

THE FACE ANNUAL REPORT

2014



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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 36 European countries including the EU-28. 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 April 2013 - May 2014 and outlines the background and key activities of our main working themes.

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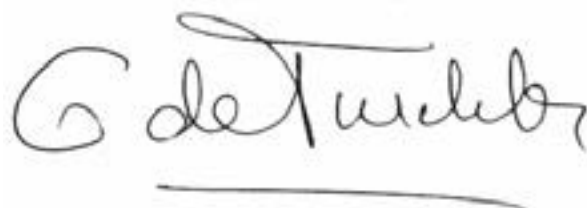
PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

The past year was characterized by great change for FACE and the European hunters but also by great successes and challenges. The most significant change was certainly the transition at the top of our federation. Angus Middleton left FACE in October 2013 to take on the position of Director of the Namibia Nature Foundation. In the past five years Angus gave a great deal of engagement and passion for FACE – starting with his work as FACE Director of Conservation and subsequently in his roles as CEO and Secretary General – and is leaving FACE a healthy and highly motivated organisation fit to confront the challenges ahead. The appointment of a new Secretary General was a difficult task, but worthwhile we have recruited Filippo Segato as Secretary General who is meeting the challenge of representing 7 million European hunters. In his first months Filippo already set an impressive course, especially in the engagement with the European Institutions.

FACE can look back on some great successes in the past year including its Biodiversity Conference held in the frame of the 2013 General Assembly which saw presentations and discussions by experts and representatives from EU Institutions, NGOs, scientific institutions and our Member associations. Relating to FACE's engagement for biodiversity, the work of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto Working Group made tremendous progress over the past months. Further success stories include the positive outcome of the European Parliament's vote on the EU Animal Health Law, the launch of the Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group (WHSG) and the trapping workshop at the August 2013 IUGB congress as well as our work on the AEWA species actions. Detailed information on these topics and other FACE work areas are featured in this report.

The greatest challenge for FACE and all European hunters is and remains in my opinion the communication of hunting to non-hunters and the aim to increase the understanding and acceptance for hunting within the European public. The public's opinions and perceptions directly impact the behavior of political decision-makers and subsequently their voting in hunting-related decisions. Therefore, only if we can gain the public's acceptance can we sustain hunting as we love it. We need to convey the value of hunting: Its value for conservation, for biodiversity, for rural communities and economies and not least its role as provider of a healthy food source. FACE undertook or joined multiple initiatives, sessions and discussions concerning this challenging task in the past year and I am hoping very much for you to continue to support us in shaping and realising a strategy for the communication and increasing of acceptance of hunting.

We are living in a time crucial for the future of hunting and its public perception – we need to face the challenges ahead united to maintain sustainable hunting in Europe!



GILBERT DE TURCKHEIM, *President*



THE 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 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 FACE SECRETARIAT



FILIPPO SEGATO, *Secretary General*

Ever since it was founded in 1977, FACE has been contributing to enriching the policy debate at European level on issues of interest to the hunting community. Over the years, as a reflection of a very dynamic constituency and societal changes, FACE has evolved in terms of membership, influence and outright capacity.

Over almost four decades FACE has been wisely steered becoming an authoritative stakeholder on all issues related to hunting, such as wildlife and habitat conservation, implementation of EU rules and consumer protection. Today the European Institutions regard FACE as a reliable partner bringing forward the views of seven million European citizens on important topics ranging from legal dossiers such as the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives to more societal concerns such as wildlife management, firearms and countryside interests. It has also broadened its scientific

activity, developing research capacity and contributing to EU consultations on many topics. FACE grew also in expertise by taking part to European research projects, as well as rising to the status of International NGO participating to international conventions for the protection of wildlife.

FACE conveys the vision of men and women concerned that the enlargement process of the EU might threaten traditions and practices that coexisted for centuries with our natural environment. The diversity of our ecosystems is reflected in the wealth of European cultures and identities and deserves to be protected and respected.

The role of FACE as an interface between those committed to sustainable use of our natural resources and policy makers takes an even more fundamental dimension in times when habitat destruction and loss of biodiversity seem to be unstoppable. While the process of urbanisation is digging a wider gap between citizens who live in cities and those who remain in rural areas, the contribution of European hunters can be an opportunity for our society. Hunting epitomises our deep bond with nature and the need to responsibly manage this heritage if we want to pass it on to the next generation.

This edition of the FACE Report wishes to provide an insight into the activity of FACE in the past year and an overview of what the hunting community stands for in terms of responsible commitment to sustainable hunting, today and in the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Filippo Segato". The signature is written in a cursive style.

THE FACE SECRETARIAT

YVES LECOQCQ

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 President of the International Union of Game Biologists 2011-2013 and presided their Congress in Brussels in August 2013.

COMMUNICATIONS

YASMIN HAMMERSCHMIDT

Communications Manager

Yasmin is responsible for FACE communications. She is coordinating communications especially with FACE Members, the wider hunting and conservation community as well as the European press by providing communications expertise on campaigns, publications, press work and social media. Yasmin is ensuring FACE Members, partners, EU decision-makers and the rest of the world are kept informed of what European hunters and FACE are all about.

LEGAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOHAN SVALBY

Director of Legal and Public Affairs

From April 2014, Johan has taken up the combined role of managing the day to day legal and public affairs work of FACE. 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. He coordinates FACE's Legal Affairs Working Group as well as our work on Animal Welfare and Health, the Bern Convention and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

CONSERVATION

CY GRIFFIN

Director of Conservation

Cy is responsible for wildlife and nature policy at FACE, providing a unique awareness and understanding of both the biology of game species with their related EU legislation. He provides technical and biological insights on a daily basis, from migratory birds to trapping. From November 2013, Cy has taken over the management of our Nature Conservation work in addition to Wildlife Conservation.

CHARLOTTE SIMON

Nature Policy Officer

Within the Conservation team, Charlotte has taken over a range of Nature Policy dossiers. Her main focus is the implementation of the Biodiversity Manifesto within the European hunting network. She is also involved in several topics of the EU Biodiversity Strategy such as Natura 2000, Green Infrastructure and No Net Loss. This includes the process "Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Service (MAES)" which is linked to the evaluation of the Economics of Hunting.

DAN BURGAR KUZELICKI

Wildlife Policy Officer

Dan graduated as a Forestry Engineer from the Biotechnical Faculty, Department for Forestry and Renewable Resources at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He joined the team after a traineeship at European Commission. His work focuses on monitoring EU nature and biodiversity legislation and its implementation. Next to that he is also working on different species issues and other topics related to our wildlife conservation work.

OFFICE & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

CHARLOTTE NYFFELS

Office & Business Manager

Charlotte manages the operations of the FACE Secretariat, from finances to human resources, whilst coordinating the administrative and office work, the translation services for the Members and the organisation of FACE Governance Meetings.

CHLOE GERBER

Office Assistant

Chloé assist the Office & Business Management Unit with general administration and reception services, facilities management, and meetings organisation. She also provides personal assistance to the Secretary General.

NICOLE BERNARD

HR & Accounts Assistant (part-time)

Nicole provides HR & accounting support to the Office & Business Management Unit.

SABINE BORGERS -GUSE

Senior Translator (part-time)

Sabine provides top quality German translations.

NEW STAFF 2014

PAUL WUJEK

Legal Affairs Officer

As of 7 July 2014

CECILIA LUETGEBRUNE

Public Affairs Officer

As of 18 August 2014

Both Paul and Cecilia report to the Director of Legal and Public Affairs.

ANGUS MIDDLETON

Secretary General

2008 - October 2013

MANUEL ESPARRAGO

Head of Political Affairs

2012 - March 2014

GABOR VON BETHLENFALVY

Nature Policy Manager

2008 - October 2013

MARILISE SAGHBINI

Communications Manager

2010 - December 2013

JESSICA INGLESE

Translator & Administrative Assistant (part-time)

2013 - July 2014



CONNECTING HUNTERS ACROSS EUROPE

FACE works with its Members, its Partners and the EU Institutions to facilitate understanding, action and exchange through regular meetings in Member States, as well as in the European Parliament and Commission.

FACE MEMBERS

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 36 countries including all the EU Member States as well as other Council of Europe countries.

FULL MEMBERS

Federata e Gjuetarëve të Shqipërisë	Latvijas Mednieku Asociācija
Zentralstelle Österreichischer Landesjagdverbände	Lietuvos Medžiotojų 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 Hercegovine (LSHB)	Federazzjoni Kaċċaturi 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 Διατήρησης Άγριος Ζώης	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
Suomen Metsästäjäliitto / Finlands Jägarförbund	Slovenská poľovnícka komora
Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs	Slovenský Poľovnícky Zväz
Deutscher Jagdverband e.V.	Lovska zveza Slovenije
Κυνηγική Συνομοσπονδία Ελλάδος	Real Federación Española de Caza (RFEC)
Országos Magyar Vadászkamara	Svenska Jägareförbundet
Országos Magyar Vadászati Védegylet	JagdSchweiz / ChasseSuisse / CacciaSvizzera / CatschaSvizra
FACE-Ireland c/o National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC)	Türkiye Atıcılık ve Avcılık Federasyonu
FACE Italia	FACE UK: British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) & Countryside Alliance

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

European Association of the Civil Commerce of Weapons (AECAC)
Association of European Manufacturers of Sporting Firearms (ESFAM)
Association européenne des chasses traditionnelles (AECT)
Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF)

7 MILLION
HUNTERS

FACE MEMBERS



FACE OFFICERS

- G. de TURCKHEIM, *President* ● ○
- J. SWIFT, *Treasurer General** ● ○
- F. SEGATO, *Secretary General** ● ○ ●

THE BIG FIVE

- G. BANA, *Vice-President, Italy* ●
- J. BORCHERT, *Vice-President, Germany* ● ○
- B. CHEVRON, *Vice-President, France* ●
- J. QUILES TARAZONA, *Vice-President, Spain* ●
- B. WHITE-SPUNNER, *Vice-President, United Kingdom* ●

THE REGIONS

- D. CROFTON, *Vice-President, Atlantic* ●
- A. KELEMEN, *Vice-President, South-East* ●
- L. KONTRO, *Vice-President, Nordic* ● ○
- N. PAPADODIMAS, *Vice-President, Mediterranean* ● ○
- E. ŠVĚDE, *Vice-President, Baltic* ●
- S. ŽERJAV, *Vice-President, Central* ●

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.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2013 IN BRUSSELS

FACE BIODIVERSITY 2020: HUNTING FOR SOLUTIONS CONFERENCE

FACE Members from 25 countries and invited guests attended the FACE *Biodiversity 2020: Hunting for Solutions Conference* and discussed their commitment to biodiversity with decision-makers from European Institutions and representatives from international organisations, NGOs and science.

The conference was underpinned by hunters' commitment to take action for nature through the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto. The event addressed the need for best possible action on the ground to achieve biodiversity targets from international to local level.

Furthermore, it was a great opportunity to share opinions with high-level speakers from EU Institutions, environmental, hunting and

other stakeholders and to showcase best-practice examples from the hunting community and other conservationists.

Particular attention was given on how to inspire and empower people to collaborate and coordinate actions for long term cost-effective biodiversity conservation. With their personal commitment and willingness to invest private resources, local stakeholders, not least Europe's seven million hunters are instrumental in generating biodiversity knowledge through monitoring of species and their habitats, and in executing biodiversity restoration and conservation activities.

In her keynote address Pia Bucella, Director of Directorate Natural Capital at the European



Commission's DG Environment, emphasised the need to work hand-in-hand to achieve the goals of the EU Biodiversity 2020 Strategy for which the active involvement of all stakeholders is essential but in particular the involvement of those "directly intervening, interested and working with nature" – the involvement of the hunting community.

The first two sessions of the day showcased opportunities for meaningful partnerships

between hunters and other conservationists and land users and highlighted some of the diverse conservation actions being undertaken by hunters every day, from international through to local levels.

The final session saw a diverse panel of experts discuss ideas with the audience on how to inspire and empower people to collaborate and coordinate actions for long term cost-effective biodiversity conservation.



