

3rd Report of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

HUNTERS' CONTRIBUTION TO FARMLAND
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION



Published in 2018



FACE

Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU

FACE is an international non-profit making, non-governmental organisation (NGO) that has acted in the interests of over 7,000,000 European hunters since its founding in 1977. From its headquarters in the heart of Brussels, Belgium, FACE represents its Members, which are national hunters' associations from 36 countries from the Member States of the European Union and other Council of Europe countries. FACE has been a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1987.

Acknowledgments

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto Working Group

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



The year 2017 was marked by the beginning of the crucial discussions about the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that will be reformed in 2020. FACE has a very clear position on the CAP post 2020: the dramatic decline of huntable and non-huntable wildlife populations, pollinators and plant diversity in agricultural areas demonstrates the shortcomings of the current CAP to conserve biodiversity. Wildlife conservation on Europe's modern farmland will only be successful if all land users including farmers, land owners, hunters and forest owners work together with a joint approach.

The third report of the Biodiversity Manifesto will help European hunters to effectively influence the reform process of the CAP. Of the 300 projects presented in this BDM report, 45% are taking place on farmland. This shows the investment and engagement hunters are making as well as the attention that is needed to restore wildlife and game populations in particular.

Different types of actions are voluntarily undertaken by hunters including habitat and species management, species monitoring, awareness rising and contributing to policy debates. Not surprisingly, the present report shows that hunters' management practices can benefit not only game species but also a range of other protected or endangered species and habitats.

Each of the 300 projects demonstrates good practice that can be followed and implemented by hunters and a wide range of other stakeholders. Many subjects are covered in this report such as combatting invasive alien species, promoting coexistence with conflict species and combatting illegal killing.

In order to better promote and vigorously defend hunting, FACE needs even more concrete evidence on what hunters and their associations are doing for biodiversity conservation. Importantly, when we demonstrate this work to hunters and other interested stakeholders such as land user groups, we also promote more coordinated approach to biodiversity conservation throughout Europe. As a result of this, the general public and decision-makers are now much better informed about the positive contribution of hunting to nature conservation. This can only be beneficial to our shared natural and cultural heritage.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michl Ebner". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr. Michl Ebner
FACE President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 3rd Report of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto is based on 300 initiatives undertaken by European hunters that contribute to biodiversity conservation. It shows that hunters are active in different ways to conserve biodiversity via species and habitat management, research/monitoring, communication and awareness raising.

While multiple habitat types are engaged with, this report shows that hunters invest considerable resources in the conservation of farmland habitats. Of the 300 projects, 134 (45%) aim to improve farmland habitats and mainly target three species: the Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*), the European Hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and to a lesser extent the Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*).

The evidence presented in this report also shows that around 120 projects are undertaken on Natura 2000 sites, which demonstrates the mutual benefits between hunting and Natura 2000. Importantly, many Annex I birds and species protected by the Habitats Directive can benefit from the actions of hunters. Although hunters' initiatives target multiple species, birds are the most represented (63% of the cases). It is interesting to note that 45% of the projects focus on 'protected species' in the different countries.

This conservation work is relevant, in particular, when the whole European Union is discussing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform for 2020. In many cases, hunters, farmers and other rural actors work together to improve biodiversity in farmed areas. Such team work delivers many benefits, but more effort is required at a higher political level to ensure the next CAP delivers for biodiversity.

In FACE's view, the next CAP (post 2020) should encourage and help farmers to better respond to the multiple environmental and often competing market demands. The CAP should incentivise habitat restoration on farmland via direct (Pillar I) and rural development (Pillar II) to increase biodiversity at the farm level. In the field, it is important that hunters and farmers work together to make sure that we restore valuable habitats and species on Europe's farmland.



INTRODUCTION

Hunting is a highly popular form of nature recreation, an activity enjoyed by 7 million people in Europe. It is one of the oldest forms of consumptive use of renewable natural resources and provides significant social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits in different regions of Europe.

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto (BDM) demonstrates the commitment of Europe's hunters to biodiversity conservation. By addressing 38 actions in 8 sections, the main objectives of the FACE BDM are:

- › To demonstrate the role and contribution of hunting to biodiversity conservation to policy-makers and the public, and
- › To promote the coordination and enhancement of this contribution in line with international conservation priorities.

The eight sections under the FACE BDM are:

- 
- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Habitats | 5. Green Infrastructure |
| 2. Species | 6. Ecosystem Services |
| 3. Protected Areas | 7. Investing in Nature |
| 4. Sustainable Use | 8. Hunters for Nature |

In 2013, FACE developed an online questionnaire aiming to gather evidence to evaluate the work undertaken by European hunters for nature conservation. This report draws on 300 initiatives undertaken by European hunters from throughout Europe.

In 2015, FACE published its first BDM report, which presented how 181 conservation projects involving hunters linked to the targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The report demonstrated how the BDM, through its actions, directly contributes to the EU's Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.

In 2016, the BDM report was focused on hunters' contribution to the implementation of the EU Nature Directives. This was because 2016 was dominated with discussions about the Fitness Check of EU nature legislation.

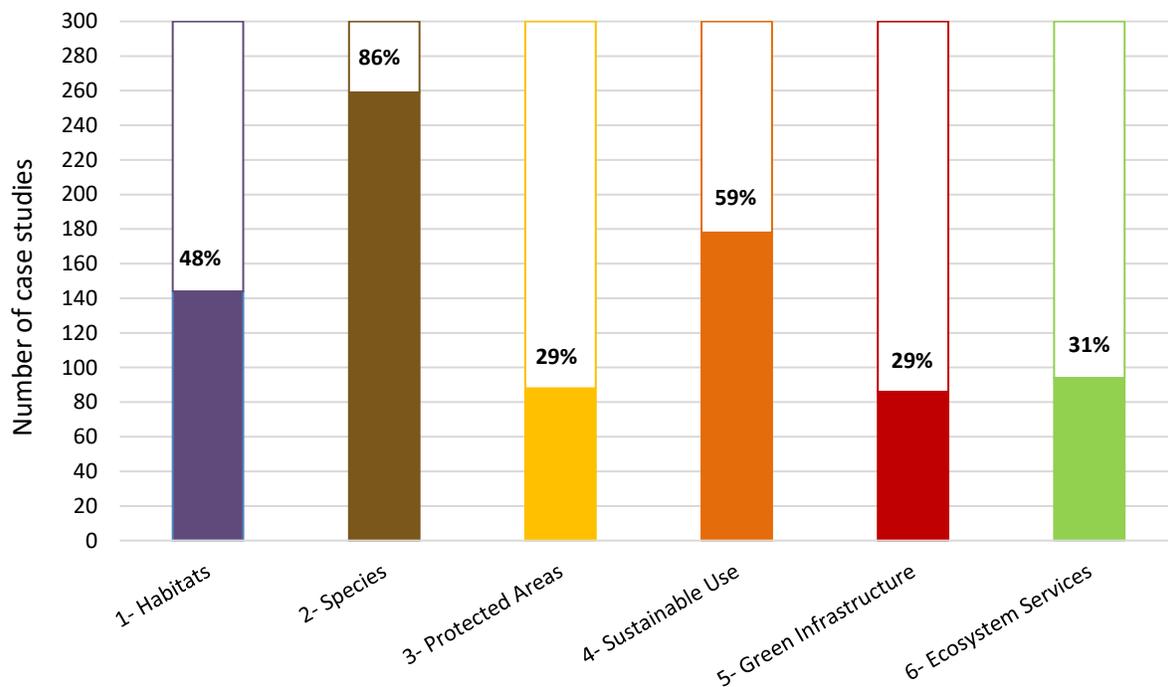
In 2017, FACE decided to link the BDM report to the contribution of hunting to the conservation of farmland biodiversity. The reason was due to the European Commission's announcement of the next reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) post 2020. This third report of the FACE BDM sets out to demonstrate hunters' contribution to farmland biodiversity.

Only 6 of the 8 sections of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto are presented in this report: the seventh one touches on all case studies (see conclusion) and the eighth one refers to the way in which FACE reports on the BDM. For each section, relevant highlights are provided along with a case study.

