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Prime minister of Denmark, Mr. Lars Løkke Rasmussen
Minister of Environment and Agriculture, Mr. Jakob Ellemann-Jensen
Speakers of the environment and members of the Danish parliament
EU Commissioner for the Environment Karmenu Vella
Federal Minister of the Environment Germany, Svenja Schulze
Minister of the Environment Schleswig-Holstein, Dr. Robert Habeck
EU Commissioner for the Environment, Mr. Karmenu Vella
UNESCO Director-General, Mrs. Audrey Azoulay

May 7th, 2018

Open letter from WWF Denmark and WWF Germany

WWF Denmark and WWF Germany: The Danish “wild boar fence” along the Danish-German border is bad news for our shared wildlife and nature

It is with great concern that the national WWF offices in Denmark and Germany have learned about the Danish Government’s plans to build a fence along the common Danish-German border between Jutland and Schleswig-Holstein.

Allegedly, the fence is aimed to prevent natural migration of wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) between Denmark and Germany. However, the fence will also have detrimental effects on other species of shared populations of larger mammals in addition to cross-border natural areas and habitats. Many of which are designated N2000-areas and therefore protected by the Habitats Directive.

WWF Denmark and WWF Germany recognise the potential danger of African swine fever (ASF) to Danish pork meat production, however we have seen no documentation yet of the effectiveness of the planned Danish border fence. The spreading of ASF to pig farms is linked to human activities and not to wild boars.

With a fence planned to be 150 cm above ground and 50 cm below, the design and construction will be a physical coast-to-coast barrier to wildlife between our countries.

We are therefore greatly concerned about the impact of this fence and how it will affect the natural cross-border migration of shared populations of mammal species like European otter (*Lutra lutra*), the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*), golden jackal (*Canis aureus*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), European



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hare (*Lepus europeus*), Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*), roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*).

In addition, we are also gravely concerned about the impacts of the construction of the planned fence in nature conservation areas of which several are shared between our nations. Examples are the Wadden Sea, the Tøndermarsk, and e.g., Jaardelunder Moor/Frøslev Mose. All of them are Natura 2000 areas protected by the Habitats Directive. The Wadden Sea is in addition also designated UNESCO World Heritage Site and of international importance.

The planned border fence will cut through these important nature conservation areas and we fear it will impair the ecological functions of the areas and divide populations of wild mammals.

Fences are an increasing problem in nature and to wildlife, and Denmark should not add to this problem.

WWF Denmark and WWF Germany urge the Danish government to reconsider the construction of the border fence and instead focus on the 'human factor' already identified by experts. E.g.: desinfection of vehicles, avoidance of food waste in nature, and awareness rising among drivers and hunters.

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NOTE:

WWF Denmark's response to the legislative proposal of the border fence (in Danish):

https://www.wwf.dk/nyheder_og_publicationer/?21681/WWF-Vildsvinehegnet-er-helt-i-hegnet