

A mallard duck is captured in mid-flight over a body of water. The duck's wings are fully extended, showing the intricate patterns of its feathers. The water below is dark and slightly rippled. The overall scene is dynamic and naturalistic.

THE FACE ANNUAL REPORT

2012



FACE is the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation.

Established in 1977, it represents the interests of Europe's 7 million hunters as an international non-profit-making non-governmental organisation (INGO).

This makes FACE the largest democratically representative body for hunters in the world and is probably one of the largest European civil society organisations.

FACE is made up of its Members: national hunters' associations from 38 European countries including the EU-27. FACE also has 4 Associate Members and has its Secretariat in Brussels.

FACE upholds the principle of sustainable use, has been a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1987, and more recently of Wetlands International. FACE works with its partners on a range of hunting-related issues, from international conservation agreements to local implementations with the aim of sustaining hunting across Europe.

This annual report covers September 2010-December 2011 and outlines the background and key activities of our main working themes in a new format which will run from January to December, in line with our financial reporting.

THE FACE ANNUAL REPORT
2012

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



2011 has been a year of significant scope for hunters in Europe.

As you will see from this Report, the sheer variety, detail and focus of FACE's activities is great, and perhaps surprising to some.

Addressing over 70 dossiers which impact on European hunters is somewhat of a challenge. FACE has certain strengths which we continue to build upon – in particular the good collaboration of all the Members and the spirit of the Brussels Secretariat, both underpinned by technical knowledge, experience and insight. These strengths are reflected in small actions every day, and through some great results, as the falconers so brilliantly demonstrated by gaining their well-deserved UNESCO recognition (p.62) – or the strong outcomes for EU firearms regulations (p.54), the new EU Animal Welfare Strategy (p.58) and the long-term foundations of The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto (p.28). The keystone of our work is collaboration, and I am deeply grateful to both the Members and our partners for making FACE's efforts worthwhile.

As the world is in a great period of change both economically and environmentally, with the world population increasingly growing into an urban majority, FACE is also in a period of great change as the hunting community adapts to these changes, whilst remaining true to what matters to hunters.

We are living in a pivotal moment for the future of hunting and its perceptions – and just as we face challenges going forwards, we see many worthy opportunities for sustainability that we hope you will join us in.

GILBERT DE TURCKHEIM, *President*

FACE is nothing without its Members.

FACE Members encompass the expertise, knowledge, structures and influence that make up European hunting.

FACE Members are national hunting associations from 38 countries including all the EU-27 Member States as well as other Council of Europe countries.

In 2010, the Slovakian Hunters' Association celebrated 90 years, the Federation of Albanian Hunters saw 60 years and the Hungarian Hunters had their 130th Anniversary. This year, the Serbian Hunters' Association celebrated 115 years of hunting and conservation at a ceremony held in Belgrade in November and the Finnish Hunters' Association reached 90 years.

This latest celebration further underlines the fact that hunting associations are amongst the oldest conservation NGOs in Europe, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation was established over a century ago in 1908 and the Swedish Hunters' Association, *Jägareförbundet* has been active since 1830. This is just to name a few.

FACE MEMBERS

FULL MEMBERS

Federata e Gjuetarëve të Shqipërisë	Latvijas Mednieku Asociācija
Zentralstelle Österreichischer Landesjagdverbände	Lietuvos mediotojų ir žvejų draugija
Royal Saint-Hubert Club de Belgique / Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen vzw	Fédération Saint-Hubert des Chasseurs du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg asbl
Lovački Savez Herceg-Bosne (LSHB)	Federazzjoni Kaccaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti
Lovački Savez Republike Srpska (LRRS)	Lovački Savez Crne Gore
Savez Lovačkih organizacija BiH (SLOBiH)	Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagers Vereniging
СЪЮЗ НА ЛОВЦИТЕ И РИБОЛОВЦИТЕ В БЪЛГАРИЯ	Norges Jeger- og Fiskerforbund
Hrvatski Lovački Savez	Polski Związek Łowiecki
Κυπριακή Ομοσπονδία Κυνηγίου Και Διαθρησής Αγρίας Ζωής	Confederação Nacional dos Caçadores Portugueses (CNCP)
Ceskomoravská Myslivecká Jednota	Federação Portuguesa de Caça (FENCAÇA)
Danmarks Jægerforbund	Asociația Generală a Vanatorilor și Pescarilor Sportivi din România (AGVPS)
Eesti Jahimeeste Selts	Lovački savez Srbije
Metsästäjien Keskusjärjestö / Jägarernas Centralorganisation	Slovenský Poľovnícky Zväz
Suomen Metsästäjäliitto / Finlands Jägarförbund	Lovska zveza Slovenije
Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs	Real Federación Española de Caza (RFEC)
Lovecka Federacija na Makedonija	Svenska Jägareförbundet
Deutscher Jagdschutz-Verband e.V.	JagdSchweiz / ChasseSuisse / CacciaSvizzera / CatschaSvizra
Κυνηγική Συνομοσπονδία Ελλάδος	Türkiye Atıcılık ve Avcılık Federasyonu
Országos Magyar Vadászkamara	Countryside Alliance
Országos Magyar Vadászati Védegylet	British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)
Skotveiðifélag Íslands	
National Association of Regional Game Councils, Ireland	
FACE Italia	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- European Association of the Civil Commerce of Weapons (AECAC)
- European Association of Traditional Hunts (AECT)
- World Council of Sport Federations for Hunting and Shooting (FEDECAT)
- Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF)

7 MILLION
HUNTERS

FACE MEMBERS



FACE OFFICERS

- G. de TURCKHEIM, *President* ● ○
- J. GARDINER, *Treasurer General** ● ○
- A. MIDDLETON, *Chief Executive** ● ○ ●
- Y. LECOCQ, *Secretary General/
Senior Policy Advisor** ● ○ ●
- THE BIG FIVE**
- G. BANA, *Vice-President, Italy* ●
- J. BORCHERT, *Vice-President, Germany* ●
- Y. BUTEL, *Vice-President, France* ●
- A. GUTIERREZ, *Vice-President, Spain* ●
- J. SWIFT, *Vice-President, United Kingdom* ● ○
- THE REGIONS**
- A. DIJKHUIS, *Vice-President, Atlantic* ●
- B. KRŽE, *Vice-President, Central* ●
- C. MIHAYLOV, *Vice-President, South-East* ●
- T. MÖRNER, *Vice-President, Nordic* ● ○
- N. PAPADODIMAS, *Vice-President, Mediterranean* ● ○
- E. ŠVĚDE, *Vice-President, Baltic* ●

FACE BOARD

BUREAU

SECRETARIAT

* Non-voting members

The FACE Members meet regularly, through regional gatherings as well as at the annual Spring FACE Members' Meeting and Autumn General Assembly. The Board and Bureau meet even more frequently.

These meetings centre around a fully-packed agenda where Members discuss and agree on actions to be taken regarding the different topics to be addressed – the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity are always present.



AUTUMN IN BRUSSELS: THE FACE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The action-packed 2 day General Assembly covered a broad range of topics impacting on hunting in Europe, with FACE Members discussing its activities in over 13 EU dossiers, each crucial to hunters - ranging from the Birds and Habitats Directives, to lead in ammunition and other emergent issues. The wide variety of topics discussed is representative of the importance and breadth of the EU's influence.

FACE's continued relations with the European Institutions have only increased in frequency. The FACE team is now actively participating in some 13 official expert or advisory groups within the Commission where policy proposals originate. FACE holds regular events in the Parliament, with regular meetings, technical expertise and monitoring communicated to FACE Members – **all to ensure the best political and environmental conditions for European hunters on the ground.**

ICELAND

This year FACE welcomed the Hunting and Shooting Association of Iceland, *Skotveiðifélag Íslands* as a Full Member. Founded in 1978 and with its central office in Reykjavik, *Skotveiðifélag Íslands* has long-since enjoyed a good cooperation with other FACE Members in the region and is a member of the Nordic Hunters' Cooperation. Iceland is a member of the Council of Europe and an EU candidate country. There are about 12,500 hunters in Iceland of whom 1,100 are individual members of *Skotveiðifélag Íslands*.

In Iceland birds are the most common game, such as geese and ducks (*Anatidae*), auks (*Alcidae*), gulls (*Laridae*), Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), skuas (*Stercorariidae*) and grouse (*Tetraonidae*). Mammals can also be found amongst the quarry species: the Arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*), reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus L.*), mink (*Mustela vison*) and seals (*Phocidae*).

FYROM

The Hunting Federation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), *Lovecka Federacija na Makedonija*, was accepted as a Full Member of FACE in September 2011. Founded in 1946, today the Federation has a central office in Skopje with a professional staff of 4. There are about 20,000 hunters in FYROM, all of whom are Members of 51 hunting clubs. These are in turn members of the National Federation. The Federation is therefore the representative organisation of hunters in the country.

FACE now has full coverage in the Balkan region, a region with excellent nature and wildlife, but also with conservation needs that arise from development. We look forward to working with the Hunting Federation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to progress sustainable hunting, to the benefit of hunters and conservation.



SPRING IN MALTA: THE FACE MEMBERS' MEETING

Representatives of the hunting world from 22 countries gathered in Valletta, Malta for the first FACE Members' Meeting. Hosted by the Federation for Hunting & Conservation in Malta (FKNK, *Federazzjoni Kaccaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti*), the Members' Meeting introduced a new format to FACE's official meetings, replacing the Spring General Assembly to focus on policy implementation and enhance exchange between FACE Members.

The 2 day meeting covered a broad range of topics impacting on hunting in Europe, including the role of hunters in large carnivore conservation and the implementation of The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto.

The ideas and findings put forward in the 8 sessions framed lively discussions and strengthened the sense of common purpose that is at the heart of FACE.

Amongst other themes, Switzerland, Slovenia, Sweden and Slovakia presented 4 aspects to gain a better understanding of large carnivore management in Europe in relation to hunters, identifying the need for greater cooperation with specific groups. Insights were provided by Germany and the Netherlands on the legal aspects related to hunting rights and in particular game damages. A particular session on the use of scientific data in policy-making provided views on how best to use data. Poland and Finland addressed data use in biodiversity conservation and sustainable wildlife management, Sweden addressing its role with wild animal welfare and health and Ireland explored the power of myth to dominate facts and figures in relation to sporting firearms and related social perceptions.

It was with a renewed sense of purpose and stronger links between the countries that the FACE Member Presidents and Delegates visited Malta together.

FACE TECHNICAL GROUPS

FACE is an evidence-based organisation.

Technical expertise and the insights they give both hunters and policy makers are at the core of our work.

We are constantly working to improve it, amongst ourselves and with our partners.

FACE operates **Technical Groups; Legal Affairs (TG LEG)** made great steps in 2011.

This working group is made up of legal professionals who, as focal points in each Member State, have an active interest in both the environment and hunting. Meeting regularly, these experts analyse and explain European legal judgments and rulings and their implications for hunting, anticipating and reflecting on issues of public interest.

Kick starting the year with an early January meeting, as Hungary launched its EU Presidency, FACE legal experts from 12 European countries gathered in Budapest. Hosted by the Hungarian Hunters' National Chamber and the Hungarian Hunters' National Association, key points discussed included the use of derogations for spring hunting under the EU Birds Directive and national rules on game damages liability – both hot topics of discussion. The legal experts kept in touch all year, and met again in October in Sweden at *Öster Malma*, the spectacular setting for the Swedish Hunters' Association headquarters. A key area of focus at the FACE Members' Meeting in Malta was revisited by the legal experts in Sweden:

HUNTING AND THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CASE HERRMANN V. GERMANY

In Case Herrmann v. Germany, no. 9300/07, the demand of an individual, being opposed to hunting on ethical grounds, to be discharged from the “hunting cooperative” (in German *Jagdgenossenschaft*), arguing that compulsory membership in the hunting cooperative was in breach of his rights under the European Convention on Human Rights was not accepted.

The judgment, although being non-final, is primarily relevant to hunters in that the Court accepts that hunting cannot be considered to merely enable certain individuals' to exercise a leisure activity but that hunting forms part of the management and conservation of nature in the general interest, and that this general interest, under certain circumstances, could necessitate and justify interference with private individuals rights under the Convention.

The successful defence by the German Government was due to a close collaboration between the German Hunters' Association, (DJV, *Deutscher Jagdschutz-Verband*) and the relevant ministries. In particular, they managed to demonstrate that the principle of area-wide hunting is consequently applied throughout Germany and that the German situation thus differs from the situation found in earlier case-law. The area-wide hunting under the German Hunting Law serves several purposes/objectives in the public interest, such as the prevention of damages caused by wildlife (a kind of property protection), control of animal diseases, prevention of road accidents involving wildlife, and protection of species through the hunting of predators. Hunting-free zones would compromise these objectives.