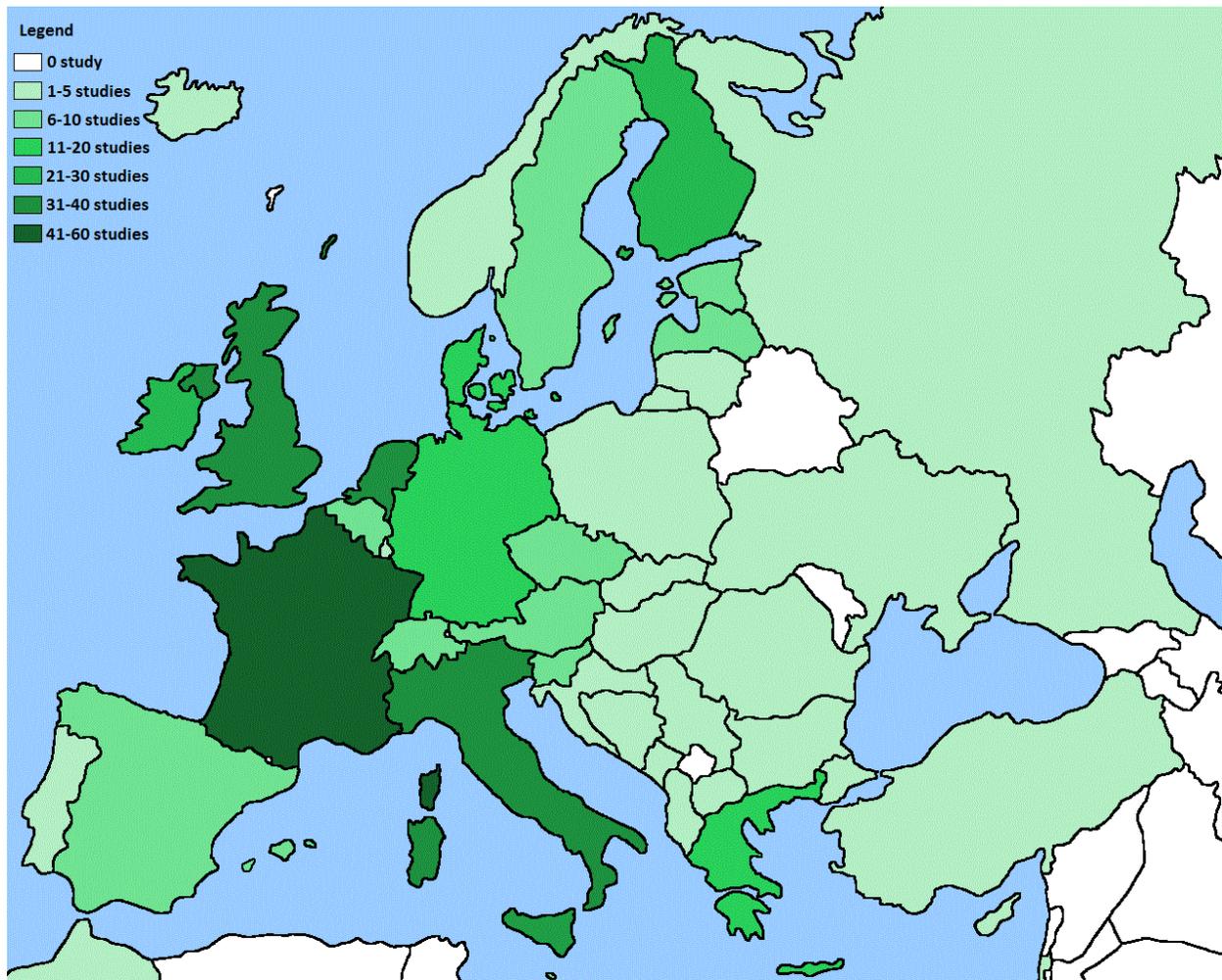
HIGHLIGHTS

The following graph gives an overview of the initiatives undertaken by European hunters for biodiversity conservation. It shows the quantity and different types of BDM-related actions that hunters implement. Most hunters' initiatives are directed species, ensuring sustainable use and habitat restoration. This demonstrates hunters' commitment to conservation and their contribution to current EU nature policy goals, which ambitiously aim to prevent biodiversity loss by 2020. These include managing priority habitats and species, both within and outside Natura 2000 sites, combatting invasive alien species, promoting farmers' uptake in suitable agri-environmental schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy and tackling illegal killing.

Proportion of case studies contributing to the sections of the BDM



Geographic distribution of hunters' 300 initiatives



The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

After the two traumatic world wars, in 1962, the European Economic Community enacted the CAP to develop a common front towards food security in Europe. Since then, the CAP has been reformed many times to be adapted to the needs of Europe's changing society and economy. Currently, the CAP consumes almost 40% of the European Union (EU) budget and is designed to ensure food security as well as the delivery of a wide range of public goods and services, including the need for healthy biodiversity on Europe's farmland.

However, the CAP has had detrimental impacts on farmland biodiversity. For example, the populations of many common farmland species are decreasing with some national extinctions. More concretely, according to [Eurostat](#), between 1990 and 2014, populations of common farmland birds declined by 31.5% and, currently many huntable species like the Grey Partridge and the European Hare are threatened on many national IUCN Red Lists. Those facts clearly show that the current CAP is not fit for purpose.

In FACE's view, the next CAP (post 2020) should encourage and help farmers to better respond to the multiple environmental and often competing market demands. The CAP should incentivise habitat restoration on farmland via direct (Pillar I) and rural development (Pillar II) incentives to increase biodiversity at the farm level. It is important that hunters and farmers work together to make sure that valuable habitats and species are restored on Europe's farmland.

Hunters' contribution to farmland biodiversity conservation

Hunters have been among the very first to notice the decrease of small game populations on Europe's farmland and in many cases, the first to take action against it. Out of the 300 BDM initiatives on which this report is based on, 134 – meaning 45% – are linked to farmland habitat. The actions undertaken by hunters on farmlands mainly target three species: the Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdrix*), the European Hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and the Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*).

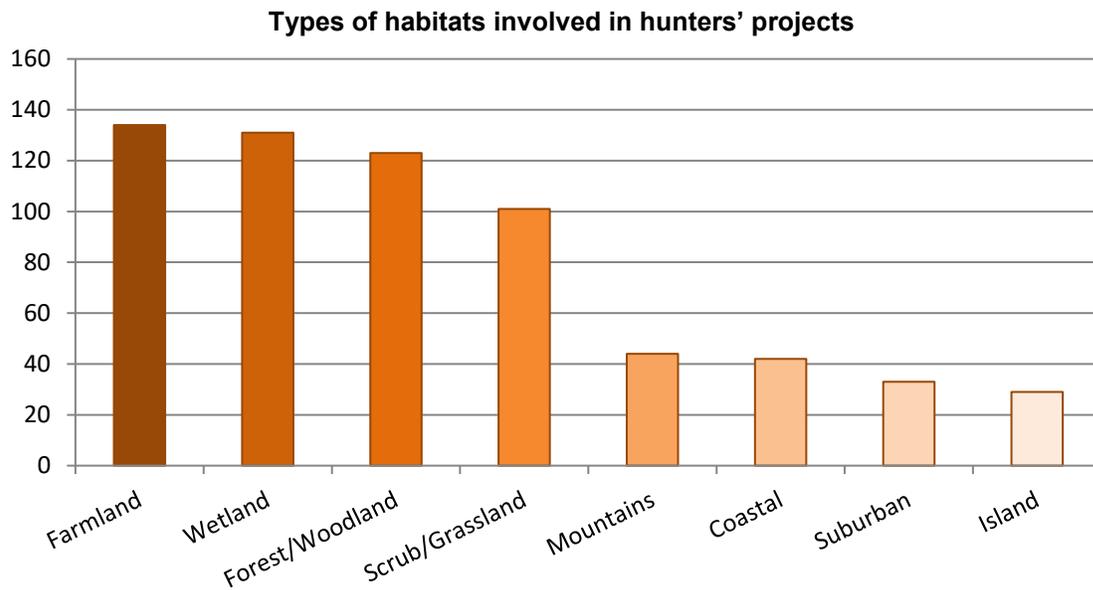
To combat their decrease, numerous actions are undertaken such as convincing farmers to leave space for wild plants and flowers, creating and managing 'biodiversity' areas, providing food and water in difficult periods and managing generalist predators.

