

Sähköpostitettu 29.8.06: patrick.murphy@ec.europa.eu

Dear Mr. Murphy,

We write to you as you are new on your post and we wish to inform you about where current EU wolf policies are leading us.

The Large Predator Society of Finland (Suomen Suurpetoyhdistys r.y.) is based in Kuhmo, a community close to the Russian border where wolves have roamed since time immemorial, and where people have managed quite well with them until the EU-directive 1992/43 came into force.

We support large predators as part of the fauna but vehemently oppose current predator policies.

We are one of the NGOs from which the Finnish ministry of agriculture and forestry requests comments on inter alia the wolf management plan.

The undersigned is a member of the board, forest engineer, 60, fluent in English, Finnish, French, German, Russian and Swedish, which enables me to read much of what has been written about wolves in the original language. I live in Sjundeå, close to Helsinki. Wolves are beginning to settle in our area.

A growing number of people in Finland are concerned with the spreading of wolves to inhabited areas and especially by the more and more brazen behavior they display. Wolves are feared, which is explained by the frequent attacks on humans and the numerous children killed until the wolf was eliminated from the Finnish living environment in the late 19th century by an effort organized by the government. Stories of these tragedies have been told by one generation to the next. The exact situation had been largely forgotten until information we, and others have supplied in course of the public wolf debate over the past year has made them common knowledge.

The danger of wolves to humans

Wolves have been relentlessly hunted in the vicinity of human habitation throughout history and wolf attacks on humans as well as on livestock and dogs have been rare – as long as wolves know that showing oneself to a human might mean death, they remain the kind of shy animals of the wilderness, which the Commission describes inter alia in its lawsuit against Finland. Such behavior used to be the rule among the wolves in Kuhmo before Finland joined the EU, and exceptions were promptly dealt with.

Wolves have been left in peace only a few times in known history, and in these cases they have changed their behavior within a short period of time, the wolf being an extremely intelligent and adaptable animal.

Below we enumerate a few sources on the behavior of wolves when they are left in peace.

Wildlife Institute of India, Mr. Kishan Singh Rajporuhit, in English

A report on man-eating wolves in India commissioned by the Indian government, which was published by the Swedish Academy of Sciences in the AMBIO series in 2000. Note especially the systematic and brazen methods of attack, the numerous child victims within short periods of time, and the recurring appearance of new man-eating wolves. See .pdf document in attachment.

Professor Emeritus Valerius Geist of the University of Calgary, in English

A paper on wolf habituation in Canada by a famous ethologist. Download from <http://personal.inet.fi/luonto/mikael.broo/> -> "Important information about wolves".

Most literature on human/wolf interaction is written in Russian and Finnish – the languages of the countries where most Eurasian timber wolves live and have lived.

Dr. Jouko Teperi, Finnish historian, in Finnish

In 1977, the Historical Society of Finland (Suomen Historiallinen Seura) published a 175 page book by the historian Dr. Jouko Teperi as #101 of the series Historical Research (Historiallisia Tutkimuksia) with the title "Wolves as a threat to people in agricultural (as opposed to wilderness) Finland in the 19th century", (SUDET Suomen rintamaiden ihmisten uhkana 1800-luvulla), ISSN 0073-2559, ISBN 951-9254-10-2.

Dr. Teperi collected the material from 300 annual newspaper issues starting 1830. He writes a detailed account of staggering losses of livestock and innumerable attacks on humans. Although only a few of the attacks on grown-ups by healthy wolves were lethal and many managed to defend themselves without suffering injury, people lived under a constant threat. Worst of all was the ever more frequent abduction and killing of children by wolves.

A new hunting law was promulgated in 1868. It abolished the previously free hunting, tied the right to hunt to the ownership of land and introduced a hunting season. The same law abolished the legal obligation of the municipalities to maintain wolf traps and to arrange wolf hunts. As a result, the general population stopped their constant hunting for meat, furs and bounty; wolf traps fell into disrepair and the wolves were left in peace. Very soon, wolves built their dens close to grazing grounds instead of far in the wilderness, preyed on cattle and became fearless or aggressive toward people. In 1877, wolves close to Tampere started preying on children and in 1880, two packs close to Turku followed suit. The Turku wolves became international celebrities for the large number of successful attacks – 22 in as many months.