The complainant has appealed before the Grand Chamber of the Court. The Public Hearing subsequently took place on 30 November 2011 and was attended by FACE and some 350 people with lawyers from both Parties in front of the Grand Chamber (20 Judges).

The judgment is to be expected during the course of 2012.

One important task of the TG LEG is to satisfy the need for easily accessible, relevant and convincing legal information and arguments being properly analysed and synthesised by its experts. One notable example of this work was the publication in 2011 of an Overview of national laws in 12 EU Member States on the liability for game damages. The publication describes and analyses for each respective country the relevant legal sources and their application, inter alia as regards definitions of damage, liable and injured parties, descriptions of how damages are assessed and evaluated, and the issue of determining compensation. It contains an analysis of potential problems with the national systems and suggestions on possible improvements. This kind of publication is a valuable tool for FACE and its Members to respond to arising issues on behalf of European hunters and establish the Federation as a reference point for hunting.

CONNECTING HUNTERS ACROSS EUROPE

The diversity of hunting practices and landscapes in Europe is unparalleled.

Just as FACE Members gain great strength in their united pan-European state, so they gain great value by working closely with their neighbours who often share the same specific issues, whether it's the impact of rapid development on the Mediterranean coastline on migrating birds, or the management of large carnivores in the North.



WHERE NORTH MEETS SOUTH

FACE Members representing the Mediterranean region visited their Nordic counterparts in Sweden in March 2011 following the Nordics' visit to Italy in 2010.

This was the second inter-regional exchange of this type, and provided the opportunity for these European hunters from very different regions to learn about different hunting systems, practices and traditions as well as game conservation.

The Mediterranean FACE Members were given the chance to try their hands at ice fishing, discovering, despite apparent differences, their common bond for hunting and the countryside.

These inter-regional meetings between FACE Members enhance international solidarity and understanding between hunters fostering a more cohesive and compelling voice in Europe.

BALTIC HUNTERS MEETING, 28-30 APRIL

FACE Vice-President Elmārs Švēde convened a regional meeting of the Baltic Hunters Associations in Latvia attended by representatives from Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and additionally from Sweden and FACE. The meeting focused on two main themes: hunting in fenced areas and wolf management in Latvia.

In addition there is the very active **CIC Central European Coordination Forum**, which includes FACE Members from the Central European countries and to which FACE is invited to attend as an observer.

FACE SECRETARIAT

The FACE Team is based in Brussels and makes up the Secretariat, representing the interests of its Members and 7 million hunters every day.

The team, headed by Chief Executive Angus Middleton, combines a passion for hunting and nature with expertise in a range of key areas so as to best ensure hunting is facilitated and sustainable, right across Europe.



The work of FACE as reflected in this Report is diverse but through our restructuring programme is increasingly focused on issues that matter to hunting and conservation.

As a team we have worked extremely hard to restructure the way in which we work and to better position ourselves where we feel that hunters and hunting should be rightly placed. It is my conviction that Europe would be vastly poorer without hunting - it encompasses elements of tradition, culture, gastronomy, recreation and above all else a strong connection to nature and its conservation.

This is not to say that hunting is without issues. We certainly have a number of challenges, but taken as a whole 'Package' today, Europe would be significantly poorer without hunting and its 7 million hunters. It is this and the positive actions of the vast majority of hunters on the ground that drive the FACE Team forward and encourage us all to stand up for what we believe in. We do so in the knowledge that we also need to adapt to changing times and circumstances and through this report you will find that we are working on some tough issues to find solutions that benefit, nature, our society and ultimately the many hunters we represent.

I encourage you to read this Report and see how we are standing up for hunting and conservation and I ask you to work with us constructively to make the European Hunting Package even better.

ANGUS MIDDLETON, *Chief Executive*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Middleton', written in a cursive style.

Angus has over 15 years of management experience in a very wide range of conservation issues and policies, in Europe and southern Africa. He has a particular interest in the conservation of birds, stemming from his great passion for falconry and raptor conservation. He also has a strong interest in large carnivores, which embody the social, ecological and economic challenges of conservation. He is a longstanding member of BirdLife Zimbabwe, an avid angler, hunter, falconer and with all that a conservationist.



YVES LECOQCQ

Secretary General/Senior Policy Advisor

Yves brings over 30 years of experience at FACE to the team and his unique combination of institutional knowledge of international environmental policy with his scientific and biological expertise. His considerable experience sees him providing keen advice to the rest of the Team as well as FACE Members, policy-makers and partners, regularly speaking at high-level events as well as technically complex meetings. Yves was recently named President of the International Union of Game Biologists 2011-2013 and will preside their next Congress in Brussels in 2013.

FACE is fortunate to have such a young and enthusiastic team looking after hunters' interests in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe. It is a token of trust in the future of sustainable hunting as a tool for nature conservation and rural development. For me, involved with FACE since 1983, it is a challenge but also encouraging to be part of this team and to share my experience and knowledge with them, whilst learning new techniques and picking up new ideas. In 2011 this has been particularly useful and effective for the wide range of topics FACE has been dealing with. Biodiversity (including ecosystem services, invasive alien species, management of large carnivores), animal health and welfare, sporting firearms and international cooperation and solidarity between hunters and other countryside users were high on the list of our priorities and it looks that this will continue to be the case for the years to come. And that is precisely why we need to have confidence in the future. I certainly do.

CHARLOTTE NYFFELS

Administrator & Translator

Charlotte manages the operations of the FACE Secretariat, from finances to human resources, whilst coordinating the administrative and logistical needs of the FACE Members including organising the FACE Meetings. She also provides our French translations.

SABINE BORGERS-GUSE

Translator & Accounts Administrator

Sabine works part-time with Charlotte and the rest of the team, providing top quality German translations and efficient accounting support.

PATRICIA NTUMBA KALUBI

Administrative Assistant

If you call the FACE Secretariat in Brussels, it is more than likely that Patricia will be answering the phone. As the part-time receptionist, Patricia fields all enquiries at FACE as well as providing administrative support.

NICOLE BERNARD, Facilities

Nicole provides facilities support for the FACE Secretariat in Brussels, coordinating in-house meetings and keeping the FACE House in check.

GABOR VON BETHLENFALVY

Conservation Manager

Gabor manages a range of nature conservation dossiers related to biodiversity, protected areas and agriculture. He also provides the management for European research and conservation projects and is dealing with applications for funding and grants.

With the investment and effort that hunters engage in nature and biodiversity conservation, they are one of the most important stakeholders. The Biodiversity Manifesto is a major first step towards truly demonstrating hunters' contributions, earning hunters the appropriate recognition and streamlining activities throughout Europe.

JOHAN SVALBY

Legal Advisor

Johan combines his legal training with a thorough knowledge of EU and international legislation, subjects and processes, providing essential legislative monitoring and advice with astute interpretation of the laws affecting hunters in Europe, from firearms to international conventions.

I have really enjoyed being involved in shaping policy this year and contributing to the successful conclusions of the implementation into EU law of Article 10 of the UN Firearms Protocol and the Commission's new EU Animal Welfare Strategy for 2012-2015.

ADRIANA ISAZA

Public Affairs Advisor

The newest addition to the FACE Team, Adriana provides public affairs insights, information and activities to ensure that the technical expertise of the Secretariat and FACE Members is conveyed as well as possible in the European Institutions, including coordinating the Secretariat for the European Parliament's Intergroup on Sustainable Hunting.

Having recently joined the team, it has been very interesting to meet a few of the FACE Members and get to know the European Parliament Intergroup on Sustainable Hunting.

CY GRIFFIN

Biological Data Manager

Cy is a FACE technical expert providing a unique awareness and understanding of both the biology of game species with their related EU legislation. Known for having an encyclopaedic knowledge, he provides technical and biological insights on a daily basis, from cormorants to trapping.

2011 revisited many long standing questions - How to reach consensus on managing conflicts between Cormorants, fisheries and fish fauna? How to deal with anomalies in Annex II part B? What is the current status of the elusive Jack Snipe? We have now done the groundwork to start providing answers, and with a greater knowledge base we will be better placed to set priorities for the conservation of wild birds.

MARILISE SAGHBINI

Communications Manager

Marilise provides communications expertise to the FACE Team for specific dossiers, as well as managing communications with the FACE Members, and is constantly seeking ways to improve the communications of FACE and the topics worked on at a technical level.

2011 has been a year of assessment and adaptation for FACE's communications – the vast potential of this area provides great challenges and inspiration for improving the presentation and perception of hunting. It requires an informed long-term approach which we are working towards, gradually and surely.

CHRISTINE RUPPRECHTER-RÖDLACH

Public Affairs Director – on maternity leave

Christine plays a key role in our relations with the EU Institutions, especially in the European Parliament where she maintains contacts with various MEPs, assistants and officials, providing them with reliable information on a range of topics whilst coordinating the Secretariat of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Sustainable Hunting. She is also the Secretariat's resident expert on agricultural issues, and maintains close ties with the German-speaking FACE Members thanks to her Austrian roots.



From left - Sabine, Gabor, Johan, Christine, Marilise, Angus, Patricia, Cy, Charlotte
Not pictured - Adriana, Yves

THE FACE OF EUROPE

FACE builds the bridge between European legislative bodies and the representatives of civil society who stand for sustainable hunting and conservation in Europe, working towards our aim: to sustain hunting across Europe.

FACE regularly holds events in the European Parliament, provides opportunities for hunters and EU policy makers to meet directly, participates in various official expert and advisory groups within the European Commission where EU policy proposals originate and their implementation brought forward. This wide variety of activity is representative of the importance and breadth of the EU's influence. The FACE Secretariat responds to this by ensuring an integrated approach, working closely with the FACE Members to make sure **the right information is reaching the right decision-makers at the right time – all for the future of hunting.**

FACE & THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

With the European Commission, FACE works on various levels. There are regular personal bilateral and multilateral meetings with Commission officials for exchanges of views and information updates. The most important of these are DG Environment, DG Health & Consumers, DG Agriculture & Rural Development, DG Trade, DG Justice and Home Affairs, DG Enterprise & Industry which cover policy fields that affect hunting. There are of course more and more cross cutting issues and other initiatives which have to be followed and which are laid down in other Directorates.

FACE participates in many consultations, expert and advisory groups of the Commission. Participating in these by providing accurate information and feedback to the Commission for its legislative proposals and their implementation is essential.

This year has seen particular involvement in official Commission groups on ongoing and upcoming issues, including 3 groups dealing with invasive alien species (p.36), 2 groups for Natura 2000 (p.34), 3 on agriculture and rural development (p.32), 2 addressing Reporting under the nature directives; amongst various others such as green infrastructure (p.37), and animal health (p.59).

FACE consults its Members for insights and expertise on the policy fields, communicating with both Members and the Commission on developments and collating relevant, accurate information to feed into meetings and events at the right time.



FACE & THE COUNCIL OF THE EU

Acts which are directly relevant to the lives of EU citizens and have a considerable international impact are adopted by the Council, usually in conjunction with the European Parliament. The Council is the EU Institution where the Member States' government representatives sit, i.e. the ministers of each Member State with responsibility for a given area. FACE is keen to improve its existing contacts with the Permanent Representations, the Secretariat of the Council and the political decision makers to ensure this body is well informed regarding hunting interests.

FACE & THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe is an international organisation promoting cooperation between all countries of Europe in various areas, including nature. Founded in 1949, it has 47 member states with some 800 million citizens, and is an entirely separate body from the European Union (EU).

Central to the Council of Europe's activity in the field of nature conservation is the Bern Convention, an international legal instrument, binding for its Contracting Parties, which covers most of the natural heritage of the European continent. FACE is focused on the Bern Convention through its work under International Agreements – with key activities being undertaken this year (p.48).

FACE is fully signed up to the EU Transparency Register (Reg No 75899541198-85) which has been set up and is operated by the European Parliament and the European Commission. FACE operates by the Code of Conduct in all our relations with the EU Institutions and their Members, officials and other staff. For more details on the register see http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm

FACE & THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The only directly elected body of the EU Institutions, the European Parliament (EP) is made up of 751 Members (MEPs) from 27 countries, most of whom work in 7 Political Groups. These MEPs are important decision makers for shaping EU policy especially following the Lisbon Treaty and the Parliament's role as co-legislator.

This is why it is central for FACE to maintain an excellent network and regular contact with the Parliament, its Members and officials by updating them about hunting-related dossiers, promoting hunters' interests and ensuring discussions on ongoing work are well informed.

FACE simultaneously reports activities and developments back to FACE Members and thereby, Europe's 7 million hunters can be kept informed of relevant EU developments.

Through the **European Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup**, FACE held **5 key events** in this centre of decision-making throughout 2011, with another 5 foreseen for 2012. These events are featured under their related sections in this Report – as varied as the topics are; they all bring together different interest groups, both from the EU decision-making scene as well as civil society.

