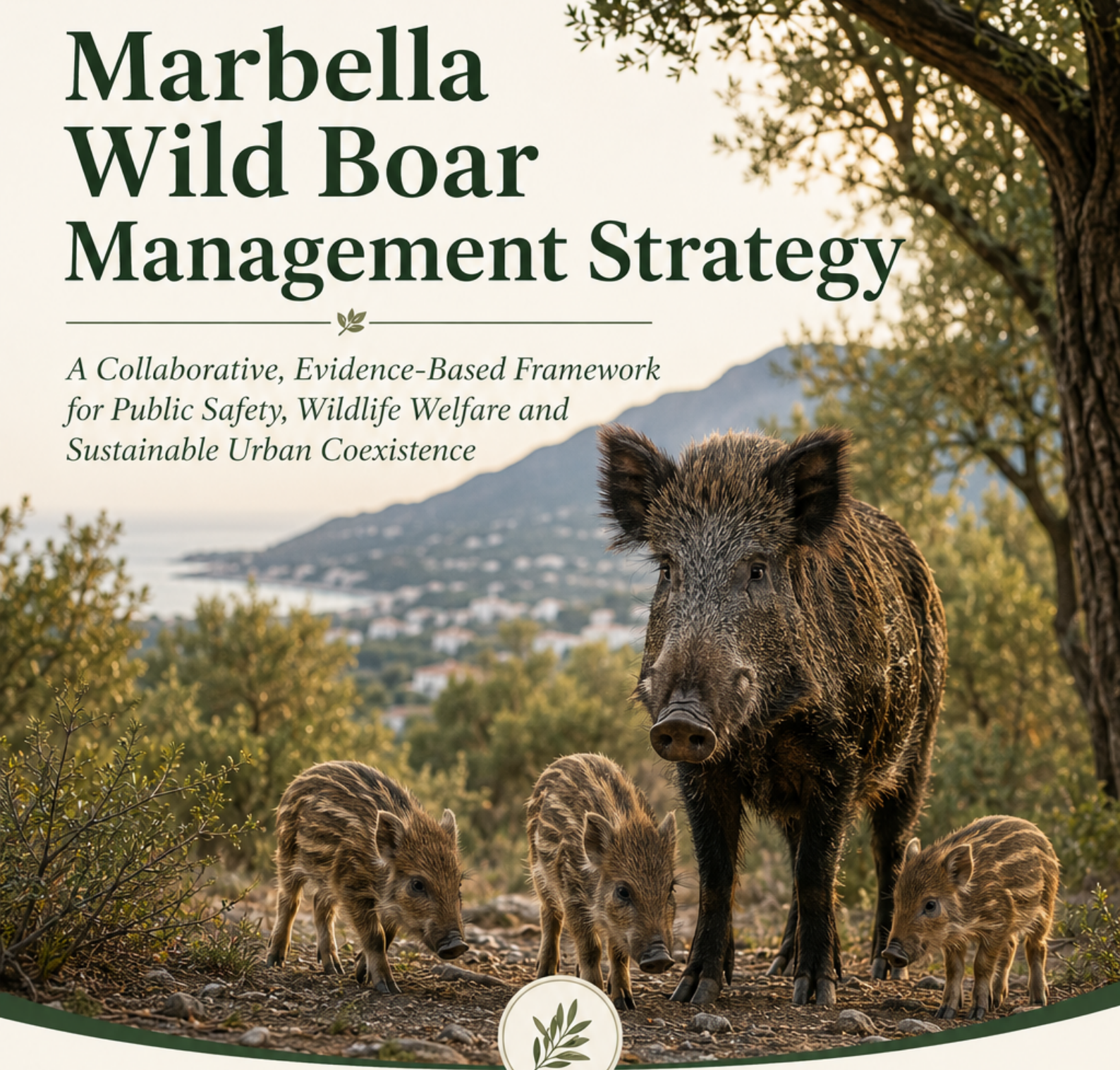


# Marbella Wild Boar Management Strategy



*A Collaborative, Evidence-Based Framework  
for Public Safety, Wildlife Welfare and  
Sustainable Urban Coexistence*



Prepared by  
**AIMS – Animals in Marbella Sanctuary**

Submitted for consideration to  
**Marbella Town Hall**

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*Rescue • Rehabilitate  
Rehome • Educate*

# **Wild Boar Management Strategy**

## **A Humane, Evidence-Based Framework for Public Safety, Wildlife Welfare and Sustainable Urban Coexistence**

### **Introduction**

The management of Marbella's wild boar population requires a balanced and forward-thinking approach that protects public safety while recognising our responsibility to safeguard wildlife and the natural environment. As urban expansion continues and interactions between people and wild boar become more frequent, there is an increasing need to explore practical, humane and sustainable solutions that address the root causes of conflict rather than simply responding to individual incidents.