Previously, child-lifting wolves had been a recurring problem only on the Carelian Isthmus, an area ceded by Sweden to Russia in 1721, and where the Russian masters prohibited all hunting. Hunting rights were restored in the mid 1800's when the Tsar incorporated the area with the grand duchy of Finland, under Russian sovereignty since 1809. During that time, wolves killed 40 children and rabid wolves killed a similar number of adults.

Teperi cites the account of a child survivor of a wolf attack, Ms Eeva Elina Kustaantytär Laakso, born 9.8.1872, deceased 21.4.1960, buried in the cemetery of Halikko east of Turku. A wolf attacked Eeva in 1880 when she was 7 years of age. Her account of the attack: *“Then I saw how a big gray animal ran from the forest towards us. It jumped a high fence and was close to us with a couple of jumps. We froze in fear. – The wolf stopped in front of me, rose up on its hind legs, put its paws on my shoulders and pressed me down. I felt its breath on my face as I sank into the snow. – The other children were at first stiff with fear but then run away screaming. The wolf grabbed my chest with its teeth and started dragging me towards the forest to start its meal. I had a thick woolen scarf around my head and shoulders to protect me from the cold, which protected me from the teeth of the wolf. Therefore it did not get a proper grip and I fell on the snow. – Then it again took me in its teeth, shook me in the air and threw me on the ground. And as if to find out if I was dead, it put its ear against my chest. I was conscious the whole time, but completely paralyzed by the fear of death, so that I hardly felt when it grabbed my chest once more and tried to reach the forest.”*

Mr. Lappalainen (see below) writes on the same incident: *Mr. Janne Mäkilä, who was hauling timber with pair of bullocks and happened to pass by, saved Eeva. The wolf let go of Eeva but stayed and watched at the edge of the forest while Mr. Mäkilä carried the bleeding girl in his arms and carried her home. Eeva's mother thought that she was dead, as she was covered with blood and paralyzed with shock. She survived, however, and bore deep scars in her face and had a limp for the rest of her life.*

The wolf, which attacked Eeva, was not one of the later famous Turku wolves, which mainly operated north of the city and killed their last victim 18.11.1881. This individual operated east of Turku and was luckily killed by the German hunter Wilhelm Both after just a few attacks on children. Mr. Both was staying at the Halikko mansion as guest of count Armfelt. The latter brought the skin of the wolf to the sickbed of Eeva, who later told how terrified she was when she saw the skin of her attacker.

Teperi remarks that Ms. Laakso's description is similar to that of most wolf attacks on children.

Note: Teperi's account of the method with which wolves attacked humans by trying to fell them and drag them away, not by going for the jugular, can be recognized in the below 18th century French picture of the Beast of Gévaudan, three wolves which specialized on children and women like many did in Finland during the 18th and 19th centuries. The relative size of the woman and the wolf match – a well-fed wolf can reach close to 200 cm in length, whereas an 18th century peasant woman could be just 150-160 cm in height.



Contemporary newspapers

All Finnish newspaper issues since 1830 have been microfilmed. I requested copies of a few issues of my daily paper Huvudstadsbladet (News of the capital), to which Teperi referred.

Huvudstadsbladet commented the first cases of childlifting by wolves in Western Finland in living memory in the issue of 17.6.1877. At the time of writing, the boys Tuomas Räikkönen, 9 had been killed on 22.4, Oskari Aakku, 3 on 30.5, and Kaarle Turunen, 3 on 4.6, all in the Tampere area:

"What kind of county is this, where wolves devour children? What kind of people is this, which lets such abominations happen three times in a row. (...) The first time such a thing happens it is called an accident. The second time it is a crime, and the third time a disgrace, because such a piece of news will make headlines in all the newspapers of the world. (...) No gun should rest in any home in the affected areas until the blood of the children has been avenged and a mother again can send her son to the meadow without soon thereafter having to learn: The wolf took him".

At the time, nobody could know that this was just the beginning – 27 more children were to be killed in southwestern Finland and many more would be injured before the wolves were eliminated. The press coverage of the childlifting became more and more intense during all this time.

Mr. Antti Lappalainen, Finnish historian, in Finnish

The historian Antti Lappalainen has collected information on human victims to wolves from court and church records back to 1660 as well as newspapers from about 1830 onwards and published his findings in the book *The Tracks of the Wolf, (Suden Jäljet)* in 2005, ISBN 952-5118-879-9. He found 193 deaths of which 110 were child victims to predatory attacks. Of these, 69 occurred 1831-1881 – one every eight months over 50 years. In addition, 83 grown-ups fell victim to wolves, most of them to rabid ones. Mr. Lappalainen investigated only human victims, whereas Teperi described the broader picture. Mr. Lappalainen found twice as many victims as Dr. Teperi.