FACE was present in the Parliament on a weekly basis, to enlarge the network, deepen existing contacts as well as facilitating visiting FACE Members' Delegations.

“Through my work with this Intergroup, I regularly have the pleasure of working with FACE. They are passionate about how hunters can contribute to the conservation of the countryside and maintain rural activities that have been enjoyed by so many, for so long.”

- **MEP Robert Sturdy**,
Co-President of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup

“Through the support of the different political groups, we jointly bring the legitimate concerns of the hunting and conservation communities into the parliamentary process. Whether it is the Common Agricultural Policy reform, wildlife conservation, forestry or animal health policy - we operate as a network and a team in a cross-cutting and effective manner. Our thanks go to FACE, ELO and all the supporters of the Intergroup.”

- **MEP Markus Pieper**,
*Secretary General
of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup*



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT INTERGROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE HUNTING, BIODIVERSITY, COUNTRYSIDE ACTIVITIES & FORESTRY

Known as the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup, FACE has provided the Secretariat for this key official Parliamentary platform since 1985 and has been more recently co-supported by the European Landowners' Organization (ELO).

Its objectives are to promote the role of hunting and other forms of sustainable use of wild species for biodiversity, wildlife management, rural development and forestry issues and to discuss current subjects whilst building the bridge between civil society and decision makers. With over 150 actively supporting MEPs making up its Membership, the Intergroup is one of the largest in the Parliament. Its activities are run by its Bureau who are responsible for setting the themes and providing overall guidance.



Described as the First Lady of Hunting in Europe, MEP Véronique Mathieu provides leadership on hunting issues in the Parliament, enabling hunters to reflect and engage in EU policy developments:

With 5-6 gatherings annually in the European Parliament, the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup mobilised itself on current themes such as Natura 2000, animal welfare, biodiversity, agriculture, forestry or invasive alien species. We have kept an interactive role so as to create the space for dialogue between MEPs from different political groups, officials, assistants and European Commission representatives.

Having made a special effort with our communications, we have – thanks to the key involvement of FACE – seriously increased our visibility through high-profile events. 2011 kicked off with the celebration of UNESCO’s recognition of falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage, gathering representatives from 16 countries worldwide (p.62). Similarly, under both the Belgian and Polish EU Presidencies, hundreds of guests gathered for the inauguration of 2 great exhibitions on hunting and nature conservation (p.24; 28).

The Intergroup has equally played a role in clarifying the European discourse to hunters on the ground by providing tailored guidance. This year in particular, the Intergroup was at the centre of an exceptional 3-day guidance session on wolf management, which started with a meeting of FACE delegates from 6 countries including France, Sweden, Finland and Switzerland – with the European Commissioner for Environment, Janez Potočnik (p.31).

Handwritten signature of MEP Véronique Mathieu.

MEP Véronique Mathieu, *President of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup*

CONNECTING HUNTERS WITH THE EU

The visits of nationals to FACE in Brussels help to communicate the immense relevance of the EU to the local level, whether it be hunters or others. This is a great challenge, which becomes more critical as the EU gains in importance. One of the ways to address this is to encourage initiatives that allow hunters and related stakeholders to interact and see it in person. FACE facilitates meetings and exchanges from the local level through to the EU Environment Commissioner Potočník.

MEP MATHIEU'S ACADEMY OF EUROPEAN HUNTING

Sustainable Hunting Intergroup President MEP Véronique Mathieu launched the *Académie des cadres cynégétiques européens* (Academy of European Hunting) on her own initiative, bringing groups of French hunters from different regions across France to visit the EU Institutions, meet officials and of course, visit FACE for a special hunters' perspective on EU affairs as well as the European Landowners' Organization, ELO.

Spring saw visits from the Bourgogne & Franche Comté regions and summer brought Champagne-Ardenne to the FACE House. The delegations, made of up local and regional Presidents, Directors and Administrators of the French National Federation of Hunters, (FNC, *Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs*), as well as representatives of the ONCFS (French National Hunting and Wildlife Agency) were interested to learn more about the work of FACE, insisting on the need to bridge the gap and better communicate the importance of EU affairs to local hunters. More of these *Académie* visits are expected, and hopefully other Members of the European Parliament will adopt this action-orientated model.

GERMAN DEPUTIES' VISIT

20 deputies of the *Landtag* of Saxony from the Committee for Agriculture and Environment with close links to hunting issues visited the European Parliament and the Commission in mid-April. FACE in cooperation with the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) organised a field visit to a Natura 2000 and LIFE+ project site in the Belgian Province Midden Limburg on 14 April. The visit to the LIFE+ project area was preceded by presentations by FACE on hunting in Europe, The Biodiversity Manifesto (p.28) and its links with EU Biodiversity strategy and policies alongside presentations by the Commission's Natura 2000 Unit and ELO.

Enabling hunters to understand the workings of the EU, and for the EU officials to hear from their citizens.

EUROPEAN SYMPOSIUM, TURKEY

A European Symposium entitled “The European Union and Turkey – What significance for hunting and game management?” was held in Bursa, northwestern Turkey on 3 and 4 June.

The Symposium gathered an impressive FACE delegation representing 14 European countries to share their experience and knowledge of hunting in and across the EU to a significant audience made up of the Turkish hunting and wildlife management community, governmental officials, journalists and others. An intensive yet varied 2-day series of presentations saw the FACE Team explaining the EU, how it works and ultimately, what the likely impact of the EU would be for Turkish hunters and hunting. Topics covered nature conservation, public and animal health, the free movement of people and of goods – including sporting firearms and ammunition, the Common Agricultural Policy and animal welfare.

Experts from the FACE Membership outlined their experiences of national negotiations during their accession and what the main challenges are nowadays for hunting in these countries, from Sweden in the North to Greece in the South - from Ireland in the West to Bulgaria in the East.

FACE will continue to support and assist the Turkish Shooting and Hunting Federation (TAF, *Türkiye Atıcılık ve Avcılık Federasyonu*) in the EU accession negotiations process. The FACE Team returned to Brussels inspired by the impressive organisation of the Symposium, the Turkish hunters’ enthusiasm to further develop their links with FACE and other European hunting organisations.

Hungary and Poland were both in focus during their EU Presidencies, with FACE active during both of these:

HUNGARY: MEETING OF THE EU HUNTING DIRECTORS THE BUDAKESZI CONCLUSION

At the invitation of the Hungarian Department of Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (Ministry of Rural Development), national and regional governmental officials responsible for hunting and game management from 14 EU Member States met in Budakeszi near Budapest on 29 June, with FACE and its Members assisting in ensuring the right people attended the meeting.

Although this was an informal event, not included in the official programme of the Hungarian EU Presidency, it was hosted and generously supported by its administration, with participation from universities, the national game management database and nature conservation NGOs in Hungary. FACE was invited to give an introductory presentation on “The case for consultation and coordination on hunting between EU Member States”.

The high-level delegates from the various participating Member State administrations each presented their own hunting and game management system and framework. They felt that this first meeting of national hunting officials (at Director, Head of Department or similar level) was useful and represented an excellent opportunity for multilateral consultation, networking and exchanging ideas and views on

a wide range of hunting-related issues. Many of these issues are directly or indirectly linked to EU policies FACE works on, in particular the Environmental Policy, but also part of the Common Agricultural Policy, Forestry Strategy, Internal Market and Consumer Protection.

A Concluding Statement was drawn up which identified a number of issues that would benefit from being dealt with at future meetings:

- Management of overabundant and increasing populations of problematic wildlife species, including invasive alien species, in relation to relevant regulatory frameworks;
- Changes in hunters’ demography and society’s perception of hunting and their implications for management policies;
- Quality of information and data used in management decisions and discussions related to hunting.

These three areas are at the heart of FACE’s work and the opportunity to address them with the European Hunting Directors in the future adds strength to our efforts in building an enabling environment for hunting in the EU.

POLAND

10 JUNE, the Hunting Culture Congress took place in the former royal castle of Niepolomice, near Krakow. Organised by the Polish Hunters' Association (*Polski Związek Łowiecki*) and other partners, FACE's Yves Lecocq attended and gave a presentation on the challenges and opportunities of hunting and wildlife management in an enlarged Europe. FACE Delegate Professor Jozef Feuereisel was also in attendance representing the hunters of the Czech Republic.

14 JUNE, a Seminar on Game Monitoring and Sustainable Hunting took place in Suprasla, near Bialystok as part of the PREFEKT forum (Podlaskie Regional Forum of Environmental Knowledge Exchange). Organised by the Mammal Research Institute and the Regional Directorate of State Forests in Bialystok, the seminar focused on north-eastern Poland conditions. In particular:

- the need for improved census methods for game populations and preparing management plans,
- managing problems with ungulate populations in areas with different status of protection,
- planning hunting in areas with wolf (*Canis lupus*) and lynx (*Lynx lynx*).



As part of the traditional November hunters' celebrations and the EU Polish Presidency, a special exhibition from 7-11 November took place to highlight the value of Poland's nature. Both the Polish Hunters' Association and the Polish Forest Organisation exhibited the unique and enriching nature of Poland at the main exhibition space in the European Parliament in Brussels. The Reception was truly remarkable, with music and game meat attracting many MEPs and other high-profile guests intrigued by the hunters.

In German the saying goes *kein Jäger, kein Wild*, no hunter no wildlife, which is equally true the other way around, and so hunters have a vested interest in ensuring not only that there is wildlife to hunt but also nature to enjoy. Thus the work of FACE is largely centred on our conservation work and in line with key policy drivers this work is split into **Nature Conservation** which we use as a term for our European focused work and **International Agreements**, which in any case we approach from a European perspective. Together these two themes account for the vast majority of our dossiers and certainly some of the most substantial dossiers. In our activities we constantly work with our partners to try and ensure policy coherence and thus, we would hope, greater conservation impact on the ground, where it matters.

The conservation issues dealt with by FACE cover the ongoing implementation of the EU Nature Directives and new policy developments. These issues are of importance to FACE as they influence national hunting legislation and of course habitats and wildlife.

FACE ensures that the role of sustainable use and incentive-driven conservation is recognised in the creation and implementation of environmental policies.

FACE works together with its Members to share expertise for environmental policy development and implementation to benefit hunting and conservation.

This expertise is supported by a knowledge base gained through monitoring research developments and maintaining close ties with our strategic partners.

NATURE CONSERVATION

BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is the diversity of life. The value of biodiversity encompasses a plurality of perceptions, practices, knowledge and cultural values that call for tolerance and mutual respect in order to work together. Socio-diversity echoes biodiversity. Biodiversity and nature should not be sanctified but socialised. Managing biodiversity does not only entail the management of all biological entities but also the management of social diversity.

The European Commission has adopted an ambitious new strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020. There are 6 main targets and 20 actions to help Europe reach its goal. Biodiversity loss is an enormous challenge in the EU, with around one in four species currently threatened with extinction.

Hunters share a passion for nature and biodiversity, their primary concern being far greater than their future ability to hunt but the ability for generations to come to appreciate nature in the raw. This is why hunters engage every day right across Europe to conserve nature and biodiversity.

THE BIODIVERSITY MANIFESTO

FACE and its Members developed The Biodiversity Manifesto. It reflects the rigorous and active commitment made by FACE, its Members and the 7 million European hunters they represent to ensure that hunting is sustainable and contributes positively to biodiversity conservation.

*This is our
commitment.*

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto aligns itself with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, directly addressing 4 of its 6 targets feeding into the 2020 headline target. The 34 action points

address a host of EU biodiversity priority areas and promote cooperation with other sectors and stakeholders such as farmers, land and forest owners, conservation NGOs and public authorities.

The Biodiversity Manifesto will contribute to demonstrating the role and contribution of hunting for biodiversity to policy makers and the public, as well as to coordinating and enhance efforts carried out by European hunters in line with international conservation priorities.



“Hunting & Conservation in Europe: people and nature”, an eye-catching exhibition organised by FACE and the European Parliament’s Sustainable Hunting Intergroup, saw FACE, its Members and partners bring a forest into the Parliament’s main space.



Biodiversity 2020: the priorities, a unique conference saw Members of the European Parliament joining with European hunters and landowners through FACE, the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and their key partners as well as national representatives from these groups, to create a meaningful discussion on the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and together find the concrete actions that we can take in order to achieve the 2020 headline target.

MEPs Véronique Mathieu and Giancarlo Scottà chaired the conference and were joined by high-level speakers from BirdLife International, WWF, ELO, and FACE as well as the European Commission's Director General for the Environment, Karl Falkenberg.

