



# *Declaration of the Campo Grande Group toward the coexistence of the iberian wolf and extensive stock-raising*

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## **THE CAMPO GRANDE GROUP, FIRST STEP OF THE SOCIAL MEDIATION INITIATIVE TOWARD THE COEXISTENCE OF THE IBERIAN WOLF AND EXTENSIVE STOCK-RAISING**

The Campo Grande Group (CGG) is a Spanish nation-wide think-tank composed of people from different backgrounds and organizations involved in the conflict between extensive stock-raising and the Iberian wolf.

This group was created by Fundación Entretantos in 2016, as part of a social mediation initiative focused on addressing the conflict surrounding the coexistence of Iberian wolves and extensive stock-raising.

The initiative has gone through several stages during these years, starting with a baseline assessment carried out over several months in some of the most conflictive areas, using a set of tools (documentary analysis, impact and opinion in media analysis, in-depth interviews, discourse analysis etc.). Furthermore, a deep work of monitoring, documentation gathering, and contact with stakeholders completed the initial stages. Finally, the initiative led to the launching of the Campo Grande Group itself.

### **A WORKING GROUP BASED ON COLLABORATION AND MUTUAL RESPECT**

The instrument built up to carry on this work is the Campo Grande Group, named after the emblematic park in the city of Valladolid hosting its meetings. The role of the CGG is, primarily, to analyze the current situation of the conflict between the conservation of Iberian wolves and the survival of extensive stock-raising, to then propose different work lines and initiatives to facilitate the coexistence, founded on a perspective of collaboration, understanding and mutual respect between the different people, organizations, professionals and stakeholders connected to this situation. To this end, a group of twenty-five people from different backgrounds and organizations was invited, all of whom were highly experienced and knowledgeable in all matters related to these conflicts (for instance, wolves, extensive stock-raising, biodiversity conservation, hunting, and rural development). The idea was to develop a stable group of discussion that could start addressing new paths to a solution with a social and cooperative focus.

The people who participate in the group do so, mostly, based on their personal perspective of the conflict. However, they consider the role of the different organizations as a key element for solving the conflict, so they work to foster the cooperation between them, facilitating and promoting dialogue, negotiation and agreement.

The ROADMAP of the Campo Grande Group is ambitious, but it has already produced a series of documents and works that allow a better understanding of the situation and provide different keys on the conflict and how to deal with it.

For instance, the group has worked on:

- The design of a stakeholders' map to understand what people and organizations are involved in the conflict, and what the role of each is.
- An analysis of discourses, to try to establish the demands of each side
- A catalogue of stereotypes, commonplaces, red lines and obstacles leading to deadlock, based on the perspective of the social conflict generated by this topic.

Once the big picture was established, the CGG focused most of its efforts on deconstructing myths and analyzing proposals and good practices already existent in different territories. These materials have served as a starting point to find and promote latent agreement possibilities between the different parties, making an effort to bring discourses closer, generate new languages and facilitate the development of proposals and agreed solutions.

The result of this work is the document displayed in these pages, the "Declaration of the Campo Grande Group". It is a first set of reflections and proposals arising from the collaborative debate and the joint work of people whose interests and positions are radically different. The spirit of cooperation, understanding, respect and empathy that made this declaration possible is, in itself, the most outstanding value of the document. Additionally, the proposals described in it also benefit from the enormous experience, the wisdom and the technical skills of the Campo Grande Group members, who contributed generously as individuals to the common work.

The document presented is the result of a consensus among people whose initial points of view were very different. This is why not all signatories may share its conclusions 100%. Logically, in the process of mutual understanding and negotiation, everyone has had to give up some of their positions to reach an agreement. Accordingly, the agreement itself, and the spirit of negotiation and collaboration of its members, are far more important than the actual wording of its contents.



# DECLARATION OF THE CAMPO GRANDE GROUP TOWARD THE COEXISTENCE OF THE IBERIAN WOLF AND EXTENSIVE STOCK-RAISING

## BACKGROUND

Probably, the so-called “WOLF CONFLICT” is the most paradigmatic in the Iberian Peninsula regarding biodiversity and natural resources. Nevertheless, despite the dozens of initiatives developed around it, as time goes on, the positions of the different stakeholders involved are growing more and more distant, the antagonism is getting fiercer and, ultimately, solutions are becoming harder and harder to reach.