Mr. Michail Pavlov, member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, in Russian, download excerpts in Swedish from www.locomail.com/vargen -> wolf.pdf

In 1982 the book *Volk (Wolf)* by Michail Pavlov, a recognized authority on the timber wolf in the USSR, was published. A second enlarged edition was published in Moscow in 1990 by VO Agropromizdat (Agricultural Industry Publishing), ISBN 5-10-001221-8. Pavlov dwells extensively on the relationship man/wolf. Among other things, he describes wolf habituation and man-eating in the Kirov, Vladimir and Ortij regions during and after WWII. The cases are described in detail. The pattern of loss of fear of humans and the method of attacks on children he describes is identical to those described in the Hazibaragh report above as well as in the 19th century Finnish sources of Teperi and Lappalainen.

Mark McNay, A Case History of wolf-Human Encounters in Alaska and Canada, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Technical Bulletin #13, 2002.

McNay examined wolf attacks on humans and found about 80 documented cases, none of them lethal. The correlation between absence of hunting and habituation to humans became obvious.

See .pdf document in attachment.

Various other sources

The museum of natural history of Orléans, France has a comprehensive library dating back to the 17th century. Mr. Eirik Granqvist did a lot of reading there in the 1980's, but did not document his sources. The first mention of wolf attacks on humans he found was in Paris in 1439, when 14 persons were killed by wolves between Montmartre and la Porte St Antoine.

Most wolf attacks on humans are never documented, and some are reported in a newspaper without making global news like the death of Kenton Carnegie. Inter alia Moscow News mentioned a few cases in a travel report from the Volgograd and Astrachan regions in Russia by Leonid Barkov in the issue June 12, 2004: *"Kolka (Vasnetsov) also told me some details about the recent tragic events in the neighboring village of Tsarevo. A female wolf had attacked an elderly man and then, five days later, a teenager. Although in both instances people rushed to their rescue as soon as they heard their screams for help, making the animal run away, both died of their wounds. These are not the only victims of wolves. The death toll increased especially last fall and this winter. In the Sredneakhtubinsk district, a wolf bit five shepherds. Only two survived the attack. In the village of Glazunovskaya, two wolves attacked a tractor driver as he was trying to repair his machine. The man survived but received severe injuries, becoming a permanent invalid. In the neighboring Astrakhan region, 16 wolf attacks on humans were registered in the same period. Three people died as a result."*

Available sources provide overwhelming evidence:

Wolf protection in inhabited areas causes habituation, which leads to wolf attacks on humans and to some wolves specializing in childlifting.

"Conservationist" wolf research and information – organized and systematic suppression of information, misleading half-truths and direct lies

We have gathered numerous statements on wolf attacks made at various times by conservationist NGOs and scientists, and have found misleading half-truths, disinformation and outright lying to be policy. This organized scientific fraud and deception of authorities and decision makers is clear to see, but nobody reacts to it, as it apparently has become a generally accepted part of large predator policy. This is all the more abominable as it has led to policy, which puts in danger children in the EU member countries.

Obtaining reliable global quantitative figures on wolf attacks on humans is impossible, and also unnecessary. It is sufficient to know that wolves are dangerous under certain circumstances and what those circumstances are. Wolf experts, inter alia in the voluminous Norwegian NINA study of 2000 "Fear of the wolf" (See .pdf document in attachment), focuses on the cases they have obtained knowledge of and draw the false conclusion that attacks are extremely rare and that wolf protection in inhabited areas thus is reasonably safe.

The disinformation of conservationist scientists, NGOs and authorities was a lot coarser before individuals and organizations such as our society started posting factual reports on the Web.

Examples

The University of Oslo had excerpts of Pavlov's 1982 book translated into Norwegian in 1987. The mention of wolf attacks on livestock, pets and humans caused uproar among conservationists and led to the Norwegian ministry of the environment (Naturvårdsdepartementet) withdrawing the translation and making the whole issue disappear. At the time, conservationist NGOs such as WWF as well as civil servants did not tolerate any information, which indicated that wolves sometimes cause significant damage and predate on children. The position was that the wolf is a shy animal, which lives on wild game and avoids humans, and that the fear of wolves is based on fairy-tales and myths. The translation of Pavlov's book *Wolf* reappeared in 2000 after a Norwegian professor of law made an investigation into the issue and castigated the ministry for acting like the inquisition and arranging book pyres like a dictatorship of the 1930's. See details in Swedish: www.locomail.com/vargen -> wolf.pdf. The NINA report mentions only that certain administrative reasons delayed the publication by 15 years.

