

Greece (GR)

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Area: 131'940 km²

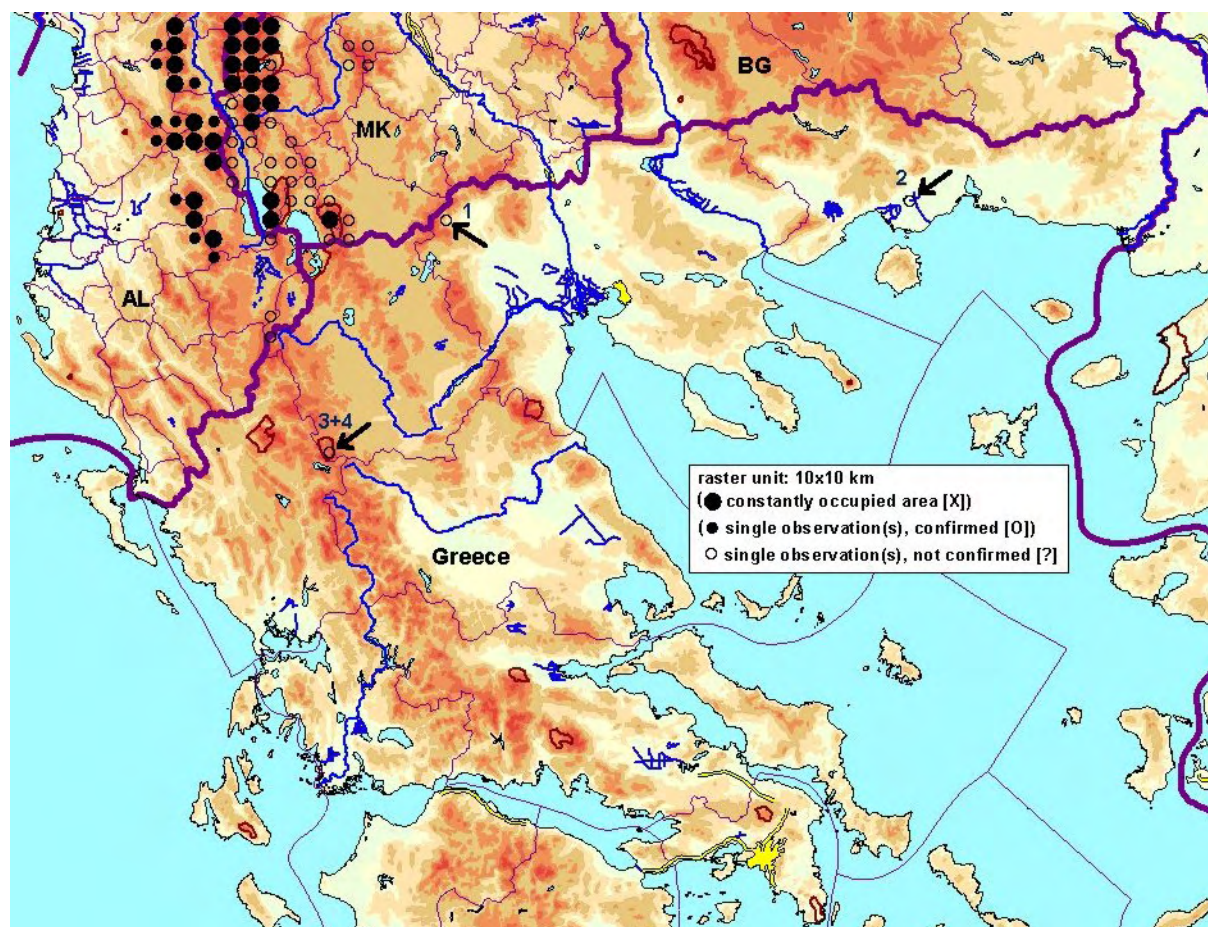
Forests & Woodland: 27.9 % (2000)

Human population: 10'623'835 (2001)

Population density: 80.5 / km²



1. Lynx distribution in Greece in 2001:



Geographic range of the population(s)

Balkan population: 1. Voras Mt. & Tzena and Pinovo Mt. (border with FYROM), 2. Nestos Delta, 3. Vassilitsa (N. Pindos), 4. Valia Kalda National Park (N. Pindos). These are only indications of lynx presence (unverified), there is no information at all on populations and/or subpopulations. Since there has been no monitoring and no project on the lynx in Greece at all, possible changes could not be detected systematically. However, a new grid cell has been added compared to earlier surveys on Nestos Delta (2) where unverified information have been reported since 1998.

Methods: sightings & signs, inquiry

2. Lynx population(s):

Population	Pop. size (Ø 1996-2001)	Lynx distribution area [km ²]				[X] & [X+O] / country area [%]	Pop. density [lynx/100 km ²]
		[X]	[O]	[?]	[X+O]		
Balkan	isolated individuals?	0	0	300	0	0	-
Total	<i>isolated individuals?</i>	0	0	300	0	0	-

3. Population size:

3.1. Estimations

Population	Year	Official estimation	Additional estimation	Accuracy	Tendency
Balkan	1996-2001	It is not possible to describe a tendency since there has been no evidence of a population. A significant change was the increased frequency of reported sightings in the Nestos Delta.			unknown
Ø 1996-2001		-			

3.2. Methods and institutions responsible for the estimations

Population	Official estimation	Additional estimation
Balkan	(No official method has been used)	-
<i>Institution</i>	No institution officially responsible	-

4. Legal situation, harvest and losses of lynx:

4.1. International treaties

EU Habitat Directive	Bern Convention	CITES
-	ratified 1983	ratified 1992

4.2. Legal status

Lynx has been fully protected by law since 1937.

4.3. Harvest numbers and other known losses to the population(s)

→ No known losses.

