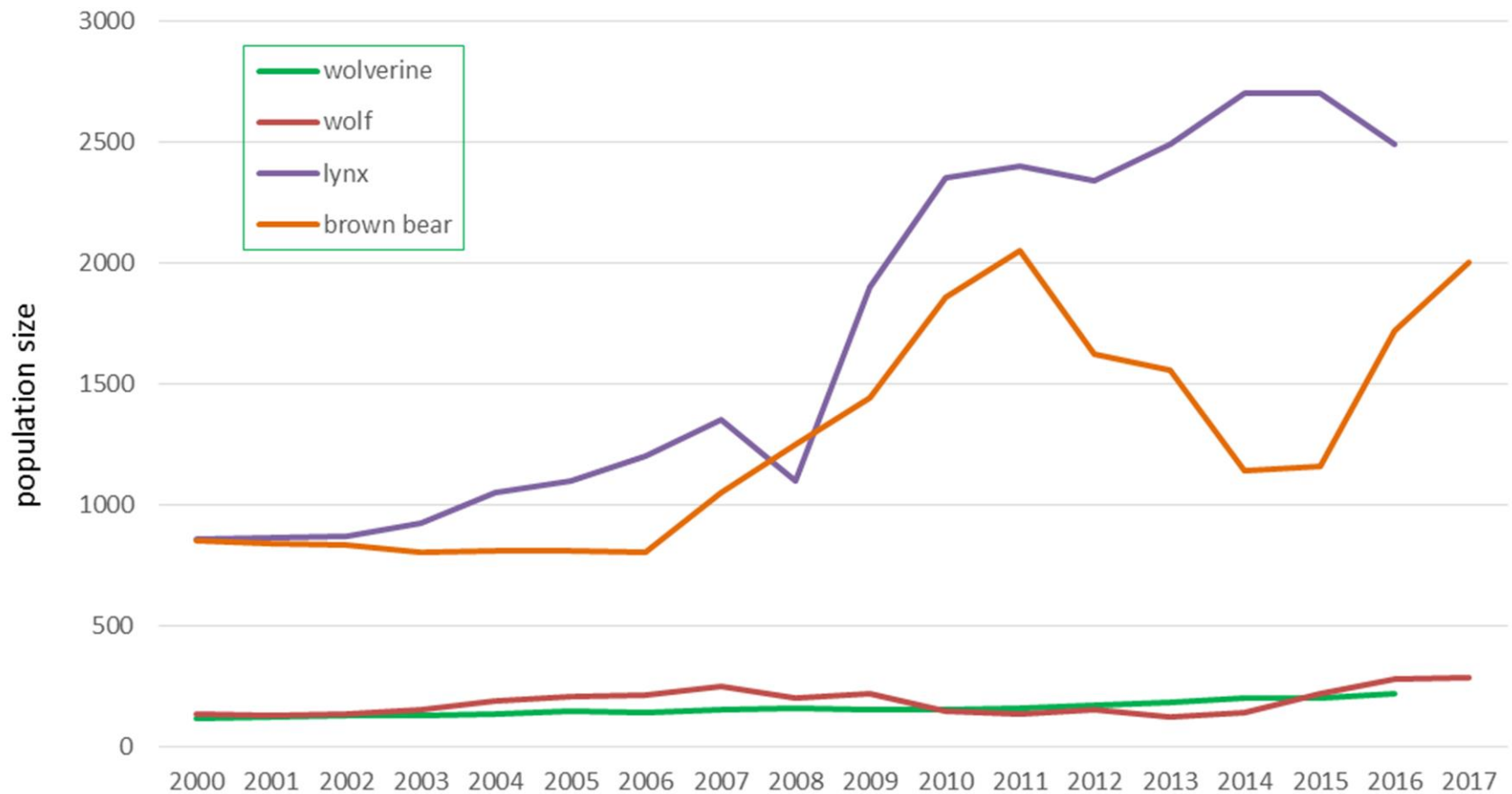


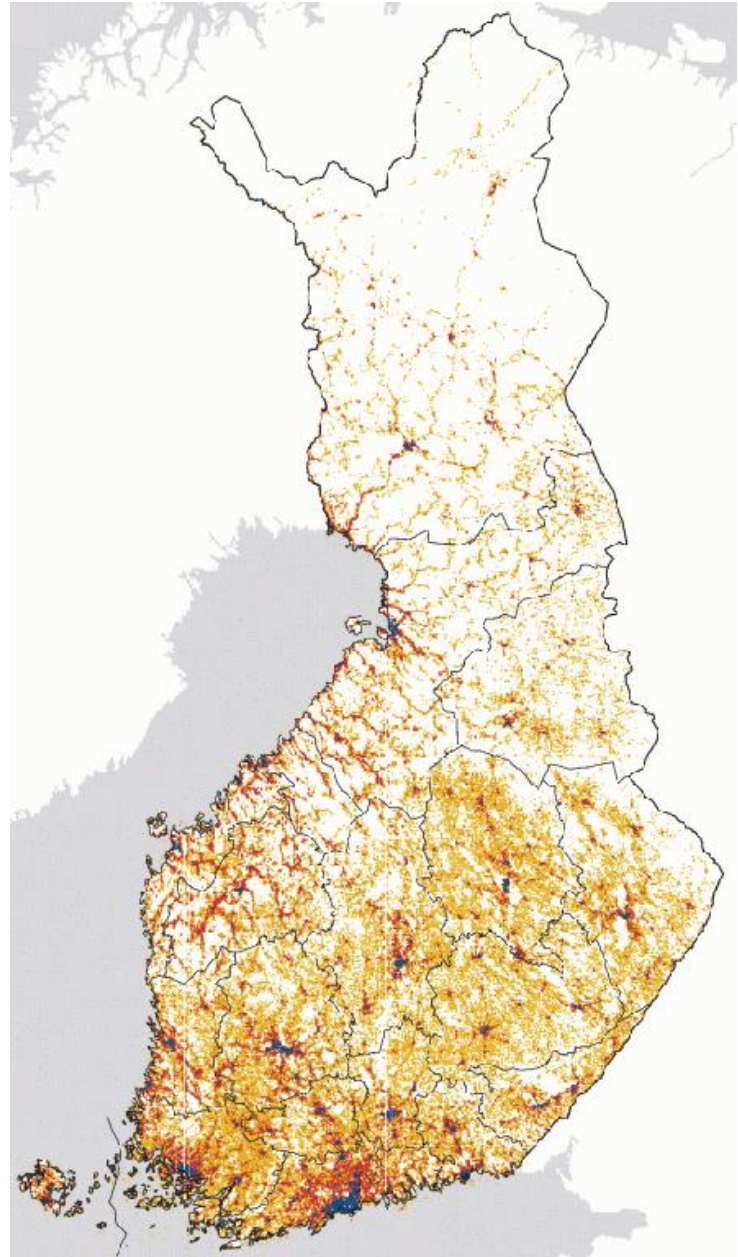


# **LARGE CARNIVORES IN FINLAND - LC POLICIES AND LOCAL RESISTANCE**

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Ruralia Institute University of Helsinki

