

PREFACE

2001 marks the 30-year anniversary of the re-introduction of the lynx in the Alps. Today, the Alps are a better living space for the lynx than in the 19th century. The forests have recovered, the wild ungulates are more abundant than ever, and the human population has decreased in many parts of the Alps over the past 100 years. The lynx has proved that it can perfectly live in this human dominated landscape. However, the modern Alps are highly fragmented. Densely settled valleys with busy traffic routes cut the living space in pieces, and the lynx needs further support to regain the once lost territory, and it will need the broad acceptance of all people to survive here. To achieve such a goal, we need the political will to have the lynx back, the expert knowledge to say how it can come back, and last but not least the public acceptance and involvement to keep it.

Scientists from all Alpine countries formed an expert group (SCALP, *Status and Conservation of the Alpine Lynx Population*) to revitalise and co-ordinate the recovery of the lynx in the Alps. The aim is to have connected lynx populations in the Alps, in order to assure the long-term survival of the species in co-existence with people. A future lynx population must be able to thrive in the Alps without permanent human support such as translocations and further re-introductions. But any sound implementation of management measures must be based on a precise knowledge of the distribution, status and trend for each subpopulation.

A first overview of the status and distribution of the lynx in the entire Alpine arc was presented at the SCALP Symposium in 1995 (*Hystrix, Italian Journal of Mammalogy*, 10(1), 1998). Now, the SCALP experts have updated the status reports from France, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia with the data from 1995 to 1999. These current reports now form the basis for the development of a pan-Alpine conservation strategy for the lynx, to be discussed with all national institutions concerned, the NGOs involved and the interest groups and people throughout the Alps. The SCALP work has been financially supported by the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE), the Swiss Agency of Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), and the WWF Switzerland.

Anja Molinari-Jobin, SCALP, Thunstrasse 31, 3074 Muri, Switzerland
Urs Breitenmoser, KORA, Thunstrasse 31, 3074 Muri, Switzerland