This team work between hunters, farmers and other rural actors is beneficial for both sides, including supporting delivery of key ecosystem services:

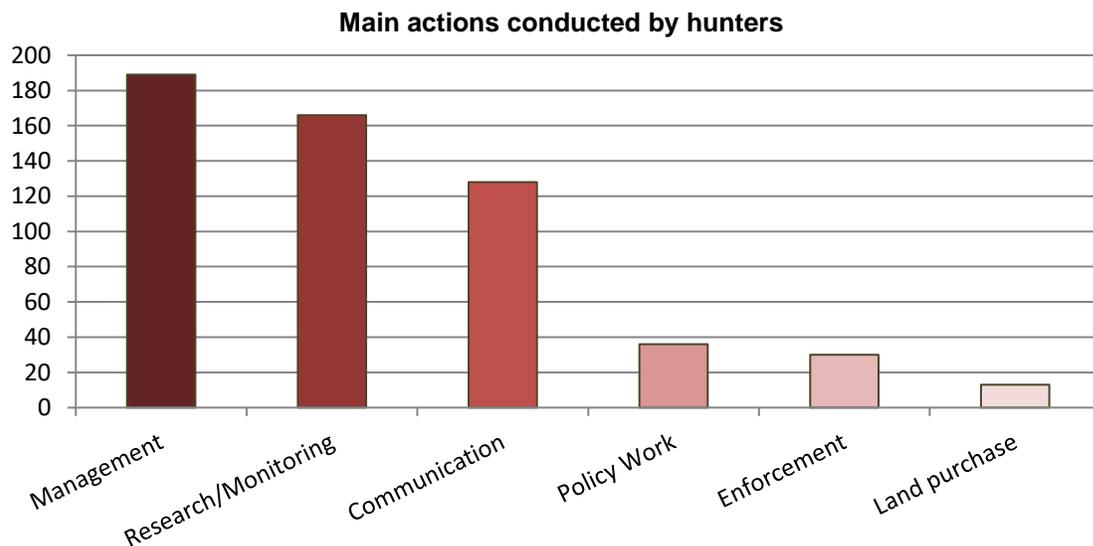
- It welcomes natural predators of pests,
- It boosts pollination through reduced pesticide use,
- It improves soil quality through reduced fertiliser use,
- It helps regulate water in wet and dry periods.



Summary of the 300 initiatives undertaken by hunters for nature conservation¹



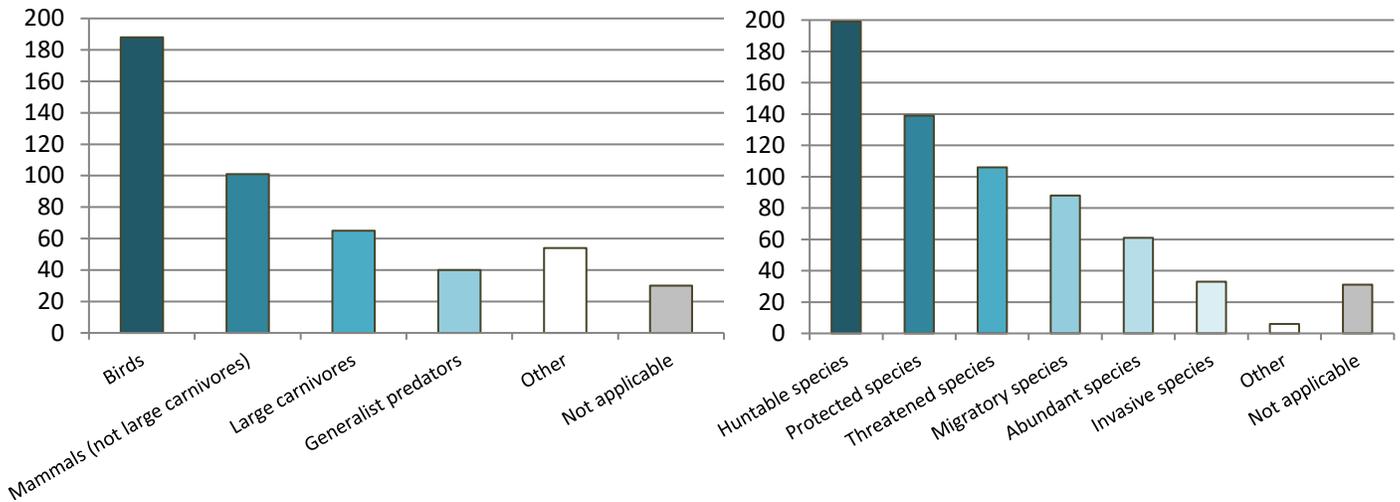
In 45% of the cases, hunters' initiatives relate to farmlands. This can be through, for example, creating habitat (e.g. game cover) for Grey Partridge or managing habitat (biodiversity areas) for Hare.



Management of habitats/species and research/monitoring are the most common actions. For example, many Red Grouse projects in Ireland carry out habitat management (e.g. diversifying Ling heather), population monitoring as well as engaging with all interested stakeholders to ensure the long term success of these projects. Those involved in these community-based projects have also played an important role in lobbying for new agri-environmental schemes (in Ireland) that cater for the needs of upland farming and biodiversity.

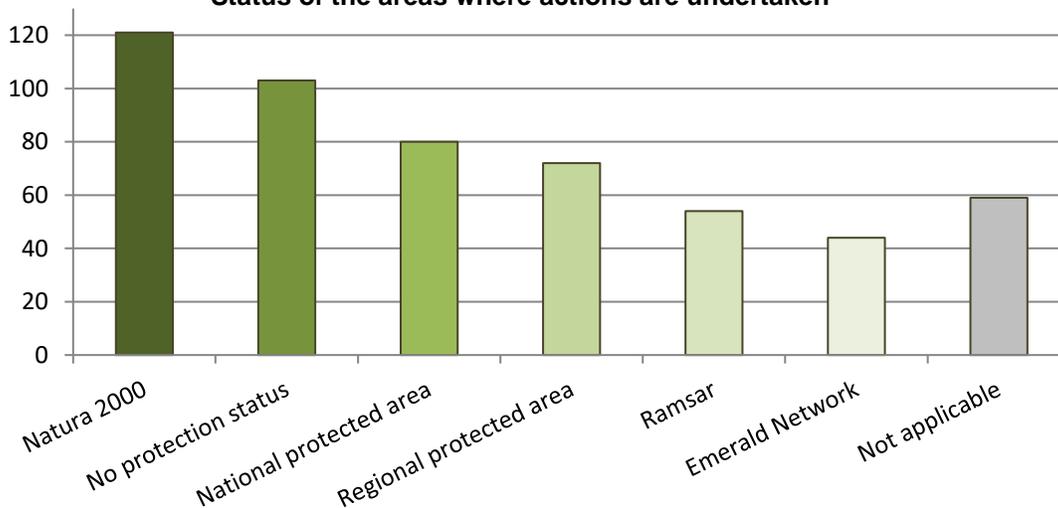
¹ Note that in the graphs presented in this report, there are overlaps between the categories. For example, a project occurring on farmland in a mountainous area is both represented in the 'Farmland' and 'Mountains' categories.

Types of species concerned by hunters' actions



The majority (63%) of hunters' actions focus on bird conservation. Out of the 300 case studies, 45% deal with protected species. In general, the category 'protected species' covers the species which are protected at the national level and are typically non-huntable.

Status of the areas where actions are undertaken



Of the 300 projects, which hunters are involved in, 40% occur on Natura 2000 sites. This is important as EU Member States have to ensure the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of EU interest under the nature directives. This requires financing, monitoring and restoration work.

This evidence presented in this report shows that approx. 120 projects are undertaken on Natura 2000 sites, which highlights the mutual benefits between hunting and Natura 2000. The evidence also shows that many Annex I birds and other species protected by the nature directives benefit from the actions of hunters.

It is interesting to see the high level of activity on Natura 2000 sites by hunters, in particular, when Natura 2000 has not always been implemented in conjunction with local stakeholders. Although there have been many conflicts around Natura 2000 designations, it is encouraging to see hunters so actively involved in Natura 2000 site management.

SECTION 1: HABITATS

“There is a need to communicate to the public the importance of conserving the wider countryside and restore common habitats which are principally close to them. For this, all stakeholders need to recognise the multi-functionality of Europe’s rural areas and to find ways to work together to conserve habitats.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*



48% of the projects (144 case studies out of 300) focus on habitat conservation.

