

The European Wildlife Bank

Rewilding
Europe®



Wildlife is more important to nature than many might think, but wildlife numbers in Europe are often extremely low, especially of the larger species. The European Wildlife Bank is a tool to bring back natural numbers of the original native herbivores in our rewilding areas.



A new way to restore natural numbers of large herbivores



Why a European Wildlife Bank?

The large wildlife species play key roles for the natural functioning of Europe's ecosystems. Wildlife also triggers the interest of people in nature, builds awareness, understanding and support, and it greatly helps the success for nature-based tourism business. Therefore Rewilding Europe supports the wildlife comeback. Some species can and will come back to their original habitats all by themselves. Others depend on the help from humans to get there and won't come back for centuries unless we reintroduce them actively. Rewilding Europe intends to play a very active role in the reintroduction and restocking of key wildlife species, beginning in our rewilding areas. A provisional reintroduction plan has been made in cooperation with local partners and prominent wildlife experts, and the work has begun.

How does it work?

The European Wildlife Bank is a tool for Rewilding Europe to provide areas with missing wildlife, whilst keeping control over these herds by making so-called herd contracts with third parties, mostly land managers/land owners in the rewilding areas. At the expiry date of the contract, part of the herd will return to the Bank, which will use it for a new contract (often with the same party in the same area). For the primary species that will be used, the following growth model will apply, starting with a herd of 100 animals:

- Normal reproductive rates mean that 100 animals will triple over 5 years, to 300.
- After 5 years 150 animals will then be returned to the Bank (a 50% return on the bank's core capital reserves over these 5 years) and leaving 150 animals ('the profit') with the project partner (a return of 150% on the original fully serviced and retired loan).
- The Bank will then 'reinvest' their new 150 animals on the same basis – and so on.
- Over a 15 year period, there will have been 3 reinvestment cycles and the original herd of 100 animals owned by the bank will by then have multiplied to 335 (an 'annual compounded yield' on the initial 100 animals of 8.5% per year). More significantly it will also have yielded a possible total of 2,365 animals now owned by at least 2 different partners in the rewilding areas (an additional 'annual compounded yield' on the initial investment of 100 animals of c. 23.5% per year).

Once the animals are finally let out free into the wild (the ultimate goal of Rewilding Europe) they will of course not be returned to the bank.

Planned species

- **Wild horses (Exmoor, Hucul/Hutul, Retuerta, Garrano, Konik, Przewalski etc):** breeds that are most closely related

to the extinct European wild horse. Wild horses play a key role in ecosystems by their use of the area (seasonal migration, daily routes, latrines etc.). By grazing the grass very short they help a completely different spectrum of plants to develop which in turn helps a variety of other wildlife species that thrive in open areas. By debarking trees they 'open up' closed forests, thus bringing a more diverse succession of forest trees.

- **Tauros (Maronesa, Maremmana, Sayaguesa, Pajuna, Podolica and crossbreeds of these):** breeds that are most closely related to the extinct aurochs. Wild bovines eat also longer and more coarse grasses than the horses do.
- **European bison:** Its feeding habits have more impact on shrubs and young trees. Bison open up bush.
- We are also planning to include a number of other native wildlife species, but their relation with the Wildlife Bank will be different, as there will be less control over these animals.

Return on investment

Investors in the European Wildlife Bank can expect a return on their investment based on the animals' reproduction rate. However, in this first phase of the European Wildlife Bank, this investment is a matter of donorship. The first investors will instead be repaid by adopting the growing herd or the expanding area grazed by 'their herd'.

Making Europe a Wilder Place