

*URGENT SUPPORT NEEDED TO STOP ROMANIAN BEARS AND WOLVES
FROM BEING KILLED ILLEGALLY*

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*INTERNATIONAL PETITION  
AGAINST THE ROMANIAN ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY'S DECISION TO  
KILL 140 BEARS AND WOLVES IN ROMANIAN FORESTS*

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It is with great urgency that we request your assistance with overturning a recent gravely alarming governmental decision that will have a severely disastrous effect on the native animal population pertaining to species of *URSUS ARCTOS* and *CANIS LUPUS* in certain forest areas of Romania.

In 2017, the Romanian Minister for the Environment, Gratiela Gavrilescu, approved a legal order which allowed for the seizure and relocation of 140 bears and 97 wolves roaming freely and safely in the Romanian forests. At that time, The Romanian Government provided assurance that the seizure - which later turned into mass culling - will be done exceptionally professionally using non-lethal methods.

At present, in 2019, there is undeniable evidence that the Romanian Government's plan was misleading and disastrous for the native fauna, as the number of animal deaths was significantly higher than that of safely relocated animals. It is of severe concern to learn that, officially, 105 bears and wolves have been killed and, as a consequence, only 27 have been safely relocated so far.

Evidently, in **ONLY** two (2) years, 116 bears and wolves have been **SLAUGHTERED** in Romanian forests. There is no official, legal or scientific evidence to support or indicate any safe seizure and relocation of these animals.

The killings of native's species of bears and wolves in Romania continue! **THIS NEEDS TO STOP!**

A recently approved governmental decision has just been issued in July 2019. This latest official decision severely violates the current European legislation regarding the cull of animals pertaining to the *URSUS ARCTOS* and *CANIS LUPUS* native species. Both species are protected by law under European law 92/43 of the European Council.

Serious consideration should be given to the fact that there is NO OFFICIAL COUNT of the exact number of bears and wolves currently living in the Romanian regions where the culling was approved.

Furthermore, there are no official records to indicate how many bears and/or wolves have been killed unlawfully by poachers. By Government order, at the moment, the number of animals to be executed is to be increased to 140 bears and 94 wolves.

This allows the cull of 140 bears of the URSUS ARCTOS species and 94 wolves belonging to the CANIS LUPUS species.

It is imperative to note that both URSUS ARCTOS and CANIS LUPUS are species protected under current, strict European Law, hence their culling is completely unlawful. Furthermore, the Government's decision to continue the culling of any number of animals belonging to the URSUS ARCTOS and/or CANIS LUPUS holds no legal grounds and is not endorsed by any solid, favourable scientific or environmental support.

The implementation of such decision requires a very rigorous process as stated by European law adopted and implemented by the European Council as mentioned in Art.16: "Provided that there is no satisfactory *alternative* and the derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range".

It is absolutely evident that the Romanian Environment Ministry has consistently **ignored** and defied the current European legislation on this matter.

The Romanian Ministry for the Environment has confirmed that it proceeded with their decision to seize and relocate (...cull, as it turned out...) based on suspicion of potential danger some bears, and wolves may present to the population. Furthermore, there is no solid scientific evidence to justify the illegal killing of the animals since 2017 and there is no current proof to justify the continuation of this cruel practice either. There is no evidence that the Romanian government has the correct skills to implement such practice safely for the animals either and avoid the further killing of more animals.

Consequently, the latest governmental decision to cull more Romanian native species of bears and wolves carries no rigorous, substantial research or evidence of alternatives to unnecessary culling, hence deeming it entirely illegal and immoral.

Furthermore, it is unknown how many bears and wolves are still alive. It is known, although unofficially, that a large number of these species are also poached illegally. There absence of knowledge of how many bears and wolves are still alive and how their numbers have been affected by latest deforestation and building work happening in their natural habitat is extremely worrying in this context.

Additionally, it is extremely alarming that there are no legal measures in place to protect both species and ensure there is enough food available for them in order to survive independently in their natural habitats, mainly forests. The recent severe deforestation of natural habitats and expansion of building work have contributed massively to the migration of bears and wolves into populated towns. Consequently, bears and wolves who suffer from disastrous lack of food do sometimes go in search for food in highly populated towns. There is no proof that this migration has been dangerous to people so far.

In the light of the points listed above regarding the culling of more Romanian bears and wolves in 2019, we are seeking your **URGENT SUPPORT** to cease the abuse and callous killing of more animals belonging to the species of **URSUS ARCTOS** and **CANIS LUPUS**. It is illegal.

The Romanian Government is unable to provide any legal and/ or scientific evidence that further seizure and relocation of more bears and wolves is appropriate or necessary.

The Romanian Government has failed to safely relocate animals in the past and there is grave concern this will be the case again! In fact, hundreds of animals were simply killed.

Furthermore, both native species are protected by European Law. Losing more numbers to unjustified culling will affect not only Romanian forests, it will consequently have a massive impact on the European ecosystem as a whole.

As a higher authority with a much broader influence status, your support is immensely needed at the moment to protect and save more of the already vulnerable Romanian native fauna. The Romanian Animal Protection Federation together with many other animal welfare associations do often initiate court cases against unlawful governmental decisions that acts against animals rights, however, their authority is often undermined by much stronger lobbying groups, such as hunters. Your assistance in making this petition known and in challenging as well as overturning this senseless decision are much needed and appreciated.

Many thanks and best of regards,

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