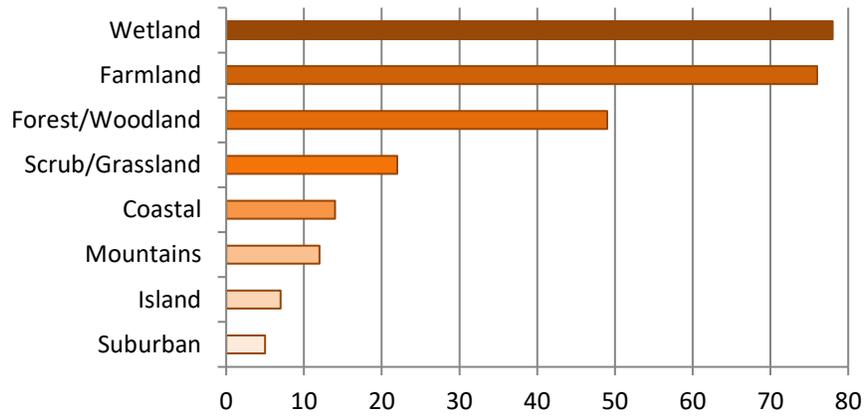
While strictly related to the 144 projects undertaken under the “Habitats” section, slightly different trends from the overview can be noticed:

- Wetlands are the most common habitat type managed by hunters (78 case studies).
- Farmland habitat ranks second with 76 case studies.
- Forest/Woodland is represented by 49 case studies.

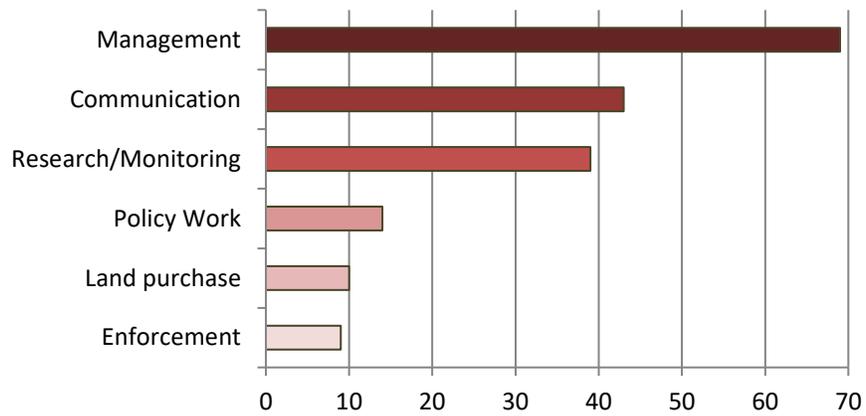
Of the 76 initiatives conducted on farmland, 90% include actions relating to habitat and species management and 55% include actions that related to communication and awareness raising.



Habitats engaged by hunters under the 'Habitats' section ²



Actions conducted by hunters under the 'Habitats' section²



² One case study can relate to several habitats/actions.

CASE STUDY

Sowing flowers for biodiversity:
Ongoing achievements by Dutch hunter



CASE STUDY: Sowing for biodiversity: Ongoing achievements by Dutch hunters

Agricultural areas in the Netherlands are increasingly becoming more intensive, industrial and monotonous. This means that wildlife from intensive managed crops and grassland is declining in many areas. For species like Pheasant, Grey Partridge and Hare, this represents a serious threat. They depend on a diverse landscape in which they can find a diversity of cover and food. In Europe, there is an increasingly bigger call for diversification and less intensive management of crops. Not only focused on higher yields and greater efficiency, but with a vision towards enhanced biodiversity too. Cooperation with landowners and nature conservation (NGO's) is important to succeed.

Farmers and hunters in the Netherlands are putting more effort into creating habitats for Pheasant and Grey Partridge, which benefit a diversity of butterflies, honeybees and other insects. The Dutch hunting association ([Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagersvereniging](https://www.jagersvereniging.nl)) came up with a sowing mixture that is easy to grow and provides protection and food for different species. The sowing mixture contains 40% yellow mustard, 30% Buck wheat and 30% Phacelia. Yellow mustard creates cover for different kinds of animals, like Hare and Roe Deer. Mixed with buck wheat, yellow mustard can also provide food for birds and the phacelia attracts different useful insects, which are an important source of protein for young birds in spring/summer.

In 2016, there was a little over a 1000 kg of the sowing mixture sold. This amounts to a strip of 1 meter wide by 220 kilometers long.

Contact and Sources:

<https://www.jagersvereniging.nl/jagen/ecologie/biotoopmengsel-jagersvereniging/>

Wim Knol, Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagersvereniging

wim.knol@jagersvereniging.nl

SECTION 2: SPECIES

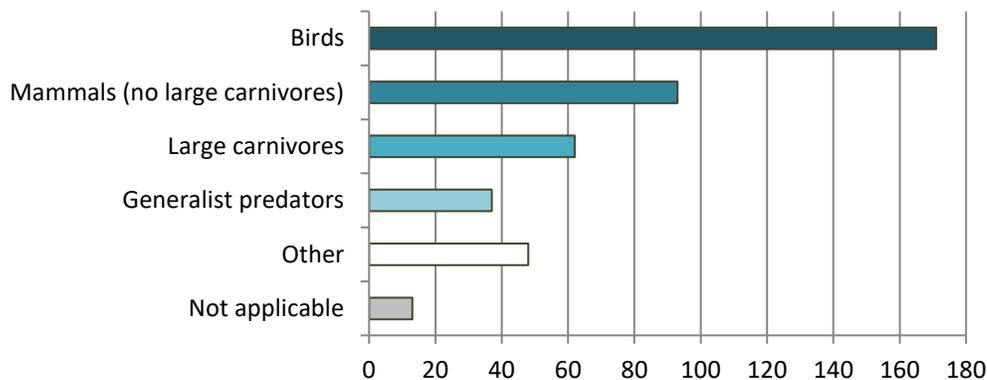
“As hunters, we will continue to work with positive incentives to conserve not only huntable species but all species.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*

87% of the cases (259 case studies out of 300) focus on species conservation.

The 259 projects strictly related to the “Species” section show that:

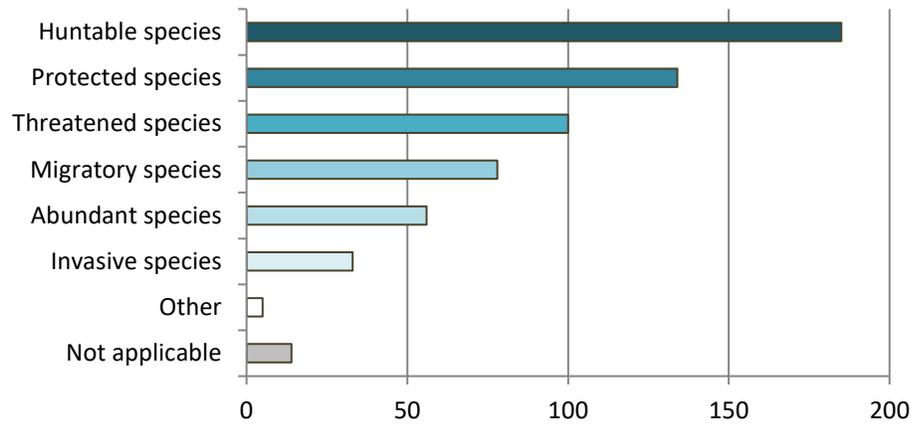
- 65% relate to bird conservation, and 45% correspond to protected species.
- While strictly related to farmlands, the BDM data show that hunters invest most resources into Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdrix*), Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*) conservation.

Types of species managed by hunters within the ‘Species’ section³



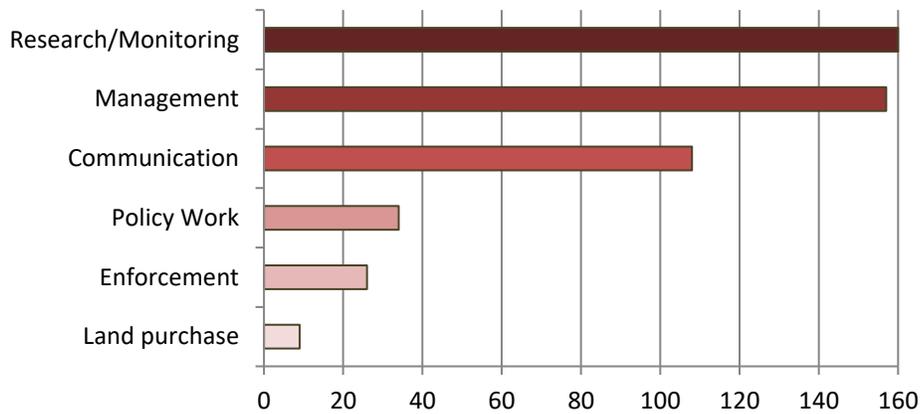
³ One case study can relate to several species.

Types of species managed by hunters within the 'Species' section⁴



- Two thirds of the case studies relate to research and monitoring, closely followed by management of species.

Actions conducted by hunters for species conservation⁴



⁴ One case study can relate to several species/actions.