The witch-hunt on Pavlov continues to this day. The NINA report calls in question the credibility and integrity of Pavlov and calls his book "a crusade against wolves", although it partly confirms his findings. Certain errors in the commentary lead to suspect that the author, Mr. Linnell of the Norwegian State Institute for Nature Research, NINA, never read the book.

The Soviet symposium paper *Povedenie Volka, the Behavior of the Wolf*, research reports on the wolf by 11 Soviet scientists and published by the Soviet academy of sciences in 1980 was translated into Norwegian and Swedish by the University of Oslo in 1982. It received similar treatment by conservationist NGOs and scientists. They disliked the mention of the damage wolves do to livestock and that they sometimes attack people. The following sentence by the editor Prof. Bibikov caused upset the most: *"In the late 1940's and earlier, cases of man-eating by wolves occurred in a number of districts"*. Mr. Stefan Johansson, leader of the Wolf Project of the Swedish Society for the Protection of Nature, Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen, commented the paper in the magazine *Sveriges Natur*, Swedish 1985:1. *"Warning for the Behavior of the Wolf: The Behavior of the Wolf is a deathblow to the attempts to conduct a serious and fact-based debate on the biology and right to exist. (...) In this soup of secondhand information, own observations and scientific fact, it is impossible to separate truth from subjective opinion and old myths (...) When putting the booklet aside, one has the impression of having read a piece of badly edited anti-wolf propaganda, which it maybe also is"*.

For details, contact Oslo University, Mr. Ivar Myrnes, ivar.myrnes@bio.uio.no or see details in Swedish: www.locomail.com/vargen -> wolf.pdf

Mr. Erkki Pulliainen, Finnish MP, professor emeritus of the university of Oulu, founding member of the Wolf Specialist Group of the IUCN, chairman of the Finnish Parliamentary Committee on Large Predators, and respected by conservationists as the #1 authority on wolves, is a case in point. He made one of his numerous mendacious statements to the Finnish newspaper *Demari* 27.10.2005: *"He calms down the wolf hysteria, which has developed during the past weeks. "Pulliainen recently took part in an international wolf congress in the United States, where it turned out that no healthy, unhurt wolf had attacked anybody during the last century anywhere in the world."* Professor David Mech, chairman of the International Wolf Specialist Group had visited Hazibarah, India and had confirmed that the attacks (see attachment) had taken place. Pulliainen must also be familiar with Michail Pavlov's and Teperi's works. Lappalainen's book was published a week before he made his statement.

In the same article, prof. Pulliainen said that the man-eating Turku wolves were a wolf-dog hybrid, and claimed hybrids to be dangerous while purebred wolves are harmless to humans. The Turku wolves were three, but like in Hazibarah, one at a time carried out the attack. Two of the wolves are conserved, one in the St. Olofs school in Turku, the other in the hunting museum in Riihimäki, an hours drive north of Helsinki. Both are purebred wolves. The third Turku wolf became a door carpet and later disappeared. No contemporary sources indicate that it would have been a hybrid or that any of them would have had bad teeth. These claims are of a later date when it became politically expedient to prove the harmlessness of wolves to humans in order to obtain legislation on their strict protection.

We challenged his statements in a letter to the editor of *Demari* and made it obvious that he is a liar. He failed to comment it.

Prof. Pulliainen is the guru and the ideological authority of the "several organizations", which the EU Commission mentions has filed complaints against felling permits of wolves issued by Finnish authorities, and which the Commission refers to in its lawsuit against Finland on this issue.

The current situation

The Finnish ministry of agriculture and forestry previously issued authorizations to local wolf management areas to issue permits to fell problem wolves. This enabled to take decisions locally and quickly. After being cited by the Commission, the ministry stopped doing so and handled every request itself. This means months of red tape to obtain the permit to remove a danger to public safety. After being cited for permits it issued itself, it finds that it is practically unable to issue permits anymore, being hogtied by the Commission.

Note: On 8.11.2005, the geology student Kenton Carnegie was killed and partly eaten by wolves in Saskatchewan. His belief that wolves are harmless to humans and his total unpreparedness for the attack is the obvious cause of his death. An adult armed even with an axe or a pole is usually able to fend off a wolf attack. Running for it means death. See details by googling.

