

Keeping the Wolf from the Door

How derogations under Article 16 of the Habitats Directive are granted in Finland

An investigative report presented to the European Commission
by The Wolf Action Group



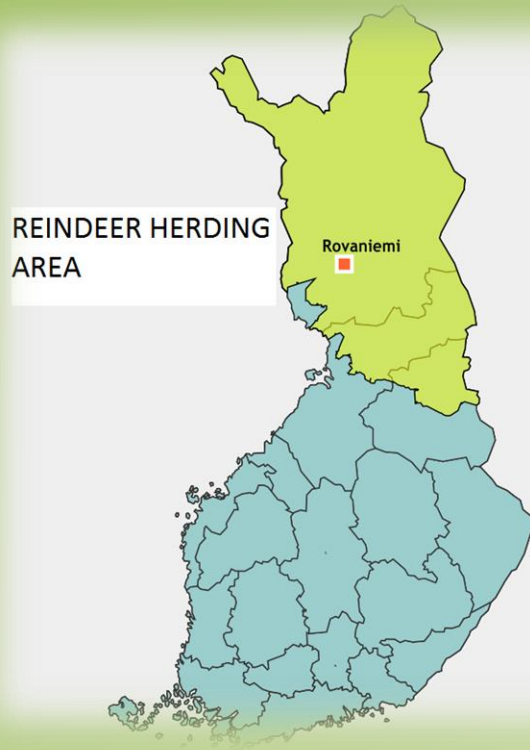
Background information

- In Finland the wolf is a strictly protected species
- Hunting of wolves is forbidden but there are exceptions (derogations)
- Granted only under very specific circumstances and for justified reasons
- Only when all other satisfactory non-lethal alternatives have been tried

Purpose of our investigation

- Are the *exceptional* wolf hunting permits being granted according to the letter and the spirit of the European Habitats Directive?
- Are non-lethal alternatives being tried before granting wolf hunting permits?

