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[Mine threatening wolves](#)

# Mine threatening wolves

Lithium exploration in Montalegre could jeopardise the survival of the wolf in this area, warns the Plataforma Lobo Ibérico, which stresses that the location of the mine coincides with the breeding area of a pack.

By TPN/Lusa, in [News](#), [Portugal](#), [Business](#), [Environment](#) · 22 Dec 2023 · [0 Comments](#)



*Credits: envato elements;*

“O Estudo de Impacte Ambiental (EIA) did not properly consider the magnitude of the effects resulting from other developments in the surrounding region, which will increase human and habitat disturbance, making the future of the wolves in the region unviable”, states the the Plataforma Lobo Ibérico.

Using data from researchers who have been studying wolves for several decades in this territory, Vila Real district, the platform states that the Romano mine, with plans for an extension of around 30 hectares, will cover around 20 percent of the territory of the Leiranco pack and lead to the destruction of their breeding site. The presence of cubs has been confirmed in this site over the last 30 years, and the mine could jeopardise the survival of this breeding group.

This overlapping of the mine with the pack’s breeding area violates legal regulations, on a national and international level, for the conservation of the species.

## **Green light**

The Romano mine, owned by [Lusorecursos Portugal Lithium](#), received the green light from the Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente (APA) in September, with a Declaração de Impacte Ambiente (DIA), however, it was conditional.

Regarding the [Iberian wolf](#), a protected species in Portugal, the DIA imposes compensatory measures for the Leiranco pack and adjacent packs that might be indirectly affected, focusing on breeding sites and ecological corridors that promote connectivity between the populations of Peneda/Gerês and Alvão/Padrela.

The project must provide a favourable habitat for the wolves and their prey, taking into account the results obtained by monitoring the wolves and the foreseen impacts on these species.

“Any mitigation measures resulting from the construction of the mine will hardly be able to compensate for the disappearance of this pack, one of the most stable outside protected areas in the central region of Trás-dos-Montes”, states the Plataforma Lobo Ibérico.

The platform also adds “the true magnitude of the cumulative impacts with other mining exploration projects in surrounding regions was not taken into account, such as the Barroso mine (Boticas), which will be located less than 15 kilometers away, and other existing or planned infrastructures, such as wind farms, solar plants, hydroelectric power plants and road networks”.



[The Plataforma Lobo Ibérico](#) warns of the need to comply with existing legislation and recommendations, at a national and international level, that protects the wolves and their habitats, particularly the packs' breeding sites, and the danger of setting precedents for future resolutions that authorise the destruction of important wolf breeding areas.

The platform also calls on the Government to comply with what was defined in 2017, in the Plano de Ação para a Conservação do Lobo Ibérico em Portugal, which considers “relevant to ensure that wolf breeding sites are duly classified as priority areas of conservation in territorial processes”.

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