

# Cooperative Transnational Wolf-management

**Preliminary insights from the “Healthy Planet” Project**  
*conducted by Huize Aarde and Osnabrück University*  
*co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*  
*and regional authorities within the INTERREG V A-Programme*  
*Deutschland-Nederland*

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## Agenda

- 13:30 – 14:00: Dialing In
- 14:00 – 14:10: Welcome and brief background to the Project (Alfons Uijtewaal, Stichting Huize Aarde)
- 14:10 – 14:30: Round of Introduction
- 14:30 – 15:00: Presentation of project results with Q&A (Andrea Lenschow, UOS)
- 15:00 – 15:10: Break
- 15:10 – 15:50: Presentations from the Praxis with Q&A
  - Crossbill Guides Foundation (on Ecosim - a simulation game on implications for policy and management of the return of big animals like for instance the wolf)
  - Cabwim wildlife research and consultancy (on methods to avoid nuisance from animals in an animal-friendly way)
- 15:50 – 16:00: Break
- 16:00 – 16:50: Plenary Discussion on Potentials for Cross-border Cooperation
- 16:50 – 17:00: Conclusions and Perspectives



# Outline

- Problem statement of the project
- Wolf Management in comparative perspective
- Management gaps and potentials for cross-border cooperation

## Problem statement

- **Biodiversity** is a global and cross-boundary challenge
  - Wolves continue to belong to those large carnivores threatened by extinction
  - EU legislation aims at protecting biodiversity since 1970s (birds and habitats directives) and provides legal framework for wolf management
- **Wolves** are perceived as **security threats** for farm animals and humans, hence local resistance
- **Cross-boundary cooperation** is called for in the case of “wandering wolves” or wolves in transboundary territories for coordinated implementation considering stakeholder interests



## Wolves in the Region (2021)

- Around 130 wolf packs live in Germany today (each with +/- 10 wolves); 23 packs live in Lower Saxony (NABU 2020)
- In NL wolves are less present yet (1 known wolf pack from 2018/2019, 4 single wolf territories (BIJ12)), border crossings become more frequent

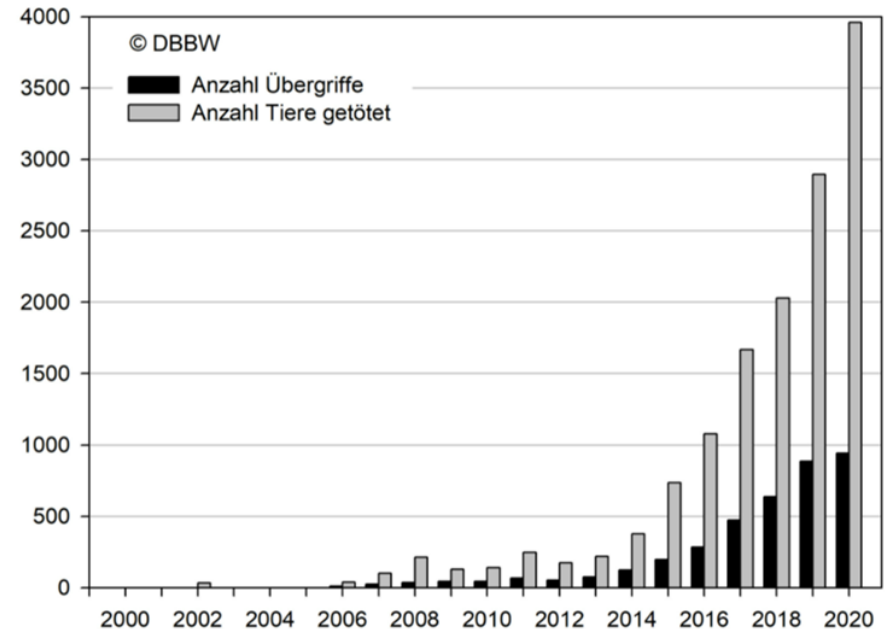


## Need to balance wolf protection with social and economic concerns

***"This is absolutely existential! [...] the thing with the wolf is really the existential question, can you (the shepherds) hold out or can you not hold out!?" (Expert from Chamber of Agriculture Lower Saxony)***

