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From Data to Action

As we move into the next phase of the CoCo project, we're pleased to share an update on what has been keeping teams busy across our case study areas and partner countries. This issue brings together the practical realities of doing coexistence research at scale, and the wider policy conversations that are gaining pace across Europe.

A major focus this time is the farmer survey. With over 1,000 face to face questionnaires gathered from farms in 12 countries and 30 case study areas, numerous field observations and nearly 2000 online survey responses from hunters and landowners, the information collection milestone is only the beginning. Turning that volume of information into a dataset that can truly be analysed has taken patience, careful coordination, and a lot of behind the scenes work. In this issue, we speak with colleagues at CITA Spain about what it really means to make data usable, and why those less visible steps matter so much for the quality of the results. We discuss with UNITO about the on-site observations and INRAE on the challenges of coordinating an online survey.

We also reflect on the policy momentum building around livestock in the EU. Following the change in protection status of the Wolf. The Bern Convention Expert Group on Large Carnivores has reconvened and is assessing how countries are reacting to this change. Further developments include a Stress Test for the Nature Directives. On the agricultural side, discussions are underway on a proposed livestock strategy and how this will be integrated into the new CAP. Debate is also occurring within the European Parliament where issues like prevention, compensation and long-term support for farmers living with large carnivores are increasingly part of the conversation. Bringing these elements together will be a key part of CoCo's efforts to create a Roadmap for Coexistence.

We hope the insights in this newsletter help connect these debates to what is happening in landscapes right now.

Thank you to all partners, team members and collaborators for your continued dedication and energy. The work is moving forward, and so are the conversations that surround it.

Katrina Marsden, Coordinator of WP 8, adelphi, Berlin.

PROJECT UPDATES

The project is made up of eight interrelated work packages as described on the project website. Here we provide a short update on ongoing activities.

Behind the Data: CoCo's Farmer Survey Takes Shape

What does it actually take to understand how pastoralists across Europe live alongside wolves, bears and wolverine? For the CoCo project, it starts with a questionnaire and approximately 1,000 of them, collected from farms in 12 countries and 30 case study areas. Getting those questionnaires filled in was a feat in itself. But turning the resulting mountain of data into something researchers can actually analyse? That has been a different challenge entirely. We spoke to Ana Grau Valenciano and Eduardo Torres Martínez, researchers at CITA Spain, to find out what that process actually looks like.

[» Read more here](#)



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Field observations of protection measures

Knowing that a farmer uses an electric fence or a livestock guarding dog tells us only part of the story. What matters just as much is how that fence is built, whether it is properly maintained, and whether the livestock guarding dogs and the shepherd work together as an effective team. Alongside the farmer survey, CoCo teams have been carrying out direct field observations of livestock protection measures, the teams have visited 321 pastures across 12 countries to observe protection measures first-hand, from measures of fence voltage and wire configuration to dog behaviour and shepherd management practices. These observations complement the farmer survey data and will help us understand not just what tools are being used across Europe, but how they are being put into practice. In the next phase of analysis, the levels of implementation of protection measures will be examined in relation to a range of contextual factors, from socio-demographic one to the local presence of large carnivore species.



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Landowner, hunter and other land user survey

In addition to the pastoralists survey we have also been engaging with other stakeholders. On 1 May, we closed an online questionnaire for hunters, landowners, land managers and environmental interests across the 12 countries participating in the CoCo project, coordinated by INRAE and supported by European Landowners' Organization and FACE. More than 1800 participants completed the questionnaire, sharing their perceptions of wildlife, their experiences with local stakeholders, and their views on balancing conservation and land use. The analyses will help identify common challenges and shared priorities across countries and stakeholder groups, contributing to fairer and more practical coexistence solutions.

