

## Combating illegal wildlife poisoning with the BalkanDetox LIFE project

The BalkanDetox LIFE project endeavours to combat illegal wildlife poisoning across Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, the Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia by shifting the perceptions and behaviour of all relevant stakeholders, from the decision-makers to the general public and the actual users of poison baits.

### Some of the main project actions include:

- Formation of official National Anti-Poison Working Groups in target countries
- Development and endorsement of operational protocols for managing poisoning incidents
- Adoption of existing National Anti-Poisoning Road Maps in target countries
- Establishment of national databases containing all wildlife poisoning incidents to monitor the situation
- Investigation of the origin of legal and illegal toxic substances used for poison baits
- Use of GPS tracking for improved detection and prevention of potential poisoning incidents
- Reinforcement of institutional capacities and prosecution efficacy by providing specific training to relevant stakeholders with the Wildlife Crime Academy
- Implementation of awareness actions

*Through these actions, the ultimate objectives are to build capacities to improve the management of poisoning incidents, raise awareness about the severity of this practice, enhance collaborations to encourage knowledge exchange among relevant stakeholders and reduce poisoning incidents to help safeguard wildlife, nature and public health.*

## Report a poisoning incident

Silence is complicit. Take action and help us fight illegal wildlife poisoning in the Balkans.

### Have you heard of or come across poison baits or poisoning incidents in the countryside?

**Don't** touch or go near the poison baits or poisoned animals as you may be putting your health and the potential criminal investigation in jeopardy.

**Do** inform the local authorities immediately to help save animals and bring the preparators responsible to justice.

### Learn more about the project and get involved

Visit the website to stay updated

 [www.balkandetoxlife.eu](http://www.balkandetoxlife.eu)

Follow the project on Facebook and Instagram:

  @BalkanDetoxLIFE

Sign up to the email list



If you have questions, please email the project coordinator

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EURONATUR

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**IT'S TIME TO STOP ILLEGAL WILDLIFE POISONING IN THE BALKANS!**

## WHAT IS ILLEGAL WILDLIFE POISONING?



It is shameful practice of indiscriminately killing animals using poison baits, typically made from pieces of meat or whole animal carcasses laced with poisonous substances, usually pesticides and other toxic substances such as cyanide and strychnine.



Even though it is illegal, wildlife poisoning is still widespread today in the Balkans and Europe. Individuals usually target predators and undesirable animals regarded as pests that can harm certain human activities, particularly game management for hunting, livestock farming, and other agricultural practices. But far from being a solution to resolve human-wildlife conflicts, illegal wildlife poisoning is an unselective and dangerous practice of killing animals that creates more problems than it 'solves.'

## ILLEGAL WILDLIFE POISONING CAN HARM ALL OF US

### PROTECTED SPECIES DRIVEN TO EXTINCTION

Today, illegal wildlife poisoning represents one of the most urgent conservation issues. More than 2,300 vultures are estimated to have died from poisoning in the Balkans over the last 20 years, resulting in the local and regional extinctions of the Bearded Vulture and Cinereous Vulture. Today, it continues to cause population declines and prevents the comeback of many threatened species.

### WORKING ANIMALS AND PETS OFTEN DIE

Poisoning does not discriminate among species. Even if not the target, other animals like livestock, guard dogs, hunting dogs and pets can get seriously ill or die when they encounter poison baits.

### PUBLIC HEALTH PUT IN JEOPARDY

If poisonous substances contact the skin or are inhaled, people can experience serious health issues and even die in worst-case scenarios. People who use poison baits are not immune to these adverse effects – they unintentionally put their health in danger and the health of unaware citizens, including their relatives, friends and local communities. Poisoning animals can also pollute people's own food chain, from the crops they eat to the water they drink, which can negatively impact their health.

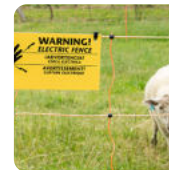
### AN ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME PUNISHABLE BY LAW

The placement of poison baits is a condemnable practice and an environmental crime punishable by law in the Balkans. Depending on the crime and case, perpetrators can receive hefty fines and even prison sentences.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES AND SAFE ALTERNATIVES TO POISON BAITS

In most cases, individuals who resort to wildlife poisoning face real problems and are often unaware of its harmful consequences and that it is an illegal practice. It is vital to raise awareness about these issues and provide solutions.

Several preventive measures and safe alternatives to poison baits do exist. These measures can reduce damages inflicted on livestock and game species by other animals, helping resolve potential human-wildlife conflicts, especially with predators.



### ELECTRIC FENCES

One of the most effective measures, electric fences enclosing livestock herds or agricultural fields can prevent the entry of animals that may inflict damages.



### FOXLIGHTS

Foxlights is a patented device specifically designed to deter predators during the night by shining coloured lights randomly at various rhythms and angles to give the impression of human presence.



### FLADRY SYSTEM

A fladry system consists of red flags hanging from ropes surrounding herds or pens to deter wolves from entering selected areas.



### LIVESTOCK GUARD DOG

The traditional and most common preventative measure is livestock guard dogs, one of the most natural and humane methods used for centuries to prevent bear and wolf attacks.