- Rising wolf tears (mostly of sheep and goat) in Germany and in the Netherland
  - Economic risks for individual farmers + shepherds
  - Conservation + landscape maintenance affected
  - Emotional impact
- Ambiguous impact on tourism

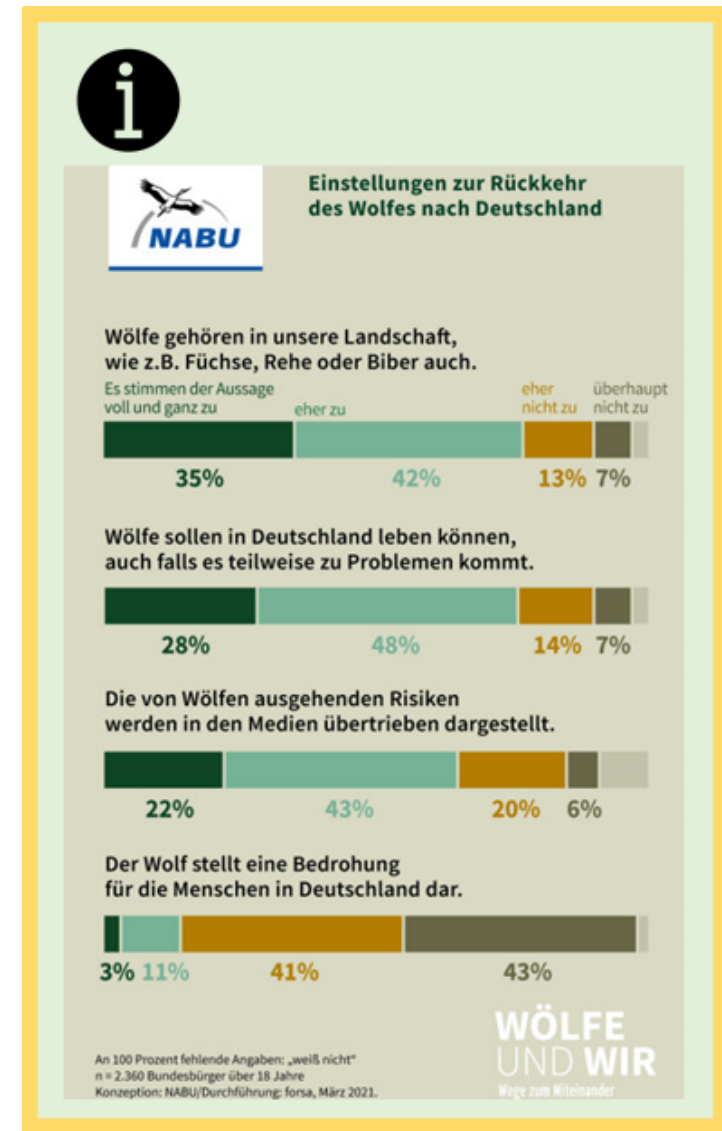
Wolf-caused livestock damage in Germany



DBBW (Dokumentations- und Beratungsstelle des Bundes zum Thema Wolf) (2021): Bundesweite Schadensstatistik. <https://www.dbbwolf.de/wolfsmanagement/herdenschutz/schadensstatistik>

# Need to balance wolf protection with social and economic concerns

- Majority of population perceives wolves as belong to our natural environment, however...
  - some more skepticism in rural areas where wolves have been sighted
  - some polarisation and partial radicalisation in society (also cross-boundary)
- In Germany radicalisation is already impacting on operational level of wolf management



## European dimension

- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Council of Europe, 1979)
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
  - prohibiting *in principle* the killing, disturbance, procession and trade of wolves
  - obligating MS to develop management systems for protected species, including data collection & monitoring
- Nature 2000 network connecting nature conservancy areas in the EU, covering 18% of the EU landmass
- Rural Development Fund; “National Eco-Schemes”; Life+
  - to support (innovative) investments intended to protect against damages from large carnivores (e.g. fences, guarding dogs or shepherding)
  - To develop schemes of coexistence between farmers and large carnivores