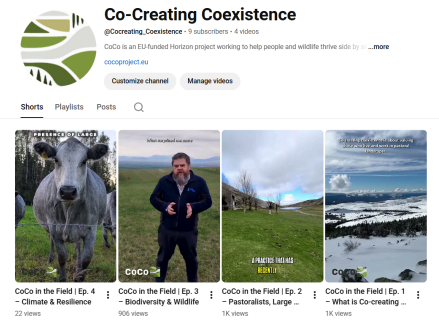


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Meeting the Field Teams: the IYRP Campaign

To give a clearer picture of what CoCo fieldwork really looks like, we've launched a video campaign within the context of International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralism. Across a series of YouTube shorts filmed in different countries, the campaign showcases the people doing the day to day work on the ground, the landscapes they work in and the key topics involved in the project work. IYRP matters for CoCo because many of our case studies are rooted in pastoral and grazing systems, where livestock, people and wildlife share space and where the costs and responsibilities of coexistence are felt most directly. By linking the campaign to IYRP, we also want to help amplify the visibility of rangelands and pastoralists in European discussions on rural futures, biodiversity and land use.

» [Check out the videos here](#)



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Visit the CoCo field sites

Across 12 European countries, the CoCo project has surveyed 30 case study areas that together capture the remarkable diversity of pastoral landscapes and human-wildlife dynamics on the continent. From mountain pastures to lowland plains, each area presents its own distinct combination of natural environments, socioeconomic conditions, farming practices, large carnivore species and coexistence challenges. These case study areas form the empirical backbone of the project. They provide the local context against which findings from over 1,000 pastoralist surveys, completed by shepherds and livestock farmers across all 30 sites, can be understood and interpreted. Twenty-eight case study areas are now documented on the CoCo website, each with a dedicated subpage presenting key facts, contextual information, and local perspectives. We invite you to explore them via the website and the interactive map and to discover what makes each place unique.

» [Take a look at the case studies here](#)



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RELEVANT POLICY NEWS

EU livestock sector: policy updates

The Commission recently consulted on a proposed EU [strategy for livestock](#), building on its Vision for Agriculture and Food. The strategy acknowledges the sector's essential role while recognising major challenges: declining herd numbers, low profitability, environmental footprint, and trade competition. It aims to ensure the sector is crisis-resilient, competitive, and sustainable, and will map challenges, identify structural weaknesses, and set out pathways for improvement

On the **CAP side**, a [Thematic Group on the CAP's Role in Supporting Sustainable and Competitive Livestock Systems](#) was established in late 2025 and has met twice in early 2026, bringing together around 40 stakeholders to explore how the CAP can support sustainable livestock systems now and in the future.

A **European Parliament motion for a resolution** on securing a sustainable future for the EU livestock sector (rapporteur: Carlo Fidanza, ECR) was adopted by the AGRI committee in March 2026 (40 for, 8 against) and will proceed to plenary. Notably for CoCo, it calls on the Commission to "identify adequate and long-term funding opportunities for preventive measures and compensation for farmers" for wildlife damages, beyond the CAP.

Finally, the **European Environment Agency** released a study and briefing on [Managing and restoring semi-natural habitats – a review of the links with extensive grazing systems](#), finding that only 10–15% of total EU ruminant livestock is sufficient to maintain grazing-dependent habitats — though this varies widely, from over 40% in Croatia, Portugal, Romania and Spain, to under 5% in Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Ireland.

Bern Convention Expert Group on Large Carnivores

Following the downlisting of the wolf from strictly protected to protected species under the Bern Convention, the [Expert Group on Large Carnivores](#) has launched a survey addressed to all Parties of the Bern Convention. The survey examines changes in the legal protection status and management measures, both lethal and non-lethal. The survey aims to identify Parties that have introduced changes to their legislation or administrative frameworks, are in the process of doing so, or are planning such changes.

Stress test of Birds and Habitats Directives

In 2026, the European Commission is carrying out a [stress test of the Birds and Habitats Directives](#). It is part of the European Commission's wider initiative on simplification, aiming to enhance EU competitiveness. The stress test aims to assess whether the directives remain fit to achieve their objectives in a cost-efficient way, including by identifying opportunities to reduce unnecessary administrative burden. A call for evidence is open.

EU Petition Committee hearing on Large Carnivore Management

On 23 June (14:30–15:30, Spinelli 3G3, European Parliament, Brussels), the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions is hosting a workshop entitled "Implementing Preventive Measures for Large Carnivore Management: Practical Pathways for Effective Coexistence", organised in connection with petition 604-2025 on brown bear protection in the Trento region. John Linnell (Norwegian Institute for Nature Research / Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences) will present CoCo findings on challenges in coexistence and the way forward for improvement. Dr Ann Eklund (Halmstad University) will present on good practices in preventive measures and damage reduction. Dr Jurgen Tack, Secretary General of the European Landowners' Organisation (ELO), will represent the farmers' and landowners' perspective. The workshop will be livestreamed on the European Parliament's webstreaming platform.