SPRING IN SWEDEN THE FACE MEMBERS MEETING 2014 IN ÖSTER MALMA

The FACE 2014 Members' Meeting hosted by the Swedish Hunters Association focused on the topics of large carnivores and lead in ammunition. FACE Representatives from 21 countries gathering in Sweden for the 2014 FACE Members' Meeting from 9-12 April, agreed to sign the European Commission's "Agreement to participate in the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores", an initiative bringing together stakeholder groups with an interest in large carnivore conservation for dialogue about human - large carnivore coexistence. A signatory ceremony, attended by Commissioner for Environment Janez Potočnik and all European stakeholders, including FACE, was held in Brussels on 10 June 2014.

The meeting was also attended by high level Swedish policy makers and aimed at covering policy and societal developments impacting on hunting. The event also focussed on a better understanding of hunting in the Nordic countries. Eskil Erlandsson, Swedish Minister on Rural Affairs spoke about the positive experience between hunters and public institutions in Sweden and underlining the exceptional relations enjoyed by Nordic hunters and political representatives.

Two workshops were held at the meeting – on large carnivores and on lead and ammunition. Lead in ammunition is an issue widely discussed throughout the FACE Membership with various initiatives taking place all over Europe. Speakers from hunting associations, the industry and



public institutions presented on the issue and FACE Members shared experiences from their countries.

Large carnivores, their management and the growing number of conflicts owing to increasing populations have been at the center of the discussions within FACE for the last couple of years. Over the past decades wolves have

returned to many regions in Europe sparking conflicts with rural populations and animal breeders. FACE is actively working with the Commission and other rural stakeholder groups in the framework of the European Commission's initiative for an "Agreement to participate in the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores".



REGIONAL DIVERSITY

The diversity of hunting practices and landscapes in Europe is unparalleled. FACE Members work closely with their neighbours who often share the same specific issues, whether it is the impact of rapid development on the Mediterranean coastline on migrating birds, or the management of large carnivores in the North. At the same time FACE aims at knowing and understanding its Members and their hunting in depth by experiencing it first hand and attending important pan-European hunting events.

NORDIC HUNTERS' COOPERATION

The Nordic Hunters Cooperation met in Öster Malma, Sweden on 7-8 September 2013 and in Helsinki, Finland on 1-2 April 2014. FACE Director of Legal and Public Affairs Johan Svalby attended both meetings briefing Members about relevant FACE topics. FACE Secretary General Filippo Segato attended the second meeting between the Baltic and the Nordic FACE regions in Copenhagen, Denmark on 11-12 March learning about Nordic hunting and discussing various EU-level topics.

EU ACCESSION OF CROATIA

In the context of the relations between FACE and the Croatian hunters and accession of Croatia to the EU on 1 July 2013, FACE's Head of Political Affairs Manuel Esparrago met with the Croatian Hunters' Federation in Zagreb on 26 April 2013.

The meeting addressed a wide range of issues that will be affected by the accession to the EU, like the listing of species in the Annexes of the Birds and Habitats Directives, the import and export of hunting trophies, firearms regulations, etc. FACE subsequently provided the Croatian Hunters' Federation with more detailed information about EU rules.





FACE IN BURSA, TURKEY

FACE was invited to participate in the European Workshop entitled “The European Union and Turkey – What significance for hunting and game management?” which was held in Bursa, northwestern Turkey on the 31 May & 1 June as part of the 5th Bursa Fair “Nature,Hunting” which attracts over 50,000 participants interested in hunting, angling, outdoor sports and other related activities.

The Turkish Shooting and Hunting Federation (TAF) generously hosted the Workshop and Cemal Akcan, Director of the Game Management Department General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks and Atilla Tankut, Vice President of the TAF, invited the FACE Team from Brussels to Bursa for a dialogue resulting in a greater understanding on both sides. The 2-day Workshop was attended by TAF members and several government officials from the Turkish Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs.

The FACE Team detailed national profiles illustrating how hunting is organised, regulated and the diverse approaches to bird hunting across Europe. These were then contextualised with FACE presentations on the EU and international framework and guidelines for bird hunting; with the FACE experts drawing out aspects of particular relevance for bird hunting in Turkey. These profiles catalysed an interactive discussion with many questions and answers.

The highly interactive nature of the workshop resulted in a valuable exchange and enhanced the mutual understanding of both FACE and hunting in Turkey, with the topics gaining most interest and discussion including regulation of bird hunting, hunting seasons, hunting licenses, gun restrictions and wildlife conservation issues. The broad array of interesting questions raised demonstrates the breadth of both hunting interest in Turkey but also the real engagement of the participants and desire to find out more about hunting beyond the country’s borders.



HUNTING AND POLITICS

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.

THE FACE OF EUROPE

FACE regularly holds events in the European Parliament to provide opportunities for hunters and EU policy makers to meet directly, and participates in various official expert and advisory groups within the European Commission. This way FACE stays close to EU policy proposals at their origin and during the stages of their implementation. These activities are based on the fostering of constructive relationships, permeated by mutual respect, between representatives of the EU Institutions, on the one hand, and the hunting community, on the other.

The wide variety of activity, as reflected across the various sections of this Annual Report, 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 meetings of the No Net Loss Working Group (p.32), the MAES Working Group (p.30), the ORNIS Committee (p.43), the EU project “Sustainable Management of Cormorant Populations”, the various Natura 2000 expert groups (p.34), the Coordination Group on Biodiversity and Nature (p.29), the expert groups preparing for an EU platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores (p.44), the Humane Trapping Standards Expert Group (p.72), the AGRI Advisory Group on CAP Reform as well as the meetings of the EU Animal Health Advisory Committee (p.67).

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

FACE & THE EU TRANSPARENCY REGISTER

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 currently made up of 751 Members (MEPs) from 28 EU Member States, most of whom work in Political Groups. These MEPs are important decision-makers for shaping EU policy, increasingly so following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009 when the Parliament extended its 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 Member, and thereby Europe's 7 million hunters can be kept informed of relevant EU developments.

FACE has been in constant contact with the Parliament, to enlarge the network, deepen existing contacts as well as facilitating visiting FACE Members' Delegations, especially during the run-up to the European Parliament elections in May 2014.

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

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 120 formally supporting MEPs making up its Membership, the Intergroup is one of the largest in the Parliament. Described as the First Lady of Hunting in Europe, the Intergroup president MEP Véronique Mathieu Houillon provided leadership on hunting issues in the Parliament during the 2009-2014 legislature, enabling hunters to reflect and engage in EU policy developments.

Through the European Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup, FACE held 4 key events in this centre of decision-making throughout the reporting period. 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.

In May 2013 a meeting was held on different national approaches for tackling game damages caused by big game. To mark the historic occasion of the accession of Croatia to the European Union on 1 July, the Croatian hunters were in focus of the meeting in July 2013, as one of the first Croatian civil society groups to visit the heart of the EU. This meeting was dedicated to Croatia's excellent game management and covered different topics concerning the integration of Croatia's wildlife, nature and hunters within the EU. The first Intergroup session in 2014 focussed on the acquisition and possession of firearms in the EU; followed by a meeting in March on land management across the Union.



CONNECTING HUNTERS WITH THE EU

The visits of nationals to FACE in Brussels help to communicate the immense relevance of the EU and its implications for local hunters. This is a great challenge, which becomes more critical as the EU gains in importance. FACE addresses this by encouraging initiatives that allow hunters and related stakeholders to interact directly; providing coordination or visiting hunters in their field:

FRENCH HUNTERS FROM NORMANDY VISIT FACE

A delegation made up of the FDC (French hunters' county associations) Presidents and Officials from the Basse & Haute Normandie region visited the FACE office as part of Sustainable Hunting Intergroup President MEP Véronique Mathieu Houillon's Académie des cadres cynégétiques européens (Academy of European Hunting). This initiative brings 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.

Following an introduction and overview of FACE, in-depth presentations on 3 key FACE dossiers: Animal Welfare, Firearms and the implementation of the Birds Directive were given by the FACE Team, providing the delegation with a deeper insight into the working of both the EU and of FACE. The elected Officials and their Directors from FDC 76 Seine Maritime, FDC 27 Eure, FDC 14 Calvados, FDC 50 Manche and FDC 61 Orne had lunch at the FACE House, with the opportunity to raise local issues, share their ideas and experiences and discuss their connection to EU policies with the FACE Team who were delighted to meet the representatives of these 5 Départements and hear their views.

FACE is always keen to host visits from hunters, which represents an opportunity to explain what FACE does for them but above all a way for FACE to know first-hand their priorities and concerns. We strongly encourage Members to organise similar delegation visits with their national MEPs.

We look forward to welcoming more hunters at the European House of Hunting!

FINNISH HUNTERS VISIT FACE AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Within the frame of a study trip, the Board of the Finnish Hunters' Association visited Brussels during 17-19 June 2013 to meet with FACE, the Commission's DG Environment, MEPs, the European Economic and Social Committee and Copa-Cogeca who represent farmers. The trip was organised by Martin Hojsgaard of the Nordic Hunters' Cooperation in consultation with FACE.

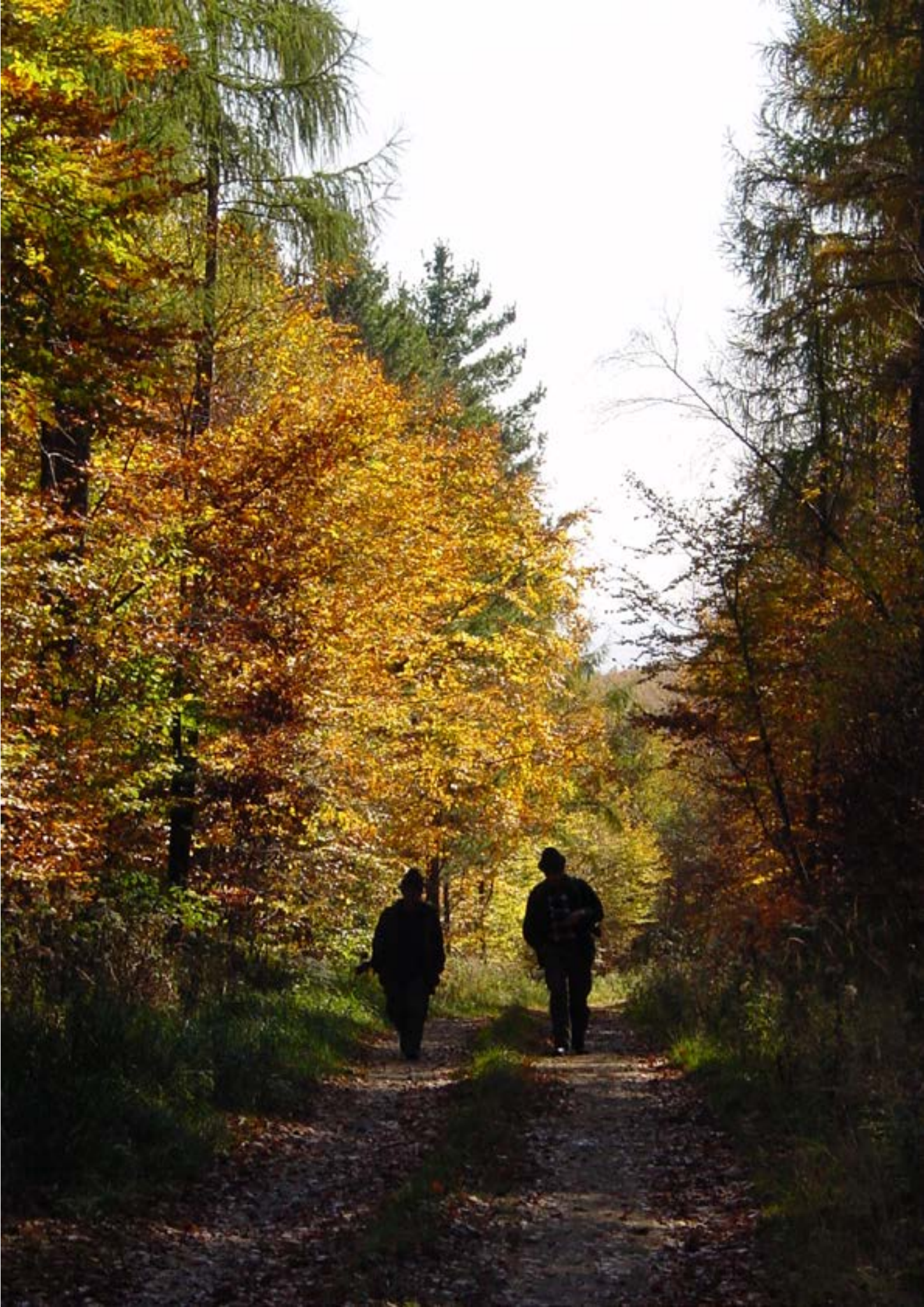
The FACE Team in Brussels met with the Finnish delegation at the FACE office, providing an overview of FACE's activities as well as an update on the latest EU policy debates prior to meeting with the Commission.

