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IBERIAN LYNX PROJECT

Project Background

The Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*) is classified by the World Union for the Nature (IUCN) as the world's most endangered feline species (Nowell & Jackson, 1996). In October 2002, the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species upgraded the lynx to **Critically Endangered** following new evidence of alarming decline.

According to the results of the last National survey, developed between 2000 and 2002 by the Ministry of Environment with the collaboration of WWF Spain, the total population is **fewer than 200 Iberian lynxes in the world**. This study indicates also that there are only two breeding populations (Andujar-Cardeña in Eastern Sierra Morena and Doñana). A positive presence of Iberian lynx has also been detected in Montes de Toledo (central Spain) but not breeding has been confirmed yet in this area.

The main threats for the species are the declining of its basic prey, the rabbit, the mortality by the man; the destruction or alteration of its habitat, and the isolation and the fragmentation of its populations. This last threat is every year more important, because the current populations are very small and isolated (there is more than 300 km between the two breeding nuclei), so they are under a clear risk of extinction due to stochastic factors (forest fires, diseases, etc). The planning of construction of several public works, like highways or dams, which will create new barriers on the corridors areas between populations and will increase the isolation of this population, is clearly contributing to deteriorate the current situation.

In 2002 WWF Spain with the support of WWF International developed a short project called Iberian Lynx and Public works, where 53 Public works projects, affecting the Iberian lynx areas, were detected. Among these 53 projects, the worse was a long highway that should connect Madrid with Córdoba, crossing Montes de Toledo and Eastern Sierra Morena and contributing to the isolation of these two populations.

In July of this year the Ministry of public works started the administrative process for the construction of this highway. WWF Spain has already pleaded to the Public works ministry, explaining why this project should be rejected. Considering the threat that this big infrastructure means for the Iberian lynx (as well for the habitat conservation of many other different protected species like the Spanish Imperial Eagle, the Black Vulture or several SCI), it's necessary a stronger effort against this very dangerous road, including legal action, communication campaign and lobbying.

Presidente de Honor: SM Juan Carlos I

Presidente: Francisco Díaz Pineda
Secretario General: Juan Carlos del Olmo

Registrado como:

WWF-World Wide Fund For Nature
WWF-Fondo Mondiale per la Natura
WWF-Fondo Mundial para la Naturaleza
WWF-Fonds Mondial pour la Nature
WWF-Welt Natur Fonds

También conocido como:
World Wildlife Fund





General Objectives:

- To spread, through a rising awareness campaign, the situation of the Iberian lynx in Europe.
- To influence in the process of development of some of the most threatening infrastructures for the Iberian Lynx that have been planned in the recent years.

Specific objectives

- To develop a raising awareness campaign in Europe, using a specific publication about the Iberian Lynx.
- To develop reports from independent Universities, showing the effects of the Madrid-Toledo-Cordoba highway in some species and habitats.
- To prepare all the materials and necessities documents to develop a lobby and communication campaign.
- To develop all the legal procedures to influence in the administrative process, including a complaint to the Commission against the highway Madrid-Toledo-Cordoba.
- To develop a communication campaign (internet, press, preparing a factsheet, a VNR and several press releases).
- To develop a lobby action in the regional, national and international institutions and to coordinate our efforts with the different NGO and social groups that area working against this infrastructure.

Budget

Concept	€
PERSONNEL (Layer, technicians and staff costs)	13.500
PUBLICATION (Iberian lynx leaflet in English, including printing, translation, distribution)	6.000
EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE (Reports about the impact of the highway on habitats and species).	6.000
GENERAL COSTS (travels, materials, VNR, office running costs, etc)	6.000
Total budget	31.500