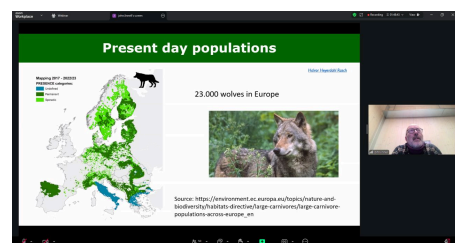
EU Large Carnivore Platform Plenary Meeting

The EU Large Carnivore Platform's 13th Plenary Meeting took place in Brussels on Friday 5 June, bringing members together to take stock of what's moving at EU level and to share what's happening on the ground. Alongside updates on current policy processes and funding opportunities, the agenda included a focus on how well damage mitigation measures are working, quick snapshots from regional platforms and partner projects, and a short CoCo update. The meeting wrapped up with a discussion on the priorities and challenges the platform should focus on next. More details on [the CoCo website](#).

PROJECT NEWS AND EVENTS

CoCo Webinar on Livestock Depredation | Online, 9 December 2025

Over 50 participants joined our first CoCo-EAAP webinar, "*Speaking to farmers and shepherds about livestock depredation*," where we presented findings from 1,000 interviews with livestock breeders across Europe and shared real-world experiences from Asturias (wolves) and Prespa (bears). A lively Q&A showed strong interest in practical coexistence solutions. Thank you to our speakers from Inland Norway University, CITA Aragón and CALLISTO for their valuable insights. The recording is available in the [website](#).



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CoCo Webinar on Tech-Driven Agriculture | Online, 16 February 2026

Organised by EUFRAS, CALLISTO and CoCo, the recent webinar “*Tech-Driven Agriculture: Securing Livestock and Coexisting with Large Carnivores*” brought together stakeholders to explore how technology can support both livestock protection and bear conservation. Designed as a co-creation session, it enabled agricultural advisors, conservationists and practitioners to share experiences and identify the practical, social, economic and governance factors shaping technology adoption. The discussion highlighted the essential role of agricultural advisors in guiding implementation and ensuring tech solutions work on the ground. The insights gathered will help inform better design, communication and deployment of new tools for coexistence.



webinar
co-created by Callisto and EUFRAS

**Tech-Driven Agriculture:
Securing Livestock and
Coexisting with
Large Carnivores**

17th February | 10:00 cet | Meet platform

Join Callisto and EUFRAS for an interactive webinar exploring how emerging technologies can support bear conservation and human-bear coexistence.

- Insights from EU project Horizon Europe CoCo
- Participatory discussion on technology effectiveness, usability & acceptance

EUFRAS CALLISTO CoCo

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CoCo at the 7th Dinaric-Balkan-Pindos Platform meeting | Tirana, Albania, 24-25 February 2026

The [7th Dinaric Balkan Pindos Platform conference](#) brought together around 70 experts, researchers, policymakers, and conservation practitioners. A central focus of the meeting was the continued development of a shared Action Plan for the Dinaric-Balkan-Pindos platform. Several CoCo partners were actively involved in the conference. Katrina Marsden (adelpi) and Spyros Psaroudas (Callisto) contributed to the thematic working group on livestock protection. The presented inputs from the CoCo project alongside Rok Černe (Slovenia Forest Service), who is also a member of CoCo's Advisory Board.



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CoCo Webinar on Livestock Protection Across Europe | Online, 9 April 2026

The recent EAAP-CoCo webinar “*Livestock Protection Across Europe*” gathered experts from Italy, Romania, Slovakia and beyond to share current practices and challenges in livestock protection. Speakers explored technical measures, fencing strategies in the Alps, the management of livestock-guarding dogs and long-term experiences from the Carpathians and Central Europe. The session offered a valuable comparative perspective on how different regions are adapting to coexistence with large carnivores, highlighting both persistent obstacles and practical solutions emerging across Europe. The recording can be found on the [CoCo website](#).



