

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was initiated and partially funded by the Munich Wildlife Society (WGM), Germany, and especially Dr. Wolfgang Schröder, president of the WGM. I want to thank Felix Knauer and Petra Kaczensky for patiently reviewing my manuscripts and helping me organize my thoughts.

While taking classes at Virginia Tech and while finishing the writing process I owe my thanks to my major advisor Mike Vaughan, who patiently corrected numerous drafts, the language problems, and was always ready for some positive discussions, to Steve McMullin for his patience with the “human dimensions stuff” and moral support along the way, and Dean Stauffer who gave advice on statistical analyses. Funding for my stipend at Tech came from the Virginia Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

My thanks go to many, many people that helped gather data in the different countries. I will never forget the tremendous hospitality that I received in so many foreign homes that made me feel at least a little bit at home. I thank the governmental agencies of Austria, Italy, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, and Sweden that provided me with statistical data and interviews about the system, and the hunters, farmers and locals who patiently listened to my questions. In Austria, I want to thank the members of the Bear Management Plan team and the WWF Austria, specifically Bernhard Gutleb, Jörg Rauer, Norbert Gerstl, Thomas Huber, the Glitzner family, for sharing data, literature, and sometimes their homes, and many fruitful discussions. In Italy, Mario Possillico and Catherine Cozza were valuable sources of data and discussions. During my stay in Norway, Jon Swenson, Jon-Ove Scheie, and Jens Thomas Sag r supplied invaluable information and discussions. Ovidiu Ionescu provided many contacts and helpful information in Romania. Anton Simonic, Miha Adamic and Iztok Koren were essential

to make my stay in Slovenia successful. Thanks also to Anders Bjärvall in Sweden to share information on bear management.

I also want to thank my parents for bringing me to the United States after high school and giving me the opportunity to live in a new culture and experience many great opportunities.

I am very thankful to my special friend William Penhallegon, who patiently read the manuscript and improved the language tremendously.

I am sorry if I cannot name everybody that helped me out personally, but you all know who you are that I have to thank.