essential information on wolves, including their behaviour, ecology, and the role they play in the ecosystem. Farmers expressed their concerns and critical issues, particularly regarding the **frequency and impact of wolf attacks** on livestock and the effectiveness of various prevention methods. **The use of livestock guardian dogs (LGDs) was a recurring topic**, with in-depth discussions on their implementation, benefits, and the necessity for effective communication and collaboration among all stakeholders involved. The meetings also addressed the issue of livestock depredation, exploring various **protection strategies** and emphasizing the importance of continuous wolf monitoring to track and mitigate potential threats. Additionally, the compensation process for farmers affected by wolf attacks was explained, along with the support provided by institutions to aid in prevention efforts. The **role of education** and outreach programs in involving stakeholders and raising awareness about coexistence strategies was also highlighted. Overall, these discussions aimed to create a collaborative environment to tackle the challenges of wolf management and promote sustainable livestock protection practices.

Key discussion points



Figure 6. Infographic scheme of the main common discussion points during the livestock farmers meetings.

- **Information on Wolves:** Provided detailed insights into wolf behaviour, ecology, and their role in the ecosystem, emphasizing the importance of ongoing wolf monitoring to understand their movements and impacts on livestock.
- **Wolf Attacks:** Addressed the challenges posed by wolf attacks on livestock, highlighting the frequency and severity of these incidents, and explained the compensation process available to farmers affected by wolf depredation to ensure they understand how to claim support.
- **Prevention Methods:** Discussed the implementation and benefits of using Livestock Guardian Dogs (LGDs) to protect herds from wolf attacks and explored additional effective strategies and tools for preventing wolf attacks on livestock, such as fencing and alarm systems.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** Stressed the need for improved communication between farmers, stakeholders, and institutions to share information and best practices, and promoted collaboration among all parties to develop and implement effective wolf management and livestock protection strategies.
- **Support by Institutions:** Highlighted the role of governmental and non-governmental institutions in providing support for prevention efforts, including funding and resources, and underlined the importance of education and outreach programs to raise awareness about wolf behaviour and coexistence strategies, involving all relevant stakeholders.
- **Sustainable Livestock Protection:** Encouraged the development and promotion of sustainable livestock protection strategies that allow for coexistence with wolves and advocated for practices that ensure the long-term viability of livestock farming in areas where wolves are present, balancing ecological and agricultural needs.



3.4. Meetings with Hunters

During the meetings with hunters, numerous important discussion points came to light. The presentations of the LIFE Wolf Alps EU project, particularly actions A4 and C3, provided essential information on wolves, including their biology, ecology, and monitoring efforts. Hunters discussed the challenges and opportunities presented by wolf presence, expressing their fears and criticalities. Collaborative monitoring and responsible hunting practices were emphasized as crucial for effective wolf management. The meetings also covered local management strategies, wolf population surveys, and the impact of wolf attacks on livestock. Educational materials and communication strategies were highlighted to improve collaboration and stakeholder involvement. The balance between eco-tourism and conservation was discussed, aiming to harmonize economic activities with wildlife protection. Additionally, the meetings addressed the potential impacts of wolf predation on wild ungulates, the importance of stakeholder engagement, and the coordination of activities. Overall, these discussions aimed to foster a collaborative environment to address the challenges of wolf management and promote sustainable hunting practices.

Key discussion points



Figure 7. Infographic scheme of the main common discussion points during the hunters' meetings.

- **Presentation of the LIFE Wolf Alps EU:** Provided essential information on wolves, including their biology, ecology, and monitoring efforts, particularly actions A4 and C3.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Emphasized the importance of engaging stakeholders and coordinating activities to ensure effective wolf management.
- **Collaborative Monitoring and Responsible Hunting:** Highlighted the need for collaborative monitoring and responsible hunting practices to manage wolf populations effectively.
- **Impact of Wolf Attacks:** Addressed the impact of wolf attacks on livestock and discussed strategies to mitigate these impacts.
- **Educational Materials and Communication:** Highlighted the need for educational materials and effective communication strategies to improve collaboration and stakeholder involvement.
- **Eco-tourism and Conservation Balance:** Discussed the balance between eco-tourism and conservation, aiming to harmonize economic activities with wildlife protection.



