

CONFLICTS WITH LYNX AND OTHER LARGE CARNIVORES IN MACEDONIA AND ALBANIA

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One of the most important parts of the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme in Albania and Macedonia was conducting a baseline survey in both countries to assess the ecological

conditions for the Balkan Lynx and the main threats to its survival. The area selected for the survey spans from North to Southeast Albania and to Western Macedonia. Besides species distribution, the baseline survey intended to gather information concerning the conflicts between humans and large carnivores. The questionnaire developed for the baseline survey included aspects of human-wildlife relationships. In total, the number of interviewed people in Macedonia is 560 from 154 different villages and is 320 people from 91 villages in Albania.

The information on conflicts was gained in different levels: general information about damages in the village, direct personal losses due to large carnivore attacks, animal husbandry details, response/prevention methods of humans towards attacks on livestock, cases of attacks on humans and fear level in regard to large carnivores.

The survey has uncovered a lot of conflicts between livestock herders and wolves and bears, although the traditional husbandry methods appear to be relatively intact. Luckily for lynx, there were a very few incidences of conflict with humans, and most probably conservation measures will not be hampered by conflicts. However, we encountered many cases of lynx being illegally killed and reasons for that should be properly evaluated and taken into consideration.