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VKM Bulletin 2026:06  
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Published: 10.03.2026

ISSN: 2704-1689  
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Suggested citation: VKM, Grainger, M., Eldegard, K., Hermansen, J. S., Kopatz, A., Mauvisseau, Q., Rueness, E. K., Star, B. (2026). Non-detriment finding for Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*). VKM Bulletin 2026:06, ISSN: 2704-1689. Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment (VKM), Oslo, Norway.

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## Non-detriment finding for Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*)

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**Competing interests:** The authors declare no competing interests in relation to this NDF.

**Date:** 14.01.2026

**Scientific name:** *Lynx lynx* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**Common name:** Eurasian lynx

**Norwegian name:** Gaupe

**Type of permit:** CITES Appendix II (Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex I, List B).

Country of Export: Norway (NO)

Country of Import: Sweden (SE)

**Purpose and source:** The proposal concerns the export from Norway to Sweden of a full-mounted 2-year-old female Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*; CITES Appendix II; source code: W; purpose-of-transaction code: H; M524069 chip number.: 578098100180263; Rovbase ID-number: M524069 (<https://www.rovbase.no/search?T=M524069>)).

For Appendix II species (Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex 1, list B) it is required to establish that export will not be detrimental to the survival of that species, in compliance with CITES Article III. In the Norwegian CITES regulation (Lovdata, 2018), the criteria for export from Norway are described in Chapter 2, Section 5, and it is required to establish that the export does not have a harmful effect on the conservation status of the species.

VKM has adopted the definition of detriment, cf. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) suggested by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Scientific Authority:

1. Harvest that is not sustainable.
2. Harvest that harms the status of the species in the wild.
3. Removal from the wild that results in habitat loss or destruction, or that interferes with recovery efforts for a species.

**Conclusion:** *Positive*

**VKM concludes that the export of one harvested wild female *Lynx lynx* from Norway to Sweden as a hunting trophy will be non-detrimental to the survival of the species and will not adversely affect its conservation status, in accordance with Article IV of the Convention and Chapter 2, Section 5 of the Norwegian CITES Regulation.**

The conclusion is based on the following factors:

- The animal was legally harvested in quota-controlled hunting in Norway.
- Long term monitoring of the lynx population (and the impact of harvest) suggests that the population is stable (with a slight increase in the number of family groups in the last few years) and that harvest is sustainable.

## 1. Biological information

### Distribution

*Lynx lynx* is widely distributed in Eurasia. It has a continuous range from Scandinavia to the eastern coast of Russia, including on Kamchatka. Further south, the species is found throughout Central Asia and on the Tibetan plateau. Smaller subpopulations occur in southern and eastern Europe and southwest Asia. The species was largely extirpated from large parts of Europe, but populations in northern Europe have recovered in number of individuals and re-expanded and in central Europe lynx has been reintroduced to several countries (Breitenmoser et al., 2015).

### Life history

Litter size in Scandinavia is 2.16 (95% confidence intervals: 1.93, 2.43; Gaillard et al., 2014). The abundance of lynx may fluctuate with prey density in parts of its range (Sunquist & Sunquist, 2009). The tendency of lynx to disperse is variable, with males being more likely to disperse than females (Samelius et al., 2012).

### Role in the ecosystem

The preferred habitat of lynx is boreal forest, where it mainly predated on ungulates, although prey-preference varies from region to region and individuals (Sunquist & Sunquist, 2009).

## 2. Population trend

There are an estimated 17,000–18,000 individuals in Europe, and while the overall population trend is considered stable, it varies across the distribution range (von Arx, 2025). Data on population size and trends are missing from many range states (von Arx, 2025).

In the latest report (Brøseth et al., 2025), the Norwegian population is estimated to about 538 individuals (95% CI = 447–630). The national population target for lynx in Norway has been set to 65 family groups and in 2025, 91 family groups were registered before the hunting season, indicating an increase compared to the previous year with 78 family groups recorded (Tovmo et al., 2024; Brøseth et al., 2025). In 2025, 267 individuals were registered dead, 27 due to conflict reducing measures and 163 as part of governmental population control, the rest were dead recoveries from traffic accidents (41 hit by cars and 11 hit by trains) and from other causes (sickness, unknown reasons, etc; 26 in total) (source Rovbase, 06.01.2026). For comparison, in 2024, 25 lynx were killed due to conflict resolution, 184 for population control, 43 were dead recoveries from accidents and 28 of other reasons (sickness, unknown reasons, etc).