# German implementation

- Bundesnaturschutzgesetz, 2009
  - Accordingly the killing of wolves is legal only under very limited circumstances (epidemic threat, aggressive behaviour against humans)
- Wolf management is responsibility of the federal states (Bundesländer): Wolfsverordnungen
  - Including funding for protective measures and compensation
- Management hierarchy in Lower Saxony:
  - Ministry for Environment, Energy, Building, Climate
    - Lower Saxony Agency for Water, Coastal and Nature Protection (NLWKN)
      - delegating tasks to regional hunters association (Landesjägerschaft) and honorary advisors on wolf matters (Wolfsberater) at provincial level (Landkreis)
      - Newly appointed Wolfsberater from NABU + BUND to raise acceptance



## Dutch implementation

- Nature Conservation Bill (NBw 1998)
- Responsibility for national nature policy lies with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) and its department for nature, scenic and landscape policies (Directie Natuur).
- Provinces are responsible for wolf management
  - The executive organisation is BIJ-12, which coordinates reporting, monitoring and research related to wolves as well as facilitated the dialogue between stakeholders



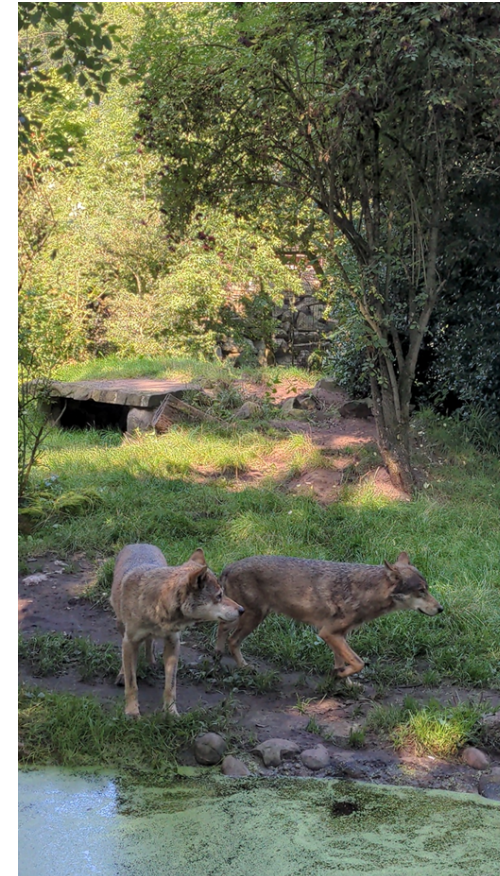
## Implementation Gaps

- Perceived „misfit“ of EU rules on ‘habitats’
  - specific needs to deal with wolf
- Horizontal sectoral cooperation
  - Distribution of competencies and information sharing between sectors / ministries involved (agriculture – environmental)
  - Distribution of funds
- Vertical and horizontal cooperation across levels of government
  - Harmonization of rules or operating guidelines at local level (Germany)
  - Cooperation between federal states (Germany)
  - In The Netherlands BIJ12 acts across provinces, i.e. processes are harmonized



# Evidence of European and Bilateral Cooperation

- EU-induced cooperation (under Habitat Directive)
  - EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores (research, information, best practice)
  - Carnivore guidelines – increasingly produced in cooperation with stakeholders
  - **but: “When you come down to the local level it is really more difficult, and you should really be talking about concrete measures” (expert on EU Large Carnivore Platform).**
- Poland-Germany: Joint programme for the monitoring
- Netherlands – Germany:
  - Annual formal exchange between Benelux states, Germany and France on wolf management
  - Dialogue between DE and NL farmers’ associations
    - **“It is helpful because those colleagues on the German side have more experience with wolves. How it works and what they do, how to act when confronted with a wolf, so they have an advantage in knowledge and experience.” (LTO representative)**
  - No cooperation at operational level (wolf advisors), yet due to management asymmetry (NL centralized/ DE decentralized + honorary advisors)



# Possible types of cross-border cooperation around wolves

Content	Character	Actors
Exchange of best practices of multi-stakeholder involvement	policy	Representatives of various stakeholders, including scientific
Exchange of best practices of dealing with claims	policy	Representatives of various stakeholders
Exchange of best practices of dealing with wolf activism	policy	Representatives of various stakeholders
Exchange of best & innovative practices of cattle protection measures	technical	Representatives of cattle owners, including innovators
Exchange of best & innovative practices of dealing with problem wolves	technical	Mainly scientific, including innovators
Coordinated monitoring	technical	Mainly scientific
Coordinated management	policy	Representatives of various stakeholders