CASE STUDY:

Small game management project (Denmark)



CASE STUDY: Small game management project (Denmark)

The main purpose of this initiative is to create partnerships or 'guilds' within a defined area of a minimum of 1.000-1.500 hectares, where farmers, ornithologists, hunters, beekeepers etc. work together to manage their land in the optimal way for species like Brown Hare (*Lepus Europaeus*) and Grey Partridge (*Perdix Perdix*).

In collaboration with environmental NGOs, universities, scientists, but also with public authorities, land owners, farmers and hunters are voluntarily conducting research and collecting data with a primary focus on the two target species, but also to measure the benefits this management to non-target species.

Each guild is linked to a professional wildlife manager who works at the Danish Hunters' Association. Each landowner in the guild can receive free advice on how to improve their terrain. The local hunters, which partly conduct and finance this project, are often the main drivers, whereas the farmers are ones who implement the actions.

The project is based on five principles:

- volunteerism;
- focus on nature and habitats;
- monitoring of populations;
- free professional advice;
- cooperation and synergy between landowners across field boundaries and interests.

Results show that keeping and protecting permanent habitats contributes to the expansion and variation in biodiversity.

Contact and sources:

www.markvildt.dk

Thomas Iversen – Project leader, Danish Hunters' Association

tiv@jaegerne.dk

SECTION 3: PROTECTED AREAS

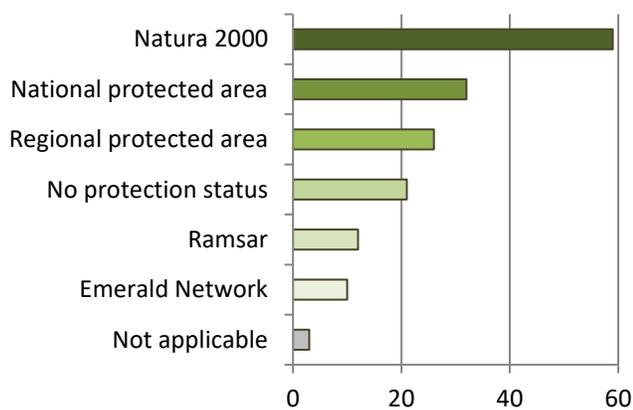
“The importance of Protected Areas for nature and biodiversity cannot be overstated; in particular the Natura 2000 network provides an excellent basis for nature conservation in the EU.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*

30% of the cases (88 case studies out of 300) are undertaken in protected areas.

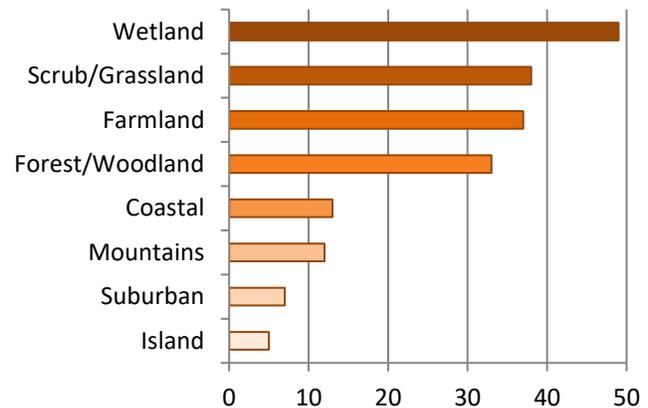
The 88 projects related to the “Protected area” section of the BDM show that:

- 67% of projects are undertaken in Natura 2000 sites (59 case studies). Other protected areas include national/regional designations, Ramsar sites, etc.
- The management of species/habitats is the most common action (in 63 case studies) followed by communication activities (58 case studies).

Protection status of the areas where actions are undertaken⁵



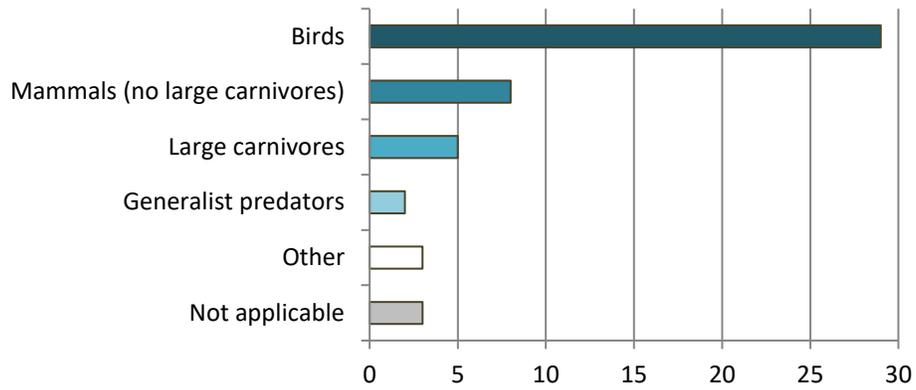
Habitats managed by hunters in protected areas⁵



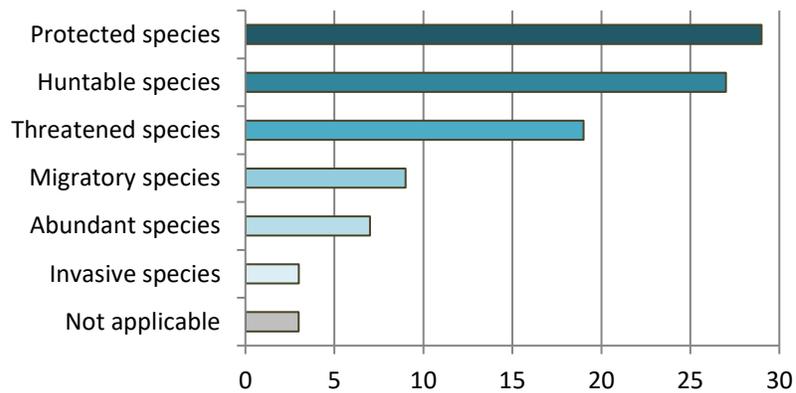
⁵ One case study can relate to several protection status/habitats.

- Importantly, 75% of the actions undertaken on farmland are within “Protected areas”, mainly dealing with protected species.

Types of species managed by hunters in protected areas⁶



Types of species managed by hunters in protected areas⁶



⁶ One case study can relate to several species.

CASE STUDY:

Moyglass Red Grouse project (Ireland)



Hen Harrier (Annex I) on project site

CASE STUDY: Moyglass Red Grouse project (Ireland)

The Red Grouse is currently Red Listed due to a 70% decline in range over the past 40 years in Ireland. The Moyglass Red Grouse project, County Galway aims to conserve the numbers of Red Grouse and other Annex I birds of conservation concern (e.g. Hen harrier, Merlin) on Moyglass Bog (Special Protection Area) through a range of management strategies.

The main management strategies include preserving the distribution, diversity and quality of heather, predator control, grit provision, monitoring, improving public awareness, and the reviewing of management practices.

It is hoped that this management, which is supported by a number of stakeholders, will lead to the local hunting club (Woodford Gun Club) securing a healthy Red Grouse population in a region where Red Grouse have suffered considerable decline due to afforestation, uncontrolled burning and limited habitat management.

Woodford Gun Club is following a Conservation Plan (2015-2020) and Appropriate Assessment report (prepared by Dr. David Scallan), which recommends actively consulting with stakeholders and encouraging participation and involvement from the local community in the management programme.



Working with local schools

Contact and Sources:

Mr. Seamas Collins, Woodford Gun Club

seamas.collins@gmail.com

https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/2013_RedGrouse_SAP.pdf

SECTION 4: SUSTAINABLE USE

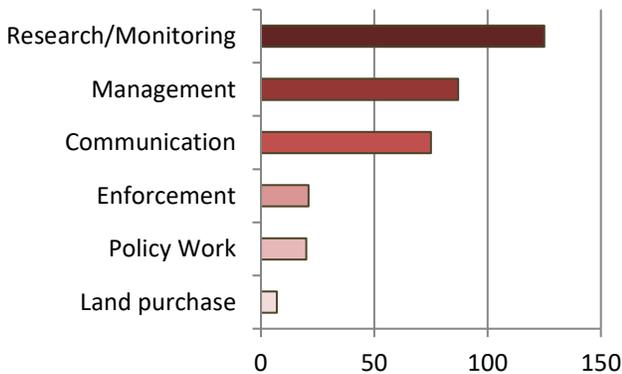
“In recognising that humans are a part of nature, both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU consider that biological resources must be used in a sustainable manner.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*

60% (178 case studies out of 300) promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

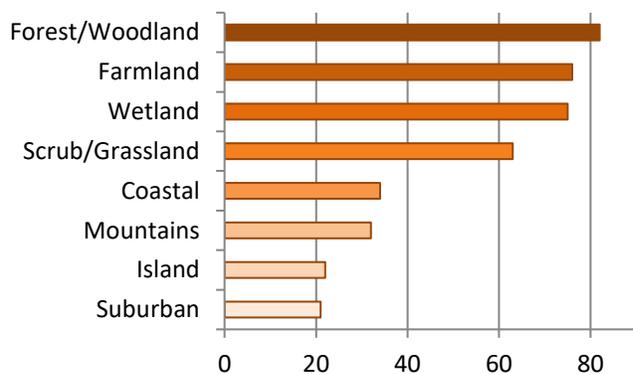
The 178 projects related to the “Sustainable use” section show that:

- Research (70%) and management activities (50%) are the most represented.
- Almost the half of the case studies involve conservation work engaging forest (82) habitats.
- Three quarters of the examples gathered concern huntable species (133 case studies), while birds are represented in two thirds of the case studies (109).

