

AVIS DE L'ACADÉMIE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE FRANCE

Living with Wildlife

Towards rational management of damage and nuisance

Noting:

1. That all current organisms are the result of more than 3 billion years of evolution and have demonstrated their ability to sustain themselves and contribute to the functioning of the ecosystems of which they are a part.
2. That each population, across multiple scales of time and space, is the result of co-evolution with other components of regional socio-ecosystems, which themselves are evolving;

Considering:

1. That damage and nuisance depend on each socio-ecological context and are always attributable to individuals, a population and/or a practice, never to a species as a whole. The species is therefore not a relevant management unit;
2. That damage and nuisance can be caused by any living being, regardless of the regulations that classify it under the Environment Code or the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code (protected, huntable, ESOD, harmful, etc.).
3. That the phenomena causing damage and nuisance (population dynamics, practices, etc.) occur on multiple interdependent spatial and temporal scales, and often over the long term;
4. That the current collapse of biodiversity requires us to take action to promote it and, of course, not to cause its decline;
5. That before any action is taken, the following must be assessed jointly: (1) the cost of the damage, (2) the cost of actions taken to prevent or limit it effectively, and (3) the benefits, or ecosystem services, provided by the animal population within the socio-ecosystem in question;

6. That decisions taken to prevent or limit damage should be based on the most recent scientific knowledge obtained at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales;
7. That in the current context of biodiversity collapse, the actions taken must not lead to the extinction of the population, except in the specific case of invasive alien species, where the most rapid elimination measures may be taken;
8. The benchmarking reports on ESOD (IGEDD), bears (CGA & IGEDD) and wolves (CGAAER and IGEDD) (1–3);
9. The academic report 'LIVING WITH WILDLIFE' towards rational management of damage and nuisance (4);

The French Veterinary Academy recommends to parties responsible for managing damage and nuisance caused by wildlife*:

1. That the benefits and damage (ecosystem services/disservices) be objectively characterised, quantified and compared;
2. That decisions be based on consultation structures that enable evidence-based dialogue between all stakeholders in the socio-ecosystem;
3. That, in dialogue and an ethical approach, non-lethal actions to prevent damage or nuisance should be preferred whenever possible;
4. That the options chosen should be based on scientific knowledge of the local socio-ecosystem and on field experience to supplement this where necessary;
5. That any decision be followed by the measurement of its effects on the appropriate elements of the socio-ecosystem, at the appropriate time and space scales, in order to objectively assess the relevance of the decision, in an iterative process allowing for its correction, if necessary.

Opinion adopted by vote of the Ordinary General Assembly of the French Veterinary Academy, in Paris, on 16 November 2025.

* Ministry of Agriculture, Agri-Food and Food Sovereignty; Ministry of Ecological Transition, Biodiversity and International Negotiations on Climate and Nature, French Office for Biodiversity; Prefects and departmental commissions for hunting and wildlife; Chambers of Agriculture; Holders of hunting, trapping or fishing rights; Managers of spaces, nature reserves and national parks; Veterinary doctors.

References

1. Castel F, Marie-Laure Hérault. Parangonnage sur les espèces susceptibles d'occasionner des dégâts (ESOD) [Internet]. Paris: Inspection générale de l'Environnement et du Développement

durable; 2024 déc [cité 10 mars 2025] p. 146. Report No.: 015518-01. Disponible à:
<https://www.igedd.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/parangonnage-sur-les-especes-susceptibles-d-a4129.html>

2. Dombrevail L, Le Coz C, Poisson F. Mission de parangonnage sur la politique publique de l'ours brun [Internet]. Paris: IGEDD & CGAAER; 2023 août [cité 29 sept 2025] p. 162. Report No.: 014851-02/22126. Disponible à: <https://agriculture.gouv.fr/mission-de-parangonnage-sur-la-politique-publique-de-lours-brun>
3. Baduel V, Dombrevail L, Le Coz C. Parangonnage sur la politique publique du loup [Internet]. Paris: IGEDD & CGAAER; 2023 sept [cité 1 oct 2023] p. 284. Report No.: 22127. Disponible à: <https://agriculture.gouv.fr/parangonnage-sur-la-politique-publique-du-loup-0>
4. Académie Vétérinaire de France. Vivre avec la faune sauvage. Vers une gestion rationnelle des dommages et des nuisances. Paris: Académie Vétérinaire de France; 2025 nov p. 74.

The French Veterinary Academy studies all subjects relating to the scientific, technical, legal, historical and ethical fields in which veterinarians practise, in particular those relating to animals, their diseases, their relationship with humans and the environment, animal production and veterinary public health. It contributes to the dissemination of scientific advances and the improvement of techniques relating to veterinary activities.

It advises public authorities and informs public opinion in the above-mentioned fields. It develops technical and scientific relations, both nationally and internationally, between veterinarians and other actors in the life and health sciences.

Founded on 20 June 1844, it was recognised as a public utility by decree on 16 April 1878 and established as the Veterinary Academy of France by decree on 12 January 1928.

Email: contact@academie-veterinaire.fr

www.academie-veterinaire.fr