

# Migration corridors for large carnivores in the West Carpathians, Czech Republic – current threats and conservation activities.

Miroslav Kutal ([miroslav.kutal@hnutiduha.cz](mailto:miroslav.kutal@hnutiduha.cz)), Tomáš Krajča ([t.krajca@seznam.cz](mailto:t.krajca@seznam.cz)), Michal Bojda ([michal.bojda@hnutiduha.cz](mailto:michal.bojda@hnutiduha.cz)), Martin Janča ([martyjanca@seznam.cz](mailto:martyjanca@seznam.cz)).

Hnutí DUHA Olomouc (Friends of the Earth Czech Republic), Dolní náměstí 38, 77200 Olomouc, Czech Republic

Key words: migration barriers, habitat fragmentation, mitigation measures, monitoring, large mammals

The Beskydy Mountains located on the Czech – Slovak border function as an important gateway for wolves, lynxes and bears. Their populations recovered in last 50 years by recolonisation mainly from the Slovak Carpathians, but they suffer from illegal hunting and migration barriers. There are three key migration corridors with national or international importance in the West Carpathians: Jablunkov region (1) located on the north part of the Beskydy Mts. is probably the only corridor ensuring direct connectivity among Czech, Slovak and Polish populations of large carnivores. South corridors in Vsetín region (2) connect Beskydy with another mountain range on Czech-Slovakian border (White Carpathians) and with hills continuing to the west. The west corridor located in Moravian gate lowlands (3) is important for migration of large mammals to the Jeseníky Mts. and possible Šumava Mts. / Bavarian forest and other regions with potential presence of large carnivores. The functionality of the key migration corridors is endangered by several factors. The most important is increasing traffic and lacking adequate mitigation measures. The tremendous example is Jablunkov region cut by road with increasing traffic between two new car factories - Nošovice (CZ) and Žilina (SK). No mitigation measures have been realised so far. Similar situation takes place in Moravian gate, where mitigation measures on D47 (D1) highway have been invested non-effectively and possibilities for migration of large mammals are very limited. Second problem comes from planned new industry and build-up areas in relatively cheap agriculture lands, which have worked as passages for animals so far. All key corridors are at least potentially endangered by this factor. FoE CZ conduct monitoring, research and lobby for better protection in decision making process, EIA/SEA procedures and spatial planning. It deals with public awareness and stakeholders' education as well. Concrete examples, achievements and failures are presented.