# LARGE CARNIVORE POPULATION TRAJECTORIES IN FINLAND 2000-2017



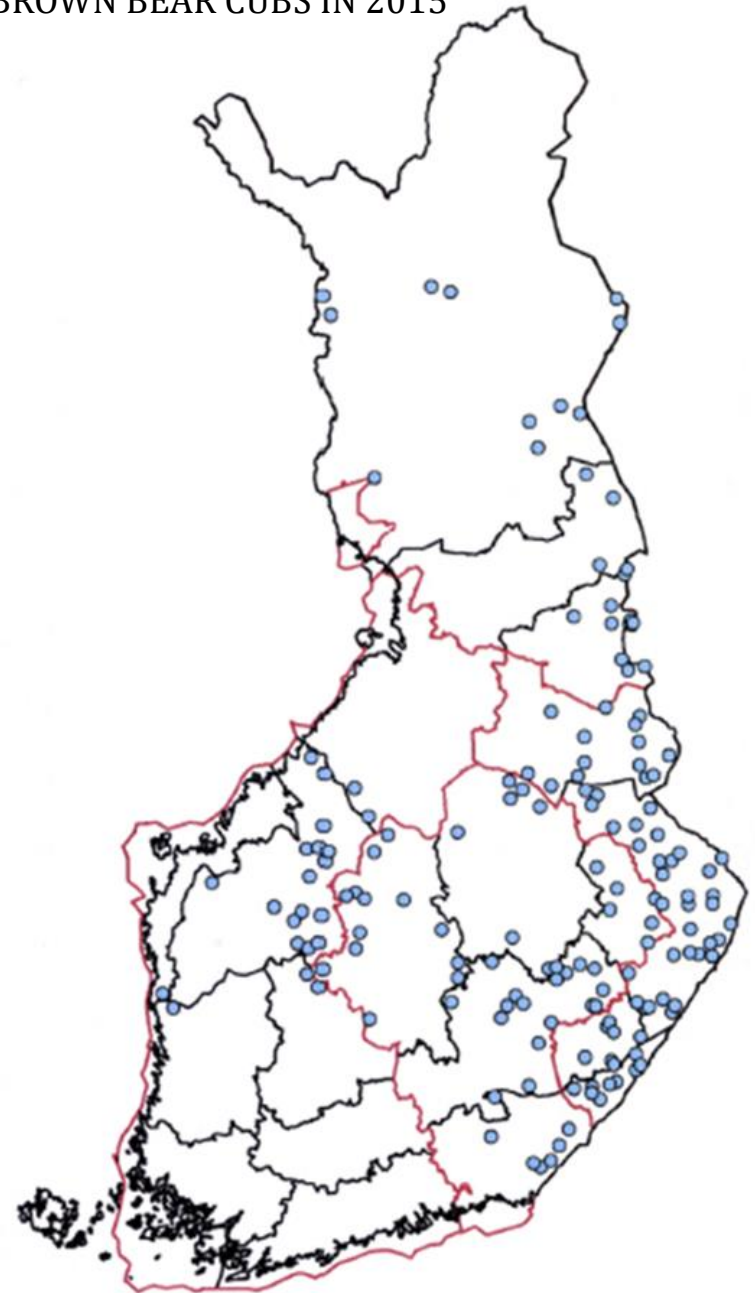
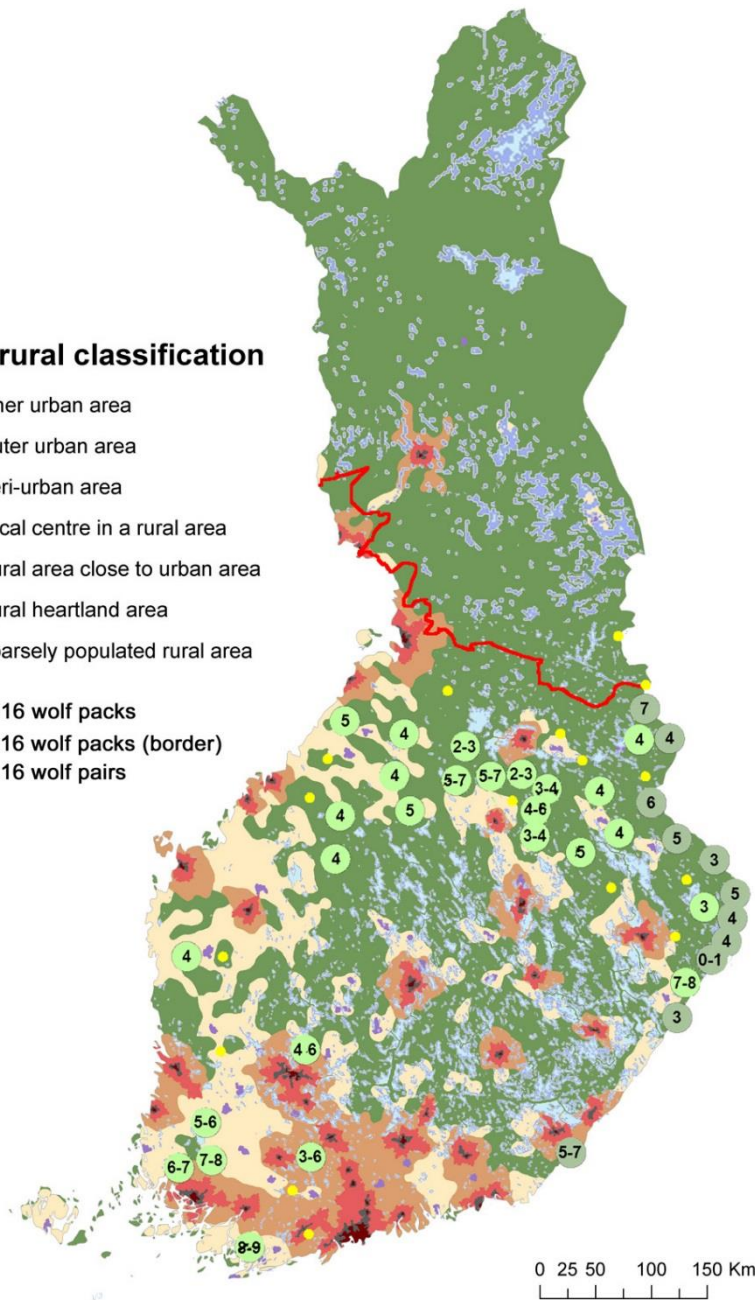