**Actions conducted
by hunters for sustainable use⁷**

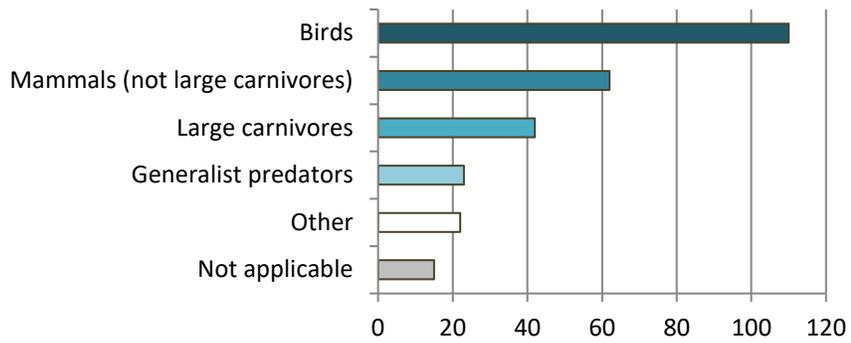


**Habitats engaged
by hunters for sustainable use⁷**

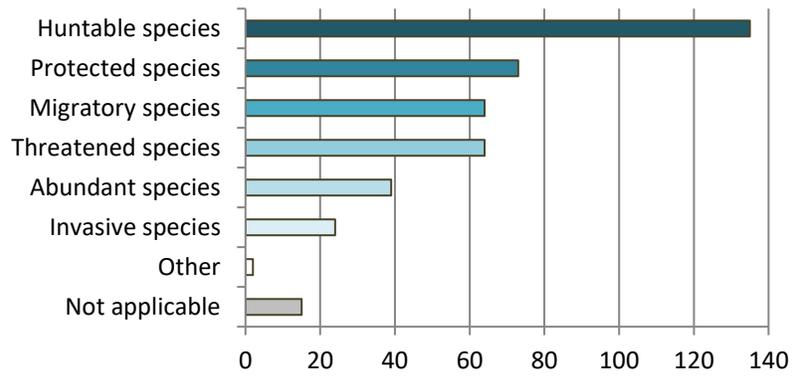


⁷ One case study can relate to several actions/habitats.

Types of species engaged by hunters for sustainable use⁸



Types of species engaged by hunters for sustainable use⁸



⁸ One case study can relate to several species.

CASE STUDY:

Grey Partridge and Brown Hare monitoring



CASE STUDY: Grey Partridge and Brown Hare monitoring

Each year at the beginning of the spring, the Hunting Interest Group of Mons invites hunters and other conservationists to meet for a one-day spring wildlife count. On 21 March 2017, around 50 people from different regions participate in this survey during cold and grey weather conditions.

The results included 60-90 Grey Partridges and 80-90 Brown Hares per 100 ha. These figures show a remarkable increase of the populations in an area where there is no game releasing.

The positive results relate to the activities undertaken by the Hunting Interest Group of Mons since many years to preserve the species:

- 1- Offering seeds to volunteers farmers to create corridors that provide the wildlife with food and shelter;
- 2- Predator control (Fox, Stone marten, Carrion crow and Magpie);
- 3- Winter feeding;
- 4- Providing with water in dry conditions and with insects (dung) for the chicks;
- 5- Creation of a large hunting reserve in the centre of the territory;
- 6- Informing and encouraging the other hunting communities to do the same;
- 7- Spring counting to ensure sustainable hunting.

Contact and sources:

http://www.solitaireardennais.be/press/article_det.php?TimeStamp=1427707586&IS=111

Bernard Colot, Founding Member and 1st elected President of the Hunting Interest Group of Mons
becolot1@hotmail.com

SECTION 5: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

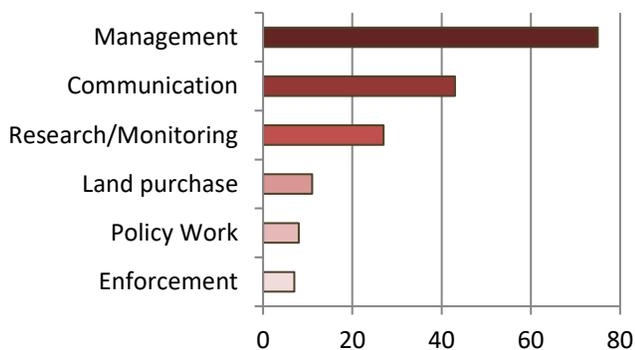
“More should be done to identify and promote the role of hunters in the cooperative management of Green Infrastructure. This should be supported by incentive measures for hunters and their local organisations to ensure that these areas are managed as part of wider landscape management objectives.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*

29% (86 case studies out of 300) contribute to the principles of Green Infrastructure.

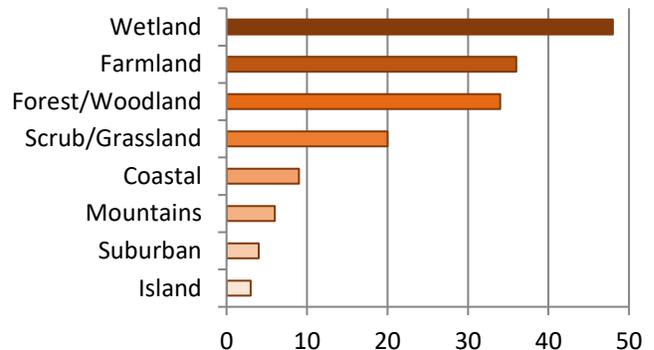
Of the 86 actions related to “Green infrastructure”:

- 87% attempt to improve connectivity between species and/or habitats and 50% are linked to communication activities.
- Green infrastructure actions are mostly occurring in wetlands (55%) and farmlands (40%).
- Migratory species are targeted in 30% of the cases.

**Actions conducted
by hunters for green infrastructure⁹**



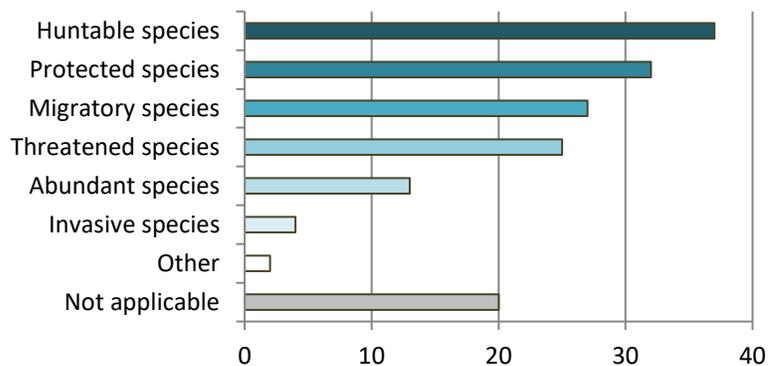
**Habitats managed
by hunters for green infrastructure⁹**



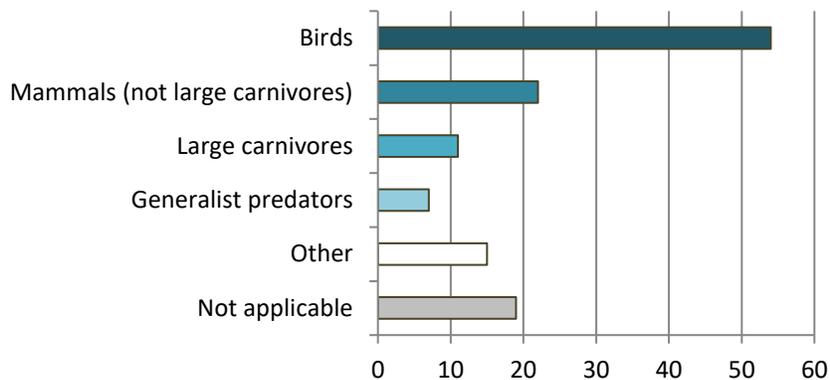
⁹ One case study can relate to several actions/habitats.