Data collection

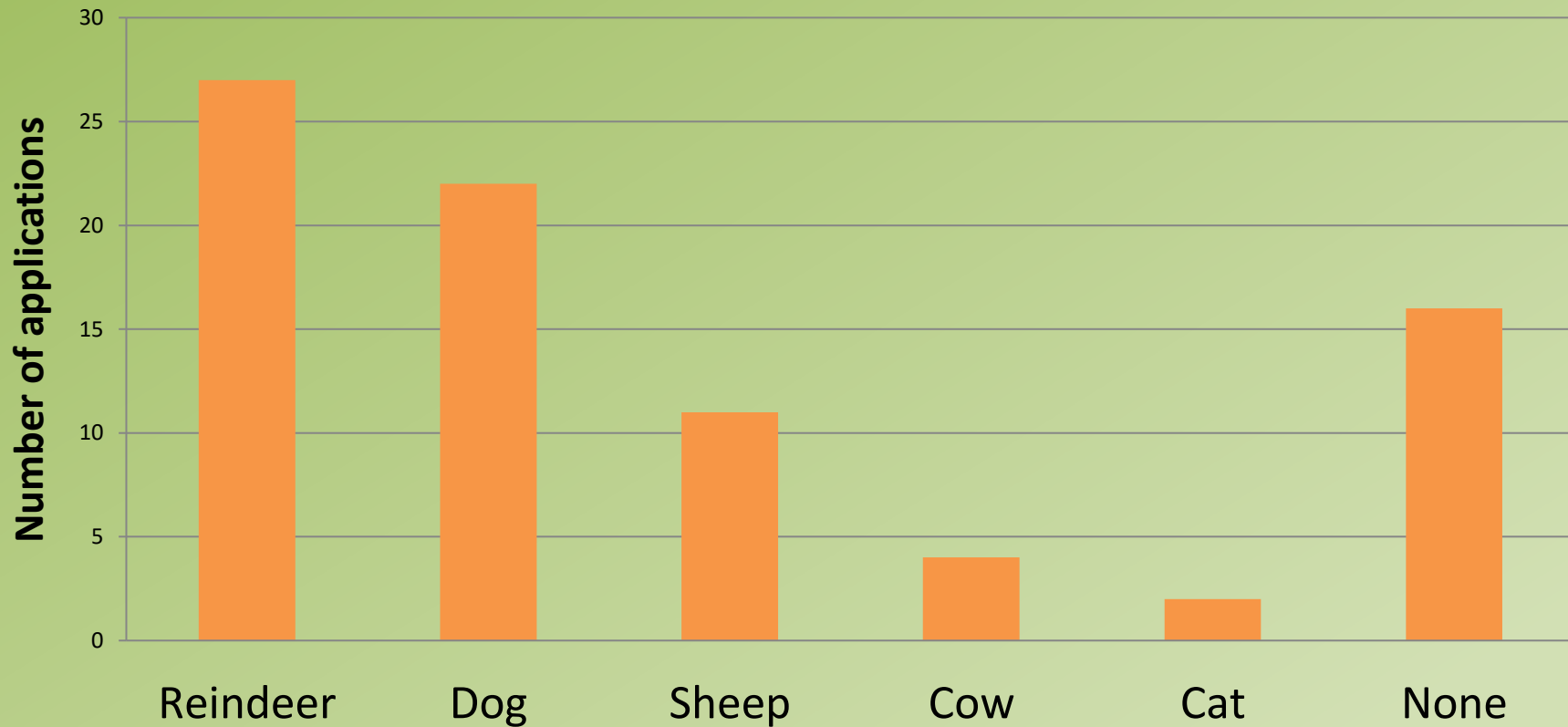


Data sample: 2016-2017 wolf hunting applications: **69**

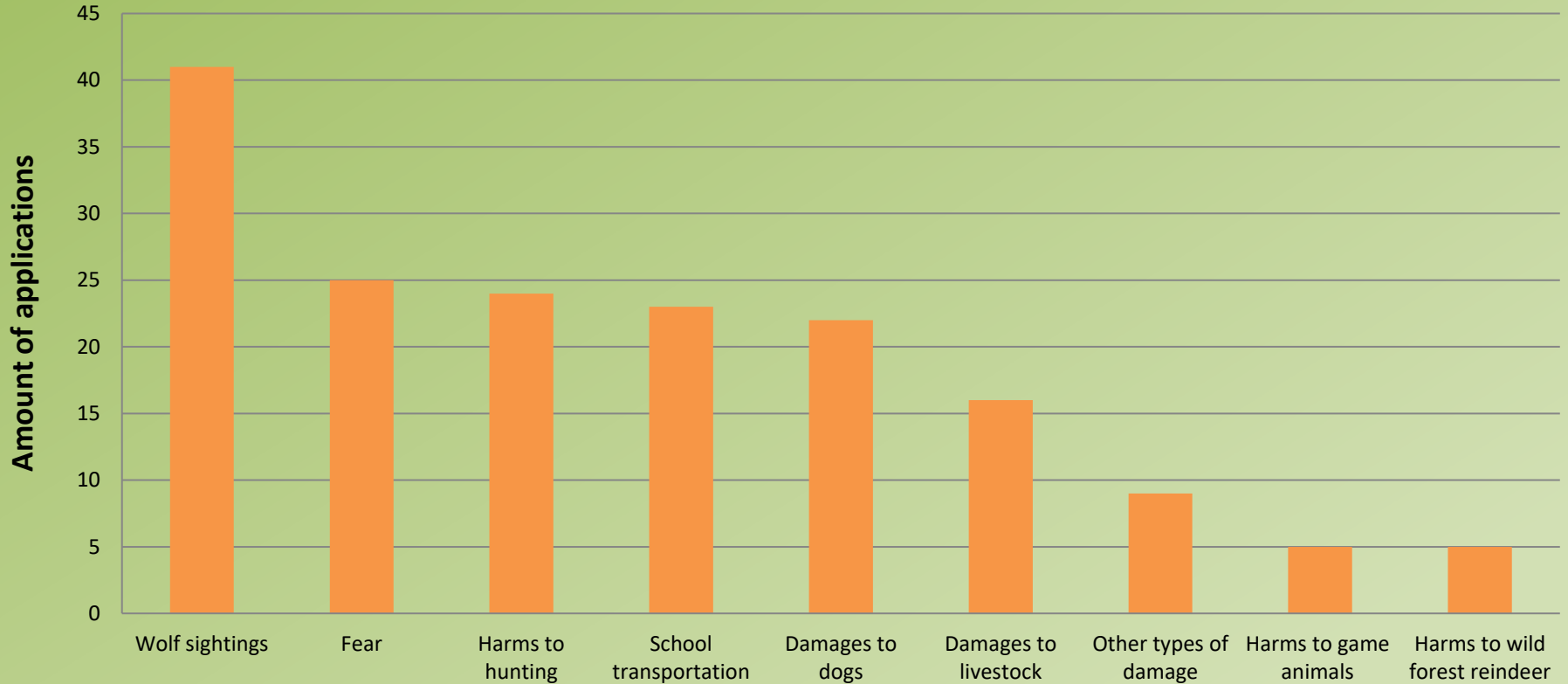
Reindeer herding area (Annex V) wolves are subject to management hunting. Derogations are not seen as exceptions: **28**