3.5. Meetings with Environmental Associations

The meetings organised with environmental associations highlighted some important discussion points. In general, the presentations of the LIFE Wolf Alps EU facilitated stakeholders' acquaintance and explored potential collaboration actions. In this regard, collaboration was a major theme, particularly in addressing conflicts with farmers and identifying common goals. Communication initiatives by LIFE Wolf Alps EU were frequently highlighted as crucial for fostering understanding and cooperation. Strategies to combat poaching were also discussed. Additionally, interesting ideas and suggestions emerged. These included reactivating local stakeholder platforms and improving information provision. Projects like the wool waste initiative and support for hobbyist breeders were proposed, along with the formation of a breeders' support team to enhance communication and support. Overall, these discussions aimed to strengthen collaboration and develop effective strategies for coexisting with wolves.

Key discussion points & ideas / suggestions



Figure 8. Infographic scheme of the main common discussion points during the environmental associations' meetings.

- **Presentation of LIFE Wolf Alps EU:** Facilitated stakeholders' acquaintance and explored potential collaboration actions.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** Highlighted the importance of LIFE Wolf Alps EU project's communication initiatives for fostering understanding and cooperation, particularly in addressing conflicts with farmers and identifying common goals.
- **Anti-Poaching Strategies:** Discussed strategies to combat poaching.
- **Stakeholder Platforms and Information Provision:** Suggested reactivating local stakeholder platforms and improving information provision.
- **Initiatives:** Proposed projects like the wool waste initiative and support for hobbyist breeders. In particular, the formation of a breeders' support team to enhance communication and support was proposed.



3.6. Meetings with other stakeholders

Other than the previously mentioned stakeholders, the LIFE Wolf Alps EU project has actively engaged with a diverse range of actors to address critical aspects of wolf management and conservation. These stakeholders include journalists, local authorities, trekking actors, students, park authorities, the public, and tourism professionals. Key discussions focused on providing accurate information, coordinating efforts, and addressing the challenges posed by wolf predation and management during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project also emphasized the importance of media communication, collaboration, and training to ensure effective wolf management strategies.

3.7. Case study: Analysis of meetings organised in Lombardy Region, Italy



Between October 2023 and April 2024, 16 meetings were organised in the Lombardy Region (Italy) with four different categories of stakeholders directly affected, on a professional level, by the return of the wolf: (a) Lowland breeders; (b) Mountain breeders; (c) Hunters; (d) Tourism sector operators. At the end of each thematic session, space was given to questions related to specific topics. The questions were recorded to establish an archive of the main categories of information that the public lacks and in which it is still necessary to invest in. Questionnaires were also distributed. This report contains the results obtained from the analysis of the questionnaires and questions, drafting a sort of compendium tool aiming at helping to structure in a targeted manner communication and public education strategies.

The document, elaborated by Anna Sustersic (ERSAF) in Italian, is part of this project deliverable as Annex 4.

4. Annexes

- 4.1. Annex 1 – Reporting templates
- 4.2. Annex 2 – Thematic Platforms' reports
- 4.3. Annex 3 – Stakeholders Meetings' reports
- 4.4. Annex 4 – Analysis of the questionnaires conducted during selected meetings in Lombardy Region by ERSAF

Note

If interested in the annexes,
please contact the project's coordinating beneficiary,
Ente di Gestione delle Aree Protette delle Alpi Marittime (APAM)
at info@areeprotettealpimarittime.it



The LIFE WOLFALPS EU project works to improve coexistence between the wolf and the people who live and work in the Alps and the Ligurian-Piedmontese Apennines by building and implementing shared solutions together with stakeholders to ensure the long-term conservation of the wolf in the Alps and along the Apennine corridor. LIFE WOLFALPS EU operates throughout the Alps and the Ligurian-Piedmontese Apennines, involving twenty Italian, Slovenian, French and Austrian partners and dozens of Institutions and associations that support the project.

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