



Pekka PESONEN
Secretary General
COPA COGECA
Rue de Trèves 61
B - 1040 Bruxelles

Brussels, 19 February 2015

Dear Mr Pesonen,

We have learned with great surprise and regret of Copa-Cogeca's sudden decision to resign from the EU's Large Carnivores Platform only eight months after its establishment.

While the recovery of large carnivore species in Europe has been a key conservation success of the EU nature legislation, this development has not been without difficulties. A broad range of stakeholders are affected by this development, and they all perceive large carnivores in different ways. These differences can and do cause tension. However, positive examples show that solutions can be found to overcome these differences.

The mission of the EU Large Carnivore Platform is to 'promote ways and means to minimize, and wherever possible find solutions to, conflicts between human interests and the presence of large carnivore species, by exchanging knowledge and by working together in an open-ended, constructive and mutually respectful way'. To this end, the platform has been successful in bringing together the broad range of stakeholders affected by large carnivores, including farmers, hunters, foresters, landowners and conservation organizations.

European farmers and farming communities are undoubtedly affected by increasing numbers of large carnivores, and we have strongly welcomed Copa-Cogeca's commitment to constructive dialogue in the framework of the EU Platform. IUCN, WWF, ELO, CIC, EUROPARC, and FACE, remain fully dedicated to a positive approach based on mutual respect and trust, and we are convinced that such dialogue and exchange will bring forward mutually satisfactory solutions.

Farmers are a crucial partner in this process and the Platform presents an important opportunity to make their voice heard. We would therefore like to invite and encourage Copa-Cogeca to reconsider its decision to leave the Platform and to continue working with its members on ensuring a peaceful coexistence of human activity with large carnivores in Europe.

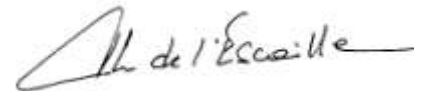
Sincerely,



Luc Bas, Director,
IUCN EU Representative Office



Tony Long, Director,
WWF European Policy Office



Thierry de l'Escaille, CEO,
European Landowners' Organisation



Ignacio Schops, President,
EUROPARC Federation



George Aman, Acting President,
International Council for Game
and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)



Filippo Segato, Secretary General,
European Federation of Associations
for Hunting and Conservation