

the case studies provide sufficient context to understand the setting and to delve into the issues involved.

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Large Carnivore Conservation and Management—Human Dimensions

edited by Tasos Hovardas (2018), Routledge, Abingdon, UK. ISBN 978-1-138039995 (hbk), GBP 115.00.

Dealing with large carnivore conservation issues means dealing with people and their interests. Easy to read, this informative book focuses on the nature and quality of human interactions integral to carnivore conservation. *Human Dimensions* convincingly demonstrates that these are amongst the most important elements in addressing coexistence challenges. This excellent volume condenses decades of high-quality research into who the relevant stakeholders are, how they interact and negotiate with each other, and how their value systems, mandates and actions influence the legitimacy and outcomes of carnivore management policies.

Human Dimensions consists of three main sections, with 16 chapters. The authors represent a wide range of professional disciplines and research backgrounds, facilitating a truly comprehensive analysis of this difficult subject. By studying the human actors at play,

they examine the controversial debate about large carnivores in a conservation psychology context. Much more than about carnivores or conflict, this book is about the importance of mutual respect and democratic consultation, key prerequisites for identifying common ground for collaboration and reaching broad societal consensus.

Part I (Chapters 1–5) provides a useful synopsis of the theoretical and methodological perspectives of stakeholder interactions in carnivore conservation. This part sets out important definitions and outlines the complex arenas in which societal discourse takes place. The authors carefully examine the roles, functions, and responsibilities of various actors and antagonists. They also explore the social, cultural and political dimensions of stakeholder participation and suggest different mechanisms to coordinate dialogue through consensus-seeking processes. Tasos Hovardas, the editor, concludes this section with a pragmatic framework for stakeholder engagement and analysis.

Part II (Chapters 6–11) portrays the diversity of stakeholder perceptions and the resulting social and environmental behaviours. These chapters illustrate how social identity and policy frameworks can shape attitudes towards large carnivores and other stakeholders through complicated reciprocal relationships. Although a common topic throughout the volume, the authors focus in particular on stakeholder polarization, such as between urban and rural interest groups. They also outline avenues to resolve governance issues and disparities in decision-making power.

Part III (Chapters 12–16) reviews decision- and policy-making at the broadest societal dimensions, covering topics such as ethics and the law. The chapters highlight the importance of trans-national collaborations, which appropriately reflect the far-reaching activities

and impacts of large carnivores. The authors examine strategic partnership opportunities with key sectors of society, such as business and politics. Advocating for fairer societal discourse and participation, they also consider the implications of decentralization in decision-making, which, ultimately, could improve public acceptance of carnivore management policies.

This book is neither dogmatic nor does it contain unnecessary technical jargon, making it an accessible resource that provides generous practical guidance. For instance, various chapters contain useful, mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods from environmental social science. The chosen case studies vividly illustrate the different dimensions of societal discourse, the power relations between stakeholders, as well as their complicated interrelations. That most examples are drawn from Europe does not diminish their universal relevance.

Hovardas and colleagues critically appraise different carnivore management frameworks, including successful and less successful approaches, always emphasizing the context-specific nature of social challenges. They skillfully review community settings in light of constantly changing societies with dynamic norms and values. The need for more democratic reconciliation of stakeholder positions reverberates throughout the text. Coexistence with carnivores requires broad societal compromise and this volume expertly disentangles the social and political implications of such an agreement. The book covers a lot of ground and it provides a valuable resource for those involved in, or unfamiliar with, the human dimensions of large carnivore conservation and management.

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