4.4. Lynx management

Population	Authority in charge		Management / Conservation Plan
	National level	Regional level	
Balkan	Ministry of Agriculture	none	none

5. Depredation:

→ There have been no documented lynx damages in the past three decades. Compensation would be paid by ELGA (State organization for damage compensation). As preventive method, aiming primarily at wolves, livestock guarding dogs are used.

6. Major threats to the lynx population(s) in the country:

Population	Past (<1996)	Present (1996-2001)	Future (>2001)
Balkan	Agriculture Extraction of wood Shooting Trapping / snaring Poisoning Prey / food base Poor recruitment / reproduction / regeneration Low densities Restricted range Other: abandonment of traditional pastoral systems Other: expansion of forest coverage	Infrastructure development: Road building	-

Comment: Threats mentioned in the column "before 1996" refer to threats encountered 25-30 years ago or even earlier when there was evidence of the last remnants of a lynx population in Greece.

7. Conservation measures:

Conservation measure	Lacking / proposed	Drafted / ratified	Implemented / applied
Legislation on an international level			X
Legislation on a national level			X
Monitoring / Trends		X	
Establishment of protected areas			X

Comment: All the above-mentioned measures, with exception of monitoring, are not addressed specifically to the lynx, but in general to the wild fauna of Greece. The NGO Arcturos will soon undertake the first monitoring project for the lynx in Greece, focusing on areas where the most recent observations have been reported.

8. Judgement of the status of the population(s) within the country & most urgent actions needed:

Population	Judgement	Most urgent actions needed
Balkan	data deficient	• Research to verify lynx presence in Greece ^a

^a Comment: Fieldwork in target areas (N. Pindos, Mt. Voras, Nestos Delta) will include: Survey with recorded calls, placement of remote control cameras in selected points, distribution of questionnaires and detailed examination of livestock killed. There should be a monitoring programme in forested areas bordering mainly on FYROM and secondarily Albania, where observations should be regularly collected and evaluated. Also, collaboration with local game wardens and stock raisers is needed in order to examine kills of roe deer and livestock, respectively. Collaboration with ELGA (State organization for damage compensation) would allow for the recognition of livestock damages possibly caused by lynx. Co-ordinated work and collaboration with FYROM, Albania and possibly Bulgaria, concerning dissemination of questionnaires and livestock damage inspection.

9. Projects:

Population	Title	Duration	Contact
Balkan	Arcturos will soon start the implementation of a small lynx project in Mt. Voras (NW Greece). It will involve mainly dissemination of questionnaires and interviews with local inhabitants, in order to collect information (and evidence) on the existence of the species there.		Constantinos Godes: cgodes@arcturos.gr

10. Contact:

Population	Name	Address
Balkan	Maria PANAYOTOPOULOU	Frangini, 9, GR-54624 Thessaloniki e-mail: buru@otenet.gr
<i>Collaborator:</i>	Constantinos GODES	7 Aristotelous Sq., GR-54624 Thessaloniki e-mail: cgodes@arcturos.gr

Country assessment:

There is no lynx population in Greece, and even the presence of single individuals remains cryptic. Since the 1950/60s lynx observations in Greece have been more or less anecdotic (PANAYOTOPOULOU 2001, 2002). From 1996-2001, three isolated spots with lynx sightings were identified (see map); their verification is however not possible as long as there are no "hard facts". A monitoring does not exist yet, but should be implemented as soon as possible. As no data on former lynx presence are available (PANAYOTOPOULOU 2001), it is very difficult to judge the unverified indications from the last few years as well as the overall status of the lynx in Greece (PANAYOTOPOULOU 2001, 2002). Consequently, it remains open where these animals would have come from. According to PANAYOTOPOULOU (2001) their origin could be due to (i) occasional transborder excursions from FYR Macedonia and/or Albania, (ii) remnants of an autochthonous population, (iii) attempts for the reestablishment of a new population nucleus by individuals originating from the neighbouring countries, (iv) clandestine releases. If the observations in the Pindos Mts (3 and 4 in map 1) could be explained through lynx venturing south from Albania, the observations in the Voras Mts (1) and especially in the Nestos Delta (2) are far away from occurrences in Albania and FYR Macedonia. Even if lynx presence in the current spots was verified, it would remain difficult to connect them to the rest of the Balkan population. Another problem is the status of the habitat and prey base. Habitat degradation has partly been extensive and although the forest coverage is currently increasing, the prey base remains poor in most areas of potential lynx habitat (PANAYOTOPOULOU 2001, 2002).

To carry out research in areas of lynx sightings as proposed by the contacts (see Table 8) is to be recommended. A continuous monitoring should be set up in the areas where a spread from the remaining nuclei in Albania and FYR Macedonia is possible; special attention should be paid to border areas. Therefore, co-operation with the neighbouring countries should be intensified. Even though no lynx may exist in Greece at the moment, the provinces of western Macedonia and Epirus in northern Greece will be of crucial importance for the future restoration of the Balkan population. The mountains of north-western Greece are strategically the best areas for an expansion or a re-introduction of lynx to boost the Balkan population.

References:

- PANAYOTOPOULOU, M. 2001: Historical distribution and present status of the lynx in Greece. The Balkan Lynx Population - History, Recent Knowledge on its Status and Conservation Needs. Ed. by Ch. Breitenmoser-Würsten and U. Breitenmoser, KORA Bericht No. 7: 28-31.
- PANAYOTOPOULOU, M. 2002: Conservation of Large Carnivores in Greece. Historical distribution and present status of lynx in Greece. In: Arcturos 2002: Protected Areas of the Southern Balkans – Legislation, Large Carnivores, Transborder Areas. Hellenic Ministry of the Environment, Physical Planning, and Public Works: 81-93.