## 3. Conservation status

*Lynx lynx* is listed as Least Concern (LC) on both the global (assessed 2014) and European (assessed 2025) version of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (Breitenmoser et al., 2015; von Arx, 2025). *L. lynx* is listed as Endangered (EN) on the Norwegian Red List for species, 2021, due to its low number of reproducing individuals (Eldegard et al., 2021).

## 4. Threats

The main threat to *Lynx lynx* is conflict with humans over game and livestock, and in parts of the range, habitat degradation is a major threat (Breitenmoser et al., 2015). In the Norwegian Red List assessment, it is stated that a reduced hunting quota could lead to increasing population size (Eldegard et al., 2021). Poaching is known to be an important source of mortality of *L. lynx*, but it is not believed to be linked to illegal trade (CITES, 2009). Low genetic diversity and elevated inbreeding levels are considered a threat in reintroduced populations in

central and western Europe (Mueller et al., 2022). While in northern Europe the species has recovered after legal protection, the Scandinavian lynx is distinct from the Finnish population and characterized by low genetic diversity due to widespread persecution in the past, i.e., bottleneck (Rueness et al., 2003; Muller et al. 2022; Hemmingmoore et al. 2024).

## 5. Conservation and Management measures:

### International legislation

*Lynx lynx* is listed in Appendix II of CITES, in Annex A the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (since 1997), in Annex II (except the Estonian, Latvian and Finnish populations), IV (except the Estonian population), and V (Estonian population) of the EU Habitats Directive, and in Appendix III (protected fauna species) of the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (European Environment Agency, n.d.; UNEP 2026).

### National legislation

In most range states, hunting is prohibited. In Finland, Sweden, Latvia, and Romania some animals are killed under derogation (von Arx, 2025). In Estonia Norway and parts of Russia, lynx is a game species and can be subject to licensed or quota-based hunting (von Arx, 2025). *Lynx lynx* is listed in Annex 1, list B in the Norwegian CITES Regulation (Lovdata, 2018) and is regulated by national legislation (see Lovdata, 2005). EU has a negative decision regarding import of *L. lynx* hunting trophies (H) under source code W from the Russian Federation (European Union Scientific Review Group, 2016; UNEP, 2026).

### Conservation measures

During the period between 1971 and 2006, lynx have been reintroduced and translocated to restore populations in central and western Europe. Genetic monitoring and translocation programs to prevent negative effects of inbreeding and habitat fragmentation are in place in parts of Europe and Asia (Breitenmoser et al., 2015). The latest assessments, however, showed that all introduced populations suffer from lower genetic diversity and increased levels of inbreeding compared to their source populations and other natural populations (Mueller et al., 2022).

## 6. Trade/use

### Legal

*Lynx lynx* was historically important in the fur market. Until 2008, the Russian Federation had annual export quotas of up to 1,000 skins or more, while Romania had quotas for much smaller volumes until 2014 (UNEP, 2026). Currently, there are no CITES quotas in place for *L. lynx* (UNEP, 2026).

According to CITES Wildlife TradeView and the CITES Trade Database, transactions reported with source code W and the trade terms “skins” and “trophies” between 2016 and 2025 (a total of 52 skins and 18 trophies; data as reported by exporters) predominantly involved the Russian Federation as exporting country (62 items) and Canada as importing country (39 items). The year 2018 represents a notable outlier, accounting for 48 of these skins and trophies, largely due to a single transaction of 39 skins from Russia to Canada (CITES Trade Database, 2026; CITES Wildlife TradeView, 2026). During the same period (2016-2025), Norway is recorded as having exported one skin and imported four skins and two trophies (CITES Wildlife TradeView, 2026; data as reported by exporters).

Importer-reported data differ substantially from the data reported by exporters, largely due to the absence of the aforementioned single transaction of 39 skins. According to the data as recorded by importers, a total of 14 trophies and 2 skins were traded in this period (2016-2025), with Russia remaining the primary exporting country (13 items) and the United States of America being the main importing country (7 items). Based on importer-reported data, Norway is recorded as having exported one skin and imported one skin and one trophy (CITES Trade Database, 2026; CITES Wildlife TradeView, 2026).

### Illegal

In-depth analysis of poaching of *Lynx lynx* in Sweden suggested that animals were killed because they are predators, not for their pelts (CITES, 2009). Illegal trade of skins and trophies from Russia to the EU has been documented (CITES, 2009). No recent documentation of illegal trade was found.

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