Southern Finland (Annex IV) wolves are a strictly protected species. Derogations should be used only as exceptions: **41**

DAMAGES TO DOMESTIC ANIMALS AS MENTIONED IN THE HUNTING APPLICATIONS (2016-2017)

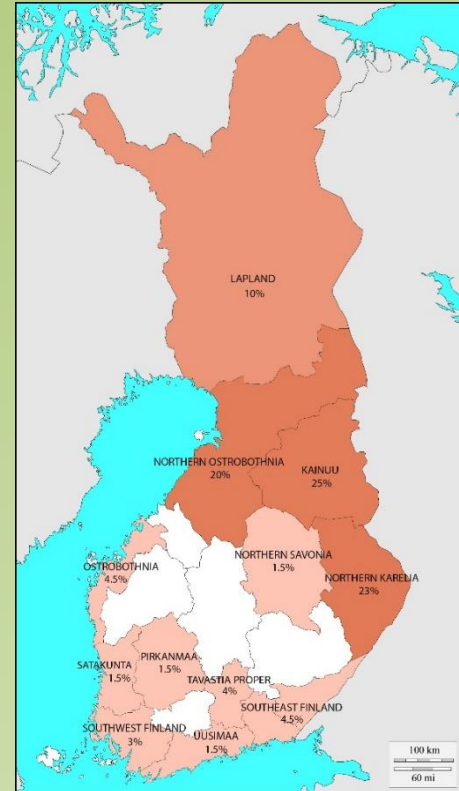


REASONS GIVEN BY THE APPLICANTS FOR REQUESTING HUNTING PERMITS OUTSIDE REINDEER HERDING AREA



Why wolves are killed in Finland?

- Reindeer industry:
free roaming livestock
- Fear:
the concept of the "bold wolf"
- Affects to hunting:
use of tracking dogs



Are Non-Lethal Alternatives (NLAs) being used?

Of the 41 applications in southern Finland:

- Wolf Taxi: 22
- Chasing off: 19
- Electric Fences: 15
- No NLAs tried: 6
(2 cases granted with permit)

Key solutions proposed

1. Protocol for effective active banishment measures
2. Sharing of safety measures to people living in wolf areas
3. Couple prevention measures to financial compensation
4. End the hunting of predators as a management tool
5. Educate the general public about the importance of wolves and other predators for the health of ecosystems

Impact of the report

Political change:

- The EC stated that the Finnish Wolf Management Plan (WMP) had indeed some "shortcomings" and started a dialogue with the Finnish authorities.
- The EC visited Finland and declared that derogations to Article 16 "were not a management tool".
- The Finnish ministry accepted that "there had been some mistakes" in their WMP.
- Today a new WMP has been drafted by the Finnish authorities with all relevant stakeholders and the Wolf Action Group took part in the process.

Thank You