## BROWN BEAR CUBS IN 2015

### Urban-rural classification

- Inner urban area
- Outer urban area
- Peri-urban area
- Local centre in a rural area
- Rural area close to urban area
- Rural heartland area
- Sparsely populated rural area

- 2016 wolf packs
- 2016 wolf packs (border)
- 2016 wolf pairs



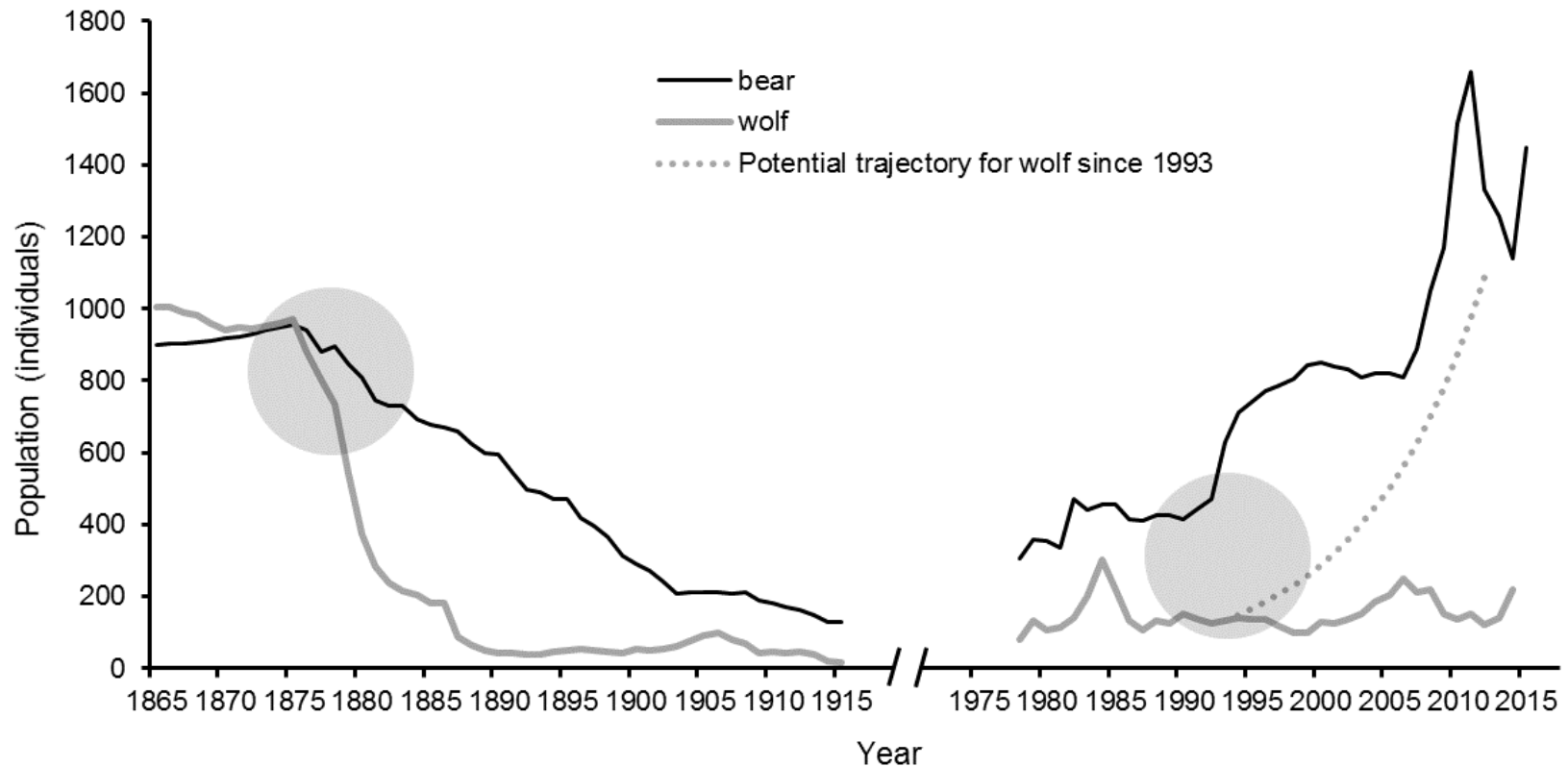


## **DIVERGENCE OF LARGE CARNIVORE POPULATION TRAJECTORIES IN FINLAND SINCE THE 1990S**

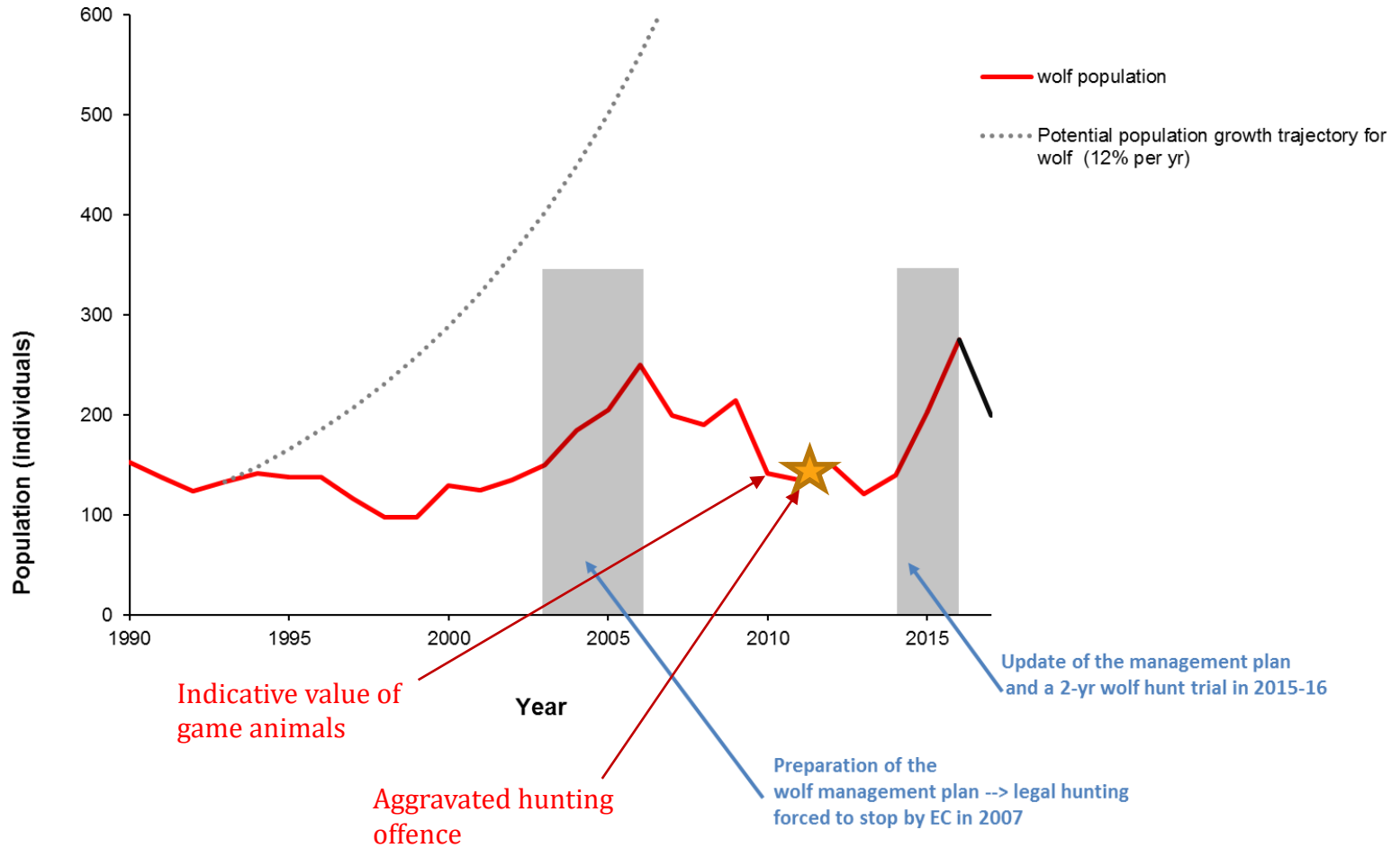
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- In spite of occasional conflicts such as livestock damages bear and lynx are well tolerated and they are considered as valued game species. Controlled population increase is not considered as a big problem.
- Policy decisions targeting at wolf population increase have been widely opposed among the rural residents. Illegal killing of wolves (30-50 illegally killed wolves per year during 2005-2010) has kept the population in low numbers.
- Wolverine management is challenging; approx. half of the population occurs in the reindeer-herding area where co-operation with researchers (tracks) is almost nonexistent and informal management (illegal killings) keeps population in low numbers.

