

COEXISTENCE WITH LARGE CARNIVORES

«To reduce those to servitude which by art may be tamed and fitted for use, and to persecute and destroy the rest by a perpetual war, as dangerous and noxious»

(T. Hobbes, *De Cive*, 1642)

Large carnivores, as animals that are potentially dangerous or damaging and difficult to exploit, have been decimated by humans through hunting persecution and the appropriation of their habitat.

Since the last century, humanity has offered most of these animals strict **legal protection**, actualized through the extensive technical expertise acquired by **biology**.

SYMBOLIC SPECIES: DOMINION → COEXISTENCE

The initial focus on ecological studies and on financial support to reduce their impact on our activities has shifted to the *“human dimension”* of coexistence, the socio-cultural fabric in which their presence is intertwined.



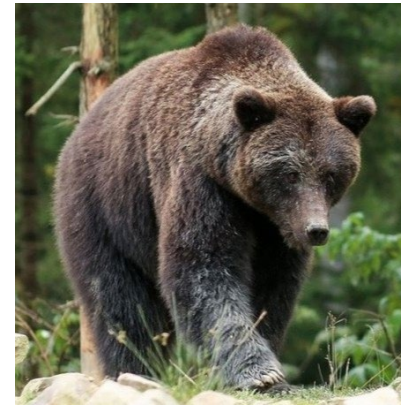
“Scapegoating” of Large Carnivores
Politics demonises them for electoral purposes, heedless of the biological and ethical premises of coexistence.

INTEGRATION

Tolerance for large carnivores doesn't depend solely on the objective assessment of their impact on human activities and the means to reduce it. It is essential to understand and act on people's perception and emotionality, which depend on their relationships, beliefs, norms and values.

Following the integration of social sciences into this research field, several specialized studies show that it is decisive to **valorise** the presence of these animals, emphasising their utilitarian, ecological and intrinsic value.

To achieve this goal, **communication** is key: mass media representations of large carnivores can amplify our concerns and fears by giving exaggerated media coverage to accidents and describing them using graphic language and images.



ELIMINATION

Although many States do so, liberalising the **killing** of large carnivores, through hunting or the systematic use of lethal control, is **ineffective** in:

- **Increasing public safety**
Hunting brown bears does not decrease the number of accidents, educating people and making anthropogenic food sources inaccessible does.
- **Decreasing economic damage**
Facilitating the killing of grey wolves does not decrease predation on farmed animals, implementing non-lethal preventive measures does.
- **Increasing tolerance**
Facilitating the killing of grey wolves does not improve people's attitude toward them and does not decrease poaching, valorising them does.

Conservationism

Preserve and restore **biodiversity**, i.e. the variety of autochthonous populations in their respective habitats (unlike the *“new conservation”* that aims at the sustainable exploitation of the environment).



Idealized Ecological Community

The original and authentic environmental composition of a territory is fixed in the past, before the correlative influence of modern humans.

Antispeciesism

Protect **the interests of animals**, according to their needs, capacities and relationships.

- **Theoretical validity**
Biological evolution and ethology prove our profound similarity to other animals, while conservation biology suggests valorising them to coexist.
- **Practical viability**
The traditional anthropocentric bias undermines our commitment to developing and fully implementing non-lethal measures to coexist.



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