Key Determinants of Human-Wolf (Canis lupus) Conflict in Shabestar County's Villages of East Azerbaijan Province, Iran

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Abstract : Developing effective and well-targeted conservation strategies is dependent upon fully understanding the complexities of the local situation. We attempted to discern the main likely wolf-human conflict contributing variables in households of Shabestar county's villages. Data were collected through questions in 53 semi-structured interviews in 36 villages across Shabestar district in summer 2014. The results suggested that people who have reportedly suffered livestock depredation and who have alternative income sources to livestock, are likely to be particularly hostile toward wildlife. With rapid assessment of households using these few key variables we are able to identify likely conflict hotspots and target conflict resolution efforts in those villages. Based on these results, the most important initial strategies for reducing conflict would be reducing the number of livestock killed by wolf, increasing opportunities to generate income only from livestock holdings rather than alternative income sources.