

Communication Guidelines for Zoos participating in releases of Eurasian lynx within the scope of the Linking Lynx network

1. Scope and purpose of these guidelines

Scope of application: These communication guidelines concern the communication of zoos about ex situ-lynx considered for release into the wild. They apply where several Linking Lynx network members are potentially affected by the consequences of communication (because they were involved in an aspect of the communication).

Purpose of these guidelines: By defining communication processes, we ensure that we present a consistent and professional image and that all directly concerned partners are informed about content and communication. It is, therefore, recommended to adhere to the proposed approaches outlined here.

We differentiate between proactive and reactive communication. Proactive communication involves trying to place a topic with a target group while reactive communication involves responding to external enquiries.

- The following applies to proactive communication: All project partners should be informed about the communication
- The following applies to reactive communication: If the enquiry is of a supra-regional nature (e.g., large media houses with “international” reach), the project partners should be informed and if needed involved. The Linking Lynx Sourcing Working Group lead (k.vogt@kora.ch) and communications lead (n.bosshard@kora.ch) should be informed and if needed involved. Regional enquiries (e.g., by regional media houses) do not require further coordination.

2. Who are project partners in case of a released ex situ-lynx?

EAZA EEP coordinator (Dina Gebhardt, dina.gebhardt@bern.ch), operator of coordination enclosure where the lynx is prepared for release, in situ project where the lynx will be released, official organisation of release site (federal state/canton), Linking Lynx communication contact person Nicole Bosshard.

3. Procedure for proactive communication

1. Drafting a media release / social media post or similar
2. Advance information (if possible, otherwise information right after publication) from initiators to other project partners (including Communication Lead Linking Lynx N. Bosshard)

4. Procedure for reactive communication

Examples for reactive communication are for example interviews requested by the media. A

distinction is made between regional and supra-regional enquiries. The content requirements should be considered for both types of enquiries.

Regional enquiries do not require consultation of partners.

For supra-regional enquiries (e.g., large national media houses with a significant reach and international or linguistic significance, such as ARD Europamagazin) the Sourcing Working Group lead (k.vogt@kora.ch) / communications (n.bosshard@kora.ch) should be informed.

5. Content requirements for communication (proactive and reactive if possible)

- Naming the project partners
- Naming the Linking Lynx network
- Reason given for release
- Name/Origin animal
- Short profile of the animal (if desired)

6. Wording

When an ex-situ animal is chosen to be transferred to a coordination enclosure, it still needs to pass a health and behavioural examination before it is cleared to be released. Please avoid communicating that and in which region or project the lynx will be released before the final decision is made. If the animal is finally suitable for release and the zoo plans to mention the region or the project where the animal is planned to be released, the wording should be agreed with the respective project.

In general, it is recommended to choose wording that carefully reflects the fact that all project partners (in situ and ex situ) are committed to species conservation. This means that terms such as "captive" or "liberating an animal" should be avoided.

General explanations on Linking Lynx objectives and background can be found on the home section of the website:

- <https://www.linking-lynx.org/e>

Some good examples for wording and reference to partners in press releases can be found here:

- <https://www.linking-lynx.org/en/news/translocation--133>
- <https://www.linking-lynx.org/en/news/translocation-125>
- <https://www.linking-lynx.org/en/news/translocation-114>
- <https://www.linking-lynx.org/en/news/translocation-127>

Please be careful using the following expressions:

- **German:**
Instead of «Freilassung» – use «Auswilderung»
Instead of «Gefangenschaft» – use «menschliche Obhut»

- **English:**
Use «Release» instead of «set free»
Use «Reinforcement or Reintroduction» instead of «rewilding»