“A great achievement was bringing together representatives of the Commission, Parliament, NGO interest groups & associations that often do not share the same opinion on the role of hunters. This dialogue is essential for change, and together with FACE we have created this biodiversity dialogue which we will continue and lead to future goals.” - MEP Giancarlo Scottà

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE - IUCN

FACE has been a Member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature since 1987. IUCN's European mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies in Europe to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

In September 2011, FACE's Gabor von Bethlenfalvy and Martin Højsgaard of the Nordic Hunters' Cooperation joined the 170 delegates at the IUCN European Conservation Forum in Bonn, Germany. Member organisations and Commission members from more than 25 countries discussed and debated the Union's work across the region, with a particular focus on the next IUCN draft Programme for 2013-16, which has a focus on sustainable use. Wildlife user groups, and in particular hunters have much to offer in this respect, as they actively contribute to nature conservation. As detailed under Sustainable Use in The Biodiversity Manifesto, *FACE and its Members urge other conservation NGOs and civil society groups to join with hunters and other wildlife users and their organisations in a constructive dialogue to focus on enhancing their contribution towards nature conservation through sustainable use.* This Forum and future events with IUCN enable us to address The Biodiversity Manifesto actions.

LARGE CARNIVORES

The conservation of large carnivores and their coexistence with humans is a challenge in Europe, because only a few European areas are able to accommodate the home ranges of large carnivores. As a result their presence in multi-use landscapes leads to a number of conflicts with human interests. We face ever increasing demands on space and resources and at the same time increased aspirations for nature, but the two are seldom viewed together. This often results in a disconnect, and large carnivores perhaps more so than other species epitomise this disconnection.

The European hunting community is a very active player in large carnivore conservation throughout Europe. FACE has an active established Large Carnivore Working Group, which is chaired by FACE Vice-President Professor Torsten Mörner and which explicitly supports the conservation of large carnivores in Europe. Through the course of the last year FACE has been very active in large carnivore conservation issues, with a special, but not exclusive, focus on the wolf.

FACE and its Members will promote the development and implementation of action plans especially for species considered to be at risk.

**- On Species,
The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto**

WOLF *Canis lupus*

Populations are increasing and on the move: wolves cannot survive in a purely protectionist environment. Hunted to extinction in many countries, they evoke a certain nostalgia for a lost wilderness. Now, wolves are on the comeback. The reasons why they were hunted so

FACE will contribute to policy formulation for issues such as large carnivore conservation.

- On Species, The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

vehemently still remain despite the changes in our shared landscape, legislation and approach. Recently there has been an increased focus on wolf

management in Europe as this species has shown an increased adaptability to expand into these multi-use landscapes. It doesn't take long for them to run into humans – and their livestock. This reignites serious man/wolf conflicts, only this time, Europe is far more densely populated and developed: conflicts are sharper than ever before. People living in wolf-inhabited rural areas have great problems and are not willing to accept more wolves and this has forced an increased polarisation between rural and urban people and conservationists vs protectionists.

Hunting is a management action aimed at simultaneously solving socio-economic problems: the use of hunters as agents for wolf management is both a practical measure and a deliberate attempt to reduce conflict by empowering rural residents to act in a sustainable, respectful and controlled framework.

FACE MEETS COMMISSIONER POTOČNIK

A strong FACE mission, based on the group set up at the Malta Members' Meeting and consisting of national hunters' organisations from Finland, France, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland came to Brussels on 21 and 22 November to discuss large carnivore management in Europe. Over a period of two days they held no less than nine meetings with decision makers in the European Commission and the Parliament.

They met informally with EU Environment Commissioner Potočnik to discuss the management of large carnivores in Europe. FACE is urging the Commission to implement its own Guidelines and allow for early management options of growing wolf populations especially if we are to make a success of the wolf's European return. In addition FACE is further urging the Commission to facilitate dialogue between various stakeholders in the debate on large carnivore management.

The second day of the visit centred on a special Conference in the European Parliament dedicated to large carnivore management. Under the auspices of the Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup and its President, MEP Véronique Mathieu, the President of the French National Federation of Hunters, (FNC, *Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs*), Bernard Baudin, and the President of the Swedish Hunters' Association (*Jägareförbundet*), Torsten Mörner, presented large carnivore management in their respective countries. The Director of the Nature Directorate in DG Environment, Pia Bucella and Head of the Nature Unit Stefan Leiner, represented the European Commission in the discussion that followed. They explained that the Commission's role is to uphold the minimum framework provided for by the EU Habitats Directive but that it is up to the Member States to decide on the implementing details on how the Directive's conservation objective shall be achieved.

FACE will continue to work for large carnivore conservation in Europe and of course promote the role of hunters in line with our *Biodiversity Manifesto*. We do not want large carnivores to be viewed as either highly protected or a menace, rather we would like to have large carnivores integrated into our landscapes as respected game species.

AGRICULTURE

FACE and its Members will develop strategies and policies to address habitat provisioning within the Common Agricultural Policy.

– On Habitats, The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is of vital importance for hunters for many reasons – from wild game and land management to hunting rights connected to land ownership and the implications of rural development for biodiversity. Moreover, the CAP budget consumes a large portion of the EU budget. When the European Commission presented its proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework in 2011, FACE joined the successful protest of a large amount of NGOs to avoid cuts to pillar 2 spending. The negotiations are expected to be concluded by the end of 2012.

As a bridge builder between farmers, land managers and conservationists, FACE is deepening its connections with all main countryside stakeholders, bringing its expertise and that of hunters to the table.

“Hunting is the human activity which holds our deepest cultural roots. It is imperative for a politician to respect this, guaranteeing its perennity through sustainable policies. The ongoing CAP reform should be an opportunity and an instrument to attain this.” - MEP

Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos,
*Vice-President
of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup*

THE RURAL COALITION

In April 2011, FACE together with 4 Brussels-based European organisations dedicated to countryside activities, namely Copa-Cogeca, the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA), the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and the European Livestock and Meat Trading Union (UECBV), launched the Rural Coalition to collaborate at the heart of rural affairs for a common purpose. The move came in a bid to strengthen the voice of Europe's rural population and to increase the competitiveness of the EU agricultural sector whilst building up an effective network of stakeholders in the countryside.

In an increasingly urbanised Europe, the Rural Coalition will be crucial in highlighting the pivotal role of rural stakeholders in the development and management of rural land areas in a multifunctional and sustainable manner that meets social, economic and environmental requirements.

In the three meetings following its launch, the Rural Coalition prepared for meetings of Advisory Groups of the European Commission related to Agriculture and Rural Development; coordinated its joint missions and statements, continued working towards a strong joint position on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy, in particular on Rural Development, as well as preparing for discussions on the Cohesion Policy and its links to agriculture.

DENMARK: CONFERENCE ON SMALL GAME AND WILDLIFE IN MODERN AGRICULTURE

As part of their preparations for the Danish EU Presidency in 2012, the Danish Hunters' Association (*Danmarks Jægerforbund*) held the first of two conferences and saw national and international experts presenting their professional knowledge and assessment of issues related to management of field game in modern agriculture, exploring the topic from both national and European perspectives. FACE's Christine Rödlach participated in the panel discussion, providing a European hunter perspective and an overview of the CAP negotiations.

The follow-up conference to discuss the results will take place in Autumn 2012. These discussions are very timely, with the CAP reform discussions and the focus on Denmark during its EU Presidency, it is vital to engage and capitalise on these conferences to maximise the benefits for small game in rural development policy formulation - a wildlife grouping that is often overlooked.

COPA-COGECA is the united voice of farmers and their co-operatives in the European Union. FACE has stepped up its collaboration with Copa-Cogeca - through our close collaboration on the Rural Coalition and with their Secretary General Pekka Pesonen addressing the 2011 FACE General Assembly.

FACE AGRI EXPERT GROUP

The FACE AGRI expert group meets annually to make formal decisions with regular updates between the experts on a monthly basis. To prepare for the Commission proposals on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013, the experts elaborated a position paper for all FACE Members. This provided the basis for representing hunters' interests in the CAP towards the EU Institutions and through the FACE Members towards national authorities. Thanks to the sound expertise of former German Agriculture Minister and German Hunters' Association DJV-President, Jochen Borchert, the chairman of the FACE AGRI expert group, as well as the indispensable expertise of France's National Federation of Hunters, (FNC, *Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs*) - meaningful discussions and input for all hunting organisations could be established. Following the last meeting in November 2011, an enhanced FACE AGRI position paper will be developed. This will form the basis of a mandate for a coordinated, EU-wide representation of hunters' interests targeting the negotiations around the CAP reform at EU level.

FACE and its Members will continue to collaborate with both, farmers and conservation organisations, to maintain and restore farmland biodiversity through local actions.

- On Habitats, The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

PROTECTED AREAS

“Hunting is an important management tool for Natura 2000.”

- Stefan Leiner, European Commission

Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. Natura 2000 designated sites now cover almost 20% of EU land surface, and the challenges of making it a success, particularly in light of the EU’s brand new 2020 Biodiversity Strategy are now more important than ever. The designation of Natura 2000 sites is coming to a close and it is time to address the appropriate management of these sites. In this respect, conflicts may still arise between those who do not acknowledge the positive contribution to biodiversity conservation through sustainable use of land and wildlife – and those who believe in inclusive management to maintain and enhance these special nature areas through their sustainable use, such as hunting.

*Natura 2000
designated sites now
cover almost 20% of
EU land surface.*



NATURA 2000 SEMINAR

In June, a lunchtime seminar in the European Parliament brought together Members of the European Parliament with representatives of European hunters through FACE, landowners through the European Landowners' Organization and the Commission to discuss the challenges and opportunities of Natura 2000. The Parliamentary Intergroup for Sustainable Hunting's President, MEP Véronique Mathieu hosted the seminar. FACE Members representing national hunting associations arrived from Denmark, Slovenia, Italy, the UK, Germany and Belgium to join the discussions with a number of MEPs including Intergroup Co-President, Britain's Robert Sturdy, German Markus Pieper (Intergroup Secretary-General), Ioan Enciu (Romania, Intergroup Vice-President), Astrid Lulling (Luxembourg) and Italy's Lara Comi amongst others.

The European Commission's Head of Unit for Natura 2000 Stefan Leiner made many positive remarks on the role of hunters in Natura 2000, focusing his presentation entirely on the opportunities of hunting and Natura 2000.

Hunting activities are carried out in many Natura 2000 sites and hunters are involved in the management of some of these sites. FACE's Gabor von Bethlenfalvy gave an insightful outline of hunting in relation to Natura 2000, by giving concrete examples of hunters offsetting costs, monitoring species and habitats and conserving and restoring biodiversity, but noting that at the local level, a top-down approach is still perceived.

EUROPEAN LANDOWNERS' ORGANIZATION - ELO is a unique federation of 67 national associations across the EU-27 which represents the interests of landowners, rural managers and entrepreneurs at the European level. ELO defends and promotes a dynamic, prosperous and sustainable countryside based on high environmental standards, economic viability and social fabric. As the Co-Secretariat of the Sustainable Hunting, Biodiversity, Countryside Activities & Forestry Intergroup of the European Parliament, FACE and ELO together provide services to its Members, offer information and insights where required, and organise the planned events. Through many years of good cooperation and through our shared interests and stakeholders, the collaboration with ELO will continue, with mutual enrichment.

FACE and its Members will continue to promote hunters' engagement in the management of protected areas in collaboration with the relevant competent authorities and other stakeholders especially in regards to Natura 2000.

- On Protected Areas, The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognises Invasive Alien Species as one of the key threats to biodiversity and as a result the EU in its *Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020* has included a specific objective to develop an EU policy on Invasive Alien Species.

Throughout the reporting period FACE was very active in the discussions and work which the Commission undertook to explore policy options. This included participating in all three Working Groups of DG Environment, Prevention (Yves Lecocq), Early Warning and Rapid Response (Angus Middleton) and Eradication, Management and Restoration - (Fredrik Dahl, Swedish Hunters' Association, *Jägareförbundet*).

It is important to remember that not all alien species are invasive and a significant number of alien species contribute to our wellbeing, not least the humble potato. We must acknowledge that in the past through animal collectors and hunting interests a number of species were brought into Europe and later released or escaped, some of which are now in at least part of their range considered invasive. For this reason we take our responsibilities seriously and have committed to do so in The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto.

Hunters and hunting have a positive role in identifying and managing invasive alien species. Hunters can be part of the solution mainly through early warning systems as is being demonstrated through the LIFE+ Project, coordinated by the Swedish Hunters' Association, to manage the Raccoon Dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*) in Nordic countries. It takes a lot of clear communication to try and get hunters to eradicate a species, as they naturally seek to conserve.

With the future policy FACE will ask that priority species are identified in a manner that recognises the positive role of non-invasive alien species. We ask that risk frameworks to be developed are pragmatic and transparent. We do not consider that hunting is any longer a high-risk pathway (especially falconry) but have committed to work with the Council of Europe to develop a Code of Conduct on Hunting and Invasive Species.

With the future policy FACE will ask that priority species are identified in a manner that recognises the positive role of non-invasive alien species.

