

THE ALPINE IBEX IN THE TRENTO PROVINCE: *STATUS*, DISTRIBUTION AND GUIDELINES FOR CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT.

Monaco A.¹, Fraquelli C.², Nicoli F.³

¹ via del Rondone 10, 40122 – Bologna (Italy)

² Servizio Foreste e Fauna, Provincia Autonoma di Trento, (Italy)

³ via Cugini 14, 42100 – Reggio Emilia (Italy)

The alpine ibex *Capra ibex ibex* went extinct in the Trento province in the 19th century (if not sometime earlier). Re-introductions started in the seventies, both in the western (Val di Genova) and eastern (Val di Fassa) parts of the province. During the last ten years three new colonies were established by introduction within protected areas (two in the Adamello-Brenta Natural Park and one in the Paneveggio - Pale di San Martino Natural Park), whereas one colony (the Sella mountains population) arised from natural colonisation from the Marmolada-Monzoni population, the oldest and largest ibex colony of the Trento province. All these populations live at the border with other regions (Veneto, Lombardia) or provinces (Bolzano, Belluno, Sondrio, Brescia). The Marmolada-Monzoni population, that had been established in 1978 with 6 individuals that had been taken from the Gran Paradiso National Park (western Alps), has shown a considerable numerical growth, with an estimated population size of more than 500 ibexes in 2003. The overall number of ibexes living in the Trento province appears difficult to define; the almost complete lack of wintering areas causes a non continuous distribution of the animals all along the year. Nevertheless, in 2003 we estimated a number of about 650-700 ibexes inhabiting the province and its neighbouring areas. At the beginning of 2004 the Marmolada-Monzoni population was affected by a sarcoptic mange epidemic that, along with the effects of a severe winter, caused a high rate of mortality (about 140 carcasses were found in the period January/October). On the basis of our survey we have define the guidelines for conservation and management of the Alpine ibex in the Trento province that we here briefly present.