EAAP
European Federation of Animal Science

CoCo

WEBINAR SERIES

**Livestock protection
across Europe**

April 9 - 15:00 CET

© EAAP

CoCo Advisory Board Meeting

On 21 April 2026, the CoCo project held its third meeting with its [Independent Advisory Board](#), bringing together scientists and stakeholder representatives to review progress and share expertise across several workstreams. The board was updated on the project's survey of hunters and landowners, offering practical insights on how to improve engagement with farming and hunting communities. This included reflections on how the

concept of "coexistence" is perceived by those communities, and the importance of ensuring the language used by the research team is appropriate for different audiences. The board also reviewed early findings from the project's analysis of wildlife management policies, pastoral farming systems, and damage prevention measures, providing guidance on how to make these outputs as useful and grounded as possible.

CoCo at the Nordic Environmental Social Science Conference (NESS) | Uppsala, Sweden 9-11 June

Preliminary results from the pastoralism-wildlife policy landscape mapping within CoCo's 12 case countries were presented by Auvikki de Boon (Umeå University) and discussed during the Nordic Environmental Social Sciences conference 9-11 June in Uppsala, Sweden.

CoCo at Pathways Europe 2026 | Oxford, 14-17 June

During the [Pathways Europe 2026: Human Dimensions of Wildlife Conference](#) in Oxford 14-17 June, CoCo was present in force. In the roundtable "Cross-country learning for coexistence: evaluating governance of pastoralism and wildlife in Europe", partners from Sweden, Germany, Romania, Spain, Italy, Poland, and France discussed the pastoralism-wildlife policy landscape across EU countries, focusing on policy coherence, consistency of strategies and instruments, justice considerations, and overall comprehensiveness.

A second interactive workshop, "Knowledge types and knowledge flows in collaborative governance arrangements for human–carnivore coexistence", organised by partners from Greece (CALLISTO) and Sweden (Umeå University), brought together scientists, conservation practitioners, wildlife managers, and local stakeholders to exchange experiences on challenges such as monitoring information not reaching decision-makers, local knowledge being excluded from management plans, and weak communication between practitioners and authorities.

In "Sharing landscapes with wildlife: Coexistence pathways for high nature value pastoral systems and large carnivores", CoCo partners Katrina Marsden (adelphi), advisory board member Hanna Pettersson (University of York), Valeria Salvatori (Istituto di Ecologia Applicata), and Alice Ouvrier (INRAE) compared challenges across pastoralist systems and identified common solutions.

CoCo was also represented in the "Livestock-predator conflicts" session –with presentations on the Ariège case study, farm practice influences, and an initial overview of the pastoralist survey– and in the symposium "What it takes for human–wildlife coexistence", where project lead John Linnell (INN) discussed the concept of coexistence with high-level experts.

Upcoming events

CoCo EAAP Webinar Series

The CoCo partner European Federation of Animal Sciences (EAAP) organises regular webinars for its membership and other stakeholders. The third webinar from the CoCo team is happening on Thursday, 23rd June 2026, 15:00 - 17:00 CET. This webinar will include information on established and emerging technologies for human-wildlife coexistence and a workshop on how these can be evaluated and adopted from the perspective of primary producers. [More information and register here.](#)

CoCo is participating in the following events:

- **European Congress of Conservation Biology (ECCB)**

A round table titled "Emerging technologies for human-wildlife coexistence" has been accepted in the [8th European Congress of Conservation Biology](#) to be held between 6-10 July in Leiden, the Netherlands. John Linnell (University of the Inland, Norway) Dimitris Bormpoudakis (Callisto-Wildlife and Nature Conservation Society, Greece) and Auvikki de Boon (Umeå University, Sweden) will co-develop with participants a working definition of coexistence technologies and describe some of the ways it could be developed in a useful, just and inclusive way. Participants including scientists, practitioners and local stakeholders will discuss, in groups or collectively, the key requirements, challenges and opportunities related to the use of technologies in human-wildlife coexistence. Facilitators, panellists and participants will co-develop a synthesis document, outlining "technologies for coexistence" as a distinct concept and detailing how a critical application of co-design can bridge the gaps between science, policy, practice and affected communities, and deliver more just and inclusive multispecies techno-ecologies.