While strictly related to farmlands and Green infrastructure, the Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdrix*) is the species the most represented.

Types of species managed by hunters for green infrastructure¹⁰



Types of species managed by hunters for green infrastructure¹⁰



¹⁰ One case study can relate to several species.

CASE STUDY:

Creating corridors in farmlands – Czech Republic



CASE STUDY: Creating corridors in farmlands – Czech Republic

Between 2009 and 2013, the Czech Hunting Association jointly with the Mendel University in Brno and Dr. Petr Marada conducted a couple of corridors projects in farmland in Hodonín District (South Moravian Region of the Czech Republic).

Those projects have numerous of purposes:

- increase the local biodiversity;
- facilitate animal migration;
- create an anti-erosion function and improve water retention;
- and enhancing the aesthetic value of the landscape.

The first project, called “The Holy Trinity habitat corridor” was deployed in the Šardice municipality. It consists of a 15 meter wide corridor on the side of an agricultural lane on former arable land. This corridor is made up of trees, bushes and grassland. Trees are planted in the middle of the corridor in two rows escorted on both sides by two rows of bushes. The grassland, based on a Meadow mix seed, extends in the whole area of the corridor. The management consists of sowing and trimming with some weed protection three times a year.

The second project, “Nenkovice thalweg – grassing and greening” is located less than 10 km away from the first one. This initiative consists of a 25 meter wide corridor (a grass strip planted together with native tree species) and in a grassy agricultural lane with an avenue of trees. Several steps have been respected to succeed in this second part of the project: First of all, the area has been cleaned and the weeds removed. Next, a herb layer has been planted with adapted species on each side of the area according to the sun exposure. Later, bare-root seedlings were planted in several lines together with three rows of bushes and trees. Grass strips have been placed around to enable mowing machines to get too close in the first years after planting.

Contact and sources:

<https://honitba-roku.webnode.cz/files/200000018-d86d6d966d/Biokoridor-Sardice-sv-trojice.pdf>

Dr. Petr Marada, project investigator

Daniel Švrčula, Specialist officer at the Czech Hunting Association

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SECTION 6: ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

“It is often hunters as both users of ecosystem services and in part managers of ecosystems that actively conserve this wider landscape, contributing to ecosystem resilience and restoration.” *FACE Biodiversity Manifesto*



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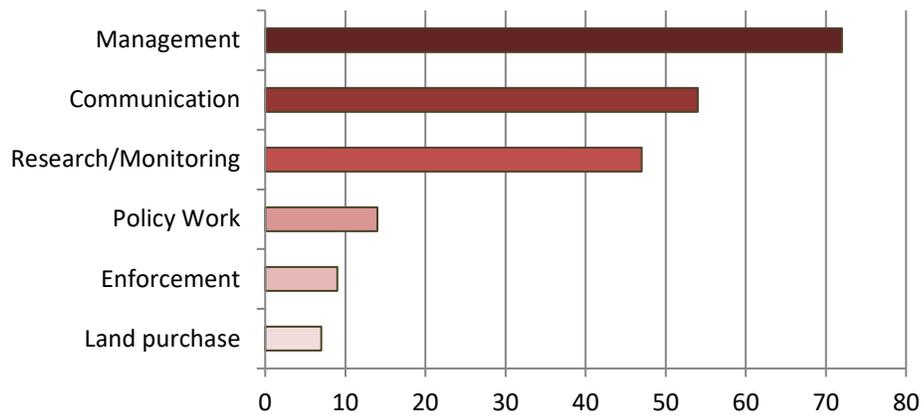
32% of the cases (94 case studies out of 300) contribute to the delivery of ecosystem services.

Of the 94 actions related to ecosystem services:

- The majority relate to the management of species and/or habitats (75%).
- The second most common activity links to communication (60%).
- The third type of activity represented is research and monitoring (50%).

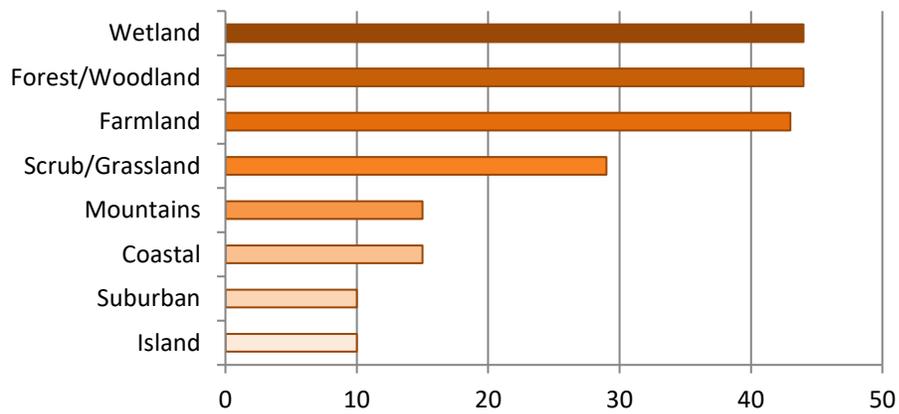


Actions conducted by hunters for ecosystem services¹¹



- Half of actions dealing with ecosystem services are undertaken on farmland.

Habitats targeted by hunters for delivering ecosystem services¹¹



¹¹ One case study can relate to several actions/habitats.

CASE STUDY:
PARTRIDGE Interreg Project



CASE STUDY: PARTRIDGE Interreg Project

PARTRIDGE is a project co-funded by the North Sea Region Programme which looks at how new management solutions can improve biodiversity and ecosystem services by up to 30% between 2016 and 2020. The project occurs on ten 500 ha demonstration sites spread in four countries: United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium (Flanders). Beyond the partnership between these countries, this project is based on partnership between different actors; researchers, farm advisors, conservationists, hunters, civil servants and farmers. The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (UK) leads the project while Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen (FACE Flemish Member in Belgium) and Deutscher Jagdverband (FACE Member in Germany) support it with other organisations.

The Partridge is the mascot of the project as the species is one of the best indicators of the ecological status of an agricultural area. If an area is optimally managed for the partridge, many other species benefit: Yellowhammer, Skylark, Hare, as well as finches and insects.

On each of the 10 sites, local management plans are developed and complemented by winter feeding and predation management. New transnational monitoring protocols are tested on the field to demonstrate the good results provided by the project. By organising farm walks and transnational demonstration site visits for farmers and civil servants, the objective is to show best practices to influence future agri-environment schemes across the partner countries.

Dr Francis Buner, Senior Conservation Scientist at the GWCT and Head of PARTRIDGE Interreg Project comments: "The main emphasis of PARTRIDGE is to demonstrate how the loss of farmland biodiversity can be reversed successfully across our partner countries. The key focus will be on grey partridge-tailored high-quality habitat improvements, the loss of which are a key factor in the decline of farmland wildlife and ecosystem services across Europe."

Contact and Sources:

<http://www.northsearegion.eu/partridge/>

Dr Francis Buner, Senior Conservation Scientist at the GWCT and Head of PARTRIDGE Interreg Project
fbuner@gwct.org.uk

CONCLUSION: THE NEED FOR A BETTER CAP

The 3rd Report of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto shows the diversity of work undertaken by hunters to benefit nature. The initiatives differ in terms of their size, target, location, type of action and duration but each of them shows that hunters are actively engaged in biodiversity conservation in Europe.

This report shows also that hunters, in conjunction with a large group of stakeholders (public



authorities, environmental NGOs, research bodies, landowners, farmers, foresters, institutions), are active in the conservation of a wide range of habitats and species on Europe's farmland. 45% of the 300 case studies include actions engaging farmland habitats. These results are unsurprising given the decline of species due to the intensification of agriculture linked to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

All 300 case studies demonstrate how the seven sections of the Biodiversity Manifesto are implemented throughout Europe. It should also be noted that Section 7 "Investing in Nature" is supported by every project in terms of the time (most hunters are acting voluntarily) and the resources invested by hunters to support sustainable hunting and conservation.

