

The role of public involvement in wolf conservation and management

Evaluating the effectiveness of public participation in the SloWolf project

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Public participation (PP)

=the "*involvement of citizens in making, understanding, implementing, or evaluating management decisions **for improved wildlife management***" (Chase et al. 2001)

Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters – **the Aarhus Convention**



What is effective PP?

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Evaluating conservation projects

Biological measures

Quantitative indicators

Social measures

Outcomes

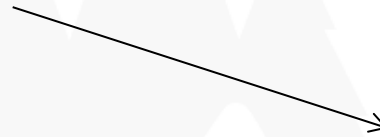
Process

Monitoring attitudes

Evaluating the process of public involvement

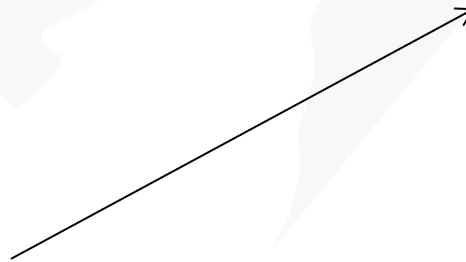
Monitoring attitudes

Persuasive communication



Attitude change

(Fishbein & Ajzen 1975)



Active participation

About the project



SLOWOLF

Conservation and surveillance of the conservation status of the wolf (*Canis lupus*) population in Slovenia (2010-2013) – SloWolf

Goals:

- Long-term conservation of wolves in Slovenia
- Study of biological and social aspects of wolf conservation
- **Improve local public and hunters' acceptance of wolves**

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Coexistence with wolves



Improving the coexistence - how?



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Public and stakeholder involvement actions

Awareness raising and information campaign



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Public and stakeholder involvement

Title of the action	Interest groups
Elaboration and revision of wolf population action plan	Representatives of different stakeholders



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Public and stakeholder involvement



Title of the action	Interest groups
Analysis of attitudes toward wolves and preparation of management recommendations	General public, hunters, sheep and goat ranchers



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Public and stakeholder involvement



Title of the action	Interest groups
Improvement of management of wild ungulate species	Hunters, foresters, biologists



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Public and stakeholder involvement



Title of the action	Interest groups
Wolf population monitoring	Hunters and interested general public



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Public and stakeholder involvement



Title of the action	Interest groups
Damage prevention measures	Agriculture advisory service employees



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Public and stakeholder involvement



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Title of the action	Interest groups
Best practice demonstration of damage prevention measures at selected wolf damage hot-spots	Sheep and goat ranchers



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Evaluating PP

Action	Involvement type	Title of the action	N of participants	N of interviews
A2	FACILITATED WORKSHOPS	Elaboration of wolf population action plan	55	14
C2		Improvement of management of wild ungulate species	48	5
C3	CITIZEN SCIENCE	Involvement of hunters and volunteers in the wolf population monitoring activities	190/ 453/ 732	3
C5	EDUCATION	Training of agriculture advisory service in damage prevention measures	30	5
C6	DONATION PROGRAM	Best practice demonstration of damage prevention measures at selected wolf damage hot-spots	19	2

Reed, M. S. (2008). Stakeholder participation for environmental management: A literature review. *Biological Conservation*, 141(10)

- 1 philosophy that emphasises empowerment, equity, trust and learning
- 2 Early as possible and throughout the process
- 3 Relevant stakeholders need to be analysed and represented systematically
- 4 Clear objectives agreed among stakeholders at the outset...

Reed, M. S. (2008). Stakeholder participation for environmental management: A literature review. *Biological Conservation*, 141(10)

- 5 ...Methods should be selected and tailored to the decision-making context
- 6 Highly skilled facilitation
- 7 Integration of local and scientific knowledge
- 8 Institutionalisation of participation

PP proces evaluation



- Suitability of Reed's criteria
- Evaluation of the process
- Additional participants' views and recommendations

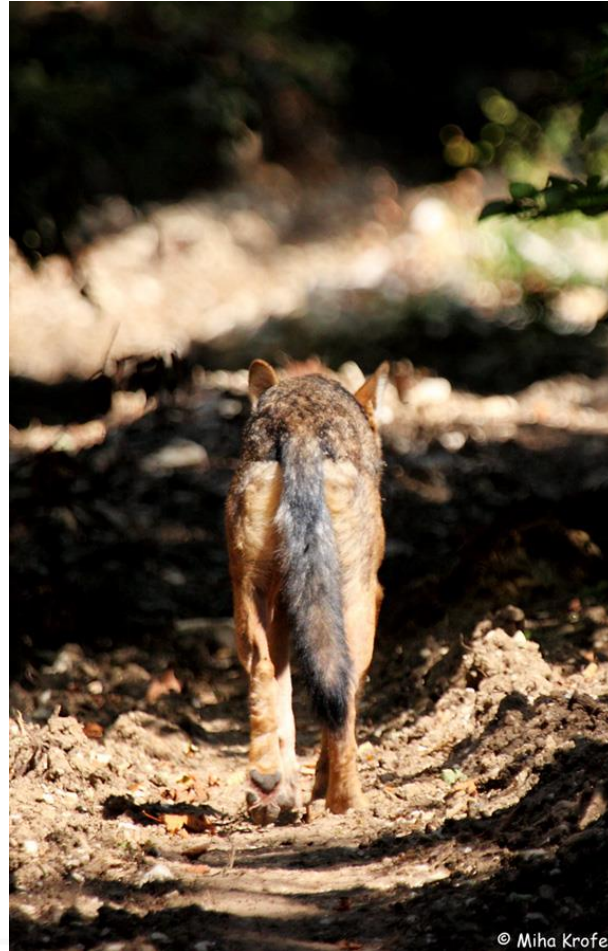


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Conclusions

- **Quality of the PP proces matters!** However, it the outcomes are deleyed, this might degrade the perception of the quality of the process.
- Reed's (2008) criteria suitable for evaluation of PP in wolf conservation in Slovenia
- Consensus vs. Compromise- lack of understanding
- Need for continuation and institutionalisation of PP
- Increased social capital through learning

Thank you for your attention!



Questions?

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