- **IBA Bear Conference**

20-25 September 2026, the [29th International Conference on Bear Research and Management will be held in Pescasseroli](#), in Italy's Central Apennines - home to the critically endangered Marsican brown bear. The conference will bring together scientists, conservationists, policymakers, and community leaders to share research and discuss coexistence strategies.

- **Tusnad Bear Conference**

The international conference TusnadEcoBear 2026, organized between 20–23 October 2026 in Băile Tuşnad, represents one of the most important Eastern European platforms dedicated to coexistence between humans and large carnivores. This year, the scientific program is structured around several major themes: large carnivore management, environmental policies and legislation, conservation technologies and best practices, scientific communication, and coexistence strategies. For details and registration information, see the [conference website](#).

RELATED PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Special feature in People and Nature on wildlife and pastoralism interactions

A new Special Feature for People and Nature, comes out 15 June. The feature “[Sharing landscapes with wildlife: conflict and coexistence between High Nature Value pastoral systems and large carnivores](#)” is led a team of editors including a number of CoCo partners and advisory board members (Katrina Marsden, Hanna Petterson, Tasos Hovardas, Angela Lomba, Tobias Plieninger, Valeria Salvatori, Camilla Sandström, and Juliette Young). It examines the challenges facing High Nature Value pastoral systems in the context of large carnivore recovery. The contributions show that whilst the return of wolves, bears, lynx, and other predators is a conservation success, it creates additional pressure on herding communities that are already contending with shrinking grazing areas, rural depopulation, and agricultural policies that favour intensive farming. The authors argue that coexistence is only achievable where local institutions are strong, pastoralists are meaningfully involved in designing solutions, and policy is treated as an ongoing learning process – and they call on European policymakers to reform agricultural subsidies, protect herders' access to common land, and bring pastoralist voices into both wildlife management and agricultural reform.

EU Large Carnivore Platform Role Play

The [EU Platform on Coexistence between people and large carnivores](#) has developed the role play game “Dealing with differences: can wolves and people coexist?”, aimed at young people (aged 15 and above). In the role play, students take on different roles, such as farmers, hunters, and local inhabitants, to discuss the return of wolves to a rural area in Europe, where they had been absent for over 100 years. The game places special emphasis on promoting dialogue and respect for different perspectives, teaching students the underlying social, economic and cultural factors around coexistence between humans and large carnivores. The role play has been translated into all 24 official EU languages, and it can be [downloaded for free via the EU Learning Corner](#).

The role play has been trialled at a number of events recently. On 22 May, the platform hosted a dedicated workshop at the [EAZA Conservation Forum](#) in Kronberg, Germany. The role play was promoted during EU Green Week at Brussels and a further session will be organised at the Pathways Conference (see events above).

New Guidance on Coexistence: Living Well with Wildlife Guide

To support municipalities, local authorities and practitioners working on the ground, Rewilding Europe and the Endangered Landscapes & Seascapes Programme have launched Living well with wildlife: A practical guide. This practical, experience-based resource helps communities navigate the challenges and opportunities of wildlife returning to human landscapes, offering a structured process for prevention, response and long-term coexistence. [Access the guide here](#).

The COEXIST research project: "Living with, living despite megafauna: dynamics and trajectories of coexistence with iconic, predatory and conflict species"

[COEXIST](#) is a multidisciplinary research project grounded in the humanities and social sciences whose objective is to study what determines coexistence between human activities and certain emblematic species. The CoCo partner in France (INRAe) is a partner in Coexist and transfers information across both projects. The aim of the project is to gain a better understanding of what drives conflict and coexistence in order to develop territorial diagnostic tools that can better map coexistence trajectories. What explains the different dynamics of coexistence depending on locations and species? What causes thresholds of conflict and their nature to evolve? To answer these research questions and achieve the objectives set, the COEXIST project will conduct research through various case studies, each focusing on a specific location and species. The locations involved are in Europe (mostly France), south America (French Guiana) and Africa (Uganda, Zimbabwe and Democratic Republic of the Congo). The project focusses on 10 predatory and conflict species. This project began in early 2025 and will end in late 2028. A phase for disseminating and popularizing the results to various audiences is planned for the end of the project.