Of interest is the large quantity of projects that are undertaken on Natura 2000 sites. The fact that 40% of the projects occur in Natura 2000 sites demonstrates hunters' commitment to supporting this important network of protected areas in terms of monitoring, conservation and restoration. It is clear that Natura 2000 needs the support of European hunters. In this context, it is widely known that some of the most important wildlife sites in Europe have survived the pressures of development and destruction due to the interests of game management.

The next CAP must ensure greater support for farmers within the Natura 2000 Network. This must also include support for areas of HNV (High Nature Value) farming by making it mandatory for Member States to incentivise sustainable agriculture (and to prevent land abandonment) in these areas.



More generally, there must be greater coherence between direct payments and rural development support aimed at conserving biodiversity. Thus far, direct (Pillar I) and rural development (Pillar II) supports have not been effective enough in delivering the necessary environmental benefits.

Further, voluntary agri-environment schemes under Pillar II have, in general, been unsuccessful apart from some examples, such as locally-led and results-based schemes in some parts of Europe. The European Commission should ensure that Member States' CAP Strategic Plans include results-based agri-environmental schemes that are locally-designed targeting clear ecological outcomes. Such agri-environmental schemes would be supported by Europe's hunting community to the benefit of a wide range of species and habitats.

While the European Commission's communication on the next CAP (issued in November 2017) notes that there must be a "strong commitment to deliver public goods and ecosystems services related to soil, water, biodiversity, air quality, climate action and the provision of landscape amenities", FACE will be working hard to ensure that a high standard for biodiversity conservation is set at EU level. In this way, Member States will have to set clear targets in the CAP Strategic Plans for actual change to take place. Thus far, it is abundantly clear (e.g. from the Fitness Check of the nature directives) that the implementation of EU nature policy at national level has been very ineffective.



Visit the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto website to have access at the 300 hunters' initiatives and many other documents:

www.biodiversitymanifesto.com

NEXT STEPS

In 2018, FACE will develop a BDM Award, rewarding hunters for their work. Follow this on the BDM website!

CONTACT DETAILS

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USEFUL LINKS

- The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto (BDM):
www.biodiversitymanifesto.com
- Biodiversity Manifesto Actions points:
<http://www.face.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/bdm-action-points-web.pdf>
- 1st Biodiversity Manifesto report:
http://face.eu/sites/default/files/documents/english/bdm_report_pdf_en_-_web_version.pdf
- 2nd Biodiversity Manifesto report:
http://www.face.eu/sites/default/files/documents/english/2016_report_-_final_en.pdf
- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/strategy/index_en.htm
- European Commission – DG Environment:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index_en.htm
- European Commission – DG Agriculture and rural development:
https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/index_en
- Green Infrastructure:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature:
www.iucn.org
- Natura 2000 Network:
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm
- The Ramsar Convention:
www.ramsar.org
- Rural Development Programmes:
https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/index_en.htm
- Convention on Biological Diversity:
www.cbd.int
- African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement:
www.unep-aewa.org
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):
www.cms.int
- Bern Convention:
www.coe.int
- State of Nature report 2015:
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/pdf/state_of_nature_en.pdf

FACE MEMBERS

Albania - Federata e Gjuetarëve Të Shqipërisë

Austria - Jagd Österreich

Belgium

- ASBL Wallonne du Royal Saint-Hubert Club de Belgique (RSHCB) – Wallonia
- Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen (HVV) - Flanders

Bosnia-Herzegovina

- Lovčki Savez Herceg-Bosne (LSHB)
- Lovčki Savez Republike Srpske (LRRS)
- Savez Lovčkih organizacija BiH (SLOBiH)

Bulgaria - Съюз на ловците и риболовците в България

Croatia - Hrvatski Lovčki Savez

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Czech Republic - Českomoravská Myslivecká Jednota

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Estonia - Eesti Jahimeeste Selts

Finland - Suomen Metsästäjäliitto/ Finlands Jägarförbund

France - Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs

Germany - Deutscher Jagdverband

Greece - Κυνηγετική Συνομοσπονδία Ελλάδας

Hungary

- Országos Magyar Vadászkamara
- Országos Magyar Vadászati Védegylet

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Italy - FACE Italia/ Federazione Italiana della Caccia

Latvia - Latvijas Mednieku Asociācija

Lithuania - Lietuvos Mediotojų ir Žvejų Draugija

Luxembourg - Fédération Saint-Hubert des Chasseurs du Grand-duché de Luxembourg asbl

Malta - Federazzjoni Kaccaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti (FKNK)

Montenegro - Lovacki Savez Crne Gore

Netherlands - Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagers Vereniging

Norway - Norges Jeger-og Fiskerforbund

Poland - Polski Związek Łowiecki

Portugal - Federação Portuguesa de Caça (FENCACA)

Romania - Asociația Generală a Vânătorilor și Pescarilor Sportivi din România (AGVPS)

San Marino - Federazione Sammarinese della Caccia (FSdC)

Serbia - Lovacki savez Srbije

Slovakia

- Slovenská Poľovnícka Komora
- Slovenský Poľovnícky Zväz

Slovenia - Lovska zveza Slovenije

Spain - Oficina Nacional de la Caza

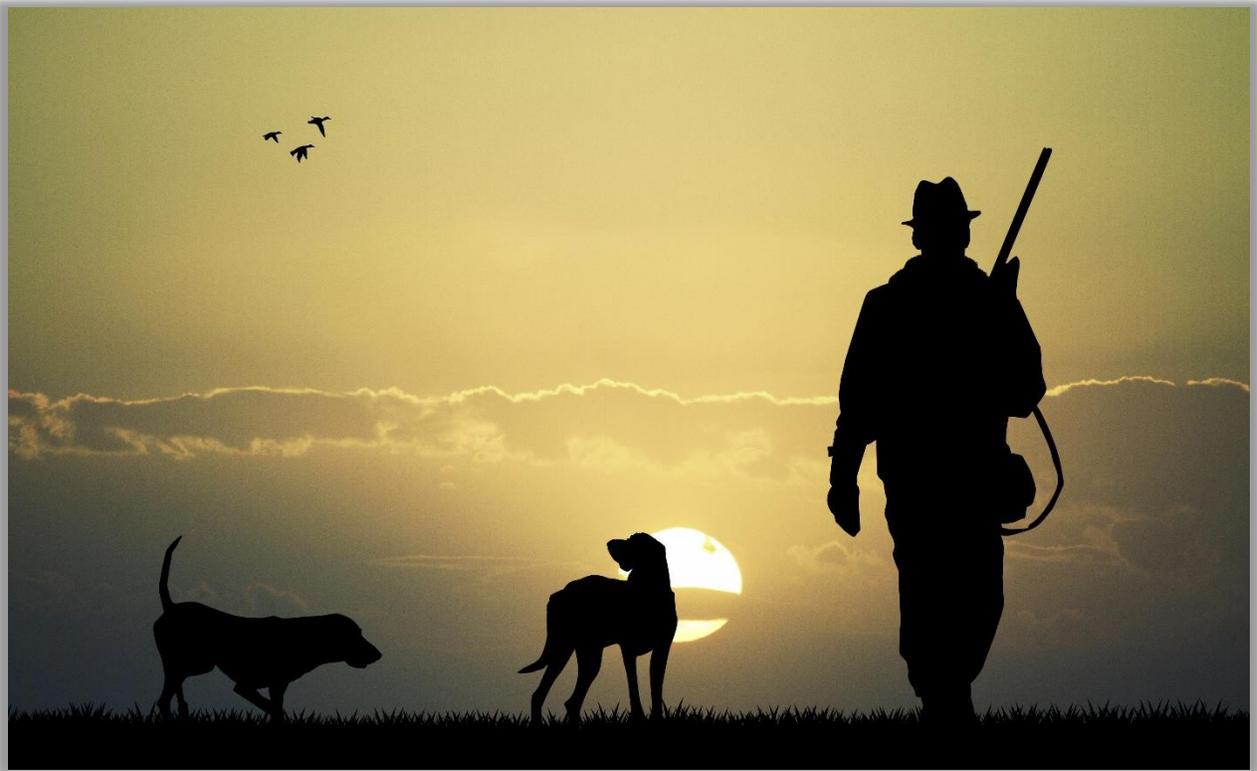
Sweden - Svenska Jägareförbundet

Switzerland - JagdSchweiz / ChasseSuisse / CacciaSvizzera / CatschaSvizra

Turkey - Türkiye Atıcılık ve Avcılık Federasyonu

United Kingdom – FACE UK

- British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)
- Countryside Alliance





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