

Progress Report II

REPORT FOR THE PROJECT „CO-EXISTENCE OF WOLVES AND JACKALS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA“

1. The primary objective of this project was: i) to gain insights into the public's perception of wolf and jackal presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), and ii) to document their recommendations for the long-term conservation of wolves in our country, with a special emphasis on livestock farmers. To achieve this, we extensively traveled throughout BIH, engaging in meaningful conversations with livestock farmers to record their suggestions and identify their specific needs. Among the most frequently proposed solutions for livestock protection was the provision of electric fences to local small farms in areas where livestock is vulnerable but where the owners lack the means to acquire such protective measures independently. Implementing this approach would serve to defend both livestock and wolf populations, making it a potentially valuable and practical contribution for our future work, particularly in the context of the upcoming and final Rufford grant.



2. It is essential to highlight the international recognition we have gained for our efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) in relation to wolf conservation. Notably, Michael Schöneberger, who has dedicated over 30 years to working at the Wolfspark Werner Freund in Merzig, Germany, visited BIH to engage in discussions regarding the status of wolves in our country and to learn about potential compensations in case of wolf attacks on livestock from the relevant ministries. Our exchange with him was featured in an interview published in the Saarbrücker Zeitung journal, accessible at the following link: [<https://www.saarbruecker-zeitung.de/saarland/merzig-wadern/merzig/michael-schoeneberger-forschte-zu-woelfen-in-bosnien-und-herzegowina-aid-88539825>].



The screenshot shows a news article from the Saarbrücker Zeitung. The title is "Den Wölfen vom Balkan auf der Spur". The article text discusses Michael Schöneberger's work with wolves at the Wolfspark Werner Freund in Merzig, Germany, and his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The article is dated 15.04.2023, 05:00 Uhr and has a reading time of one minute. Below the text is a photograph of Michael Schöneberger and Dragana Šnjegota standing in Banja Luka. The caption below the photo reads: "Michael Schöneberger und Dragana Šnjegota trafen sich in Banja Luka. Foto: Michael Schöneberger".

3. The most important objective we aimed to achieve, with our collective efforts across the previous Rufford projects, was to organise meetings with the responsible Ministries and other pertinent Institutions in our country. The intention was to present our comprehensive findings and propose long-term conservation strategies to ensure the continued persistence of wolves. I am thrilled to report that we successfully coordinated meetings with relevant institutions from both entities. This achievement holds immense significance as, currently, neither entity possesses a formal conservation management plan for wolves. In addition to showcasing our findings, we suggested a range of conservation measures, which encompass direct input from livestock farmers, with the aim of establishing a comprehensive conservation management plan.

During the meeting, held at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University of Banja Luka, we had the participation of representatives from the following institutions:

1. Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management of Republic Srpska
2. Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical, and Natural Heritage of Republic Srpska
3. Hunting Association of Republic Srpska
4. Center for Environment (CZZS)
5. Association C.E.Z.A.R.

We reached a consensus on the necessity of establishing an ongoing monitoring program for wolves in our country. **It was agreed that the meeting in Banja Luka marked the inaugural step towards the creation of a comprehensive conservation management plan for wolves!**



4. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to present our project and its outcomes at the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo, as part of the II STEM conference. We were honored to receive recognition in the form of an award for one of the best projects, results, and presentations. This award holds significant importance for our team, as it serves as validation that our

dedicated efforts towards the long-term preservation of wolves have been acknowledged by the pertinent authorities.

Furthermore, we engaged in productive discussions with representatives from the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism. We had the chance to present our findings and explore future actions essential for wolf conservation. The response from the ministry was overwhelmingly positive, further affirming the value of our work.



6. We are consistently in the field, actively searching for signs of wolves and jackals, engaging in conversations with local communities, and gathering extensive data to enhance our understanding of how to effectively manage these two species.