In the EU, many ecosystems have been degraded, largely as a result of land fragmentation.

With the Council of the EU endorsing the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, the EU and its Member States are committed to maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services and restoring degraded ecosystems by incorporating a concept of Green Infrastructure in spatial planning.

Some Green Infrastructure concepts already exist at different scales, however there is no coherence and no commonly agreed approaches throughout Europe as to how to bring about the necessary results.

The European Commission launched its Working Group on Green Infrastructure (WGGI) in March 2011 to prepare an EU Green Infrastructure initiative for 2012.

FACE, with the help of its own expert group on Green Infrastructure, was active in drafting the recommendation documents of the Commission's WGGI to make sure that the documents reflect hunters' interests.

Green Infrastructure will not function without cross-sectoral integration, in particular of those that have an impact on land use and biodiversity (e.g. agriculture, transport, energy). Spatial planning however is not an EU competence; therefore the role of regional and local authorities in implementing Green Infrastructure is crucial, as they are responsible for such decisions in most EU countries.

The establishment and maintenance of Green Infrastructure needs the engagement of land managers and users, such as farmers, foresters and hunters.

Hunters are often the only conservation and restoration force in ordinary landscapes.

Within The Biodiversity Manifesto, FACE and its Members elaborated on Green Infrastructure with three action points.

Hunters have knowledge on movements of wildlife and hence can advise on functional connectivity of landscape features (e.g. for planning green bridges and corridors) as well as on coordinated management schemes (e.g. through Game Management Units). Hunters are often the only conservation and restoration force in ordinary landscapes (non-priority habitats) such as in intensive agriculture (e.g. planting hedgerows and wild flower strips), where biodiversity friendly grant schemes are difficult to obtain.

Green Infrastructure and hunters need to work with each other, not against each other.

Hunters have knowledge on movements of wildlife and hence can advise on functional connectivity of landscape features.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GAME BIOLOGISTS, IUGB CONGRESS

BARCELONA, SEPTEMBER 2011

This unique twice-yearly gathering created once more a bridge between researchers, scientists, wildlife managers and authorities and those studying the human dimensions of wildlife management. European hunters and game managers were well represented by their experts, with the Spanish FACE Member, the *Real Federación Española de Caza* (RFEC) having a permanent information stand. Plenary sessions covering a range of topics were complemented by a series of workshops, including a special workshop on the Sustainable Management of Migratory Birds, led by UK FACE Member the British Association for Shooting & Conservation (BASC) along with FACE. Participants were encouraged to give their own views, make suggestions, and present ideas and proposals with a view to improving contacts and cooperation between hunters and game biologists.

The differing perceptions of hunting were widely discussed from many angles, and the central contribution and role of hunters in game biology is celebrated as our FACE Secretary General/Senior Policy Advisor Yves Lecocq was nominated President of IUGB for the 2011-2013 term.

This prestigious position at IUGB will see Yves chair the IUGB Congress in Brussels from 27-30 August 2013, so keep the dates free and check our website for details.



SPAIN - SPANISH HUNTERS AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT

The Spanish FACE Member, the RFEC (*Real Federación Española de Caza*) reinforced its commitment to the environment with a series of short publications focusing mainly on Red-legged partridge (*Alectoris rufa*), one of the most popular game birds in Spain.

This included the development of a cost-effective technique to detect hybrids of *A. rufa* and *A. chukar* in captive-bred Red-legged partridges. This work, in collaboration with Spanish and French laboratories, is undertaken in the hope of avoiding genetic pollution of wild populations of partridge. This project is also supported by a second study which aims to map the genetic purity of Red-legged partridges throughout Spain.

GREECE - CONTRIBUTION OF GREEK HUNTING ASSOCIATIONS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION

In order to tackle illegal killing activities in Greece, the Hellenic Hunters' Confederation took it upon itself in 2000 to set up its own Game Warden Service to work side by side with the existing Forest Service for control of illegal killing and wildlife protection.

What is even more commendable is that the costs (salaries for 350 full-time wardens, vehicles, equipment and operational costs) are entirely covered by the voluntary payments of the Greek hunters, through their hunting associations.

At the time of writing, the Game Wardens of hunting organisations have made 944,512 controls resulting in 16,816 prosecutions over the last 10 years. It is also encouraging that there has been a strong reduction in the number of infringements, particularly hunting out of season and without a licence. This is despite an increase in the number of controls. In order to give an impression of the scale of this work in the region Macedonia and Thrace alone, over 12 million kilometres of patrols have been made in hunting and non-hunting areas.



FACE FLIES FAR AND HIGH FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS

SPECIAL FOCUS - FACE & BIRDS

It has been said that migratory birds, particularly waterfowl, flying from the vast swathes of Russia and the Arctic to the depths of Africa carry with them some of our dreams. Dreams of a time when humans were closer to nature, a closeness that is most strongly retained through wildfowling - but with it comes a responsibility to conserve that which we love.

FACE was formally founded in 1977 as a result of national hunting associations engaging with the process which resulted in the adoption in 1979 of the **EU Birds Directive**.

Since those early days, FACE has remained very close to its roots by continuing to work on issues related to birds and in particular migratory birds. This work has continued to be carried out within the framework of the **EU Birds Directive** but also as part of international agreements such as the **Bern Convention** (p.48) and the **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**, p.46. As a part of this work, FACE Members together with the CIC (International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation) and the OMPO Institute were integral in the establishment of the **African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)** (p.44) in the 1990s.

This extensive involvement in the conservation of migratory birds reflects the sincere commitment hunters make to safeguarding the future of these species, and is seeded through this Report, from our work in **nature conservation** and **international agreements** to our **projects** (p.67-9) this year and for the future.

THE BIRDS DIRECTIVE

The Birds Directive has undergone considerable extension in its bio-geographical scope since its adoption; at the time of writing it covers 27 Member States with a network of 5,347 Special Protection Areas (over 10% of the EU's land surface). The next era of the Birds Directive will be one of implementation and management of sites. The question to be asked is how effective is this legal instrument in delivering conservation for wild birds and their habitats, and how can we measure progress? Target 1 of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy aims that under the Birds Directive 50% or more species assessments will show a secure or improved status. This roughly translates as 80% of species' assessments being either secure or improving by 2020 (now 52% secure according to BirdLife International 2004).

Whilst FACE joins in celebrating the success of the Birds Directive it argues that greater recognition should be made of the socio-cultural diversity within the EU. People should not be left out of the equation as it is ultimately the citizens that turn policy into action on the ground.





FRANCE - COLUMBIDAE IN A CHANGING WORLD

Co-organised by the ONCFS (French National Hunting and Wildlife Agency), FACE Member from France, the National Federation of Hunters (FNC, *Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs*) and the latter's research group GIFS, a national symposium on columbidae (pigeons and doves) was held on the 15 and 16 November at the Palais des Congrès in Bordeaux. During the two days, around 30 scientists and experts presented the progress in knowledge on the wild columbidae found present in France including Wood pigeon, Rock dove, Stock dove, Turtle dove, Collared dove, as well as their distribution in Europe and Africa. Each species was discussed in terms of their ecology, population dynamics and movement aspects in relation with farming practices and sustainable hunting.

FACE's biological data expert, Cy Griffin gave an overview of the hunting of Columbidae in Europe and was impressed by the level of research on the species in France: "There is a staggering amount of monitoring and conservation work being conducted in France on the 5 species of columbidae, both by national institutions like the ONCFS and the French Hunters' Federations at national and regional levels. The Wood pigeon is the primary focus, perhaps due to the popularity of its hunting and the diversity of issues which surround it, including changing migration and distribution, agricultural damages, legal status. Developments in technology are also being put to use such as radar, tracking devices and online reporting of bag data, to discover more and ensure the sustainability of their hunting."

OMPO: MIGRATORY BIRDS OF THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC - is a research institute and international NGO committed to the scientific study of Palearctic migratory birds on their overall distribution range in Africa-Eurasia, and providing knowledge for their management and sustainable use. Due to the scope of its monitoring work OMPO has proved invaluable to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and other international fora dealing with the conservation of migratory birds. More recently OMPO has produced an Atlas of Duck Populations in Eastern Europe. It covers the latest population data and ecology of 11 species of ducks from the genera *Anas* and *Aythya* from six countries of Eastern Europe (European Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine). This publication addresses some key gaps in our knowledge about duck species in a region stretching from the Barents, White and Baltic Seas in the north to the Caspian and Black Seas in the south.

With the trans-boundary nature of many of the world's environmental problems, an increasing number of multilateral environmental agreements exist with implications for national and regional policies. These agreements inform the global agenda, establish conservation principles and provide tools for cooperation.

As the EU often forms an influential block at these meetings, it is vital that FACE follows and contributes to these meetings to represent the interests and insights of European hunters. This ensures FACE is informed of international conservation trends, learns about other conservation experiences, stands up for the interests of hunters, raises the profile of hunters as conservationists, as well as finding ways of working with other conservationists.

FACE and its Members cover and actively participate in key international agreements, providing relevant expertise, coordination, synergies and awareness. Much of our work on International Agreements is done in collaboration with our partners. This work links directly to our Nature Conservation work, is applied to our European policy work and by FACE Members at national levels.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS - AEWA



AEWA covers over 250 species of birds ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle, including many important game species.

Unlike many other agreements AEWA has a built-in recognition of the need for conservation, including the sustainable use of migratory species. For this reason it remains a very important agreement for European hunters to cooperate in managing shared populations of migratory birds.

Parties to the Agreement are called upon to engage in a wide range of conservation actions which are described in a comprehensive Action Plan. This detailed plan addresses such key issues as: species and habitat conservation, management of human activities, research and monitoring, education and information, and implementation. It is this Action Plan which forms the basis of the work of the AEWA Secretariat and Committees, for which 2011 was an extremely busy year.

The Technical Committee, to which FACE is an observer, has had over 50 dossiers to deal with in the course of the last few years. A number of these have focused on hunting issues. A good number of these were resolved at the Technical Committee meeting in Naivasha, Kenya in September 2011 and passed by the Standing Committee in Bergen in November 2011. This work will now go forward to the Meeting of Parties to be held in La Rochelle, France.

Overall there has been an increased interest by AEWA and the Parties to AEWA to promote the conservation of populations rather than just focusing on protecting endangered species, something which FACE continues to support.

This has been shown in the work on developing an Adaptive Management Plan for Pink-footed Geese (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) but also is important for a number of key range states that are not yet Parties to AEWA, including Russia and Turkey. FACE has been active in promoting AEWA in these countries as they are very important range states for many migratory birds.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Anser erythropus

Following a meeting held in Helsinki in December 2010 attended by FACE Chief Executive Angus Middleton, priority actions are being developed for the conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose. Regrettably these focus to a large extent on restricting hunting which is viewed as the main threat to the survival of the population particularly within the EU.

Fortunately, through the interventions of FACE and representatives from the Swedish Hunters' Association, a recurring priority is to develop conservation measures in conjunction with hunters which would include a range of voluntary and mandatory restrictions but also diversionary feeding, habitat provisioning, etc.

FACE continues to insist on the need for less prescriptive priorities and a more pragmatic involvement of local stakeholders - including hunters - in the conservation actions.

GLOBAL FLYWAY CONSERVATION: COOPERATION IS KEY

Seosan in South Korea was the venue for the first global flyways meeting, which brought together flyway conservation experts from around the world to discuss the main issues facing migratory birds. The hunting community was represented by FACE's Angus Middleton, who presented some of what hunters in Europe have been doing for flyway conservation.

WHAT ARE HUNTERS DOING?

FACE is involved in many of the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and has a very active role in the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) as an observer organisation.

At European level, one of the most significant partnerships has been the Birdlife-FACE Agreement which began 5 years ago as an agreement to respect the EU Birds Directive but has since developed through regular bilateral meetings to include joint activities in other conservation fields (e.g. reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy).

FACE and its Members also support research and monitoring of migratory birds with examples such as the active participation of Nordic Hunters' Associations in the Nordic Waterbirds and Climate Network (NOWAC) and support to the European Institute for the management of wild birds and their habitats, OMPO.

At national and site levels there are many thousands of activities being undertaken by hunters such as the *Club International des Chasseurs de Bécassines* (CICB) in France which looks into the habitats, research and hunting of snipe (*Gallinagininae*).

There are also actions in respect of endangered species such as the Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*) where - as an example from Hungary - a flagging system is employed with the full cooperation of the regional and local hunters' associations to ensure that hunting is controlled at key sites during the migration period.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

With regards to hunting, the term is often and rather unfortunately used as a blanket term to cover all types of consumptive resource utilisation. This is often done in place of the BirdLife threats criteria Biological Resource Use which includes many aspects which are not at all related to hunting such as fisheries by-catch, harvesting of plants and forest products as well as forms of persecution (such as poisoning) which may involve hunters but is not hunting in itself.

