



Deliverable D 3.4

PRACTICE ABSTRACT – FIELD EXPERIENCE

[Version 1.0]

DOCUMENT DETAILS

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List of terms, acronyms, abbreviations

Term / Acronym / Abbreviation	Meaning / Full text
WP	Work Package
LGD	Livestock Guarding Dog

CoCo Partners		Relevant Ethics Committee
UNIVERSITY OF INLAND NORWAY		Research ethics committee at INN (Komité for forskningsetikk ved INN)
NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE FOR NATURE RESEARCH		Adherence to INN's protocol
ADELPHI RESEARCH GEMEINNUTZIGE GMBH		Not applicable (not gathering primary data)
LEIBNIZ CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESEARCH		Ethics Committee of ZALF
INSTITUTE OF APPLIED ECOLOGY		Comitato Etico of Istituto di Ecologia Applicata
UNIVERSITY OF TURIN		Comitato di Bioetica of UNITO
UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA		University of Ljubljana's Committee for Ethics in Research Involving Human Subjects
CALLISTO, ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR WILDLIFE AND NATURE		Ethics Committee of CALLISTO - Environmental Organization for Wildlife and Nature
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE FOR WILDLIFE AND MOUNTAIN RESOURCES		Ethics Committee of ICDCRM
AGRI-FOOD RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OF ARAGON		Comité de Ética en Investigación con Seres Humanos (CEISH) of CITA
FRANCE NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT		Comité éthique de l'INRAE
UMEÅ UNIVERSITY - DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE		Swedish Ethical Review Authority (Etikprövningsmyndigheten)

CoCo Partners		Relevant Ethics Committee
LATVIAN STATE FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE "SILAVA"		Research ethics committee supervising observance of the Ethics codex of SFRI Silava
INSTITUTE OF NATURE CONSERVATION POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES		Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Nature Conservation PAS (Komisja ds. Etyki Badań Naukowych w Instytucie Ochrony Przyrody PAN)
EUROPEAN LANDOWNERS' ORGANIZATION		Adherence to INN's protocol
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ANIMAL SCIENCE		Not applicable (not gathering primary data)
RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY		Swedish Ethical Review Authority (Etikprövningsmyndigheten)

CoCo is funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe - Research and Innovation programme (grant agreement No. 101181958). The project, started in November 2024, has a duration of three years.



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About the project: Co-creating Coexistence

‘Co-creating coexistence: Advancing policies, practices, and stakeholder engagement for integrating wildlife and livestock into sustainable multi-functional landscapes in Europe’ (CoCo) is a research project designed to build the knowledge base necessary to identify future pathways that can reconcile the needs of pastoralists with those of wildlife in shared European landscapes.

Recovering wildlife populations can create challenges for rural professions, including extra costs and workload due to predation and damage mitigation as well as conflicts between stakeholders concerning wildlife management and the contested nature of relevant knowledge. This occurs in addition to existing socio-economic challenges concerning, for example, power, wealth, social capital, and gender and diversity. Some of the major obstacles to addressing these challenges are conflicts between stakeholders and the contested nature of relevant knowledge.

The CoCo project will tackle such challenges and transform the ongoing entrenched conflict to promote human-wildlife and cross-sectoral coexistence in multi-functional landscapes. To this end, a partnership of 18 research and stakeholder institutes and organisations across 12 European countries, will implement a multi-disciplinary and multi-actor approach aimed at co-creating knowledge with high legitimacy. Through eight work packages, a ‘Roadmap to Coexistence’ will be created with policy and practice recommendations.

The project will use methods as diverse as systematic reviews, field inspections, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and modelling. The project’s ambition is to collect original quantitative and qualitative data from at least 1000 pastoralists, 1000 hunters and 1000 landowners and qualitative data from stakeholders deployed in a comparative way across 12 countries. The insights stemming from the reviews, the analysis of new data, and the modelling will be integrated into policy recommendations for a better standardization, harmonization and integration of both pastoral and wildlife management systems.

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Evaluating livestock protection strategies: a cross-country field approach

Objectives

Coexistence between farmers and large carnivores is key to ensure biodiversity conservation, safeguard agricultural activities, and preserve rural communities. Achieving this requires effective prevention measures and shared land-management strategies. The CoCo project aims to improve wildlife–livestock coexistence by also assessing livestock protection strategies. Harmonised data on husbandry practices and wildlife interactions are collected from farms across 12 European countries and standardized field assessments evaluate how prevention measures are implemented, allowing cross-country comparisons of their effectiveness. We present the results of this latter activity here.

Results

A total of 321 farmers were interviewed (239 men and 82 women): 64.2% were sheep and/or goat farmers, 26.5% cattle farmers, 9% farmers raising mixed livestock (sheep, goats, and cattle). Among them, 52.3% had previously experienced predation events on the pasture under observation, mostly caused by wolves and, to a lesser extent, by bears and lynx; only 3 cases involved all three predators.

Anti-predation strategies were evaluated, including prevention tools (livestock guarding dogs (LGDs), electric fencing, stables) and management practices (shepherd presence, newborn animal management, nighttime sheltering). A preliminary assessment of the anti-predation strategies indicates that they are not always implemented correctly and we identified several shortcomings. Electrified fencing was most often used (69.1%), while LGDs and stables appear to be less consistently adopted, respectively 44.9% and 57.6%. Newborn animals are rarely managed separately and under controlled conditions from the rest of the herd (47.7%). Finally, 55.3% of farmers confine their livestock at night, and in 63.9% of cases a guardian is present during the day.

Practical implications

Field observation of the methods in use enabled direct contact with farmers and encouraged constructive exchanges. In addition, it provided an opportunity to raise awareness among farmers about the need to adopt appropriate protection measures (e.g., properly socialized LGDs and sufficiently high electric fencing) and to regularly check their correct functioning to improve their effectiveness.

D3.4 Practice abstract – field experience

English

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- help projects share their results in an easily understandable way for farmers, foresters, rural communities and others from practice
- foster knowledge flows, and shares project results more widely and at a faster pace
- support the development of project proposals with added value, avoiding duplication of ongoing or completed projects
- facilitate networking by connecting project partners with farmers, foresters and others from practice
- answer to real needs from the field

Operational Groups can benefit from getting involved in EU-wide Horizon networks to learn about good practices or innovative solutions from across the EU. Horizon projects can benefit from interacting with Operational Groups, which develop innovative solutions for real practical needs from farmers, foresters or rural communities.

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