# HUNTING VS. PERSECUTION, BROWN BEAR AND WOLF IN FINLAND

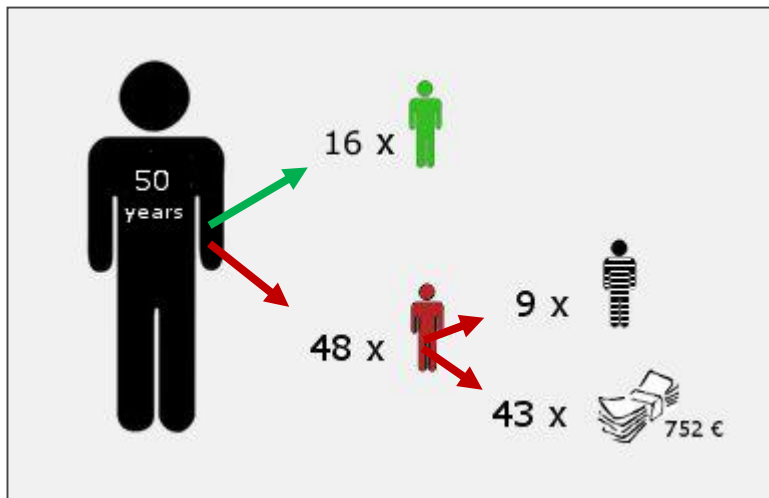


# WOLF POPULATION TRAJECTORY

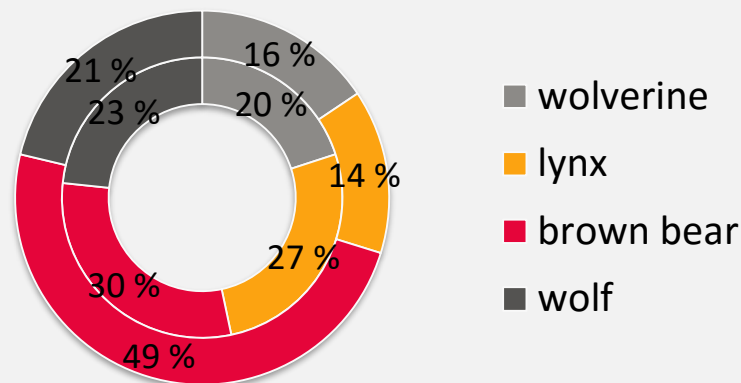




## HUNTING VIOLATOR AND TARGET SPECIES IN FINLAND



- Hunting violator is 50-years-old male (range 21-71).
- Otherwise legal hunters.
- At a time, 2.3 men (range 1-7) took part in illegal killing.
- Main motive was disputes over LC policies.
- Outcome of a cost-benefit calculation.



Frequency of large carnivore species during 2005-2010 in

- ✓ Police Records (n=141, outer circle)
- ✓ District Courts' Sentences (n=30, inner circle)
- ✓ Hidden criminality, strong community support to illegal killings of wolves.

*"Those wolves breed like rabbits, but good friends are damn hard to find."*



## WOLF CONFLICT - URBAN VS. RURAL

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- Shared emotions and shared local knowledge towards harmful species-> shared attitudes
- Alienation of traditional rural life from society at large

*“If people have to live in this kind of fear, it’s some relief when someone does something to remedy the situation. The authorities won’t help!”*



## CONSERVATIONISTS AND ANIMAL WELFARISTS VS. HUNTERS, FARMERS, REINDEER HERDERS

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### ➤ Rumors

- secret, intentional government action to re-introduce wolves
- locals are backward and irresponsible in relation to wolf conservation when comparing them to other nationalities

### ➤ Stigmatizing of others



## AUTHORITIES VS. LOCALS RESEACHERS VS. LOCALS

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- Marginalization of emotions and local knowledge
- Who's right?
- Distrust of the authorities and researchers

*“It seems to be a common opinion among the authorities in this country that large animals don’t cause any harm. Conservationists have the impression that predators aren’t capable of hurting anyone. Especially in eastern Finland, the wolf population is far too large. Domestic animals and children are under threat. The authorities won’t take the problem seriously.”*