

WILDFORCE

European Wildlife Forensic Intelligence Framework for Biodiversity Conservation

LIFE 2026 — PARTNER SEARCH

Programme / Call	LIFE Programme — Nature and Biodiversity LIFE-2026-SAP-NAT-NATURE
Project acronym	WILDFORCE
Coordinator	Department of Veterinary Sciences, University of Turin (Università degli Studi di Torino), Italy
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Project status	Consortium building / partner search for a LIFE 2026 proposal

Project concept

WILDFORCE aims to strengthen biodiversity conservation by reducing the impacts of illegal wildlife mortality on protected species through the development, validation and demonstration of the first European Wildlife Forensic Intelligence System (EWFIS).

EWFIS is conceived as an integrated operational system combining veterinary forensic medicine, forensic science, ecology, molecular biology, geospatial information and digital technologies. The project will translate scientific evidence from wildlife mortality investigations into operational knowledge supporting conservation management, environmental compliance and the implementation of EU nature legislation.

Main objectives

- Develop and validate the European Wildlife Forensic Intelligence System (EWFIS).
- Harmonise wildlife mortality investigation procedures, including scene investigation, evidence collection and preservation, chain of custody, forensic necropsy, laboratory analyses, forensic reporting and quality assurance.
- Improve and validate scientific tools for wildlife mortality investigation, including post-mortem interval estimation, forensic pathology, genetics, toxicology and forensic entomology.
- Demonstrate EWFIS under real conservation conditions in Natura 2000 sites, protected areas, wildlife rescue centres and veterinary diagnostic laboratories.
- Strengthen institutional capacity, interoperability and cross-border cooperation through specialised training and knowledge exchange.
- Support implementation of the Birds Directive, Habitats Directive and Environmental Crime Directive through harmonised methodologies, operational guidance, digital decision-support tools and policy recommendations.

Partners sought

The consortium is interested in organisations from European countries that can contribute complementary scientific, conservation and operational expertise. In particular, WILDFORCE is seeking potential partners such as:

- Universities, veterinary faculties and veterinary diagnostic institutes with expertise in wildlife pathology and veterinary forensic medicine.
- Forensic laboratories and specialist teams in toxicology, forensic genetics, molecular biology, forensic entomology and related disciplines.

- Natura 2000 site managers, protected-area authorities, wildlife rescue centres and organisations able to support pilot implementation under real conservation conditions.
- Competent environmental authorities and, where appropriate, law-enforcement or environmental-enforcement bodies involved in wildlife mortality investigations.
- Organisations with expertise in geospatial information, digital evidence management, interoperable data systems and decision-support tools relevant to wildlife mortality investigations.
- Institutions able to contribute to training, replication, networking and long-term uptake of harmonised wildlife forensic methodologies across Europe.

Expected contribution of partners

Depending on their profile, partners may contribute to the baseline assessment of existing procedures and capacities; co-development and validation of harmonised Standard Operating Procedures; scientific validation of forensic methodologies; provision of pilot sites and operational case studies; training and capacity building; digital and geospatial integration; stakeholder engagement; and European replication and uptake of EWFIS.

Target species and demonstration settings

The project will focus on protected terrestrial vertebrates, with particular attention to large carnivores, birds of prey and other species frequently affected by illegal mortality. The final selection of target species, pilot sites and participating authorities will be agreed with the consortium and competent conservation bodies. Demonstration settings may include Natura 2000 sites, protected areas, wildlife rescue centres, veterinary diagnostic laboratories and environmental authorities representing different European biogeographical regions.

European added value

WILDFORCE builds on previous European initiatives addressing wildlife crime, mortality monitoring and conservation, while seeking to integrate currently fragmented expertise into a harmonised and transferable operational system. The proposal is designed to complement rather than duplicate existing structures and to facilitate common methodologies, cross-border technical cooperation and long-term adoption by competent authorities.

Expression of interest

Organisations interested in exploring participation in the WILDFORCE consortium are invited to provide a short institutional profile, relevant expertise and facilities, previous experience in EU/LIFE projects (if applicable), the proposed contribution to WILDFORCE, and the name and contact details of a scientific/technical contact person.

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Note: This partner-search fiche is based on the current WILDFORCE Part B draft. Specific partner roles, work packages, pilot sites, target species and consortium composition remain to be agreed during proposal development.