Several topics were discussed with Pia Bucella, Director of the directorate Natural Capital of DG Environment.

The Commission appreciated the Finnish hunters' efforts to seek constructive dialogue and also welcomed the participation of FACE.

The Finnish delegation also explained its concerns to several Finnish MEPs – an excellent initiative that strengthens the link between MEPs and the hunters/voters in their constituency. Following these connections, at least one more Finnish MEP decided to join the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup in the European Parliament.

The study trip was an opportunity for FACE to further enhance its cooperation with the Finnish Hunters' Association and is looking to work closer with its Finnish Member. Other Members are encouraged to organise similar visits in coordination with FACE.



The nature conservation issues dealt with by FACE cover the ongoing implementation of the EU Nature Directives and new policy developments related to nature and biodiversity.

These issues are of importance to FACE as they influence national hunting legislation and in particular **habitats** and **site protection regimes**.

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

FACE works together with its Members to share and promote 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

With around one in four species currently threatened with extinction, biodiversity loss is the most critical environmental threat alongside climate change in Europe and worldwide.

The tenth Conference of the Parties (CoP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Nagoya in 2010, adopted various strategies and protocols to tackle this issue. The latter include the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and a strategy to mobilise resources for global biodiversity.

As response to these mandates the EU leaders and the European Commission have adopted an ambitious new strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020. The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 includes 6 main targets and 20 actions to enable Europe reach this goal.

Both the CBD and the EU Biodiversity Strategy emphasise the need to engage a broad variety of stakeholders - including local communities - in the planning and implementation processes. Hunters can play an important role in these processes.

THE BIODIVERSITY MANIFESTO

In line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the CBD Strategic Plan, 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 represented by them to ensure that hunting is sustainable and contributes positively to biodiversity conservation.

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto addresses 4 of the 6 targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy with its 34 action points and promotes cooperation with other sectors and stakeholders such as farmers, land and forest owners, conservation NGOs and public authorities.

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto is intended to provide a framework in which national hunters' associations can demonstrate and coordinate efforts in line with international and national biodiversity objectives.

FACE conducted a project from end of 2012 until September 2013 to implement the objectives of the Manifesto at the Mediterranean level. This project was co-financed by the MAVA Foundation. In course of this project FACE developed a database to collect and classify



as much information as possible on projects contributing to biodiversity conservation conducted by hunters. Additionally, national biodiversity strategies and actions plans were evaluated to identify possibilities for hunters to be involved.

FACE Mediterranean Members gathered on 12 September 2013 discussing current issues in their regions and sharing information and expertise on the Biodiversity Manifesto process.

Following the finalisation of the Mediterranean project, FACE decided to go one step further by implementing the Biodiversity Manifesto at European level on a long-term basis. For this purpose, FACE launched a new FACE Biodiversity Manifesto Working Group which held its first meeting in April 2014.

The Working Group took the opportunity to discuss the development of an efficient system for gathering information on hunters' contribution to biodiversity conservation, the improvement of the Biodiversity Manifesto and the development of a communication plan.

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

THE EU CO-ORDINATION GROUP FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE

FACE attended the 2013 meetings of the EU Co-ordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature (CGBN). These meetings, organised twice a year, gather representatives from member states, stakeholders and technical staff from the Biodiversity and Nature Units within the European Commission's DG Environment.

The objectives of the Co-ordination Group are to oversee the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the delivery from the various Workings Groups as well as to provide the supporting material and preparatory work for meetings of the Nature Directors (see p. 35).

HUNTING DIRECTORS' MEETING

For the third time, government officials responsible for national game management and hunting gathered for the Hunting Directors Meeting. The meeting took place in Brasov (Romanian Carpathian Mountains) in October 2013 to discuss EU policies relevant to hunting in the respective member countries.

Ten Member States were represented (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden), with the European Commission's DG Environment, and FACE as only NGO, being invited as observers.

Agenda topics ranged from the management of large carnivores within the restrictive framework of the Habitats Directive to the new Commission Proposal for a Regulation on Invasive Alien Species, the control of cormorants under the Birds Directive to the opportunities for small game management offered by the Greening measures of the forthcoming Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) reform 2014-2019.

THE MAES PROCESS AND THE ECONOMICS OF HUNTING

MAPPING AND ASSESSING ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR SERVICES (MAES)

FACE has been involved with the European Commission's DG Environment MAES process through the work of the EU MAES Working Group. Its objective is to support the implementation of Action 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy which calls Member States to: (a) Map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory by 2014 (b) Assess the economic value of such services, and promote the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020.

The European Commission's MAES process is highly relevant for other actions from the Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy: "Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services". Indeed, identification and assessment of ecosystem services provide relevant data for the implementation of the Green Infrastructure and No Net Loss initiatives (see p. 32).

The first action of the MAES Working Group in 2013 was to support the development of an analytical framework followed by the creation of 6 thematic pilots. Their objective was to test this framework on real data at European and national level.

In 2014, the Working Group and Members States decided to focus more on the mapping issues, but data is still needed for the assessment of ecosystem services.

Hunting can be considered one of the various ecosystem services. Therefore, FACE was engaged in two of the pilots (agro-ecosystems and forest), contributing to the data gathering and to evaluate the economics of the ecosystem services linked to hunting.

Since wildlife can have multiple uses and hunting can cover a broad range of habitats, it appeared difficult to make a distinction among habitat types. This made the need for a specific study focused on hunting obvious.

THE ECONOMICS OF HUNTING

Economics is a crucial aspect of policy formulation and decision-making. This applies to both environmental policies when evaluating the economics of biodiversity loss and to hunting activities representing an important socio-economic activity, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, sustainable hunting "reinvests" in nature conservation through management or restoration activities. Unfortunately the data on the economics of hunting is still dispersed and varied across Europe.

In collaboration with MEP Véronique Mathieu and researchers from the Stirling University, FACE developed the "Framework on the Economics of Hunting". This is a conceptual framework meant to build the basis for reflection, discussion and ideas in order to start an assessment of the value flows linked to hunting. It also aims to provide information to evaluate those values' impact on socio-economic but also environmental aspects and to feed into the evolving MAES process.

Hunting activities represent an important socio-economic activity, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, sustainable hunting "reinvests" in nature conservation through management or restoration activities.

THE FACE WORKSHOP ON MAES AND THE ECONOMICS OF HUNTING

Knowing that some FACE Members have conducted studies at a national level, and that research is planned in other countries, it was deemed useful to align these studies with the requirements under MAES to feed into this EU process.

FACE organised a workshop on 18 October 2013 gathering a representative of the agro-ecosystem pilot from the MAES Working Group, an expert from the Instituut voor Natuur- en Bosonderzoek (Belgium) and 5 of its Members (France, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK), as well as others expressing an interest (Czech Republic, Germany and Slovakia).

The Workshop aimed to find some shared measures or means to harmonise some of the indicators so as to contribute to the MAES objectives.

To a first European picture...?

In April 2014, FACE started liaising with researchers from the University of Stirling in order to identify the feasibility of a study that would contribute to the MAES process and provide of first assessment of the Economics of hunting at European level.



NO NET LOSS OF ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR SERVICES

Action point 7b) of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 requires the European Commission to carry out further work with a view to proposing by 2015 an initiative to ensure there is no net loss of ecosystems and their services (e.g. through compensation or offsetting schemes).

In 2013, the Commission set up the Working Group on No Net Loss of Ecosystems and their Services to collect views from Member State representatives, stakeholders (industry, farmers, environmental NGOs, etc.) and experts on such an initiative. Furthermore, the EU Commission instigated a study led by the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) to identify policy options for this initiative; the report was published by end of January 2014.

FACE closely followed the discussions conducted by the Working Group and the development of the resulting guidance documents.

Biodiversity offset/compensation schemes usually follow a 3-step mitigation hierarchy of:

- Avoid or prevent negative impacts on the environment in general;
- Minimise and rehabilitate on-site effects of development if impacts cannot be avoided;

- Offset/compensation measures that are undertaken as a last resort for the residual adverse impacts.

The Working Group discussed what a No Net Loss policy may need to consider possible instruments addressing all stages of the mitigation hierarchy.

A No Net Loss policy may mainly focus on measures that aim to address unavoidable residual impacts (i.e. those that remain after avoidance, minimisation and rehabilitation measures have been taken). This is because analysis of current policy instruments indicate (as suggested by the IEEP study) that most existing measures aim to avoid or reduce impacts, and the most significant policy gaps (outside the Natura 2000 network) relate to dealing with residual impacts.

The importance of following the mitigation hierarchy by first focusing on avoiding and minimising the environmental impacts was raised in the Working Group. Compensation and offsetting should be considered as a last option, only resorted to after the previous measures have been applied.

Further development of the No Net Loss initiative will be carried out in 2014 such as the launch of a public consultation. FACE will follow the evolution of the situation, ensuring the link between No Net Loss policies and hunting activities is taken into consideration.

Hunters certainly have an interest in not losing out on natural areas, and avoiding loss of or damage to ecosystems. This may require the systematic consideration of alternative options for achieving the objectives of the proposed activity.

In areas affected by the project and by the biodiversity offset, effective participation of stakeholders needs to be ensured in the decision-making about biodiversity offsets including their evaluation, selection, design, implementation and monitoring. Furthermore, areas managed for hunting could be seen as potential offsets, carried out cost-effectively through voluntary engagement by hunters.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

In the EU, many ecosystems have been degraded, largely as a result of land fragmentation. With the Biodiversity Strategy 2020 the EU and its Member States committed to maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services and restoring degraded ecosystems by incorporating a concept of Green Infrastructure in spatial planning.

The Green Infrastructure concept is meant to help reconnect existing nature areas and improve the overall ecological quality of the broader countryside. A green infrastructure will also help maintain healthy ecosystems so that they can continue to deliver valuable services to society. Therefore, it is a tool that uses nature to provide ecological, economic and social benefits.

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.

In 2013, the European Commission released a Communication for encouraging the use of Green Infrastructure, and for ensuring that the enhancement of natural processes becomes a systematic part of spatial planning.

The Communication sets out the policy background for strategy and includes a short description of what Green Infrastructure is. It also describes how Green Infrastructure can contribute to a number of key policy areas and identifies what needs to be done to promote the deployment of Green Infrastructure and how this will be achieved.

The European Commission decided to launch a new Working Group on Green Infrastructure Implementation and Restoration for 2014. The objectives of this Working Group are to support the implementation of the strategy's actions as set out in the Communication and to provide a platform for sharing best practices on Green Infrastructure deployment. It will also address the linkages between the restoration of degraded ecosystems and the deployment of Green Infrastructure.

The concept is relevant to hunters as both restoration and Green Infrastructure projects may have an influence on the areas where hunting activities are carried out.

Moreover, hunters can play a key role by providing expertise on coordinated management schemes (e.g. Game Management Units) and on individual local level actions (e.g. planting hedgerows and wild flower strips). Hunters already conduct many restoration activities and could provide support in the identification of degraded ecosystems and the elaboration of restoration plans based on the local land conditions.

These types of contribution maintain a fundamental Green Infrastructure for the conservation of nature at a landscape level, thus strengthening and restoring ecosystems, increasing landscape connectivity and its capacity to respond to environmental change (e.g. climate change). Therefore, FACE engaged in the new Working Group to provide expertise from local actors, represent hunting activities and identify how hunters and their activities could contribute to Green Infrastructure implementation.