The currently situation of confrontation around the issue of Iberian wolves is deeply concerning as it is perceived as a clash that goes beyond wolves and their ecology, the attacks on domestic livestock, the evolution of wolf populations and the feasibility of extensive stock-raising. It is a social conflict involving different sectors and organizations, different ways of life, different beliefs and positions, and definitely different groups of people. Far from denying the divergence in opinions, which exists and is legitimate, it looks like antagonism and extreme and confrontational positions are not the adequate way of solving the issue. Conversely, we are convinced that the rising polarization of the conflict poses a clear risk to both the conservation of the species and the survival of extensive stock-raising, and it is threatening the future of a living rural world.

In response to this situation, which causes distress, pain and unease, a group of people linked to social organizations related to extensive stock-raising, nature conservation, rural development, and some academics and environmental experts, have been getting together during the last two years. We are united by a certainty, a need and a premise. **THE CERTAINTY:** no solution to this conflict is ever going to be effective without a basic dialogue-based social agreement. **THE NEED:** dialogue can only be tackled if the stakeholders involved agree to do so. **THE PREMISE:** acknowledging the scope and of the conflicts around wolves and characterizing such conflicts is an essential first step to any action taken from a social mediation perspective.

The Campo Grande Group has worked hard, often from distant and even antagonistic positions in order to analyze the current situation of the conflicts around the conservation of the Iberian wolf and the survival of extensive stock-raising, as well as to propose work lines and coexistence initiatives with an approach of collaboration, respect and understanding.

Our **MISSION** is to create an adequate climate facilitating the development of alternatives aimed at the long-term coexistence between extensive stock-raising and wild populations of wolves. We have pursued this from a position of generosity, often brave and difficult to reach, by stepping out of personal

and corporative comfort zones, overpassing preconceived ideas and feelings about the coexistence of the Iberian wolf and extensive stock-raising.

The LONG-TERM GOAL is ambitious: to reach agreements that allow compatibility between extensive stock-raising and wild wolf populations, under a perspective of usefulness and accuracy. In order to achieve this goal, we have analyzed the origins of Iberian-wolf related conflicts thoroughly, and we think that now is the time to move to practical proposals, offering to the Spanish society a line of action focused on conflict-solving.

We are not so naive as to believe that we have found the ultimate solution. There are still many topics to discuss, many possibilities and action lines and, above all, many people and organizations that still need to join this process. However, we do want to give value to what we think is our humble contribution: give visibility to the possibility of finding dialogue-based solutions.

Consequently, we are displaying below some reflections and thoughts that may allow to build a new attitude for managing Iberian wolves and extensive stock-raising.



# REFLECTIONS AND PROPOSALS TO BUILD CHANGES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF IBERIAN WOLVES AND EXTENSIVE STOCK-RAISING

## 1| REGARDING DAMAGES QUANTIFICATION, EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION

### WE OBSERVE...

- ▶ That the tools currently used to recognize and measure the attack of canids to extensive livestock flocks are not efficient for making accurate assessments, and consequently, the information they provide is not a realistic reflection of reality. This is due to diverse reasons. On the one hand, the criteria used are different in each regional government, and the information yielded is therefore hardly comparable between regions (also, protocols used by environmental officers are often not clear). Besides, with the evidence gathered, it is almost impossible to discriminate between attacks from feral dogs and wolves. On the other hand, many attacks remain undeclared by farmers, for many reasons including the exhausting bureaucracy that not everyone is used to dealing with, and the mandatory display of remains (despite the fact that many predators can make them disappear quickly if the attack is not detected immediately). Furthermore, the relationships between farmers and officers can disturb the procedure. Occasionally, cases of fraud in the procedure have been detected.
- ▶ That the cost of the damage assessment procedures, both in terms of human and economic resources, is extraordinarily high for environmental agencies.
- ▶ That, although there are quality and reliability limitations in some of the data obtained, we also note a lack of transparent access to information on the attacks, damages and compensations. This issue is the responsibility of regional governments. This information should be clearly accessible to any stakeholder in order to establish positions based on actual facts.
- ▶ That economic compensation tools are based on the quantification of the damage so, given the flaws mentioned above, it comes as no surprise that compensations do not satisfy any of the parties affected by the conflict. Moreover, economic aspects necessarily drive and condition the damage assessment procedures, which may pervert its operation.
- ▶ That the affected farmers perceive the unjustified delays on damage payments as negligence from the government agencies, which generates defenselessness and may even lead to the failure of these measures.

