

Open Letter

To:

International organization for the protection of animals;

Italian League for the Defense of Animals and the Environment (LEIDAA)

Parliamentary Intergroup for animal rights and environmental protection Italy

According to national and international press reports, I would like to make the following proposals to the relevant organizations regarding the bear attack in Italy:

I cannot agree with the fact that the bear, which killed a young man jogging on a hiking trail in northeastern Italy, should be brought, at the proposal of international environmental organizations, to Romania, more precisely to the sanctuary in Zărnești.

First, the sanctuary in Zărnești, Romania, which has 67 hectares, is already overpopulated and the state is making major efforts to be able to create the necessary conditions for bears in Romania.

Right now there is another ongoing project which is supported by European funds, that aims to build a bear sanctuary, in Postăvaru, in Brașov County, with an area of 60 hectares and with a budget of approximately 2 million euros, for a bear population of around 100 animals.

Those specimens that can no longer live in their natural habitat in Romania will be relocated here. We invite international environmental organizations to support brown bear repopulation projects in habitats where the species has been exterminated. At the same time, we ask for their support so that the bears from Romania to be relocated to EU member states. I also propose to these organizations the establishment of sanctuaries in the other EU member states. The sanctuary in Zărnești, Romania, is an example of good practices and we can always come with the know-how to help.

Romania can continue to support the repopulation of natural habitats in European countries, without brown bear populations and can contribute, through LIFE projects or other forms of collaboration, to restoring the ecological balance in the EU. At the same time, I believe that dangerous bears, those that have attacked people, should be extracted immediately.

Overpopulation in certain areas of Romania is a problem and I see that it also appears in other areas of Europe, therefore the European Commission and the European Parliament must come up with new measures regarding the management of large carnivores.

With regards,

Tánczos Barna

Former Minister of Environment, Water and Forests Romania