Hunters can play a key role by providing expertise on coordinated management schemes and on individual local level actions. Hunters already conduct many restoration activities and could provide support in the identification of degraded ecosystems and the elaboration of restoration plans based on the local land conditions.

NATURA 2000 AND PROTECTED AREAS

Despite Europe being the most densely populated continent, the surface area designated as protected areas has been growing exponentially since the 1970s. This expansion precipitated the evolution of their management, increasingly run with and by local communities and stakeholders, integrating social, economic and environmental needs.

Today, some areas rely fully on the local people and their knowledge whilst in the first half of the 20th century protected areas were predominantly strictly protected national parks, run by central governments.

The EU's Natura 2000 Network and the Council of Europe's Emerald Network were developed in the mind-set of this evolution in approach. Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy and its designated sites now cover almost 20 percent of EU land surface.

The success of these areas requires the support of land users, in fact, many of our valuable habitats are the results of traditional land use and some of the most important wildlife sites in Europe have survived the pressures of development and destruction due to the interest of wildlife recreational uses, such as hunting.

BIOGEOGRAPHIC PROCESS

The Commission wishes to play its role in promoting cooperation and exchange of experience between all actors involved in the management of Natura 2000. Therefore, the biogeographical process has been developed involving a series of seminars, one for each of the nine biogeographical regions or for a group of regions. By identifying common objectives and priorities and enhancing cooperation and synergies, the Commission wants to ensure that the potential of the Natura 2000 network is fully exploited.

In January 2014, a new cycle has been launched for the Continental – Pannonian – Steppic – Black sea regions and the Steering Committee meeting took place on 5 March 2014 to select a certain number of priority habitat types. The process aims to bring together key experts to agree on a list of recommendations and proposals for concrete actions regarding the management of the selected habitat types.

In the meantime, the EU Commission and Member States agreed on a new organisation of the biogeographical process to make it simpler and more practical. This new organisation will be applied to the Continental – Pannonian – Steppic and Black sea regions. The cycle for the Mediterranean region has continued to progress

in this frame with the organisation of a kick-off meeting in Thessaloniki (Greece).

FACE informed its Members from the respective regions and liaised with the Natura 2000 Users Forum in order to coordinate engagement of the hunting community as part of the national delegations. However, some efforts still need to be conducted to improve communication with the Members States and to ensure that discussion on land management includes actual managers on the ground.

By identifying common objectives and priorities and enhancing cooperation and synergies, the Commission wants to ensure that the potential of the Natura 2000 network is fully exploited.

EU BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

The EU Biodiversity and Nature Directors' Meetings take place twice a year, organised by the country holding the EU Presidency at the time and focusing on dedicated items. Attended by the Biodiversity and Nature Directors of the national Ministries and their equivalent from the European Commission, the meetings provide guidance and orientations to more specific Commission Working Groups relating to policy and implementation legislation.

In 2013, the first Biodiversity and Nature Directors' Meeting was held under the Irish EU Presidency in Dublin, Ireland, in May and the second meeting under the Lithuanian EU Presidency in Vilnius, Lithuania, in November. In 2014, the first meeting under the Greek EU Presidency took place on 24 and 25 April in Athens, Greece.

The Natura 2000 Users Forum presented their view on related subjects through joint interventions, which were coordinated by FACE for the meetings in Ireland and Greece.

These emphasised amongst other points the need for better involvement of local actors for the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, less bureaucracy on the ground and consistency between EU policies. The Interventions were welcomed by the European Commission and national delegations.

NATURA 2000 AWARD

The European Commission launched the "European Natura 2000 Award" to recognise excellence in best practices for nature conservation in Europe. The award aims to draw the public's attention to the network's success and to demonstrate its importance for the protection of biodiversity across Europe.

FACE informed its Members about this opportunity for hunters to demonstrate their role and involvement in the Natura 2000 Network and their contribution to the Nature Directives.

The European Commission acknowledged hunters' engagement for Natura 2000 by selecting the ChasNat 2000 project of the Regional French Federation of Hunters from Languedoc-Roussillon as finalist for the Natura 2000 award.

Unfortunately the project did not win the award. However, the EU Commission and the jury acknowledged the excellence of all the finalists, stressing the difficulty of choosing a winner.

Having been selected as finalist already shows hunters' efforts for nature conservation are being recognised and communicated at a broad level.



THE NON-INTERVENTION MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

The biogeographic process for the Alpine region was finalised by the end of 2013 with some debates regarding the introduction of the 'non-intervention management' concept in the Natura 2000 context. FACE was concerned about the implementation and consequences of such a notion which excludes the majority of management activities from the areas.

Bans - which should be based on scientific evidence - need to be evaluated on a site-by-site basis (due to local differences and different conservation objectives). Conflicts arising from unnecessary bans can cause additional challenges in achieving the conservations objectives.

On a case by case principle and under certain conditions, non-intervention can be considered as a useful tool for achieving some conservation objectives. However, FACE does not agree with non-intervention management being quoted as one of the main categories of management at biogeographical level as it does not provide the flexibility needed locally for nature users/managers to decide which method is the most suitable.

In collaboration with Copa-Cogeca, the Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF) and the European Landowners' Organization (ELO), FACE kept track of the situation. Two joint statements were signed in June 2013 and November 2013 by the four organisations expressing our shared concerns about the introduction of non-intervention forest management in Natura 2000 discussions and urging the European Commission to withdraw the concept from the biogeographical and national processes.

The European Commission gave a positive reply to the request by reaching a compromise for the final report of the Alpine process.

THE NATURA 2000 USERS FORUM

The Natura 2000 Users' Forum brings together FACE and foresters (the Confederation of European Forest Owners, CEPF), farmers (Copa-Cogeca), anglers (European Anglers' Alliance, EAA) and landowners (European Landowners' Organisation, ELO).

Our organisations represent environmental, socio-economic and socio-cultural activities linked to rural areas - areas which host the largest proportion of the EU biodiversity. Together we represent over 45 million EU citizens which own, manage and use land and the renewable natural resources.

The Forum helps policy-makers in policy development and implementation of the EU Nature Directives, especially concerning Natura 2000 and understanding local socio-economic situations. It has proven to be a good platform to address EU policy-makers with the joint messages.

A meeting was organised in April 2014 gathering for the first time the Head of Units Nature and Biodiversity from DG Environment, their team and the Natura 2000 Users Forum. This was the opportunity to discuss issues identified by the Forum with aims to improve dialogue and involvement of local actors in the European processes.

NATURA 2000 AND FORESTS

By the end of 2013, the EU Commission has launched a new working group with the objective of developing a new guidance on the management of forests within Natura 2000.

This guidance is meant to assist Member State administrations, key stakeholders and practitioners in developing and promoting forestry systems and thus contributing to the maintenance and improvement of the conservation status, more specifically for the rare and threatened habitats and species of EU importance.

Hunting remains a necessary tool in forest management more particularly concerning population management (e.g. damages in surrounding agricultural fields by Wild boar and the control of generalist predator species). Furthermore, hunting is associated with many socio-economic benefits within Natura 2000 network and often represents an attractive source of income for landowners and an incentive to manage forest sustainably.

Therefore, FACE has been involved in the two last meetings of the working group in order to provide hunters' views on the various issues and to identify how hunting could contribute to future processes linked to the management of forest within Natura 2000.

Furthermore, it gives FACE the opportunity to be involved in the debate concerning the non-intervention concept and its inclusion in the new guidance.

Linked to that issue, FACE had the opportunity to attend a meeting for a project called "ThinkForest" which aims to identify information needs related to forest policy questions and build a common understanding of the current problems.

This event constituted the occasion to present another project called "INTEGRATE" conducted by the European Forest Institute with the objective to integrate forest biodiversity conservation into regularly managed forest, and the complex relationships, trade-offs and emerging challenges.

This integrative approach is opposed to the segregate one which consists of having a strictly protected reserve within the forest area and is more akin to the non-intervention principles.

The foresters and other stakeholders (including hunters) will have a significant role of demonstrating how management measures, when done properly, can contribute to biodiversity conservation and that the dialogue is open to make the compromise between human activities and biodiversity



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognises Invasive Alien Species (IAS) 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.

REGULATION ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Invasive Alien Species are responsible for biodiversity loss and species extinction but they also cause 12 billion Euro of costs in European Union alone. That is why the European Commission proposed a new Regulation with aim to establish a framework, to tackle the problem of IAS on an EU scale. It will provide a coordinated approach and will focus on prevention measures, namely: early detection and rapid eradication, surveillance and controls on borders.

With the future policy action FACE will ask that priority species are identified in a manner that recognises the positive role of non-Invasive Alien Species.

HUNTERS AND INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

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.

We do not consider that hunting is any longer a high-risk pathway (especially falconry); nonetheless we have committed to work with the Council of Europe Bern Convention with the Code of Conduct on Hunting and Invasive Species. Properly trained hunters could indeed be effectively involved in monitoring programmes of IAS distribution and could play a fundamental role in terms of surveillance on new IAS arrival or introduction, to support an early detection and rapid response system or to raise awareness on IAS.

Good example of hunters' involvement 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.

NORDIC HUNTERS TURNING THE TIDE OF ALIEN PREDATOR INVASIONS

To mark the end of their LIFE+ project "Management of the invasive Raccoon Dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*) in the north-European countries" – MIRDINEC (LIFE+/09/NAT/SE/344), the Swedish Hunters' Association held a conference in Luleå, Sweden 16 - 18 June 2013 to present results and gather experts engaged in similar projects across Europe and further afield.

More than most issues, the problem of regulating Invasive Alien Species (IAS) requires a global approach to local problems. Regions can be both the source and recipient of IAS e.g. Eurasian Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) is invasive in North America, while the Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) is invasive in Europe. Within Europe we also need to work together to ensure that good work is not put to waste by lack of action in neighbouring areas.

The MIRDINEC project is one of the good examples where Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark have worked together to prevent and contain the spread of an IAS. It is particularly commendable that Norway, despite having no Raccoon dog has seen the benefit of contributing to the project through co-funding.

FACE is very proud of the success of the project. Since the project began in 2010, no Raccoon

dogs have been confirmed outside the area where they were present before the project started. Furthermore, the predicted population increase within the study area has been avoided, with no increase detected. Thanks to additional research, advances have been made in understanding the biology of the Raccoon dog, in particularly the dispersal during different times of year and between sexes. The project also developed new techniques which can be put to use in other regions.

You may ask why hunters are so interested in stopping the spread of Raccoon dog, as in Northern Sweden it poses little threat to any hunting interests. It could however threaten some rare amphibians such as the Fire-bellied toad (*Bombina orientalis*) in the Southern Sweden, and nesting colonies of waterbirds. The concern of hunters is for wildlife in general, not only the game species which they hunt.



COUNCIL OF EUROPE - BERN CONVENTION: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR HUNTING AND INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

The 33rd Standing Committee meeting of the Bern Convention was held 3-6 December, in Strasbourg the Code of Conduct for Hunting and Invasive Alien Species was favourably adopted. This was important to draw a final conclusion to 2 years of dialogue with the principle authors of the Code. The idea of this Code of Conduct was first suggested at the 2003 in the Bern Convention's European Strategy for IAS, where one of the action points was to 'Work with FACE and national hunting and shooting organisations to assess risks associated with introduction of alien game species for restocking. As appropriate, co-operate in the elaboration, adoption and implementation of a European Code of Conduct on Hunting to regulate and manage such introductions'. 10 years later, this objective has been achieved. There is also a clear message in the Code that hunting as a pathway for the introduction alien fauna has significantly changed since 1980, and at present represents a minimal risk. It should also be understood that this is one of several codes of conduct on invasive alien species including; horticulture, botanical gardens, pets, protected areas; next year one will be developed on recreational fishing. These Codes of

Conduct are voluntary, as is stated in the opening of the Code, "the principle of self-regulation is considered to be more successful and effective than any other legally binding scheme".

Other issues of interest were eradication efforts for Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*).