This document has been prepared in the spirit of constructive collaboration and aims to present a range of proposals that could contribute to a more effective long-term management strategy. While not exhaustive, these recommendations are intended to encourage discussion, support evidence-based decision-making and promote the development of a coordinated approach that benefits residents, visitors and wildlife alike. We respectfully invite Marbella Town Hall to consider introducing the following initiatives, or similar measures, as part of a comprehensive Wild Boar Management Strategy for Marbella.

### **1. Secure food sources**

Install more wild bar-proof rubbish bins in affected areas

Increase the frequency of waste collection during peak tourist seasons

### **2. Habitat management**

Clear dense vegetation near urban areas which boar are drawn to. Create buffer zones between woodland and residential developments where practical. Regularly remove fallen fruit from public parks and streets.

### **3. Public education**

Launch an awareness campaign explaining why feeding wild boar increases conflict. Provide guidance on protecting gardens and securing compost bins. Install clear signage in hotspots. (Feeding wild boar, whether intentionally or unintentionally, significantly increases the likelihood of human–wildlife conflict. When wild boar begin to associate people with food, they become bolder and more likely to return repeatedly to urban areas, parks and residential neighbourhoods. This not only increases the risk of road traffic collisions and damage to property but can also lead to potentially dangerous encounters with people and pets. Public education, together with measures to prevent access to food sources such as unsecured rubbish bins and discarded waste, is therefore an essential component of any effective long-term wild boar management strategy).

#### **4. Physical deterrents**

Improve fencing around parks, schools and playgrounds. Consider wildlife fencing along roads with frequent collisions. Use motion-activated lighting or other non-harmful deterrents in appropriate public areas. The installation of motion-activated lighting in areas where wild boar frequently enter residential neighbourhoods, parks and public spaces could provide a simple, humane and non-invasive deterrent. As wild boar are primarily active after dark, the sudden illumination of an area may discourage them from approaching gardens, footpaths and communal spaces. Unlike permanent lighting, motion-activated systems activate only when movement is detected, reducing unnecessary light pollution and energy consumption.

To maximise their effectiveness, motion-activated lighting could also be combined with temporary audible deterrents, such as alarms or recorded human voices, in carefully selected locations. As wild boar are intelligent animals and can become accustomed to repeated stimuli over time, deterrents should be varied or relocated periodically to reduce the likelihood of habituation.

While these measures are unlikely to provide a complete solution on their own, they could form a valuable part of a wider evidence-based management strategy alongside improved waste management, habitat modification, public education and ongoing population monitoring, helping to reduce the frequency of wild boar entering urban environments.

#### **5. Population control**

Commission regular scientific population surveys to monitor numbers. Consider fertility control research and capture-neuter-release initiative (see points 8 and 9).

#### **6. Regional cooperation**

Work with neighbouring municipalities so that efforts are coordinated. Managing the problem in one town alone often results in animals moving back from surrounding areas.

#### **7. Monitoring and reporting**

Create an easy reporting system for residents to log sightings and aggressive behaviour. Use the data to identify hotspots and target interventions efficiently.

The aim is not to eradicate wild boar but to maintain a healthy, sustainable population that reduces risks to residents, pets, agriculture and the animals themselves. A balanced management plan is generally more effective than relying on a single measure.

#### **8. Introduce a “Pilot Programme” for CNR (Capture-Neuter-Release):**

Explore the feasibility of a targeted capture-neuter-release programme in urban wild boar hotspots. This should be accompanied by population monitoring to evaluate effectiveness and integrated with measures such as secure waste management, public education and

habitat modification. CNR would be one tool within a broader management strategy rather than a complete answer.

## **9. Immunocontraception (fertility vaccines).**

Researchers are continuing to study this approach because it avoids surgery, although it is not yet widely deployed as a practical solution for large free-ranging wild boar populations. Our approach would be to contact the research team at the University Autonomy de Barcelona (UAB). They carried out Spain's best known pilot using the Gonacon immunocontraceptive vaccine on urban and peri-urban wild boar. Their results suggested the treatment was particularly effective in females and younger animals, although they also concluded that further research was needed before wider implementation.

We call upon Marbella Town Hall and the Junta de Andalucia to explore becoming a pilot municipality. The proposal could request collaboration between:

Marbella Town Hall

Junta de Andalucia (environmental and wildlife departments)

UAB researchers

Local veterinary universities (such as University of Cordoba which has strong wildlife expertise).

Wildlife veterinarians and ecologists.