### WE AGREE ON....

- ▶ Improving and making damage assessment procedures consistent in every territory, in order to have accurate and useful information for decision-making.

- ▶ Facilitating access to information on damages, attacks and compensations, currently handled by the government agencies.
- ▶ Focusing on reducing and simplifying the compensation procedures, proposing less bureaucratized and more accessible procedures.
- ▶ Considering that linking compensations to damage assessment processes, given the difficulty and complexity of their execution, just increases the conflict, and does not satisfy the interests of any of the stakeholders involved.

### **THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND..**

- ▶ That the damage quantification mechanism be based on a “voluntary declaration of casualties”, periodically stated by the farmer before the agriculture department of his or her respective regional government.
- ▶ To incorporate this measure in a global concept as “compensation for coexistence with wildlife”, grouping all caseload currently considered in different procedures, which have a negative impact on farming, particularly on extensive stock-raising.
- ▶ Once the quantification has been assessed, a correction factor would be applied to each zone, that could be linked to the official wolf census (i.e. highest percentage of compensable casualties on the areas with higher wolf density), among other criteria.
- ▶ To implement a monitoring procedure to assess the system, the correction factors and the degree of satisfaction of all stakeholders over time.





## 2| REGARDING ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

### WE OBSERVE...

- ▶ That the economic instruments usually implemented for damage compensation show notable weaknesses (some of them already evident after several years of application and monitoring of the different tools used), in order to be considered fair and useful.
- ▶ That, occasionally, economic instruments are being considered as a subsidy for support or compensation, while other times they are used to encourage certain practices.
- ▶ That some government agencies use financing of damage insurance as a tool to compensate damages to farmers affected by attacks.
- ▶ That the economic instruments are designed exclusively by the government agencies, leaving the citizens as mere observers of conservation policies.

### WE AGREE ON....

- ▶ Considering that economic instruments of compensation of damages should not be a subsidy, a grant nor a reward, but should just compensate with justice and amplitude the damages supported (including inconveniences, effort, time, etc.).
- ▶ Addressing compensation through insurance is especially pernicious, because it forces an initial payment from the farmer and because premiums usually do not cover the damage sustained in full.

### THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND..

- ▶ To substantiate damage compensation on the 'voluntary declaration of casualties' mechanism mentioned above, considering it the fairest and most financially efficient system.
- ▶ To investigate the potential of other economic tools not yet mobilized, such as those associated with marketing (through guarantee systems, quality brands, etc.) or by exploring the tax options through incentives or exemptions linked to the environmental benefits.
- ▶ In addition to damage compensation, and regardless of any action implemented on this side, we also recommend using economic tools to promote and provide financial support to investments in management measures for damage prevention and reduction that may be undertaken by the farmers.
- ▶ To enable a monitoring protocol, leading to the assessment of the systems, the correction factors, the prevention of fraud and the degree of satisfaction with the procedure of all the stakeholders involved over time.

## 3| REGARDING MANAGEMENT AND DAMAGE REDUCTION MEASURES

### WE OBSERVE...

- ▶ That damage reduction and management measures (also known as 'preventive measures') are indispensable tools for improving coexistence between extensive stock-raising and wild populations of wolves. Moreover, their effect on the effective reduction of livestock casualties as a result of the attacks has been proven.
- ▶ Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these measures is relative, and remains very conditioned by the particularities of each area, management system, livestock breed, topography and landscape. Consequently, measures which are effective in a specific farm, could come out as inadequate, (or even clearly ineffective or not viable in both an economic, and a technical sense), on a different one.
- ▶ That, even if all preventive measures were applied in every livestock farm, the result would not prevent all damages on livestock.