As a result of escapes from waterfowl collections in the UK about 50 years ago, the Ruddy Duck started breeding in the wild and expanded its range well into Continental Europe, where it through hybridisation seriously threatens the survival of the very rare White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucopsis*). Both the EU and the Council of Europe have legislation and rules in place, or in the pipeline, to fight invasive alien species; the Bern Convention in particular adopted in 2010 a Recommendation to its Contracting Parties for the eradication of Ruddy Ducks.

National officials and experts reported on the situation in their respective countries. The UK reported less than 50 specimens of the North American Ruddy Duck remain in the country (compared to well over 6,000 some ten years ago) and control operations will continue until

complete disappearance. France, Belgium and Spain also reported good progress in achieving the objective of eliminating Ruddy Ducks from the wild. A serious concern remains the Dutch authorities' total lack of action with this species, despite the fact that the number of Ruddy Ducks has continued to increase in the Netherlands over the last years, with at least 12 breeding pairs in 8 different sites in 2013.

The Bern Convention authorities view this as a serious infringement and a procedure for this non-compliance is considered, subject to a formal complaint by another country or non-governmental organisation. For instance, a similar procedure was launched against Italy several years ago for the failure of controlling the invasive Grey squirrel.

THE EU BIRDS DIRECTIVE

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.

Today FACE continues to enhance the implementation of the Birds Directive and the challenges faced by EU enlargement and changing population status of Europe's wild birds – this work remains at the heart of FACE.

In line with Target 1 of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, FACE is focusing on Action 3 - Increasing stakeholder awareness and involvement and improved enforcement, and Action 4 - Improve and streamline monitoring and reporting, which complements FACE's broader engagements on the conservation of migratory birds.

MEMBER STATES REPORT ON THE STATUS OF WILD BIRD POPULATIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME UNDER THE DIRECTIVE

At the end of 2013 EU Member States submitted their first reports under the new format which records population status and trends for around 500 species of birds, for the period 2008-2012). Previously reports were required every 3 years on the implementation of national provisions taken under the directive, but from now there has been an agreement to submit much more substantial reports every 6 years. This follows extensive work conducted within the framework of the Expert Group on Reporting, with which FACE has been involved since its conception in 2008.

HOW TO MEASURE PROGRESS OF THE BIRDS DIRECTIVE?

On 21 November 2013 members of the European Commission's Expert Group on Reporting met to discuss how to measure progress towards target one of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. This target is that 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show a secure or improved status. The baseline figure for birds considered to be Secure is 52%, based on the assessment by BirdLife International in 2004. If the target was simply to increase this figure by 50%, then it would mean that 78% of species would need to be in Secure status by 2020. However, this is not quite correct as the target includes species whose status is either secure or improving. The point of the meeting was to define the conditions under which species will be classified as improving, even if their status is not Secure by 2020. If for example a species has shown a long-term decline since 1980, but has been stable in the last 10 years, this would be considered as an 'improvement'.

At the meeting raised the concern that we are mainly assessing the extent to which species are doing poorly. If we only look at the negative end of the scale we are missing half the picture in the assessment process. We should also be able to communicate the successes of conservation and the species which are prospering.

ORNIS COMMITTEE: UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS CAN THE HUNTING OF A SPECIES WITH AN UNFAVOURABLE STATUS BE ALLOWED?

This question was raised at the ORNIS Committee of 30 April 2014 where the results of a study to assess the implementation of the EU management plans for Annex II species of the Birds Directive were presented. As the Commission explained these plans while not legally binding are aimed to assist Member States in fulfilling their obligations under the Birds Directive, particularly the provisions of Article 7, by ensuring that the hunting of these species complies with the principle of wise use and good population status.

Since all 13 Management Plans have come to the end of their time frame, an assessment was made on the level of implementation by Member States. In brief the main results of the assessment were that although actions had been taken for the species, these were not often linked to the EU plans. Overall only 8% of the short-term objectives of the MP have been achieved, but a large majority had at least been partially achieved. The category of measures related to hunting (hunting ban, bag limit, bag statistics, etc.) had the highest implementation score whereas the category of measures related to habitat conservation/management (in particular agri-environmental schemes) has the lowest score.

The study considered that the contribution of the hunting community in the implementation of the actions was low but was higher in countries where the species is huntable. FACE stated that this apparent low implementation could be explained by the fact the actions within the Management Plans did not seek to involve hunters in conservation actions, only impose restrictions, which is the role of the authorities to carry out, and that the conservation actions by hunters are voluntary efforts not recorded in a formal manner.

As has been highlighted in the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto there is a need to document the conservation work done by hunters to demonstrate the contribution of hunting to nature.

This is important for huntable species with declining populations as it should be understood that hunting is a strong motivation for conservation. An excellent example being the Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*) which although having declined across much of Europe due

to the habitat loss and degradation, would have certainly experienced more drastic declines if it wasn't for the efforts of hunters. There are even cases such as in Ireland where hunters have saved the species from extinction at national level.

In terms of future steps FACE stressed the recommendations given in the report drafted by BirdLife International and FACE in 2012 on "Methodology for bird species recovery planning in the European Union", in particular the need for partnership approaches to strengthening the ownership of plans by stakeholders and authorities. All action planning processes should begin with a workshop to identify realistic activities which are supported by those who will take responsibility for their implementation. Without this there is a risk of the process getting off to a poor start, obstructing the opportunity for conservation of the species.



LARGE CARNIVORES

“Hunters are one of the main stakeholders in the conservation and management of large carnivores in Europe: they are - and need - to be part of the solution.”

- Pia Bucella, European Commission

Throughout 2013 FACE engaged in dialogue with and between the different stakeholders who have an interest in Large Carnivores, resulting in the success of the Agreement on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores signed 10 June 2014.

This is a process of dialogue with different stakeholders who have an interest in Large Carnivores. The overall objective is to identify practical approaches to help ensure the maintenance or achievement of the favourable conservation status of Europe's large carnivores; Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), Eurasian lynx (*Lynx*

lynx), Wolf (*Canis lupus*) and Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) and to secure their coexistence with humans by reducing conflicts. The first EU Workshop was held on 25 January 2013 and focussed on identifying stakeholders' visions for the rural landscapes, the main obstacles to achieving these visions and potential solutions to these. This second follow-up meeting on 5 December, to which approximately 90 representatives from livestock producers, reindeer herders, hunters, foresters, environmental NGOs, scientists and others were invited, centred around the Commission's proposed next steps as inspired by stakeholders' previous input. The hunting community was well represented and included 12 experts from the FACE Working Group on Large Carnivores.

In January 2014 a 'core group' of stakeholders, and several senior officials from DG Environment met to plan the development of the Large Carnivores Platform.

At this meeting FACE provided constructive input into the list of key action points for large carnivore populations in Europe. FACE also stressed the need to acknowledge that some rural communities are suffering from the pressures of large carnivore presence. Traditional land uses such as extensive agriculture and herding also provide important wildlife habitats, that would be lost if the land was abandoned. Denying that a problem exists is not conducive to solving conflicts.

Finally after two years of preparatory work the Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores, promoted by the European Commission, was signed in Brussels on June 10th, between European key stakeholder organisations in the presence of Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik.



In his speech Mr Potočník stressed the "[...] need to treat our natural neighbours with respect – but we also need to heed the concerns of those whose lives are genuinely affected by their close proximity. My warm congratulations to the organisations that have worked together to set up this important platform, which represents a major step forward in efforts to address the issue of peaceful coexistence".

FACE President Gilbert de Turckheim stated that the European hunters' community is concerned by the growing number of problems involving large carnivores in areas which are being recolonized after decades of absence. Hunters are important rural stakeholders, and in many countries have long been involved in the monitoring, conservation, conflict resolution, and management of wolves. By participating to the Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores, FACE reiterates its commitment for conservation based on the principle of sustainable use.

During the launch of this initiative the European Commission stressed that this agreement belongs to the stakeholders, comparing it to the FACE – BirdLife International Agreement on the Birds Directive signed in 2004, on which the Large Carnivores agreement is modelled.

While the EU Habitats Directive is a suitable legal instrument for the conservation and management of species that are in an unfavourable conservation status, a greater understanding is needed at national and local level on how its provisions should be interpreted, particularly for the regulation of large carnivores that are increasing in population size. Conflicts need to be resolved taking into consideration the needs of local communities, economic aspects as well as traditions.

Through the platform FACE will continue to work for large carnivore conservation in Europe and of course promote the role of hunters. 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

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ILLEGAL KILLING

FACE ACTION FOR THE ILLEGAL KILLING, TRAPPING AND TRADE OF BIRDS

IMPEL (EU NETWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW) HAS STARTED A FIRST PILOT CASE ON ILLEGAL KILLING, TRAPPING AND TRADE OF BIRDS

IMPEL is an international non-profit association of European environmental authorities. It was set up in 1992 as an informal network of inspectors concerned with the implementation and enforcement of environmental law. The main IMPEL activities concern awareness raising, capacity building and exchange of information and experiences on implementation and enforcement. Previously IMPEL has focused on more industrial issues such as landfill and trans-frontier shipment of waste, but are now moving into more 'green' issues.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to eliminate IKTT of birds protected by the Birds Directive in the EU through awareness raising, exchanging of best practices and improving co-operation between enforcement experts.

At this first round table meeting of the project on 16 May 2013, FACE was invited to give an overview of its involvement in issues regarding wildlife crime and the EU Roadmap on IKTT of birds. This was a relatively small meeting with 4 Member States represented (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Italy and Malta), as well as those from IMPEL, BirdLife International and EU-Twix (EU Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange), which is an intranet for enforcement officials (e.g. customs, prosecutors) run by TRAFFIC for exchanging information on wildlife seizures across EU Member States.

FACE gave a presentation at the meeting, stressing the need to understand and define the problem in order to set priorities and objectives, rather than deciding what is required based on initial impressions. Priorities need to be set based on threats to conservation and scale of problem. From the Member State presentations it was clear that each has different needs, but with the common goal of improving efficiency and effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions.

A second meeting of the IMPEL project 'Eliminating illegal killing of birds' was held on 2-3 October 2013 in Malta in the sidelines of a much larger conference on implementation and enforcement of EU environmental legislation.

While at the first meeting the focus was on illegal poisoning of birds, in particular raptors, and illegal trapping and trade of passerines. However, the trend in the dialogue was to concentrate on more tangible tasks, based on the individual needs of Member States.

FACE highlighted the efforts by hunters' organisations to draw the line between legal hunting and illegal killing of birds. We also stressed the need for this message to be brought forward by other conservation groups. Common messaging can only strengthen efforts and help reduce conflict between groups.

Illegal killing is not hunting.

ILLEGAL KILLING, TRAPPING AND TRADE OF WILD BIRDS - COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONFERENCE - 29-31 MAY, TUNIS

The issue of the illegal killing, trapping and trading of birds – particularly in Mediterranean countries – has been regularly on the agenda of the meetings of the Council of Europe’s Bern Convention for the past 15 years. Its Standing Committee therefore decided to organise a European conference to address this problem, held in Cyprus in July 2011. FACE was actively involved in the discussions, leading to Recommendation No. 155 (2011) on the illegal killing, trapping and trade of wild birds. The key message of Recommendation No.155 was “zero tolerance toward illegal bird killing” and equally that it was not about legal hunting practices: in fact legal hunting and sustainable use should be recognised for their positive role in tackling the problems identified.

FACE was again represented at a follow-up conference, organised by the Bern Convention on 29-30 May 2013 in Tunis.

19 countries were represented along with the EU, officials from the Bonn Convention on Migratory species (CMS) and from its African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). The OMPO Research Institute and the Tunisian Hunters’ Federation as well as a wide range of bird conservation and protection NGOs were also present.

FACE gave presentation on rural crime and challenges and opportunities for host countries in relation to sustainable bird hunting tourism. Stressing the need to understand why people continue to capture or trade birds illegally before preparing well-targeted education and awareness-raising campaigns.