Offer Marbella as a research site. Marbella experiences repeated human-wild boar interactions, making it a useful location to evaluate whether fertility control can reduce urban conflicts over several years.

Seek external funding: research projects can sometimes be supported through regional, national or European biodiversity and wildlife management grants, reducing the financial burden on the municipality.

Given that Andalucia is currently prioritising population reduction through existing wildlife management measures, particularly because of concerns about crop damage, road safety and the spread of African swine fever, any pilot proposal for immunocontraception would be to complement rather than replace the current management strategy which could then be reviewed as a complete alternative should it become a success.

## **10. Identification and Monitoring Programme**

Capture a representative sample of wild boar using humane methods. Fit numbered ear tags and a limited number with GPS collars. Record health, sex, age and location of capture. Maintain a central database of tagged animals and sightings. Encourage residents to report sightings of tagged boar via an app or dedicated hotline helping the municipality monitor movements and assess the effectiveness of management measures.

## **How AIMS could assist:**

We would be inclined to introduce a Marbella Urban Wildlife Initiative:

“AIMS would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with Marbella Town Hall, wildlife researchers and the Junta de Andalucía on a humane, evidence-based wild boar management programme. Our charity can contribute through public education, community engagement, volunteer coordination, fundraising for research, data collection on sightings and helping to communicate best practice to residents. We believe that combining scientific research with public participation can improve both public safety and animal welfare.”

The recent video footage, which appears to show young wild boar being forcibly separated from their mother and handled in a manner that many members of the public perceived as causing significant distress, has understandably generated widespread concern. Regardless of the full circumstances surrounding the incident, it has highlighted the urgent need for Marbella to adopt a transparent, evidence-based and humane approach to managing its wild boar population.

As interactions between people and wild boar continue to increase, the Town Hall has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by proactively exploring modern wildlife management initiatives that prioritise both public safety and animal welfare. This could include working with universities, wildlife experts and veterinary professionals to investigate innovative solutions such as fertility control research, improved monitoring, scientific population studies, enhanced public education and more effective waste management strategies.

The public wants reassurance that wildlife is being managed responsibly, professionally and compassionately. By openly evaluating humane alternatives and supporting scientifically guided pilot projects where appropriate, Marbella can build public confidence while ensuring that management decisions are informed by evidence, transparency and best practice.

In the short-term we would suggest the following objectives:

a) Reduce road traffic collisions involving wild boar (for example by 50% within three years). According to statistics published by the DGT wild boar are now the single most common animal involved in wildlife-related road traffic collisions in Spain, accounting for approximately 45% of all reported animal-vehicle collisions, ahead of roe deer (23%) and dogs (15%). More broadly, animal-related road traffic incidents have doubled over the past decade, with over 36,000 incidents recorded nationally in 2024. Although the majority result in property damage, many also lead to injuries, highlighting the significant and growing impact of wildlife on road safety.

This is not only a national issue but one that is increasingly affecting municipalities across Andalucía and the Costa del Sol. As wild boar continue to expand into urban and peri-

urban environments, reducing the frequency of road traffic collisions should form an important objective of Marbella's Wild Boar Management Strategy.

To support evidence-based decision-making, Marbella Town Hall should establish a centralised monitoring and reporting system for all wild boar-related incidents. This should include road traffic collisions, sightings within urban areas, reports of injuries to people or pets, property damage, complaints received from residents and the outcomes of any management interventions. Publishing an annual **Wild Boar Management Report** would enable trends to be monitored over time, identify areas requiring targeted action and provide transparency for residents.

Collecting and publishing this data would allow the effectiveness of management measures to be measured objectively, ensuring that future decisions are guided by evidence. It would also demonstrate Marbella Town Hall's commitment to transparency, continuous improvement and responsible wildlife management while helping to build public confidence in its long-term strategy.

b) Reduce reports of boar entering urban areas

c) Increase public awareness of responsible waste management and feeding restrictions.

d) Monitor population trends annually to assess the effectiveness of interventions.

At present, there does not appear to be any publicly available, consolidated dataset or annual report documenting wild boar-related incidents within Marbella. Publishing this information would improve transparency, support evidence - based decision making and allow the effectiveness of management measures to be evaluated over time.

A proactive strategy would show that the Town Hall recognises the legitimate concerns of residents, values the welfare of wildlife and is committed to finding long-term solutions that reduce conflict between people and animals. It would also help position Marbella as a municipality that embraces innovation, transparency and responsible environmental stewardship.

The current public concern should not simply be viewed as a response to one distressing incident, but as an opportunity to begin a constructive dialogue about how urban wildlife can be managed in a way that reflects both modern scientific knowledge and the values of our community.



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