

# Road infrastructure development

## Impact on wildlife corridors' permeability

Ecological impacts of road infrastructure development in Poland will be most acutely felt in the most valuable areas, namely in the Carpathians, where biodiversity spots of European import are situated. The populations of large mammals which have the highest spatial requirements, including large carnivores: wolf, lynx and bear, are the most threatened.

The most significant among all the negative impacts of roads is creating migration barriers which break landscape connectivity. In the Carpathians, an area of exceptional biodiversity, it is extremely difficult to avoid conflicts between roads and precious wildlife refuges. 2 out of 7 main Polish wildlife corridors of international import run through the Carpathians: the Southern and the Carpathian Corridor. The planned expressways S-7 Spytkowice-Podwilk, Jabłonka-Chyżne and Chyżne-state border as well as the S-19 Dukla-Barwinek will break landscape connectivity of the most important wildlife corridors in the Carpathians which play a key role in transboundary migration of large carnivores.

## Traffic-related death rate

Currently traffic accidents with bears in Poland occur rarely. They may, however, significantly increase bear mortality in the near future. This problem may become particularly serious on voivodship roads where traffic is projected to increase and which have not been included in the minimizing measure program (protective fences, wildlife crossings for large animals).