The term hunting also needs to be further understood, as the motivation may vary from livelihoods to recreational and it may be of a voluntary or commercial nature, with many aspects in between. In this regard it is necessary to clearly delineate harvest take associated with various form of hunting and non-harvest mortalities associated with other resource uses or actions.

Once this is better understood and formulated, the challenges can perhaps be better addressed.

As an example, livelihood harvesting essentially falls under the bushmeat trade for which there is already a very advanced debate, which is rarely acknowledged in migratory bird meetings. Other issues related to recreational hunting, such as information sharing (e.g. monitoring and harvest data), hunting tourism and even conflict management can also be better addressed. There is much work to be done but the hunting and bird protection communities - no matter how diverse - have significant common points to work together for effective flyway conservation, which is in the interest of all.

CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES - CMS

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) is of great importance to FACE, as this Convention looks to conserve a significant number of wildlife species which are of interest to hunters. In recent years the Convention has rather unfortunately begun to promote protection as an end in itself. This is inopportune as protection is a means for conservation but is not an end in itself.



2 KEY RESOLUTIONS AT THE 10TH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES

FACE teamed up with the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) to work together at the 10th Conference of Parties of the CMS, which took place in Bergen, Norway. There were a number of important dossiers which we as a group were active in amending and supporting.

These related particularly to migratory birds but also other non-European game species (e.g. Argali, *Ovis ammon*).

The most important result was that of the Saker Falcon Resolution which gave a strong and positive emphasis on sustainable use despite the CMS becoming generally more protectionist. The original Resolution sought to up-list the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) to Appendix I (strict protection) despite a favourable review from CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, p.50) for the Mongolian population. This population has been increasing as a direct result of an innovative sustainable use programme, which allows for the capture and trade of a limited number of birds.

The final Resolution that was passed not only gave an exemption for the population in Mongolia but also explicitly recognised the contribution of sustainable use programmes to the conservation of Saker Falcons and allows future exemption possibilities for Parties that wish to implement sustainable use programmes. Another very positive outcome was the role taken by the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (which was dormant until recently) in leading this initiative.

Another key Resolution passed covered the important work on Global Flyways (p.45), which encompasses the efforts of FACE across a number of key policy areas including the Birds Directive, Natura 2000, CMS, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). There were a number of other key Resolutions which FACE and our partners, including BirdLife who brought forward a number of these Resolutions, will seek to collaborate on in the period ahead.

Protection is a means for conservation

but is not an end in itself.

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY - CBD

Biodiversity policy at a global level is guided by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the most important international convention in the field of environment conservation.



The CBD has 3 main objectives, notably for hunters the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity. It has 193 Parties including the EU and its Member States, as well as other European countries, and has a driving impact on European environmental policies.

In April 2002, the Parties to the CBD committed themselves to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level. The EU and its Member States set an even more ambitious target, namely to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Both targets were not met.

With the commitments made in The Biodiversity Manifesto, FACE and its Members can contribute to the implementation of several decisions taken at the COP 10, all the more relevant as the COP specifically calls for stakeholder and local community involvement.

In October 2010, FACE attended the 10th Conference of the Parties of the CBD in Nagoya, Japan where a new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for 2011-2020 was adopted – namely, the Aichi Targets which address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss. The Parties agreed to translate this overarching international framework into national biodiversity strategy and action plans within two years. The EU adopted its 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and FACE aligned its Biodiversity Manifesto accordingly (p.28).

FACE welcomes the COPs decision to further invite Parties to increase human and financial capacity for the application of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity by improving the implementation of the definition of sustainable use and by improving the understanding and implementation of concepts of adaptive management. Through The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto, European hunters commit to the wise and sustainable use as laid down by the Principles.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR GAME AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

- CIC is a politically independent advisory body, internationally active on a non-profit basis. The CIC's global community advocates sustainable hunting through its knowledge, networks and valued traditions to benefit people and conserve nature. The CIC is present in over 80 countries. The CIC is one of our key partners and over the last year we enjoyed good collaboration with them in our work at the CMS COP10 as well as in early preparations for the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2012 and CITES issues. FACE also supports the CIC in their work promoting sustainable wildlife management at a global level and in particular their work with the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as other areas reflected in this Report.

THE BERN CONVENTION

The Bern Convention is an international legal instrument, binding for its Contracting Parties, in the field of nature conservation, which covers most of the natural heritage of the European continent. The Convention places a particular importance on the need to protect endangered natural habitats and vulnerable species, including migratory species. Its Standing Committee (T-PVS) monitors the implementation of the Convention at each of its meetings by reviewing reports, processing case-files and adopting recommendations.

THE LARNACA CONFERENCE ON ILLEGAL TAKING AND TRADING OF BIRDS IN EUROPE

As a result of the discussion held at the 2010 T-PVS meeting, it was decided to organise a European Conference to clearly identify the extent of the problem of illegal bird killing in Europe, by analysing its human dimension and by collecting information on the implementation of the relevant legislation in place at European level.

This conference took place in early July 2011 in Larnaca, co-organised by the Council of Europe and The Cyprus Game Fund (Ministry of the Interior). FACE was from the very beginning actively involved in its preparation, together with the European Commission (DG Environment), BirdLife International and the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement Secretariat. For an audience of some 100 participants – mainly national and European officials, as well as representatives from various NGOs, FACE Secretary General/Senior Policy Advisor Yves Lecocq made a keynote presentation at the opening session. Other valuable presentations were made by FACE Vice-President Nicolas Papadodimas (on the role of the Greek Hunters' Confederation for enforcement of legislation) and by the Cyprus hunters' President Antonis Kakoullis. In the Conference Working Group "Human Dimension", FACE Vice-President John Swift from the UK acted as Rapporteur.

The Conference adopted a Declaration as well as a Draft Recommendation for the T-PVS.

At its 2011 meeting, the T-PVS welcomed the report of the Larnaca Conference and took note of the Declaration it had adopted, calling in particular for a zero tolerance approach to illegal killing of birds. The T-PVS then examined the draft Recommendation prepared at the Conference and adopted it after some amendments. The original reference to animal welfare as fundamental right was deleted and the alternative wording suggested by FACE namely that ethical aspects should be taken into account, was accepted. Another issue FACE raised was that the reference in the draft to lead (in ammunition) should not be confused with intentional poisoning of birds, as this would in fact weaken the whole message, and as a result this was indeed removed.

Illegal killing is not hunting

FACE can therefore fully endorse and support Recommendation N°155 (2011) on the illegal taking and trade of birds in Europe, as finally adopted by T-PVS. In order to monitor progress in this domain, T-PVS further decided to include a follow-up conference in its work programme for the year 2013, something to which FACE will also contribute.

STANDING COMMITTEE

During the 30th and 31st annual T-PVS Standing Committee meetings, FACE was once more present and active in representing the hunters' interests. For instance, T-PVS adopted after a long debate, a Resolution on the legal interpretation of Article 9 "Exceptions" of the Convention which should now not present additional difficulties to Parties for allowing derogations (similar to comparable clauses in the Birds and Habitats Directives), including for unspecified "other judicious exploitation" (such as falconry).

FACE was also involved through a working group in drafting a European Charter on Recreational Fishing and Biodiversity (p.65).

Good progress was recorded for the implementation of the Convention's European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species and the preparation in this framework of innovative voluntary Codes of Conduct. A code on Hunting is scheduled for adoption in 2012, for which FACE has already provided preliminary comments.

THE ALPINE CONVENTION

The Alpine Convention is a framework for the basic principles and general measures for the sustainable development of the Alpine region. Despite all Member States (Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Slovenia) and the EU agreeing on the various protocols, not all have been ratified. Each Member State is bound to implement the protocols it ratifies. The Alpine Conference is the political decision-making body of the Alpine Convention and consists of the Ministers of the Alpine States.



In 2010, FACE was accepted for the first time as an observer to the Permanent Committee and was represented by its FACE Member Delegate Srečko Zerjav of the Slovenian Hunters' Association (*Lovska zveza Slovenije*) at the Alpine Conference in March under the Slovenian Presidency.

The Permanent Committee established the Large Carnivores and Wild Ungulates Platform (WISO) which promotes international coordination and collaboration for related management and conservation issues. Initiated and coordinated by FACE Switzerland Delegate Dr. Marco Giacometti and supported by FACE, the group FaunAlp was created in order to represent FACE Alpine Members in the WISO Platform.

In 2011, FACE was represented by Dr. Marco Giacometti at several meetings of the WISO Platform, which discussed the management of large predators at population level with a focus on options for the management of alpine wolf populations – and with the ultimate objective of providing Ministers with practical conservation and management recommendations in 2014 as a basis for political decisions.

Within the frame of the ECONNECT project, supported by the Alpine Convention, FACE and FaunAlp contributed in identifying the most urgent research questions concerning an ecological continuum in the Alps.

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CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA - CITES

CITES is mainly relevant to hunters in relation to the import/export of hunting trophies, but also as one of a number of key international agreements setting the global conservation agenda, establishing conservation principles and providing the tools and means for cooperation.

CITES currently has 175 Parties, including the 27 EU Member States which during CoPs, held every 3 years, are expected to speak with one voice and to vote as a block.

CITES seeks to regulate international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants at sustainable levels to ensure that this trade does not threaten their survival.



The past year saw continued advocacy by FACE amongst policy-makers about wildlife utilisation programmes and their contribution to conservation. The Vienna Symposium in May 2011 on the relevance of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) represents a welcome positive element giving new hope for better political recognition of successful conservation strategies.

Later in the year FACE was represented at the 25th CITES Animals Committee, 18-22 July, Geneva; and the 61st CITES Standing Committee, 15-19 August, Geneva; where it contributed to the most relevant discussions on hunting and wildlife management.

During 2012 and early 2013 a series of issues related to the preparations of the 16th Conference of the Parties (CoP16), to be held 3-15 March 2013 in Thailand will be handled by the EU Presidencies.

Building on the Vienna Symposium on CBNRM programmes, FACE will highlight the conservation benefits delivered by trophy hunting and defend the special legal status given to hunting trophies, thereby avoiding unjustified restrictions and bureaucracy on trophy exports/imports. For example, hunting trophies of black rhino (*Diceros bicornis*) are the only trade permitted in this species as a result of hunters' participation in conservation-based hunting programmes. FACE will work in close collaboration with its partner organisations CIC (International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation) and SCI (Safari Club International).

COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION: A PROMISING FUTURE

The Symposium on the relevance of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) for the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed species in exporting countries took place in Vienna, Austria in May and gathered some 70 participants from over 20 countries to raise understanding and awareness amongst EU decision makers and the larger conservation community of the potential benefits of CBNRM and to develop ideas on how the EU can contribute to the success of CBNRM. As many of the successful CBNRMs in Africa include trophy hunting, the Symposium was of direct relevance to FACE. There was a good cooperation and support between international hunters' organisations present at the Symposium, such as FACE, SCI (Safari Club International) and CIC (International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation).

When correctly applied, CBNRM programmes are considered by the international conservation community as a highly promising tool in combining conservation of wildlife with poverty

reduction. It is in this combination that the success of these programmes lies because the social and economic benefits derived from sustainable use, including revenues from trophy hunting, provide sustainable incentives for local people to conserve wildlife. This is in particular true in Africa for species such as the African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) and lion (*Panthera leo*) which would otherwise risk being perceived by local people as nuisances, competing with land-use and livestock production, and sometimes posing a direct lethal threat to humans. Where the local communities on the other hand are effectively given responsibility for the management of species through CBNRM, it contributes positively to species conservation by rendering them a true value whilst increasing the welfare of the communities by addressing poverty.

This Symposium represents a welcome step in the right direction towards better conservation strategies, where CBNRM has an important role to play – as do hunters.

The social and economic benefits derived from sustainable use, including revenues from trophy hunting, provide sustainable incentives for local people to conserve wildlife.

SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL - SCI, with members in 107 countries is a leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. They work closely together with their sister organisation the SCI-Foundation (SCI-F) who fund and manage worldwide programmes dedicated to wildlife conservation and outdoor education. Both organisations are key partners and FACE continues to enjoy cooperating with both on a very wide number of issues, ranging from purely hunting-related to global conservation issues. In the last year these included successful cooperation on CITES issues, firearms legislation and SCI-F's support of the International Union of Game Biologists' Congress Workshop to name a few.

FACE and its Members seek to ensure that hunters can acquire, possess, use and travel with firearms and ammunition safely and without unjustified bureaucracy, costs or restrictions.

Many of these aspects are presently covered by EU law, either through full harmonisation or minimum rules.