*FACE has a longstanding policy
of zero-tolerance
towards illegal killing.*

IUGB CONGRESS

FACE AT THE HEART OF
INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE
PROFESSIONALS MEETING:
BRUSSELS 2013 IUGB CONGRESS

The 31st biennial Congress of the **International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB)**, which took place during 28-30 August 2013 under the headline 'Diversity in Wildlife Management – Objectives & Tools', brought together more than 300 participants from 34 countries and 4 continents in the European capital of Brussels.

Set up in Germany in 1954, IUGB has positioned itself as a key international player promoting rational wildlife conservation and management. Operating as a flexible structure, IUGB provides a unique platform for discussion and the exchange of ideas for biologists, foresters, veterinarians, game managers, sociologists, rural economists, hunters and others, all sharing a professional or academic interest in the biology, management and sustainable use of game, other wild species and their habitats.

The 2013 Congress headline was addressed in a wide range of quality presentations including 6 Keynote speeches, 84 oral papers and 118 posters given during 5 Plenary, 17 Parallel and 7 Thematic Sessions. This breadth reflects the diversity in which world-wide, professionals and volunteers are managing wildlife species and habitats, for a wide range of objectives and using a variety of tools and techniques.

From these presentations and perhaps even more from the related discussions and exchanges of views (also the informal ones during the breaks, side-events and excursions), a number of issues stood out.

As far as applied methodologies are concerned, consensus developed among participants that straightforward counting and monitoring of wildlife may no longer be sufficient. Clear management aims and objectives need to be set at the start, with the emphasis not only on the



game species and habitats, but also the whole ecosystem and wider environment.

The Congress also dealt with the issue of Invasive Alien Species, their impact on wildlife management and many other aspects of society. It is likely that this topic will receive even greater attention at future IUGB Congresses.

The new topical issue of research into wildlife welfare and its practical applications in the management of wild species was addressed for the first time at an IUGB Congress, both in a Plenary session and in a Thematic workshop.

Other Thematic workshops included the management of large carnivores in the EU, the environmental impact of the Common Agriculture Policy, the role of sustainable trapping in wildlife management and how to deal with 'urban' wild boar; as well as the use of GPS technology in wildlife research and the management of migratory waterbirds (the latter with the reconstitution of the Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group within Wetlands International, see box/next).

The next IUGB Congress will take place in August 2015 in Puebla, Mexico, the new Presidency being conferred on Professor Daniel Jimenez-Garcia who took over from outgoing IUGB President Dr Yves Lecocq. Historically and culturally, IUGB has focused primarily on Europe, but there was a good North American participation in Brussels, with two out of six keynote presentations, including that of Dr Wini Kessler, President of The Wildlife Society (TWS) at the Opening session. It became obvious that there are indeed many similarities between Europe and North America in the domains of wildlife management and research, and closer cooperation between IUGB and TWS can only be beneficial.

RELAUNCH OF THE WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL WATERBIRD HARVEST SPECIALIST GROUP

The Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group (WHSG) affiliated to Wetlands International was relaunched on 28 August at the IUGB during a thematic session on waterbird management, which was sponsored by FACE.

Reactivating the Group is a response to a longstanding need for more coordinated game management of what are mostly migratory waterfowl. This has been preceded by an increase in activities related to the sustainable management of waterbirds within the AEWA region. These include the development and adoption of the AEWA Management or Action Plans which foresee the coordination of sustainable harvest practices for species amongst range states for species such as the Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) and the Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis*). The ongoing processes have shown not only that there is a clear need for scientific and policy-related advice on the sustainable use of waterbirds on a flyway scale, but that AEWA is an instrument through which they can be developed and implemented.

As specified in the Terms of Reference adopted by the Specialist Group's board the Group

aims to promote science-based knowledge and to act as scientific advisors in national and international processes where harvest is an issue for conservation or management of waterbird species and species populations.

Activities to be undertaken by the Group include identifying the extent and types of harvest taking place within the major waterbird flyways and identifying what information is needed to sustainably manage waterbird populations as well as which knowledge gaps need to be addressed. The Group will also aim to provide useful decision-making tools for harvest management processes. Whilst the initial scope of activities will be largely focused on the AEWA region the Group is open to global issues and will seek greater collaboration between flyways.

The Group will be affiliated as a Wetlands International Specialist Group, chaired by Professor Jesper Madsen of Aarhus University in Denmark, with the Secretariat provided by FACE. This underlines the continued commitment by European hunters towards the sustainable management of migratory waterfowl.



PROMINENT HUNTERS FROM MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA SIGN DECLARATION ON RESPONSIBLE HUNTING

Hunters from 7 countries in the Middle East and North Africa have signed a Regional Declaration on Responsible Hunting, at a ceremony organised by the BirdLife International and UNDP/GEF Migratory Soaring Birds (MSB) Project on 5 December in Beirut, Lebanon; with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL, BirdLife Partner in Lebanon) as a collaborating partner in this event. The 'MSB' Project seeks to mainstream conservation management into targeted private and public sectors: Agriculture, Tourism, Waste Management, Energy and Hunting in 11 countries along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway. The collaborative and inclusive approach at the heart of this Project is very promising for an effective and sustainable future for conservation in the region.

FACE's Marilise Saghbini joined hunters from the region, observers from the Lebanese Higher Hunting Council, BirdLife International's Director of Conservation Richard Grimmett & Senior Programme Manager (Flyways) Marcus Kohler, and BirdLife Partners from attending countries, the Lebanese Ministry of Environment, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Under the Patronage of H.E. Mr. Nazem El Khoury, Lebanese Minister of Environment, the ceremony celebrated the adoption of the "Code of Best Practices for Hunters and Hunting Groups for Responsible Hunting and the Full Protection of Migratory Soaring

Birds". Signatories of the Responsible Hunting Declaration have committed to adopt the Code of Best Practices for Hunters and Hunting Groups for Responsible Hunting and the Full Protection of Migratory Soaring Birds as the founding principle of their hunting activities, and to implement measures to conserve migratory soaring birds and their habitats. Many of the hunters present have expressed their aspiration to create national responsible hunting groups and societies with the Code of Best Practices for Responsible Hunting as their core value.

Following the official signing of the Declaration, a number of presentations gave an overview of the different aspects of both hunting and bird conservation in this region. National presentations by hunters profiled the hunting in the respective countries, revealing that despite social, political and cultural differences, hunters in Europe and in the Middle East share concerns, values and of course, species. FACE was invited to share a presentation on how it operates, how hunting is organised in European countries, and how hunters and other conservationists collaborate for mutual benefit.

FACE outlined the benefit of joint conservation projects as a successful vehicle for building trust and recognition. Mr. Osama Al Nouri, Regional MSB Project Coordinator, declared: "The MSB project aims to revive the hunter's traditional sustainable hunting practices that do not threaten migratory soaring birds along the Rift Valley/

Hunters in Europe and in the Middle East share concerns, values and of course, species.

Red Sea flyway within the scope of the Code of Conduct, to establish national and regional mature responsible hunting groups that are working closely with BirdLife partners as allies against indiscriminate practices, and ensure firm government buy-in through effective regulations and efficient implementation of national laws”.

The clear recognition of the need to work with hunters to achieve conservation goals - and not against them - is a promising step in the development of the conservation agenda actions in this important flyway region. As has been seen across the European region, where collaboration is inherent to the conservation and hunting actions, meaningful results can be achieved. As the work of this Project and future initiatives develop in the Middle East and North Africa, it will be critical to explore the best ways to incentivise hunters to conserve, as recorded

at the International Union for Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress in 2000: “The use of wild living resources, if sustainable, is an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use, provide incentives for people to conserve them.” The responsible hunters of the region have an immense potential to act as catalysts for a responsible hunting ethos in the Middle East, where hunters are recognised as a force for good conservation of both species and habitats.

The Declaration and Code of Best Practices signed and adopted at this event can be viewed here: migratorysoaringbirds.undp.birdlife.org/en/sectors/hunting.

The clear recognition of the need to work with hunters to achieve conservation goals - and not against them - is a promising step in the development of the conservation agenda actions in this important flyway region.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

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 180 Parties, including the 28 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.

EU CONSULTATION ON THE RULES GOVERNING HUNTERS WHO IMPORT TROPHIES INTO THE MEMBER STATES

During 2013/2014 the European Commission conducted a process of reviewing the regulatory framework governing the import of hunting trophies into the EU Member States through the so called 'personal and household effects derogation'. This derogation entails a less restrictive regime for hunters compared to the more burdensome rules applied to wildlife trade in the commercial sector.

FACE COMMENTS TO THE COMMISSION

As part of a consultation process on this topic FACE submitted its comments to the Commission. In summary, the FACE submission concludes that:

- No restrictive amendments of the EU personal and household effects derogation in relation to hunting trophies should be tabled without clear evidence indicating that there are demonstrable conservation concerns warranting such restrictions. This would otherwise put an unjustified and disproportionate extra burden - which is not required by the CITES Convention - on hunters participating in a conservation activity. Such a move could have major

detrimental impacts on efforts to use hunting as a conservation/livelihoods tool in range states.

- In case a future thorough scientific review by the Commission would show that such demonstrable conservation concerns exist, the least possible restrictive solution should be opted for. This includes definitely avoiding the introduction of a mandatory import permitting system for all hunting trophies of Annex B species. A possible solution - if deemed necessary - which could be implemented via the Commission Regulation, would be to make a provision excluding from the derogation specific species-populations/country combinations of conservation concern through the so called EU Suspensions Regulation.

Trophy hunting based on science and conducted in compliance with all relevant laws constitutes a tool for conservation that provides an economic incentive for local communities to co-exist with certain problematic species and has contributed to saving some of them from extinction. Any additional burden on EU citizens who are engaging in such lawful activities risk reducing the funds available for wildlife conservation.

FACE's conclusions were echoed by organisations such as the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), Safari Club International (SCI), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) and the US Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). In some cases they referred directly to FACE's paper. The EU decision-makers have thus received a strong and united message from the conservation world that it appears unjustified to table restrictive amendments to the current EU personal and household effects derogation in relation to hunting trophies, and moreover, that such a move could have major detrimental impacts on efforts to use hunting as a conservation/livelihoods tool in range states.



FACE will continue to work together with international partners to maintain a non-bureaucratic and effective EU system for the import/export of hunting trophies. A decision by the Commission on this issue is expected in 2014.

SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL - SCI



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. During the reporting period FACE and SCI have particularly collaborated in gaining positive recognition of hunting as a tool for conservation within CITES, of which much effort went into the EU revision of its wildlife trade regulatory framework. In December 2013 FACE participated at the annual SCI European Chapters Meeting in the Palarikovo Castle in Slovenia.

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

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



AEWA covers 255 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. AEWA has developed the tools to progress conservation and not just protection. For this reason it remains a very important agreement for European hunters to cooperate in managing shared populations of migratory birds.

FIRST MEETING OF THE AEWA PINK-FOOTED GOOSE INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

The first meeting of the AEWA Svalbard Pink-footed Goose International Working Group (AEWA SPfG IWG) took place on 23 April in Copenhagen, hosted by the Danish Nature Agency. The meeting was well attended by national delegations from three of the four range states along the flyway of the Svalbard population of the Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*): Norway, Denmark and Belgium. FACE participated as an Observer to the meeting as did the Finnish Nature Agency.

This momentous meeting, for European waterbird management, was held to discuss and agree on the strategy and actions needed to implement the Management Plan for the Svalbard population of the Pink-footed Goose. This Management Plan will be a first European test case for an adaptive flyway management plan which sets out to manage a population which could threaten sensitive ecosystems on its

breeding grounds in Svalbard, and cause conflicts with agricultural interests along its migration route, whilst ensuring that the population maintains a favourable status. The plan details a number of objectives aimed to collaboratively manage the population size of the Svalbard Pink-footed Goose following the principles of adaptive management. The aim is to secure its living conditions and habitats along its flyway, whilst ensuring that any hunting of the species is sustainable.

Advice on this new approach of adaptive management is being provided by Dr. Fred A. Johnson of the U.S. Geological Survey who is working closely with experts from Aarhus University in Denmark to create a model framework to support the Adaptive Harvest Management of the Svalbard Pink-footed Goose. The working group discussed the requirements for implementing a sustainable harvest strategy, based on a 3-year cycle for regulating hunting and starting in 2013. As part of this first phase for implementing an Adaptive Harvest Management strategy it was agreed that an annual assessment of population status, harvest levels in Denmark and Norway, as well as model evaluations, will be necessary to avoid uncontrolled population responses and to gain further knowledge.



