



IBRIWOLF - Pilot actions for the reduction of the loss of genetic patrimony of the wolf in central Italy.

LIFE10 NAT/IT/000265



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Project description:

Background

The project focuses on a relatively recently recorded threat to wolf conservation, namely interbreeding with domestic dogs. Wolves and dogs are biologically the same species but, while wolves are biologically natural, dogs are a product of artificial selection managed by humans. Over the past twenty years, sightings of wolves in Tuscany with morphological characteristics different from those of typical Italian wolves have increased. Moreover, genetic analysis has confirmed that some specimens of wild canines (in Tuscany and elsewhere) are not only first-generation hybrids (a cross between a wolf and a dog) but also hybrids subsequently integrated into the wolf population.

The project will have high demonstration value because it will be the first project in Europe to manage wolf-dog hybrids (without simply killing dogs). Although hybridisation between wolves and dogs has been recorded for centuries, the wide-spread presence of dogs and the lack of control of hybrids, together with a reduction of wolf populations, make this a serious threat to the conservation of the genetic identity of the wolf.

Objectives

The project aims to:

- Identify and remove all the hybrids from two pilot areas in Tuscany;

- Decrease the presence of free-ranging dogs through their removal and the sterilisation of all captured individuals;
- Increase awareness among the general public of the threat posed by hybrids to wolves and to wildlife in general;
- Establish a network of interest groups that could contribute to the development of best solutions for tackling the problem of hybridisation in the longer term;
- Develop and maintain a database for recording hybrid activity;
- Draw up guidelines for the management of wolf-dog hybrids, following wider consultation with interest groups;
- Develop areas where hybrids can be kept in captivity for public awareness purposes;
- Establish a network of public administrations from areas where the hybrids have been recorded in order to stimulate the replication of successful experiences and the improvement of experimental activities implemented through the project.

Expected results: The results expected include:

- The development of a methodology for the identification of hybrids;
- The complete removal of all wolf-dog hybrids (an estimated 15 individuals) from two pilot areas in Tuscany;
- Sterilisation of at least 70% of free ranging dogs in the Province of Grosseto;
- A shared long-term strategy for management of hybrids in the Province of Grosseto;
- Strong collaboration with nearby provinces where hybrids have been recorded;
- A significant increase in awareness about the impact of hybrids on wildlife and the local economy;
- A reduction of at least 50% in the number of free-ranging dogs as a result of an awareness campaign targeting local communities.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Species - Mammals

Keywords

conservation of genetic resources, biodiversity

Target species

Canis lupus

Natura 2000 sites

SIC IT51A0013	Padule della Trappola, Bocca d'Ombrone
SIC IT51A0015	Dune costiere del Parco dell'Uccellina
SIC IT51A0016	Monti dell'Uccellina
SIC IT51A0017	Cono vulcanico del Monte Amiata

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Provincia di Grosseto - Dipartimento Sviluppo Sostenibile.
Type of organisation	Local authority
Description	The Province of Grosseto (Provincia di Grosseto - Dipartimento Sviluppo Sostenibile) is responsible for the management of protected areas and areas adjacent to protected areas; Bioitaly (Natura 2000); the protection of biodiversity through the creation of ecological networks and eco-corridors; biotopes; the protection of urban biodiversity; the protection and enhancement of local breeds of agricultural significance; and the protection of forests and monumental trees.
Partners	Ente Parco Regionale della Maremma, Italy Dipartimento di Biologia e Biotecnologie "Charles Darwin"-Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy WWF Italy Comunità Montana Amiata Grossetano, Italy

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE10 NAT/IT/000265
Duration	30-SEP-2011 to 28-FEB -2015
Total budget	2,296,659.00 €
EU contribution	1,700,906.00 €
Project location	Liguria

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Read more:

- Brochure-Leaflet Title: "L'ibridazione tra lupi e cani: un problema che mette a rischio il futuro del lupe" (1.645 KB) Year: 2013
No of pages: 2
- Poster Title: "L'ibridazione tra lupi e cani: un problema che mette a rischio il futuro del lupo" (442 KB) Year: 2013
No of pages: 1
- Project web site <http://www.ibriwolf.it/>

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