

# PRESS RELEASE

## COCO PROJECT

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## TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR COEXISTENCE

### CoCo advances tools and technologies that support communities living alongside large carnivores in Europe

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As large carnivore populations continue to recover across Europe, the need for effective, practical and widely accepted coexistence solutions has never been more pressing. Within the CoCo project, a dedicated stream of work is advancing the understanding and deployment of tools and technologies that can support both livestock protection and large carnivore conservation.

From smart fencing and early warning systems to GPS-based livestock tracking and wildlife monitoring, a growing range of technological solutions is becoming available to rural communities living alongside wolves, bears, lynx and wolverines. However, the effectiveness of these tools depends not only on their technical performance but also on their usability, affordability and acceptance by the people who use them every day.

CALLISTO Wildlife and Nature Conservation Society, CoCo partner organisation based in Greece with extensive experience in human–bear coexistence, is leading efforts within the project to evaluate and advance these tools. Drawing on years of field experience in large carnivore management and community engagement, CALLISTO is helping to bridge the gap between technological innovation and real-world application in rural landscapes.

A central element of this work is a structured co-creation process that brings together stakeholders – including agricultural advisors, pastoralists, livestock farmers, hunters and local authorities– to assess new technologies across multiple dimensions. These include the conditions under which technologies are effective, the reasons they may fail in practice, social acceptance and data governance considerations, and the requirements for successful adoption by end users. This multi-dimensional assessment ensures that technological solutions are not only technically sound but also socially viable and practically implementable.

“Technology alone is not the answer, but when developed and deployed in close collaboration with the communities that need it most, it can be a powerful enabler of coexistence. Our work within CoCo focuses on understanding not just what works technically, but what is practical, accessible and trusted by the people on the ground.” Alexandros Poulakis, Policy & Governance specialist, CALLISTO.

Particular emphasis is placed on the role of agricultural advisors as key intermediaries in supporting the uptake of new technologies and ensuring their proper implementation. Their position at the interface between research, policy and farming practice makes them essential partners in translating innovation into real-world coexistence measures.

Recent stakeholder consultations, including a co-creation webinar organised by CALLISTO and EUFRAS (European Forum for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services), have yielded valuable insights into the practical, social, economic and governance dimensions that influence technology adoption. These consultations explored scenario-based approaches to technology deployment, examining who uses the technology, at what stage it should be introduced, what operational support structures are needed and what the main barriers and enabling factors for adoption are.

The insights gathered through these processes, combined with evidence from CoCo's 12 case study countries, will feed into practical guidance and policy recommendations aimed at scaling up successful coexistence tools across Europe.

Follow the project's progress and stay informed about new findings at <https://cocoproject.eu/>.