

**LEADERS OF EUROPEAN HUNTERS MEET IN GREECE**

FACE GATHERS IN ATHENS FOR THEIR 2012 MEMBERS’ MEETING

**Athens, 31 March 2012 –** Representatives of the hunting world from **22 countries** gathered in Athens, Greece for the 2012 FACE Members’ Meeting. Hosted by the Hellenic Hunters’ Confederation and their President Nicolas Papadodimas, the Members’ Meeting focuses on EU policy implementation and enhances exchange between FACE Members. The 2 day meeting covered a range of topics impacting on hunting in Europe.

Thefirst day revealed the results of various projects on wildlife and its habitats in Greece, undertaken by the Hellenic Hunters’ Confederation. The outstanding quality of these studies was fully recognised by participants. They underlined the relevance and reliability of biological data and knowledge for the sustainable management and wise use of wild species and their habitats. The gathered representatives unanimously adopted a Declaration, urging the Greek authorities to take this data into account in national and regional legislative, policy and administrative measures concerning hunting and biodiversity. This includes the designation and concerted management of Natura 2000 sites, which now cover almost 20% of EU land surface; and the preparation of Red Lists of threatened species. This Declaration is deeply relevant in many other countries; particularly in urging authorities to engage hunters in the management of Natura 2000 sites.

On the second day, FACE Members discussed the future implementation and interpretation of the two EU Nature Directives – Birds (1979) and Habitats (1992), identifying points and aspects for which sustainable hunting should be better enabled to play its role for the conservation of biodiversity. To elaborate concrete proposals, an ad hoc Working Group was set up which will report back to the FACE Board and ultimately at the annual General Assembly in September in Brussels. FACE also launched its new Annual Report, covering a broad range of current issues for hunters and policy-makers, from nature conservation to hunting methods.

In a time where the EU’s economic uncertainty is centred on Greece, the European hunting community representatives gathered in this great country in a display of hope and strong solidarity, central to FACE’s ethos. It is with a renewed sense of purpose and stronger links between the countries that the FACE delegates visited Greece together. The Declaration and launch of a new ad hoc Working Group are a testimony to the renewed vigour of FACE in 2012.

**\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\***

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**PHOTOS:** [http://www.flickr.com/photos/face\_eu/sets/72157629724449823/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/face_eu/sets/72157629724449823/%20)

**DECLARATION:** <http://www.face.eu/Communication/Press%20Release/Declaration%20-%20Athens%202012.pdf>

**FACE ANNUAL REPORT 2012:** <http://www.face.eu/Communication/Publications/FACE%20Annual%20Report%202012%20EN.pdf>

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

Established in 1977, FACE represents the interests of Europe’s **7 million hunters** as an international non-profit-making nongovernmental organization (NGO).

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

FACE upholds the principle of sustainable use, has been a member of the International Union for the 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. [www.face.eu](http://www.face.eu)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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