AEWA ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP FOR THE TAIGA BEAN GOOSE TUUSALA, FINLAND, 12-14 NOVEMBER

While several goose species in Western Europe are undergoing population increases, there are some exceptions. At the last AEWA Meeting of Parties in 2012 (MoP5), it was reported that the Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis*) had decreased from an estimated 100000 birds in the mid-1990s to 63000 in 2009. As a result the Taiga Bean Goose was uplisted to a higher category under the Agreement. This requires that it be subject to certain legal measures, including that Parties should prohibit hunting unless practiced under the framework of an International Species Action Plan, which should endeavour to implement the principles of adaptive harvest management. These later conditions were also an amendment made at MOP5.

Putting species on lists and drafting amendments to texts may be a necessary first step, but real conservation benefits only happen when there is action. Thankfully the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Finnish Wildlife Agency took the initiative to develop an International Action Plan under AEWA.



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.

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

FIREARMS & AMMUNITION

FIREARMS

2013 was marked by the publication, in October, of the Communication from the European Commission “Firearms and the internal security of the EU: protecting citizens and disrupting illegal trafficking”.

In addition to laying out several actions to specifically deal with illegal activities (which FACE welcomes), the document announced the plan of the Commission to completely change the EU rules on the legal acquisition and possession of civilian firearms.

The Commission argues that legal firearms are lost or stolen due to the absence of EU common standards on their storage, relying however on debateable figures to justify that claim.

The Commission maintains that criminals may seek to acquire firearms in Member States with “flexible” rules and misrepresents the existing EU rules on legal firearms (laid down in the Firearms Directive) omitting to mention that the sale and possession of firearms, such as hunting rifles and shotguns, are subject to a strict set of formalities and thorough background checks, barring criminals – and any person who is “likely to be a threat to public security” – from acquiring and possessing firearms.

FACE reacted with a strong rebuttal seeing no justification to re-open a Directive that already works satisfactorily. In fact FACE believes that the measures laid down in the Communication by the European Commission are “aimed at the wrong target”.

In the case of deactivated firearms being illicitly reactivated, rather than overhauling the Firearms Directive, FACE invites the Commission to fulfil its obligations and ensure that Member States comply with the existing legally-binding provisions.

FACE is following these developments closely, engaging the Commission and hunters, industry (manufacturers and dealers), collectors and sport-shooters, in order to coordinate actions and achieve common goals.

FACE sees no justification to re-open a Directive that already works satisfactorily

MEETING IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: EUROPEAN COMMISSION INVITED TO DISCUSS ITS COMMUNICATION ON FIREARMS

The European Commission participated to a panel discussion with representatives of legal firearms organisations about the Communication on illegal trafficking in firearms in the EU.

On 11 February 2014 representatives from DG HOME and DG Enterprise sat opposite speakers from FACE and the European Association of the Civil Commerce of Weapons (AECAC) at a panel discussion on legal firearms in the EU in the European Parliament. Fabio Marini, Head of the Firearms Task Force at DG Home laid out the purpose and aims of the Commission Communication concerning illegal trafficking in firearms in the EU.

Manuel Esparrago, FACE Head of Political Affairs and firearms expert in his presentation underlined the weak points in the Communication’s data and called upon the Commission for more transparency in its methods and data collection.

Mr Marini acknowledged the complaints from the various representatives of the European legal firearms owners organisations – hunters being the largest group of legal firearms users in the EU – and underlined the Commission’s intention to involve this important and knowledgeable group in the future proceedings concerning a possible amendment of the firearms directive,

namely by including FACE in the Commission's Firearms Expert Group.

A future involvement opens opportunities for FACE to voice the knowledge and experience of legal firearms users and to clearly separate users of legal firearms and users of illegal firearms.

In the course of 2014 DG HOME and DG Enterprise will carry out studies seeking to establish whether existing EU rules on firearms need to be amended in order to fight illegal trafficking of firearms. FACE will closely monitor the process and ensure the voice of hunters will be heard in this process.

SPEAKERS

Fabio Marini, Head of Task Force Firearms, DG Home Affairs, European Commission

Sylvia Kainz-Huber, Deputy Head of Unit Defence, Aeronautic and Maritime Industries, DG Enterprise and Industry, European Commission

Yves Gollety, President, AECAC – European Association of the Civil Commerce of Weapons

Manuel Esparrago, Head of Political Affairs, FACE – European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation

THE ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN MANUFACTURERS OF SPORTING FIREARMS - ESFAM joined FACE as an Associate Member in 2012 and collaborates with FACE for the best enabling environment for hunters and their firearms and ammunition by working together through the ESSF and with other firearms and ammunition partners as well as with the EU Institutions. The Association's commitment to hunters goes one step further than support in firearms issues: ESFAM's support of The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto underpins the integral relationship between hunters, biodiversity and the economy.

WFSA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND PANEL SESSION AT IWA IN NUREMBERG

On invitation by the World Forum for Shooting Activities (WFSA), FACE Communications Officer Yasmin Hammerschmidt participated as speaker in a panel session in the framework of the WFSA General Assembly and Plenary Session 2014 in Nuremberg, Germany on 6 March.

The plenary session took place after the WFSA General Assembly and started with a welcome by WFSA president Herbert Keusgen. The first highlight of the session was Miss Kansas Theresa Vail being awarded the Vito Genco

Shooting Ambassador Award for her role and work as woman shooter and hunter in the US. The following panel "Breaking gender barriers" focussed the relation between women and firearms outlining women and their personal journey to become a sports shooter, hunter or lobbyist.

Yasmin Hammerschmidt was joined by Manuela Schmermund, multiple gold medal winner for Germany at the Paralympics and Sandy Froman, former president of the NRA in speaking on their



experiences with firearms. The panel was chaired by Julianne Versnel from the International Association for the Protection of Civilian Arms Rights (IAPCAR). Ms Schmermund spoke about how sport shooting brought her back to a fulfilled and participating life after she had a car accident resulting in a life in a wheelchair. Sandy Froman spoke about her experiences as a woman in lobbying. Based on her personal journey to become a hunter Yasmin Hammerschmidt outlined a recent survey carried out by FACE on the motivations driving women to hunt, which include interacting with nature, working for conservation, sourcing of game meat and working with dogs.

The panel was followed by a presentation by William F Kullman, Senior Advisor for International Affairs with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in the United States talking about firearms in the context of the work of the UN.

Last speaker of the day was William Mc Grath, Legislative Counsel of SCI in Washington, USA. He briefly outlined the recent work done by WFSA and SCI in South America.

WORLD FORUM ON THE FUTURE OF SPORT SHOOTING ACTIVITIES - WFSA represents over 100 million sport shooters around the world and is recognised by the Economic and Social Council of the UN General Assembly. WFSA is present at every major UN conference affecting hunting or sport shooting. In June 2012, the WFSA hosted a two-day interactive workshop *Promoting Hunting in the 21st Century Through Effective Communications* in Rome, Italy in which FACE participated actively.

AMMUNITION



FACE engages with a wide range of stakeholders to fully support the phase out of lead shot in wetlands on the one hand, and on the other, to prevent disproportionate or premature responses in relation to the wider use of lead in ammunition. This is reflected in the work outlined below as well as other aspects such as work on the EU Water Framework Directive, participation at the Association of European Manufacturers of Sporting Ammunition (AFEMS) General Assembly and numerous interactions with FACE Members and other interested parties.

Lead has always been and still is the main substance used for bullets and shot. However, in more recent times, there is increasing awareness of the toxicity of lead, which can have both acute and chronic effects in wildlife and humans. In this context, there is an ongoing debate at international, European and national levels about the introduction of restrictions on the use of lead in ammunition, the extent and proportionality of such restrictions, the feasibility of managing risks and the availability of satisfactory alternatives to lead.

THE REACH PROCESS

The REACH Process is a the European Regulation for the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals that seeks to improve protection of human health and the environment from the risks of chemicals. It covers all substances, including those used in ammunition.

Annex XV of the REACH Regulation lays down general principles for preparing Annex XV dossiers to propose and justify - amongst other items - restrictions on the manufacture, sale or use of a substance within the Union.

FACE assisted the European Chemicals Agency, through their consultants AMEC, in their investigations into the use of lead shot and the idea to initiate an Annex XV Restriction under the REACH Process.

Whilst the results of this are still pending, FACE considers that a full Annex XV Restriction on the manufacture and marketing of all lead shot would be a disproportionate response to the need to phase out lead shot in wetlands.

WIDER USES OF LEAD

Considering that concerns over lead in ammunition now encompass a broader range of issues, including potential effects on human health and on wildlife outside of wetlands, the FACE Board agreed to establish a Working Group focusing on ammunition.

THE FACE AMMUNITION WORKING GROUP aims to bring about a knowledge-driven process to assess the risks involved in the use of lead and non-lead ammunition for hunting in relation to conservation, animal welfare, human health (especially relating to game meat consumption) and safety concerns.

This process will take into account the needs of hunters, particularly in relation to the efficacy, availability and affordability of ammunition, as well as public perception and the reputation of hunters, ensuring that stricter measures are not imposed in advance of a more complete understanding of the issues at hand. The Group focuses on:

- Proposing measures to support the phase-out of the use of lead shot in wetlands in all FACE Member countries that have not done so, and more generally measures to ensure compliance.
- Collaborating with other stakeholders, primarily the industry, to develop criteria for the assessment of all ammunition types in line with new criteria being identified (e.g. human health, safety, environment etc.).
- Focusing on the issue of lead in game meat in relation to the work being carried out by the European Commission's DG Health & Consumers (SANCO), to assess the risks to human health and propose mitigation measures where required.
- Monitoring and advising on policy developments at national, EU and international levels, ensuring that stricter measures are not imposed in advance of a more complete understanding of the risks.

ANIMAL WELFARE & HEALTH

ANIMAL WELFARE

COMMISSION CONFIRMS: NO EU MANDATE TO REGULATE THE WELFARE OF WILD ANIMALS IN RELATION TO HUNTING

FACE has consistently held that the EU has no competence to regulate the welfare of wild animals in relation to hunting and that the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 never altered this fact.

It was therefore welcomed that the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy Tonio Borg, in a written reply of 31 March 2014 to a Parliamentary question by French Green MEP Sandrine Bélier, clarified that the EU's power to improve animal welfare by law-making and enforcement is limited, and more importantly, that the Commission has no mandate to put forward specific policies for regulating the welfare of wild animals in relation to hunting, in the specific case of the question hunting with hounds or dogs.

Hopefully, this admirable clarity will help settling the issue of where the legal competence to regulate wild animal welfare, including for wild game, belongs. That is, in the national parliaments, which are best placed to deal effectively with these issues – not in the EU Institutions. This is important, as political decisions affecting the great diversity of European hunting cultures and traditions should be taken as close to the citizens as possible.

WTO SEAL TRADE DECISION – A CHANCE TO GET THINGS RIGHT

On 22 May 2014 the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body published its final decision on the EU ban on trade in seal products. To make a long story short, in its over 200-pages long report the Appellate Body upholds, in theory, the possibility for the EU to maintain trade restrictions on seal products based on the justification that such restrictions are necessary to protect “public morals” regarding animal welfare concerns. This sets a dangerous precedent indeed. However, WTO pointed out that, in practice, the EU ban is designed and applied in a manner that is in breach of international trade rules, and hence, the EU was ordered to change its ban. Indeed, much needs to be taken into account in such revision - not least the principle of sustainable use and a recent survey commissioned by the Trade Fairness Coalition illustrating that the majority of Europeans are not in fact opposed to the hunting of seals. This prompted FACE to call on the EU Institutions to get things right this time.

The trade ban was adopted in 2009 following intense lobbying by animal rights groups against the seal harvest conducted in particularly Canada. It contains an exception allowing EU hunters to continue selling seal products in the Member States, provided such products result from sustainable resource management programmes (SRMs). The Appellate Body points out in its decision that this exception constitutes a “means of arbitrary and unjustifiable discrimination” against traders in Canadian and Norwegian-caught seal. The EU has therefore been ordered to change its ban to comply with WTO rules.