FIREARMS & AMMUNITION

THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 10 OF THE UNITED NATIONS' FIREARMS PROTOCOL (UNFP) INTO EU LAW

A positive development for FACE during 2011 was the successful conclusion of the implementation of Article 10 of the United Nations' Firearms Protocol (UNFP) into EU law. The adopted regulation results for the first time in harmonised rules at EU level on the transfer of firearms and their ammunition for civilian use, including for hunters and sport shooters, to and from third countries outside the Union (so called extra-EU transfer). Transfer within the EU (intra-EU transfer) continues to be governed by the EU Firearms Directive, 91/477/EEC, from 1991.

Long before the proposal first appeared in text FACE explained to the European Commission the need for simplified procedures to apply to European hunters. Essentially, FACE advocated that hunters travelling to and from the EU with their firearms and ammunition during a journey to a third country could use their European Firearms Pass (EFP) as the sole document in relation to EU customs control. This would provide an exemption for hunters from the standard procedures envisaged in the proposal, which would otherwise subject them to export, import and transit licensing and other authorisation systems – which would be both costly and time-consuming.

EURONEWS:

FACE was interviewed by the television channel Euronews regarding the vote, presented as an objective expert on EU firearms issues: a valuable step in positioning FACE's profile positively to 170 million European viewers.

Through excellent cooperation with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) - in particular the crucial role played by MEP Véronique Mathieu, the President of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup - as well as the European Sport Shooting Forum (ESSF), the following points suggested by FACE were included in the final text adopted by the European Parliament Plenary on 13 October:

- Acceptance that simplified, non-bureaucratic procedures for law-abiding hunters are compatible with and not in contradiction to the high ambitions of the EU to combat the illicit trafficking in firearms;
- Making the European Firearms Pass (EFP) the sole document required in relation to EU customs when hunters are leaving from and returning to the EU through a Member State other than that of their residence;
- When leaving from their country of residence, hunters would have the choice of using the EFP or another document considered valid for this purpose by the competent authority of the said Member State;
- The clarification that also ammunition and essential components of firearms shall be included in the simplified procedures. On a proposal by the Council, the ammunition was limited to a maximum of 800 rounds for a hunter and a maximum of 1200 rounds for a sport shooter per journey.

The end result is satisfactory and hunters and sport shooters will benefit from simplified procedures.

The text adopted by Plenary represents an agreement with the Council; the latter is expected to adopt the same text soon. It will then be published in the Official Journal of the EU and start to apply and be binding in all Member States eighteen months after the date of its publication.

Over the last few years lead in ammunition has once again become a topical issue.

FACE and its Members remain committed to phasing out the use of lead-shot in wetlands and at our General Assembly of March 2010 we reaffirmed this position.

However concerns over lead in ammunition now encompass a broader range of issues, including potential effects on human health and on wildlife. These concerns require close attention and in cases where they prove to be significant, they will require that mitigating actions are taken. Lead, like many other substances in daily use, is toxic but the use of lead in ammunition is an extremely complex issue, which requires due attention to establish actual risks and the necessary solutions to minimise them.

FACE works closely with its Members in exchanging relevant information on the use of lead in ammunition in order to facilitate a better understanding of this complex issue. We also work as part of the CIC-coordinated Hunting Ammunition Platform, which includes the ammunition industry, and provides global insight into this issue.

Ultimately FACE aims to facilitate processes to ensure that hunters have information on, and access to, ammunition which is safe to use for the purpose intended, available and affordable.

FACE and its Members remain committed to phasing out the use of lead-shot in wetlands.

EUROPEAN SPORT SHOOTING FORUM - ESSF is an informal discussion platform of European representatives of civil firearms and ammunition-related sectors (manufacturers, retailers, users) and of which FACE was one of the co-founders. Together members of the ESSF collaborate in providing relevant expertise to the Commission expert groups and elsewhere in the EU decision-making process. This has proven valuable in terms of advocating hunters' interests, for example with regards to the implementation of Article 10 of the UNFP into EU law.

Hunters care. They care about nature, they care about other people in the countryside and they care about animals: their dogs and other aides such as birds of prey for falconry of course, but also for wild animals. Hunters are trained, motivated and committed to eliminate any avoidable suffering to animals – it is an essential part of hunting ethics and of all formal codes of conduct.

Hunters also monitor the health status of animals living in the wild (Swine Fever, Rabies, Avian Influenza...) and play a key role in protecting public health and that of domestic (farmed) animals. In this way they are partners of European (EU) and international (OIE) initiatives against transmissible diseases (zoonosis).

In the EU and Council of Europe FACE acts as a guardian of the subsidiarity principle in relation to wild animal welfare and welfare of auxiliary animals, such as hunting dogs, by ensuring that these issues remain within the sole jurisdiction of Member States which are best placed to deal effectively with these matters.

ANIMAL WELFARE & HEALTH

ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE EU - A NEW STRATEGY

On 19 January 2012, the European Commission adopted the long-expected four-year EU Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals. The Strategy presents the priorities and lists the actions foreseen by the Commission in the domain of animal welfare during the period 2012-2015. The Commission has chosen to focus its activities almost entirely on animals kept in captivity for economic purposes, such as farmed animals and animals kept for scientific purposes. Importantly, wild game and wild animals not kept in captivity remain outside the scope of action, and no concrete legislation for hunting dogs is envisaged at present.

Anyone having followed the process behind the Strategy knows that this outcome did not occur without intervention. On the contrary, the starting point in 2009 for establishing future priorities was that all categories of animals, including wild, were up for discussion and all regulatory options were possible.

In October 2010 FACE organised a meeting in Strasbourg of the European Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup on the future EU Strategy. Veterinarians from the hunting community held presentations and discussed with MEPs and representatives of the Commission about the work of hunters at national level on animal welfare and encouraged EU decision makers not to unjustifiably interfere with hunting in this domain.

Individual hunters made a great contribution in this process in the form of their massive mobilisation to the Commission's Online Survey on animal welfare, launched in 2010. On the question about whether respondents viewed it as important that the EU is involved in welfare policy for wild animals, **no less than 88%** disagreed or strongly disagreed with involvement. The Commission evaluators felt compelled to make an explicit note in the Survey Report that the strong representation of hunters in the response to the online consultation illustrated their concerns.

Following repeated attempts during this process by some animal rights' organisations to spread deceptive misinformation about the treaty provision on animal welfare following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, FACE welcomes the clarification by the Commission in its Impact Assessment for the Strategy that the treaties "[do] not provide a legal basis for protecting animals" but merely create the obligation of the EU to ensure that "the welfare requirements of animals are considered within the framework of certain EU policies". These policies are limited to agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies.

In 2014 we can expect a possible legislative proposal for a simplified EU legislative framework for animal welfare. FACE will continue to uphold that a possible Commission proposal should be confined to the scope of the Strategy of which it is part, and hence be restricted to farmed animals and animals kept for scientific purposes – not hunted game. This view is supported by the results of the Commission's Online Survey and the European Parliament Resolution on animal welfare adopted in Plenary in May 2010 calling for EU action to promote animal welfare but only for livestock and animals in captivity.



MAN & ANIMAL GROUP

Considering the crucial importance of the public debate on animal welfare, the FACE General Assembly XLV in September 2011 decided to renew the mandate of the permanent Working Group, 'Man & Animal', to formulate policies on the relationship between hunting on the one hand, and the welfare of wild animals on the other.

Using a multidisciplinary approach, it is preparing an evidence-based set of ethical, ecological and other insights justifying the practice of 'using' wild animals in a responsible way, including sustainable hunting, as well as collecting scientific reports, studies and other peer-reviewed publications relating to the welfare of wild animals. This work coordinates and complements the important work done by national hunters' organisations over many years.

ANIMAL HEALTH

THE CASE OF THE TAPEWORM, *Echinococcus multilocularis*

On mainland Europe this tapeworm is already present, spreading through the fox population and there are concerns about protecting the human population. All it takes to get infected is to accidentally ingest some tapeworm eggs from dog or fox faeces, so those who hunt and work in the countryside or own dogs are all key risk groups.

In 2011 FACE Members in countries concerned urged the Commission and Government officials for the retention of controls against tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*) for dogs travelling to Finland, Ireland, Malta, Sweden and the UK after the expiry on 31 December 2011 of the old exemption to require a pre-treatment. The worry in these countries is that if an infected dog entered and started infecting other dogs and eventually foxes it would be impossible to eradicate the tapeworm.

On 14 July 2011 the Commission finally published a new regulation permitting Finland, Ireland, Malta and the UK to retain their tapeworm control as of 1 January 2012. The final version of the regulation was published in the Official Journal of the EU on 15 November 2011 marking its acceptance by the Parliament and the Council of the EU.

So now, before travelling to one of these four Member States, a dog needs to receive a specific treatment administered by a vet. The details of the treatment should then be recorded by the vet in the pet's passport and the owner can travel with his pet from 24 hours to five days (120 hours) after treatment.

It is thanks to the efforts of the concerned FACE Members that these exemptions exist which benefit not only hunters but the general public.

Sweden is the only country not being granted the right to continue requiring pre-movement treatment against tapeworm. This decision by the EU Institutions follows the fact that Sweden can no longer claim echinococcus-free status because it reported its first echinococcus cases in wild carnivores in January 2011.

Different hunting methods, traditions and cultures exist throughout Europe. These often have significant national or regional importance for hunting and bring richness to the diversity of hunting in Europe. This richness is a part of our common heritage. It can also have practical applications in retaining local knowledge and continuing to provide recreational benefits.

The diversity of these methods, traditions and cultures gives rise to these aspects having varied application through Europe. Recognising the principle of solidarity, FACE supports the various legal hunting methods, traditions and cultures in Europe whilst fully recognising the principle of subsidiarity which defers decisions on their application to national levels.

FACE works primarily to support activities related to hunting methods, traditions and cultures, this work often being carried out by other organisations who we view as important partners. These include the International Union of Hunting with Hounds, the European Bowhunters' Federation, the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey and the European Association of Traditional Hunters to name a few. In addition our work in support of angling recognises the fact that a number of our Members are hunting and angling associations and is also a form of solidarity with other recreational wildlife users, with whom we share many common values.

HUNTING METHODS & CULTURE

FALCONRY

A HUNTING CULTURE: REFLECTIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

Representatives from 16 countries gathered with EU decision makers in Strasbourg to launch the global celebrations of UNESCO's recognition of Falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Falconry's official inscription at UNESCO's 5th Intergovernmental Committee meeting that took place in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2010 is an immense achievement for a tradition that is over 4000 years old and encompasses the largest ever nomination in the history of the UNESCO convention, presented by 11 nations. To recognise the endeavours of the falconry community, the International Association for Falconry (IAF) and FACE joined together with the European Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup to host *Falconry – a hunting culture* at the heart of Europe. 2011 was a series of celebrations, starting in Europe with this event and ending in December with thousands of falconers assembling in Abu Dhabi for the International Falconry Festival.

The 19 January celebrations, *Falconry – a hunting culture*, began with a colloquium to present and discuss the impact of UNESCO's recognition of falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The international line-up of speakers shared their expert views on falconry, hunting, culture and politics. Guests discussed the impact of this recognition for the future of falconry, and its potential impact for hunting in Europe.

It is hard not to be filled with awe for falconry: the image of a falconer in perfect harmony with his bird encapsulates the great complicity between the two.

Falconry glows with potential for our future, an unbroken thread of culture that binds man to his natural world.



Falconry is the art of hunting with trained birds of prey, born out of ancient local tradition around the world and recognised today as a global cultural phenomenon that is present everywhere. It has played a pivotal role in multiple facets of our culture.

The beauty and benefits of falconry have often been unseen, underestimated and misunderstood, many seeing it as a contentious activity.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY - IAF is dedicated to the preservation of the ancient art of falconry. Preserving falconry involves maintaining not only the traditional culture that builds practical skills of empathy with animals, but also the conservation of raptors and their prey through preservation of natural habitats. We therefore encourage falconry within the context of sustainable use of wildlife. The IAF is made up of more than 70 associations in over 50 countries worldwide totalling 30,500 Members.

On behalf of European hunters, we congratulate the international falconry community and the IAF in particular on their hard work in having falconry recognised as a cultural heritage and express our gratitude for allowing us to share in their success.

TRAPPING

Trapping is a legitimate and indispensable activity for regulating wildlife populations.

Without trapping, overpopulation of certain species - including invasive alien species - can occur, with serious potential consequences for human health, private property and ecosystems.

FACE supports the development in Europe of certification systems for trap-types based upon international standards within the framework of the AIHTS (Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards).

The long awaited report of the EU Contract on Humane Trapping Standards (2007-2009), of which FACE was one of the project partners, arrived at the end of 2011. This report of over 360 pages gives a description of the state of the art of research, science and application of trapping standards, providing the European Commission with a better knowledge base from the implementation of the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS).

Importantly it provides recommendations for improved trapping standards with the objective of minimising avoidable suffering of trapped animals as much as technically possible.

