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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations

Subject:	AOB item for the meeting of the “Agriculture and Fisheries” Council on 23-24 June 2025: Conference: Sustainable management of populations of protected animals that cause losses in agriculture (Brussels, 15 May 2025) <i>- Information from the Presidency</i>
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On 15 May 2025, a conference on sustainable management of populations of protected animals that cause damage in agriculture, organized by the Polish Presidency, was held in Brussels.

The conference brought together around 65 people, mostly representatives of EU Member States, as well as representatives of the European Commission (both DG AGRI and DG ENVI), academia and agricultural organisations.

The event was dedicated to the current challenges related to the growing numbers of protected animals in particular the wolf and the legitimate concerns of rural communities directly affected by the growing population of this species.

During the discussion, the EC referred to, among other things, that on 8 May, the European Parliament voted to downgrade the wolf's protection status from 'strictly protected' to 'protected', aligning the provisions of the Habitats Directive with the amendment made by the Bern Convention Committee on 3 December 2024. With this, Member States have more flexibility in managing wolf populations. The directive will enter into force 20 days after publication in the EU Official Journal. Member States will then have 18 months to comply with its requirements.

It was pointed out that it is necessary to implement preventive measures to reduce damage caused by large predators as well as effective compensation schemes and better dialogue with farmers and technical support.

The need to move towards a proactive and controlled model of large predator management based on science was emphasised to ensure the stability of wolf populations while reducing damage caused by large predators, predominantly wolves - especially in regions where traditional livestock grazing is widespread.

The conference also drew attention to the growing bear population, primarily especially in Romania, where fatal attacks on humans are becoming more frequent. The European Commission has indicated that it currently has no plans to change the protection status of other large carnivores. However, the case of Romania highlights the need to seek solutions to the problems of the increasing population of this species in some regions of the EU.