

National Action Plan for European Mink Scientific Council of December 13th 2022 Record of decisions

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1. Proposal for a French translocation strategy

The feedback and a proposal of French strategy for the translocation of the European mink (*Mustela lutreola*) was presented (see the presentation on PowerPoint).

The key points of discussions are:

It is relevant to firstly stay within the area of action of the 3rd NAP to implement the translocation project.

The social acceptance of the project is a key point and should not be overlooked.

The experimental nature of the project must be explained from the start.

Even if the choice of individuals to be released (number, age, sex) is very dependant of the breeding centre availability (pups), the strategy must specify theoretical needs/goals, especially on the sex-ratio.

Each translocation project is unique and it is very hard to anticipate all the failure or success factors. The project implementation requires flexibility and adaptability. In this context, the project team organisation must allow rapid decision-making.

The two types of translocations (reintroduction, reinforcement) are possible in France and have different benefits and risks. Reintroduction allow firstly to learn and capitalise on experience about implementation methods in France. Reinforcement can bring quickly genetic diversity and reconnect populations' cores. However, it risks bringing more constraints on an already fragile core (destructuring of the established population, competition...). Both options must be studied in parallel but pay attention to the multiplication of translocation sites regarding breeding centres capacities to produce pups. In addition, the choice of a reintroduction project should not reduce under no circumstances investments on known cores' preservation in the wild.

The French strategy must be long-term, keeping in mind the need of reconnection with Spanish populations.

A more precise knowledge on the both minks species distribution in France is needed to identify release areas and must be rapidly done: possible sites within the 3rd NAP area should be quite limited.

Regardless the chosen option, clear objective must be set, based on current knowledge. It can be firstly simple then gradual over time.

A summary note entitled "Feedback and definition of the French strategy for the translocation of the European mink (Mustela lutreola)" describing the elements presented during the CS has been done. The members of CS have two months (until February the 15th) to give them advice.

2. Care protocol for European Mink in distress

The aim (methodology of construction and goals) of the care protocol was presented (see the presentation on PowerPoint).

The "Care protocol for European Mink in distress" is available here:

- *In French, read-only, not editable :*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/125-151ysxamlibbK3iaQgkUxvlfTZKB1/edit?usp=share_link&oid=118107748628964569506&rtpof=true&sd=true

- *In English, editable :*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/11Sy25YWzsnG31tJMizbOY1yW_4RkmNXI/edit?usp=share_link&oid=118107748628964569506&rtpof=true&sd=true

The members of CS have two months (until February the 15th) to make their comments. The protocol will then be validated and implemented if necessary.

Please note that next meeting will be held at March 2nd 2023.