### WE AGREE ON...

- ▶ Dismissing the idea of reaching a 100% effectiveness in management and damage reduction measures, as it is an unreachable and utopic goal, which will also make it very difficult to reach an understanding between farmers and environmentalists.
- ▶ Working through social agreement towards the definition of a threshold of damages that could be acceptable. Tentatively, the Campo Grande Group has estimated this threshold to be somewhere between 3-5% of yearly predation casualties.
- ▶ Improving damage control is a must, for which it is necessary to provide in-field technical advisory support, for facilitating the implementation of preventive measures adapted to the reality of each farm.

### THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND...

- ▶ To quantify the efficiency of practices and measurements targeted at reducing damages, with the purpose of making clear what their usefulness is under strict criteria.
- ▶ To decouple damage compensation payments from the degree of application of damage reduction measures by farmers. We understand that this kind of conditionality undermines damage compensation mechanisms by bringing in external factors that may distort the intended goal.
- ▶ To implement support services for introducing preventive measures aimed at adapting extensive stock-raising farms to the coexistence with wolves. The efficiency of such measures should be implemented and enhanced, and they should remain over time. The implementation of these measures, which involve investment by farmers, should be adequately stimulated and supported by public funding.

- ▶ To mobilize investment on research, development and innovation on management and damage reduction measures.
- ▶ To promote the establishment of adequate communication channels between scientific knowledge and the farming community, both to improve the implementation of prevention measures in farms, as well as to transfer local knowledge and experiences into scientific research.
- ▶ To promote the quest for shared dialogue spaces between farmers from diverse areas, as the exchange of experiences and local knowledge can be a very efficient tool to adopt and adapt these measures to the different local contexts.



## 4| REGARDING POPULATION CONTROL

### WE OBSERVE...

- ▶ That the issue of population control, which refers in essence to the use of lethal force on wolf populations, is a delicate and extremely sensitive subject, which triggers passionate debates between the stakeholders. Actually, it is probably THE main conflict around which all other wolf-related conflicts revolve, and on which the positions of the stakeholders are more unwavering and antagonistic. We understand that this situation is natural given the powerful symbolism of both the animal— wolf — and the fact itself—death— that brings about a feeling of pain in people on both sides of the conflict.
- ▶ That, unfortunately, in the Campo Grande Group we cannot state that we have reached the final solution to ease the conflict. It has indeed been the subject that caused the most heated discussions. If any topic could have resulted in the ending of the conversations, it would have undoubtedly been this one. But this didn't happen; we stated the enormous differences that separate both sides, but we persevered in the debate to find the common grounds that unite us. And we found some, despite the outstanding differences between us.
- ▶ That it is not always an effective solution for attacks on livestock, and that there are not enough studies on the positive relationship between population control and damage reduction, and that the outcomes of the studies cannot be extrapolated to all situations.
- ▶ That population control is occasionally used as payback, which does not favor conflict de-escalation.
- ▶ That, when used for damage control, are often performed with a delay, and that the administrative procedures are very slow. Moreover, administrative procedures and protocols lack consistency between regions and need stronger technical criteria.
- ▶ That there is a considerable number of animals, although the figure is obviously unknown, that are poached, poisoned or illegally controlled, which seriously disturbs analysis and management.
- ▶ That using hunting as a tool for controlling wild populations of wolves distorts the actual knowledge on the role that population control can have on livestock damage reduction.

### WE AGREE ON...

- ▶ Acknowledging that no mediation processes will be capable of addressing the moral and ethical issues around the use of lethal force to control wolf populations. For some people, the death of living beings will inevitably cause pain. The question here is the extent to which this can be tolerable for people and human communities.
- ▶ The fact that the only possible justification for population control could be to control damage on livestock and could only be accepted after other alternatives proved themselves ineffective or insufficient.