New Guidance on Wolf Management Interventions

This [guidance document](#) from LIFE WILD WOLF aims to reduce the likelihood of human injuries caused by wolves in modern Europe and to help ensure that communities living in wolf areas maintain trust in the authorities responsible for managing risky situations. The guidance outlines

measures designed to reduce the risk of incidents involving wolves and people in a variety of scenarios, providing a framework to help identify when specific interventions may be appropriate.

New Study: Lower-Tech Solutions can drive meaningful change for Human-Wildlife Coexistence

This [new study](#) challenges the assumption that "smart" rural innovation requires high-tech digital solutions. Simpler tools such as electric fences, livestock guarding dogs, and bear-proof bins can drive meaningful change when communities are genuinely involved in adapting them to their local context. Researchers in the LIFE ARCPROM project studied local communities in three Greek national parks and found that the key to successful implementation is collective ownership i.e. communities refining each tool to suit their specific contexts. This demonstrates that rural innovation is a social achievement, not just a technical one. The study calls on EU rural development policy to move toward place-based, community-driven models that can deliver both fairer outcomes for people and more sustainable results for wildlife conservation.

Webinar available: Bridging Science & Management to address anthropogenic Wolf-Dog Hybridization

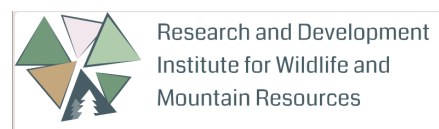
WOLFNESS's second webinar, "*Bridging science and management to address anthropogenic wolf-dog hybridisation*" is [now available to watch](#). Drawing on recent and ongoing research illustrated with exemplary photos, it examines the limits of using morphological traits to identify wolf-dog hybrids (WDH), concluding that such traits alone are insufficient for identifying WDH or informing effective management strategies.

Wildlife Poisoning in Europe: Two Alarming Incidents

In spring 2025, two major incidents underscored how serious and persistent the issue of wildlife poisoning remains in Europe, even inside protected areas where poison baits are illegal under national and EU law. In Italy, [at least 18 wolves were found dead](#) within a few days in the Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise. Initial investigations strongly suspect poisoning, and an urgent criminal investigation is underway. Just weeks earlier, in Greece, 12 Cinereous vultures were poisoned in the Dadia–Lefkimi–Soufli Forest National Park, resulting in the death of nine birds and seriously affecting ongoing conservation and recovery efforts. Although they are not usually the intended targets, vultures are highly vulnerable to poisoned bait intended to kill large carnivores that come into conflict with livestock farming and other practices. [The mass poisoning](#) was discussed extensively at the most recent [Greek National Large Carnivore Platform meeting](#), where participants called for a full investigation, strict enforcement, and targeted public awareness campaigns. The Working Group Against Poisoned Baits published an [open letter](#), proposing specific prevention measures. Both incidents occurred inside protected areas, despite poison baits being illegal under national and EU law. They reflect a broader and deeply concerning pattern and serve as a reminder that wildlife poisoning remains one of the most urgent conservation threats in Europe today.

VISIT THE COCO PARTNERS: ICDCRM

The Research and Development Institute for Wildlife and Mountain Resources (ICDCRM) in Miercurea-Ciuc is one of the most dynamic applied research institutions in Romania dedicated to the sustainable management of wildlife and mountain ecosystems. Established in 2018 under the coordination of the "Gheorghe Ionescu-Șișești" Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, the institute conducts research activities at the intersection of wildlife management, biodiversity conservation, forest management, agri-environment and the adaptation of mountain ecosystems to climate change. Through national and international projects, ICDCRM's strategic objective is to actively contribute to the development of adaptive natural resource management. Although it is a young institute, it has already become an active partner in international research projects.



"For us, the CoCo project is important because it gives us the opportunity to work directly alongside European partners on issues that are relevant for mountain communities in Romania as well. I believe that the institute's participation in such a project demonstrates that our experience and work can play a real role in identifying practical and balanced solutions for the relationship between people and wildlife in rural environments affected by multiple social and economic pressures. At the same time, we consider the transfer of knowledge and experience between the research teams involved to be essential for the future of ICDCRM, as well as strategically important for research in Romania." Dr. Agnes Keresztesi, ICDCRM Scientific Director.

Imprint:

<https://cocoproject.eu/en/statement-online-data-protection-policy>

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