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Abstract: LUNO (Luchsumsiedlung Nordostschweiz = Translocation of lynx to northeastern Switzerland) is on one side a first implementation of the Swiss Lynx Management Concept 2000 and on the other side a governmental project based on an agreement between the Governments of the cantons Appenzell Innerrhoden, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, St. Gallen, Thurgau, and Zurich and the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape. The main goals of project include: a) to set-up a regional lynx population, b) to develop and to assure the longterm survival of this population and, by that, c) to contribute to the restoration of the lynx population in the entire Alpine arc.
Translocation of lynx to northeastern Switzerland: the project LUNO – its history and structures

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LUNO (Luchsumsiedlung Nordostschweiz = Translocation of lynx to northeastern Switzerland) is on one side a first implementation of the Swiss Lynx Management Concept 2000 (Blankenhorn 2002, Roch 2000) and on the other side a governmental project based on an agreement between the Governments of the cantons Appenzell Innerrhoden, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, St. Gallen, Thurgau, and Zurich and the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape. The translocation from compartment VI to compartment II is more or less incidental since at the time of publication of the Swiss Lynx Management Concept but independently a deputee of the cantonal parliament of St. Gallen asked the government to check the possibilities to reintroduce this species in suitable habitats of the Canton.

The motivations for this requirement were:

- reasons to increase the biodiversity,
- the 100th anniversary of the successful reintroduction of ibex in Switzerland which also took place on the territory of the Canton St. Gallen,
- the 200th anniversary of the creation of the Canton St. Gallen by Napoleon Bonaparte for which several cultural activities were assigned.

Based upon a positive reaction of the government the parliament consented to the deputee’s demand and by this created the base to cooperate within the above mentioned agreement (Ruhlé 2002). For the other four Cantons the decisions to participate to the agreement were taken by the governments or even by the ministers responsible for wildlife and hunting. In two cases the participation was a restricted one: the Cantons Appenzell Innerrhoden and Appenzell Ausserrhoden refused to be involved in releases to be made on their territories.

The main goals of project include:

- to set-up a regional lynx population,
- to develop and to assure the longterm survival of this population and, by that,
- to contribute to the restoration of the lynx population in the entire alpine arc.

Due to the fact that the Confederation of Switzerland as well as five different Cantons located in Compartment II are involved in the LUNO project, its organisation is quite complex (Robin 2002):

- A steering committee is deciding on the strategical level and supervises the project. It
is composed of the ministers responsible for wildlife and hunting of the five Cantons involved and the head of the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape.

- An executive committee implements the strategical decisions and controls the operational ongoing of the project. It is composed of the heads of the wildlife agencies of the Confederation and the participating Cantons.

- The coordination is assured by two persons, a wildlife-biologist (Klaus Robin) and a forest engineer (Heinz Nigg).

- The operative work is done within a framework of modules with a lot of tasks as the following (Nigg 2002):
  - **Module Lynx**: translocation, mounting the radiotelemetry-equipment, telemetry and localisation, identification of prey found dead by local people particularly hunters, collaboration in information events (Head: Andreas Ryser)
  - **Module Ungulates**: standardisation of a method for roe deer and chamois population census and its application (Head: Patrick Durand).
  - **Module “Rare species”**: estimation of a potential Lynx’ impact on the regional capercaillie population (Head: Klaus Robin).
  - **Module Forest**: investigation on the impact of Lynx as a regulator of ungulates damaging forest plants (Head: Dani Rüegg).

The ongoing of the project is extensively communicated to diverse target groups as politicians, hunters, other NGO representatives, journalists and to the public. The means applied are oral presentations, broadcasting radio- and television emissions, diverse printproducts as well as a homepage www.luno.ch.

LUNO is running mainly at the cost of the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape.

The first phase of the projects’ agreement runs for the three years’ period 2001-2003. The agreement may be prolonged. Preliminary results of the “Module Lynx” of the LUNO project are presented by Ryser et al. (this volume).

**References**