A note recently posted in Alaska



Comment: If this wolf were in Finland today, the ministry of agriculture and forestry would expect local hunters to file an application to fell it. The ministry would demand detailed information on its dangerous behavior, including affidavits. It would also demand proof that alternative methods such as scaring it, erecting fences, using repellents etc. have been sufficiently tried and have failed, as well as proof that felling it would not harm the favorable conservation status of the wolf in the area. After receiving all this, it would pass the application to the Fish and Game Research Institute for verification of the favorable conservation status. If the conservation status is not satisfactorily confirmed, permit to fell the wolf would be denied in spite of its dangerousness. Even if a permit were awarded, it would take months to process with several demands for more detailed information.

The ministry has learned that only an ironclad documentation of this sort spares it from being cited by the Commission.

Local hunters are supposed to do all this paperwork in their spare time. It is the only legal venue to liberate the area of a dangerous animal, and the local population is boiling with anger at this oppression of their constitutional right to security.

People live under a constant threat, and the authorities are unable to help, being hogtied by EU rules and the Commission. See inter alia the letter of Ms. Anja Vitakari to Mr. Dimas 12.3.2006. To our knowledge, she has not yet received a reply.

Examples

The local game management area applied for permit to fell the wolves, which had attacked Ms. Raila Ahonen and – after months of red tape, the ministry issued a permit to fell one of them. After it was felled, the others behave like before.

A wolf pack, which terrorizes the village of Kuhmoinen for the third consecutive year is left practically in peace – the ministry issued a permit to fell one after months of red tape. The permit was awarded for hunting during two weeks and to fell only a wolf, which had been proven to pass the yard of a house in that time. It took an hour to find and fell such a wolf – the pack lived in the village. Luonto-Liitto, well known by the Commission, filed a complaint to the ministry, which instigated criminal investigation against the hunters for supposed breach of the conditions of the permit. The rest of the pack carries on like before.

An alert

We hope that this reading shall make yourself, your colleagues and your superiors realize that you will wake up one morning to find that a wolf has taken a child in a member country, and then to follow how another and still another is killed. - Childlifting wolves are careful and move large distances, so it takes a long time to find the right one even if large numbers of hunters are mobilized and they kill all the wolves they can in a large area, which the Habitats directive expressly prohibits. Finding and killing only the man-eating wolves but no others is virtually impossible.

Judging from the intense press coverage of the childlifting in Finland in the late 19th century, these child victims will create no less of an uproar than the recent pedophile murders in Belgium and the UK.

The Commission will not look good when it becomes known that you have been warned of this danger time and time again, that you have brushed the warnings aside and that you have insisted on a legislation, which has made the tragedies inevitable.

The killings of close to a hundred children in India by wolves in the 1990's is nothing to judge by – a few Indian children getting killed doesn't receive international press coverage and doesn't seriously upset citizens in the EU member countries.

Recommended reading

We strongly recommend that you read the works of Mr. Rajporuhit and Prof. Geist, and have the works of Lappalainen, Pavlov and Teperi translated and then read them as well.

When you have done so, try to find a proven satisfactory alternative solution to killing wolves, which approach human habitation. You will find many attempts by conservationists to scare wolves away, but none of them successful. - You cannot permanently scare a wolf away from its territory or a known source of food. Fences are not a satisfactory solution, either. - Only the high and thick walls you find in zoos, with foundations going several feet deep, are entirely safe and even lighter ones are too expensive to fence in all grazing grounds. Permanently fencing in the children is unsatisfactory from a human point of view.

When studying this problem, you may note that the Russian masters on the Carelian Peninsula in the 18th and 19th centuries recommended exactly the same methods to the population when it complained of wolf terror while being prohibited to hunt wolves. Their attempts did not stop wolves from lifting and killing forty of their children over the years, not counting the survivors and all the victims to rabid wolves and the staggering losses of livestock. You will also find that the Commission blames Finland for not using these "efficient" alternative methods in its lawsuit.

When you have done all this, do read the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the solemn promise given by the President of the Commission in 2000, Romano Prodi upon signing the said Charter, as well as the Constitution of Finland which the Charter professes to respect, especially regarding the right to security and a sound living environment.

Kindly also read the letter of the undersigned to Mr. Pierre Schellekens 8.2.2006. Download from <http://personal.inet.fi/luonto/mikael.broo/> -> "Wolf policy based on lies"

Best regards,

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