The report also deals with a number of topics relating to the trapping of species listed in the AIHTS including:

- Information gathered by FACE in 2007 on trapping methods and the certification of traps for AIHTS species from all 27 EU Member States, Canada, the Russian Federation and the USA.
- The public consultation “Your attitude towards the regulation of trapping in the EU” attracted a strong response from FACE Members and the hunting community. The message was made clear: we care about the welfare of animals when trapping and this should be legislated for at national levels, in other words through subsidiarity.

FACE strongly advocates the creation of a platform of competence for an efficient international cooperation in the certification of trap types and offers its expertise in this field.

CHARTER ON RECREATIONAL FISHING AND BIODIVERSITY

Under the Bern Convention (see our work on International Agreements, p.48) a working group was created to draft a Charter on Recreational Fishing and Biodiversity. This group included some of the contracting Parties and other experts such as FACE, the European Anglers' Alliance (EAA), the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC), the European Fishing Tackle Trade Association (EFTTA) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Along with the previously published European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity, this new Charter on Recreational Fishing and Biodiversity recognises the sustainable use of wild resources as an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use provide real incentives for people to conserve them.

FACE, whose Membership also includes national hunting and angling associations, contributed to these Charters which position angling and hunting as a consumptive and recreational form of utilisation and management of fish and game species in Europe, in accordance with the provisions of the Bern Convention. Anglers and hunters can contribute to the conservation of species through regulating fish and game populations and caring for their habitats, assisting in monitoring and research, and raising public awareness of conservation issues.

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EUROPEAN ANGLERS' ALLIANCE - EAA is a pan-European organisation with more than 3 million members affiliated to the 14 EAA member organisations. EAA is the only European angling organisation of its kind defending recreational anglers' interests at the European level and beyond. Established in 1994, the EAA's Mission is to safeguard the fish stocks and fisheries of Europe and to protect the interests of all those who fish with rod and line for recreational purposes. Under a European Commission contract on Natura 2000, FACE has been working together with the EAA to progress the dialogue between the European Commission and wildlife users. More recently, both organisations worked together on issues of mutual concern, such as the Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and Invasive Alien Species.

PROJECTS

FACE engages in projects that strengthen and support the work of FACE and its Members. Projects provide structured frameworks that can enhance our credibility and our partnerships whilst encouraging knowledge and expertise sharing.

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF CORMORANTS

Phalacrocorax carbo

FACE has been involved with the EU project ‘Sustainable Management of Cormorant Populations’, which aims to disseminate information about cormorants, their numbers, management and conflicts related to cormorants, fish, fisheries and aquaculture through a dedicated online platform. This includes experiences with cormorant management and solutions to reduce their impact.

Parallel to this activity will be counts of breeding and wintering sites throughout Europe and a Cormorant specific guidance document that will clarify the key concepts of Article 9 of the Birds Directive in relation to the implementation of the derogation system to assist authorities taking actions to reduce cormorant damages.

This follows FACE’s efforts in 2008, urging the Commission to give clearer guidelines to Member States on how best to regulate cormorant populations and address issues related to economic and ecological pressures caused by cormorants.

FACE stressed that any actions should be carried out within the existing framework of the Birds Directive.

This project is led by a consortium consisting of Aarhus University and the UK’s Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) in alliance with the Wetlands International Cormorant Research Group. To guide the work, a Stakeholder Liaison Group has been set up to take account of the wide range of concerns which typify this human-wildlife conflict. As member of this group, FACE is advising on legal and technical aspects of the Birds Directive, and ensuring no negative repercussions for hunters’ interests.

Discussions during the stakeholders meetings have centred on addressing: what sustainable management of cormorants is, what format it should take and with which methods, and how we can navigate through this complicated issue.

FACE is advising on legal and technical aspects of the Birds Directive, and ensuring no negative repercussions for hunters’ interests.

WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL is dedicated to maintaining and restoring wetlands - for their environmental values as well as for the services they provide to people. They work through their network of twenty offices, partners and experts to achieve their goals.

FACE’s Cy Griffin, attended the Wetlands International event in Edinburgh, Scotland in February which included a meeting on the future of the International Waterbird Census (IWC), a two-day Members Meeting, followed by a Symposium, “Wetlands in a Changing Climate”.

FACE’s attendance was mainly to strengthen relations between the two organisations, but also to communicate to a wider audience the interest that hunters continue to have in the IWC. Established in 1967, the IWC remains one of the few global biodiversity monitoring schemes, but financial constraints threaten its future.

The collaborative work of Wetlands International to conserve and restore wetlands worldwide is impressive, with the people living in wetlands perceived not as a problem, but the key to successful conservation work; they are the ones who need to be involved.

EU BIRDS CONTRACT

Under the EU Contract on Scientific and Technical Assistance Supporting Species Protection under the Birds Directive which FACE assisted BirdLife International with, recommendations were made to the European Commission for a new methodology aimed at improving the production and implementation of Action Plans (Annex I), Management Plans (Annex II), and updating of the Key Concepts document on Article 7§4 of the Birds Directive.

The initial results of the Contract were presented at the conference 'Bird Conservation in the EU: Planning for recovery action and sustainable use' in Brussels in November 2010. In the welcoming speech by Ladislav Miko, Director for the Nature Directorate in DG Environment, he highlighted the importance of birds not only because of the large public interest they generate, but as a key indicator of the state of our environment. He urged stakeholders to improve the coordination of their conservation actions and search for new ideas to enhance mutual understanding.

To test a new methodology for collecting data from different sources, a specific task was undertaken to produce population assessments for species where there was an identified knowledge gap.

FACE was responsible for this task in relation to Rock Partridge *Alectoris graeca* and Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* and organised 2 workshops to address this challenge.

The value of monitoring hunting bags has been clearly shown for the Jack Snipe and the excellent work done in France could be replicated in other countries.

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL is a global partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. Since the FACE-BirdLife International Agreement was signed in 2004 the cooperation has continued to grow, a good example being the EU Birds Directive Contract, where both organisations sought to prioritise actions, and widen consultation on important issues relating to the implementation of the Directive. The collaboration is, however, not without problems on both sides which often stem from national disagreements. Therefore in addition to our EU policy work, more efforts should be made to build national dialogues and to further promote an understanding of hunting and cooperation for nature conservation.

JACK SNIPE WORKSHOP 5 OCTOBER, BRUSSELS

The workshop on Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*) focused on the advances in knowledge gained over the last 10 years, and in particular the work of the French Snipe Network *Le Réseau Bécassine* and the OMPO Institute, and their collaboration with scientists at international level. The workshop proved very informative. The work in France is an excellent example of how a network of hunters have advanced knowledge of a species which is considered a mystery to most ornithologists.

The conclusion of the assessment made by FACE is that there is no evidence for a decline in Jack Snipe numbers, and at global level it is considered as having a stable population. Therefore the Jack Snipe should not be a priority for an EU recovery plan. Alternatively a plan or strategy for the conservation of wetlands and perhaps more importantly intermediate wetland habitats (e.g. wet meadows) would be more practical and would benefit a wider range of species. Similarly, given the difficulty of monitoring this species and the lack of resources for censuses, efforts could be directed towards the monitoring of habitats suitable for Jack Snipe. The value of monitoring hunting bags has been clearly shown for the Jack Snipe and the excellent work done in France could be replicated in other countries.

ROCK PARTRIDGE WORKSHOP 28 OCTOBER, BOLZANO, ITALY

The Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*) workshop was held in the scenic town of Bolzano in northern Italy. There was strong participation from hunting associations from Italy's Alpine provinces, presenting their work on population monitoring and analysis of bag statistics.

From France, the renowned expert on the species, Dr. Ariane Bernard-Laurent of the ONCFS (National Hunting and Wildlife Agency) told participants about the monitoring protocols used in France and offered recommendations for their use elsewhere.

Besides FACE Italy, Members from Albania, Greece and Bulgaria also participated, contributing to greater understanding of the Rock Partridge throughout its range.

Whilst migratory species attract international collaboration, sedentary species are often managed at a local scale. Holding the workshop in a region which holds a population of Rock Partridge was a clear advantage, as it made it possible for experts to attend that otherwise would not have travelled to a meeting in Brussels. Hopefully this event was a step towards tapping into the immense quantity of knowledge held within the hunting community and bringing it to the fore.

The assessment process after the workshop was a collaborative effort between FACE and BirdLife International who assisted with their own networks to fill gaps in knowledge for some of the countries not represented at the workshop. The outcome of this work showed worrying declines through much of the species range but stable populations in France and Greece.

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TRANSACTIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

After 3 years of hard work by 14 partners from 10 countries, the core results of an important research project - TESS - were presented in a final conference hosted by the European Parliament Intergroup “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development” in the European Parliament, Brussels in May 2011.

An optimistic future for hunters and other local actors to continue to inform environmental policy, enhancing the paths towards a better state of nature.

TESS (Transactional Environmental Support System) was a research project supported by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Commission. The project began in October 2008 with the aim of designing a decision support system that will make it easy for policy makers to integrate local knowledge into their decision making whilst guiding and encouraging local activities that restore and maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services. In this respect, the aims of TESS are more ambitious than only supporting central policy.



The ultimate aim is to aid restoration and maintenance of biodiversity and natural resources in the European countryside, by reversing the processes that caused so much degradation.

FACE, as one of the project's partners, enabled hunters to contribute to the project by participating in surveys and providing information for case studies. The dynamic engagement of hunters in the provision of information reflects their motivation to be involved in improving the practices, methods and support systems available for biodiversity restoration – from the local level right through to the pan-European.

The project's unique nature, targeting the involvement of local actors in the conservation of biodiversity through the sustainable use of wild resources, urged Professor Jacqueline Mc Glade to offer TESS a home in the European Environment Agency (EEA). TESS directly aligns with the aims of the EEA to involve local citizens in the provision of local information for monitoring the environment.

The conference closed with an optimistic future for hunters and other local actors to continue to inform environmental policy, enhancing the paths towards a better state of nature.

NATURALLIANCE, a new web-portal to help everyone whose work or recreation depends on nature has just launched. The initiative was born out of the unique TESS project, and seeks to build up the knowledge needed to manage and restore land, water and wildlife whilst recording the good work being done for nature across Europe.

This dynamic engagement can continue, as Naturalliance provides information on a variety of topics, from hunting and game management to hounds and dog walking, looking to showcase best practice and opportunities.

FACE FINANCES

EXPENDITURE 2010

Premises	16,392.70 €
Consumables	16,594.54 €
Administration	45,004.57 €
Communication	9,370.59 €
Research & Studies	14,512.09 €
External Relations	9,419.84 €
SG-SPA costs	2,672.30 €
President costs	7,553.71 €
Staff Missions	54,619.70 €
FACE Bureau, Board & GA	49,695.00 €
Staff	592,253.40 €
Training & Development	10,388.32 €
Financial devaluation	5,307.00 €
Extraordinary charges	3,686.25 €
TOTAL	837,470.01 €

INCOME 2010

Full Membership Fees	639,700.00 €
Associate Membership Fees	16,000.00 €
Projects	30,383.69 €
Grants	84,510.00 €
Subsidies & Gifts	54,476.45 €
Insurance Compensation	1,725.26 €
Financial Products	12,587.38 €
Extraordinary income	900.00 €
TOTAL	840,282.78 €

EU Nature & Biodiversity Policies: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature

European Parliament: www.europarl.europa.eu

Council of the EU: www.consilium.europa.eu

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto: www.face.eu/CONS_biodiversity-en.htm

Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds - AEWA: www.unep-aewa.org

Convention on Migratory Species - CMS: www.cms.int

Convention on Biological Diversity - CBD: www.cbd.int

Council of Europe's Bern Convention: www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/nature/bern

Alpine Convention: www.alpconv.org

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora - CITES: www.cites.org

International Union for Conservation of Nature - IUCN: www.iucn.org

Copa-Cogeca: www.copa-cogeca.be

European Landowners' Organization - ELO: www.elo.org

OMPO Institute: www.ompo.org

International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation - CIC: www.cic-wildlife.org

Safari Club International - SCI: www.scifirstforhunters.org

Safari Club International Foundation - SCI-F: www.safariclubfoundation.org

International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey: www.iaf.org

European Anglers' Alliance - EAA: www.eaa-europe.org

Wetlands International: www.wetlands.org

BirdLife International: www.birdlife.org

Naturalliance: www.naturalliance.eu

PHOTOS

Cover: Garganey Duck (*Anas querquedula*) & The FACE Members' Meeting p.11 - Eugène Reiter (FACE Delegate, Luxembourg)

Angus Middleton p.14 & FACE Secretariat p.17 - Adam Nieścioruk (Poland)

THE VOICE OF EUROPEAN HUNTERS

Hunters have a vested interest in ensuring not only that there is wildlife to hunt but also nature to enjoy.

Work with us constructively to ensure that hunting in Europe remains good for hunters, society and nature.



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