- ▶ Stating that bad management of population controls is largely to blame for the extreme positioning of the stakeholders affected. A more adequate, accurate and consistent management system would probably lead to a different, less polarized social response.
- ▶ Considering that zoning can be useful as a proper tool for Iberian wolf population management, although this requires accurate information (both technical and scientific) and, above all, social agreement. This zoning would not necessarily imply the definition of exclusion areas, but to adapt management tools to the actual reality of each territory.
- ▶ The existence of controversy around this issue, which has been used to fuel the conflict. More science is needed to assess the efficiency of these controls on damages to livestock, which is indeed their ultimate target.
- ▶ Acknowledging the fact that reducing the number of wolves in large percentages ensures a decrease in damage to livestock. We state that as of today, this option is unacceptable for an important part of society.

### **THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND..**

- ▶ To use population control just as a damage-control tool, when other non-lethal measures have been proved insufficient or ineffective in preventing unacceptable losses, aiming to minimize its application in the medium and long term.
- ▶ That population control, always implemented under these criteria, should be performed following strict management protocols that are consistent in the different regional governments.
- ▶ To avoid the use of hunting as a management tool for wolf-caused damage control.
- ▶ In order to make sure that the objectives of these controls—if they are ever approved—are achieved, they should be carried on immediately after the attacks.
- ▶ That in a context as diverse as the Iberian Peninsula, damage management must be adapted to the different realities in each zone, following an adaptive and participatory model.

## 5| REGARDING CENSUSES AND SCIENCE

### **WE OBSERVE...**

- ▶ That there are censuses in Spain from 1988 establishing that the Iberian population is, quantitatively, one of the most important in Europe.
- ▶ That there is only one Iberian population, currently in a phase of relative territorial expansion, with individuals appearing in new areas, abandoned decades ago due to the pressure suffered.
- ▶ That, despite the fact that census methods and techniques are object of ongoing scientific debate, there is an agreement on using reproductive packs as demographic unities for population estimations. There is also agreement on the big picture of the situation of the Iberian population, even though there can be disagreements when moving to the specifics.
- ▶ That there is a biased and slanted use of scientific and pseudoscientific information that is applied as a weapon for confrontation, rather than the promotion of the scientific knowledge or the improvement of management.

### **WE AGREE ON...**

- ▶ Not considering relevant for the purpose of conflict resolution the number of individuals. What should really matter is how wolf populations and their state of conservation affects extensive stock-raising, since there can be areas with high wolf densities and few attacks, while others with fewer individuals are highly conflictive.
- ▶ Considering the actual state of conservation of Iberian wolf populations as favorable.

### **THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND...**

- ▶ To use the categories proposed by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) as the scientific criteria on the status of the Iberian wolf population, that declare it as “near threatened”.
- ▶ To avoid the use of census data in the debate as an element for confrontation, leaving it exclusively within the range of scientific or conservation management debates.
- ▶ To improve information on methodologies and census techniques on large carnivores. We understand that scientific debate and dissemination of knowledge in society should contribute to bring positions closer or, at the very least, to a better understanding of the complex population situation of the Iberian wolf.

## 6| REGARDING THE LEGAL STATUS

### **WE OBSERVE...**

- ▶ That there is a diversity in terms of wolves' legal status in Spain, which makes managing the species and its related conflicts complicated.
- ▶ That the EU's stand on the legal status to the north and the south of the Douro river is one of the sources of difficulties to make legal instruments consistent, and it seems like there are no indications of change in this European status.
- ▶ That the distribution of powers in the Spanish State adds complexity to the management of wolves, understood as a unique population.

### **WE AGREE ON.....**

- ▶ Acknowledging that highly valuable tools in our legal framework are currently underused. Implementing new management plans, while most regional governments already have some, does not make sense as long as the material aspects that hinder the adoption of efficient and socially accepted measures are not modified.

### **THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND...**

- ▶ To establish unified criteria in terms of the legal status of the whole population of Iberian wolves.
- ▶ To unify the administrative tools operated by the different regional governments while establishing an effective inter-administrative coordination with Portugal.
- ▶ To work towards the creation of a unique Iberian wolf management plan, designed collaboratively by officers from the different regional governments, experts, NGOs and extensive stock-raising professional organizations.
- ▶ To constitute a state-wide wolf platform that serves as a space for debate and for participative planning in Spain.