If EU decision-makers would seek compliance by removing the SRM exception altogether, instead of extending its application to Canadian and Norwegian SRM programmes, the consequence will be a fatal blow to the very fundamental principles of sustainable use of natural resources. It would effectively mean that seals hunted in the framework of sustainable resource management,

for example to protect against damages to fisheries, could no longer be sold, not even at the local market. In other words, hunting seals would be allowed under national and EU rules – and even encouraged in view of marine resource and fisheries management – while at the same time there would be limitations on the use of the products resulting from such hunts. This risks turning a valuable natural resource into wastage.

It will therefore be of paramount importance that EU decision-makers rethink the entire seal trade ban, to avoid the Union finding itself in breach of globally agreed principles of conservation of biological diversity, including the principle of sustainable use, to which the EU and its Member States are legally bound, inter alia under the Convention on Biological Diversity. A blanket ban is simply not an option. A failure to do so would not only cast sustainable use into peril, but it risks severely damaging the EU's reputation as a leading actor on sustainability worldwide.



ANIMAL HEALTH

NEW EU ANIMAL HEALTH LAW HUNTERS' POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS RECOGNISED

On 15 April 2014 the Members of the European Parliament adopted a new EU Animal Health Law. This new regulation replaces 40 existing directives, regulations and other texts regarding the prevention and control of transmissible diseases in animals, including those that are transmissible to humans.

It will apply to both kept (e.g. hunting dogs and ferrets) and wild animals (including wild game). Throughout the legislative process, FACE worked constructively with the EU Institutions to secure a reasonable text for hunters, which included the following important achievements:

- The adoption of a draft compromise text recognising hunters' knowledge and positive role in disease monitoring and control in wild species, while excluding an ill-worded proposal in the Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development for mandatory regulations susceptible of imposing additional burdens on hunters.

- The rejection of an amendment, by French Green MEP José Bové, seeking to impose an EU-wide ban on the capture and keeping of all wild birds for use as live decoys for hunting purposes, such as magpies, crows, wood pigeons, ducks and other waterfowl. As a matter of fact, the use of such decoy birds could indeed be a valuable instrument to monitor the health of wild birds (e.g. as happened during the avian influenza outbreak), so their use may well be promoted. The real reason behind this amendment was clearly ideologically driven anti-hunting sentiments.

FACE welcomes the final text adopted in plenary and believes that it contributes in a holistic and balanced way to the effective prevention and control of animal disease occurrences in the Union. Hunters will continue to be in the frontline of monitoring the health status of animals living in the wild. They will so play a key role in protecting both the environment and public and animal health, an important task duly recognised by the new EU Animal Health Law.

ANIMAL HEALTH

AFRICAN SWINE FEVER: “SHOOTING, SHOOTING, SHOOTING IS NOT THE SOLUTION”

The African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) is a serious viral disease that infects domestic pigs and wild boar (humans are not susceptible to the virus). Having been successfully eradicated from the EU mainland in the nineteen nineties (although still present in Sardinia), the disease has recently been detected in wild boars in Lithuania and Poland. The most likely scenario appears to be the passage of wild boars from Belarus where the situation of ASFV has been described by the European Commission as “out of control”.

During the debates that followed concerning the ASFV, FACE called for stakeholders not to overreact.

There is a high level of awareness and preparedness in the Member States, being coordinated under a common EU framework overseen by the European Commission.

The recent detections were in fact made through surveillance in buffer zones already established before those discoveries, showing that there is an effective system in place.

In a special report from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) evaluating possible mitigation measures to prevent introduction and spread of the ASFV through wild boar, published on 14 March, the scientific experts conclude that “drastic hunting is not a tool to reduce the risk for introduction and spread of ASFV in wild boar populations”.

The same day as the report was published the Directorate General for Health and Consumers (SANCO) in the European Commission conveyed the same message at a meeting of the Animal Health Advisory Committee (AHAC). Organised several times a year, these AHAC meetings are an opportunity for SANCO to brief relevant stakeholders and sectors (animal producers, transporters and processors, trade and consumers, animal welfare NGOs etc.) about new developments and future work in the domain of animal health. Attending on behalf of Europe’s hunters was FACE’s J. Svalby. The Commission concluded that “shooting, shooting,

shooting is not the solution” to the ASFV, but instead that the priority is the containment of the disease in the infected areas and the prevention of infection of domestic pigs. The Commission also underlined that the current ASFV situation for wild boar is not a disease crisis.

FACE echoed this message at an international meeting on ASFV and other animal health issues at the wildlife-livestock-interface, held in Paris on 24-25 June later in the year. At this event, being organised jointly by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), FACE’s Y. Lecocq made a presentation on ASFV and wildlife from a European perspective.

Drastic hunting is not a tool to reduce the risk for introduction and spread of ASFV in wild boar populations.

Overall, the European Commission’s approach to and guidance on how to effectively deal with the ASFV appear sensible and science-based. In addition to the abovementioned statements and recommendations, the Commission published in mid-January its ‘Guidelines on surveillance and control of African swine fever in feral pigs and preventive measures for pig holdings’. This document contains a section on hunting, where it is inter alia clarified that increased hunting pressure may not be the best solution, as it may increase movements of wild boar.

Hunters will continue monitoring the health status of wildlife, including playing a role in protecting farmed animals from the ASFV.

There is no need for overreaction in the form of calling for increased, drastic hunting of wild boar. FACE agrees with the European Commission that the strategy for wild boar must be sustainable and long-term.



Europe is home to a rich diversity of hunting methods, traditions and cultures. These have grown naturally out of local adaptations to the environment and the species. The richness they offer is a part of our shared heritage. This 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 varied applications through Europe. In 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 the 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 values.

HUNTING METHODS & CULTURE

TRAPPING

Traps are used worldwide in interactions with wildlife. This may be to minimise environmental damage or to assist conservation by helping to control over-abundant or alien invasive species, or for relocation. It is an equally valuable research method, for example to fit individuals with markers or transmitters to follow their movements. Since many mammals are predominantly nocturnal, or are present around buildings or settlements, trapping is often the safest method for restraint.

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).

FACE strongly advocates international cooperation in the certification of trap types and offers its expertise in this field. In addition to trap standards, FACE recognises the importance of best practice and methods to ensure a high standard of welfare for the trapped animals.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES ON TRAPPING MAMMALS IN EUROPE

These guidelines are meant for trappers, authorities, NGOs and other parties interested in trapping of mammals. The information presented in this document refers to specific species and guidelines for trapping them while ensuring a high standard of welfare for the trapped animals and minimising any non-target captures.

IUGB CONGRESS

During the International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB) Congress in Brussels in August 2013, FACE held a workshop on trapping titled “Wildlife conservation and management: The role of traps and trapping”. Speakers from the USA and Canada explained the research done on traps and trapping methods in their respective countries and also expressed support and readiness to help EU Member States with the implementation of AIHTS.

The workshop aimed to establish a network for collaboration and knowledge sharing to improve trapping standards. Speakers touched upon topics like usage of different traps and methods. FACE informed the participants that Best Practice Guidelines for Trapping of Mammals in Europe will be published in 2014, which aim to educate trappers in sustainable trapping while minimising any non-target captures.

MEETING OF THE EXPERTS GROUP ON HUMANE TRAPPING STANDARDS

FACE together with UETA (Union of European Trappers' Associations) participated at the first meeting of the Experts Group on Humane Trapping Standards, organised by the European Commission's DG ENV. The meeting's purpose was to present the current status of implementation of the AIHTS (Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards) to the Member States. The agreement was originally negotiated in 1997 but only entered into force in July 2008 after ratification by the Russian Federation. Parties now have until July 2016 to implement it (which means to test and certify traps and ban the use of non-certified traps).

The meeting was also attended by delegates from the Russian Federation, the USA and Canada, all of which outlined the status of implementation

in their countries. Canada presented the work of the Canadian Fur Institute which is testing and certifying traps. This is important as the agreement allows for mutual recognition of traps certified in one party to the agreement to be used in the territory of another (Art 12.). A good example for this mutual recognition was the DJV (Deutscher Jagdverband – German Hunting Federation) sending two marten traps to the Fur Institute of Canada to be tested if they meet the AIHTS requirements. The implementation of AIHTS at EU level requires no implementing act, as AIHTS is binding to all Member States and its implementation is in their responsibility. FACE presented its current work for the publication of the Guidelines for Trapping Mammals in Europe, which were planned to be published by June 2014.

WOMEN HUNTERS

The face of hunting is changing. In the past decade more women are joining Europe's hunting community, actively engaging in conservation and championing sustainable hunting, and a real connection with nature.

FACE had put a special focus on women hunters in the last year. The proportion of women in the hunting community varies between different regions; the numbers are highest in the Nordic countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands. In Norway 12% of hunters are women and in Germany every tenth hunter is a woman.

The number of women hunters has risen noticeably in recent years; Norway saw an increase of 60% in the number of women

hunters over the last 10 years. This development is likely due in great part to the Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers' (NJFF) focus on recruiting women hunters and anglers. The NJFF started the "NJFF Jenter" initiative which aims to encourage and integrate women into the organisation.

FACE wanted to learn more about hunting women and their motivations, challenges and viewpoints. We wanted to put a face and a name to hunters by showcasing individual women hunters on the FACE website. You can view the proportion of women hunters in European countries as well as women hunters profiles on our website.

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.

FACE FINANCES

FACE offers a very cost-effective support to its Members, when considering all of the work carried out by the FACE Secretariat and the fact that Membership subscriptions represent less than 10 cents per hunter.

It is in this ethos that we also offer cost-effective and transparent management of finances to our partners, generating maximum impact with limited expenditure.

FACE's core funding is provided by the FACE Members.

FACE is also supported by the European Commission Directorate General Environment through LIFE NGO funding.



EXPENDITURE 2013

Premises	19 600.65 €
Consumables	7 730.35 €
Administration	59 439.09 €
Communications	108 978.39 €
SG-SPA Costs	1 714.61 €
President Costs	5 112.68 €
Staff Missions	68 767.86 €
Staff	627 988.22 €
Staff Training & Development	18 906.38 €
Depreciation & Written off Trade Debtors	36 791.29 €
Financial Devaluation	1 175.06 €
Extraordinary charges	5 645.61 €
TOTAL	961 850.19 €

INCOME 2013

Full Membership Fees	682 575.00 €
Associate Membership Fees	13 500.00 €
Projects	35 000.00 €
LIFE NGO Grant	141 404.63 €
Subsidies & Gifts	36 000.00 €
Additional Subsidies	31 500.00 €
Operational Support	3 628.05 €
Financial Income	3 230.73 €
TOTAL	946 838.41 €

Nature Conservation & Wildlife Conservation

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

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto: www.face.eu/nature-conservation/biodiversity

Invasive alien species: Keller, R.P., Geist, J., Jeschke, J.M., Kühn, I.: Invasive species in Europe: ecology, status, and policy: Environmental Sciences Europe 2011, 23:23: www.enveurope.com/content/23/1/23 and www.cbd.int/invasive/WhatareIAS.shtml

EU Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services (MAES): <http://biodiversity.europa.eu/ecosystem-assessments/european-level>

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB): www.teebweb.org

International Agreements

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

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

The EU Institutions

European Commission: www.ec.europa.eu

European Parliament: www.europarl.europa.eu

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

Partners

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

Wetlands International: www.wetlands.org

BirdLife International: www.birdlife.org

Federation of Veterinarians of Europe: www.fve.org

PHOTOS

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P. 28, 43, 49, 69 - Eugene Reiter

P. 31 - Claude Schutte

P. 32 - F. Goblet

P. 35 - ChasNat Project, www.chasseurdulanguedocroussillon.fr/c/natura-2000_frclr

P. 41 - Hannu Huttu, Finland, www.hannuhuttu.com

P. 61 - Kyriakos Skordas

P. 67 - Stefan Pellas

FOR AN HONEST RELATIONSHIP
WITH NATURE

The voice of European hunters