## 7 | REGARDING THE TOURIST BUSINESS

### WE OBSERVE...

- ▶ That the growth of this type of tourism is unstoppable, and that it is becoming a very strong financial incentive in some areas.
- ▶ That this economic success has occasionally led to bad practices by some tourist promoters.
- ▶ That this activity generates rejection in some rural areas, because the tourist attraction is not the territory itself but an animal species that causes damages and pain in the rural communities where it establishes itself.
- ▶ That wolf-watching tourism, such as other carnivore-watching activities, creates jobs and economic activity in specific territories while contributing to the improvement of the image of the species.

### WE AGREE ON....

- ▶ Considering wolf-watching as an excellent opportunity for urban people to come closer and get to know in depth the reality of the rural world and eventually, the reality of extensive stock-raising and its social and environmental relevance.
- ▶ The need for adequate tourist activities regulations and for the dissemination of good practices. The target is to avoid the impacts that tourism overcrowding could have on wolf conservation and how it could interfere in other land uses.

### THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND...

- ▶ To avoid seeing tourism as the economic solution for the future in those areas. It should be perceived as a complement for the main occupation of the rural communities, which should be the primary sector, whether agriculture, extensive stock-raising or forestry activities.
- ▶ To profit from the demand of wildlife tourism while avoiding identifying it exclusively with wolf-watching and including the surroundings, the local landscapes, the culture around wolves and pastoralism, traditional ways of life, etc., to tourist packages.
- ▶ To use this asset as a rural and community development tool, in such a way that rural communities take part in the tourist offers and are benefitted from tourism proceeds.
- ▶ To get environmental agencies to regulate this kind of activities to prevent abuse and bad practices that may put at risk both wild wolf populations and other local land uses.



## LIST OF SIGNATORIES

Name and surname	Organisation/Occupation
Joan Alibés Biosca	Farmer and cofounder of Beealia
Germán Alonso Campos	Ecologist. Ecology teacher at Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Nuria Alonso Leal	Fundación Entretantos. Ambientologist and expert in social participation
Gaspar Anabitarte Cano	Unión de Ganaderos y Agricultores Montañeses - COAG
María Ballesteros Martínez	Farmer
Isabel Bermejo López_Muñiz	Member of Ecologistas en Acción _ Área Agroecología, Soberanía Alimentaria y Medio Rural
Juan Carlos Blanco Gutierrez	Doctor in Biology
Ángel Blázquez Carrasco	Mountain Engineer. Associated researcher at Universidad de Córdoba. Member of Ecologistas en Acción _ Área Agroecología, Soberanía Alimentaria y Medio Rural -
Santiago Campos Fernandez de Piérola	Expert in Environmental Mediation
Víctor Casas del Corral	Biologist, expert in rural development
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María del Rosario García Barrión	Farmer and member of Ganaderas en Red [GER] and Ganaderos Ibéricos Unidos [GIU]
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Name and surname	Organisation/Occupation
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Guillermo Palomero García	President of Fundación Oso Pardo
Begoña Peco Vázquez	Ecology Professor at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
Óscar Rivas López	Asociación Galega de Custodia do Territorio
Odile Rodríguez de la Fuente	Fundación Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente
Antonio Ruiz Salgado	Environmental lawyer. Legal adviser of the Foro de Redes de Custodia del Territorio. Member of Ecologistas en Acción
Yolanda Sampedro Ortega	Fundación Entretantos. Expert in Social Participation and Facilitation
Jose Angel Sánchez Fabian	Fundación Entretantos
Luis Suárez Arangüena	Biologist
Rubén Valín Tascón	Coordinator of Ganaderos Ibéricos Unidos [GIU]
Juan Antonio Valladares Álvarez	President of Foro Asturias Sostenible para el conocimiento y desarrollo del medio rural (FAS)
Isabel Vilalba Seivane	Sindicato Labrego Galego

