

THE FACE BIODIVERSITY MANIFESTO

and its contribution to
the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020

Reporting 2015



FACE

Fédération des Associations de Chasse et Conservation de la Faune Sauvage de l'UE
Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU
Zusammenschluss der Verbände für Jagd und Wildtiererhaltung in der 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 Full Members, which are national hunters' associations from 35 countries from the Member States of the European Union and other Council of Europe countries, as well as its Associate Members at the level of the European Institutions. FACE has been a member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) since 1987.

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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



The year 2015 can be considered as an important step forward in policy processes related to biodiversity conservation. While the State of Nature 2015 report provides the most up to date status of species and habitats from reporting under the Nature Directives 2007-2012, the Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy presents the progress made under its 6 targets.

According to the State of Nature report, only 16% of the habitats have a favourable conservation status. In terms of species, particularly birds, the situation is better with 52% considered to have a secure population status, which is comparable to the (hunnable) bird species listed in Annex II, where 55% are deemed to be 'secure'.

On the other hand, while progress has been made under a few targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the mid-term review demonstrates that the EU is currently not on track to reach all the 6 targets by 2020, including the headline objective which aims to Halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restore them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

The current figures provided at EU level clearly demonstrate that more needs to be done for implementing conservation strategies at regional and local level taking into account the socio-economic and cultural aspects.

In that sense, it is clear that hunters play a key role in implementing balanced actions that support biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. In order to be able to hunt tomorrow, hunters need to demonstrate their positive contribution to nature conservation.

Despite the fact that hunters do a lot for conservation, it sometimes remains difficult task to demonstrate this. We need concrete numbers and figures and we need to quantify what hunters and their organizations do for biodiversity; the more we can quantify, the better hunters can coordinate towards more effective biodiversity conservation throughout Europe.

Nature and Biodiversity policy rarely portray hunting a pro-active role for conservation and part of the reason is that policy makers and stakeholders do not always understand hunting and the benefits it provides.

Through the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto and this report, we hope to provide some initial responses on hunters' contribution to biodiversity conservation and our shared heritage – Nature.



INTRODUCTION

After the failure of the EU in reaching the overall target to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010, and difficulties in the development of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, FACE and its Members adopted the Biodiversity Manifesto (BDM) which reflects the active commitment made by European hunters to biodiversity conservation, ensuring the sustainability of hunting for future generations.

By addressing 34 actions in 8 sections, the main objectives of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto are:

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

The Biodiversity Manifesto also provides a framework for all communications on hunting-related conservation issues.

In order to reach those objectives, FACE launched the Biodiversity Manifesto Working Group in January 2014, made up of experts from national hunting associations (from Belgium - Flanders, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom).

While supporting the collation of relevant examples to feed into the process, the Working Group also provides FACE with expertise on the assessment and reporting of the results.

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto and the Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

Through 6 mutually supportive and inter-dependent targets which address the main drivers of biodiversity loss, the EU Biodiversity strategy 2020 aims to reduce key pressures on nature and ecosystem services in the EU - The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020

The Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, published by the European Commission in October 2015, presents mixed results of achievement and indicates that more efforts are still necessary to improve the state of nature at EU level.

Therefore, this report presents how rural actors, and more specifically hunters, (can) contribute to the implementation of the various targets and actions set in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto offers a relevant framework for such assessment as it is directly related to 4 of the 6 targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020; the relationships between the chapters of the Biodiversity Manifesto and the European targets are presented on page 8-9.

In order to provide a good overview of hunters' contribution to the European frameworks, 181 examples (also called case studies) of conservation work undertaken by hunters have been assessed and used to understand and demonstrate this contribution.

By mapping these case studies against the actions of the Biodiversity Manifesto and other indicators (such as the collaborations that occurred or the type of funds used), trends have been identified and are highlighted in this report.

The report of the Biodiversity Manifesto 2015

This report focuses on the actions that contribute directly towards the targets set in EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020. The fit is exceedingly good with 23 of the 34 actions in the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto directly contributing to the Strategy.

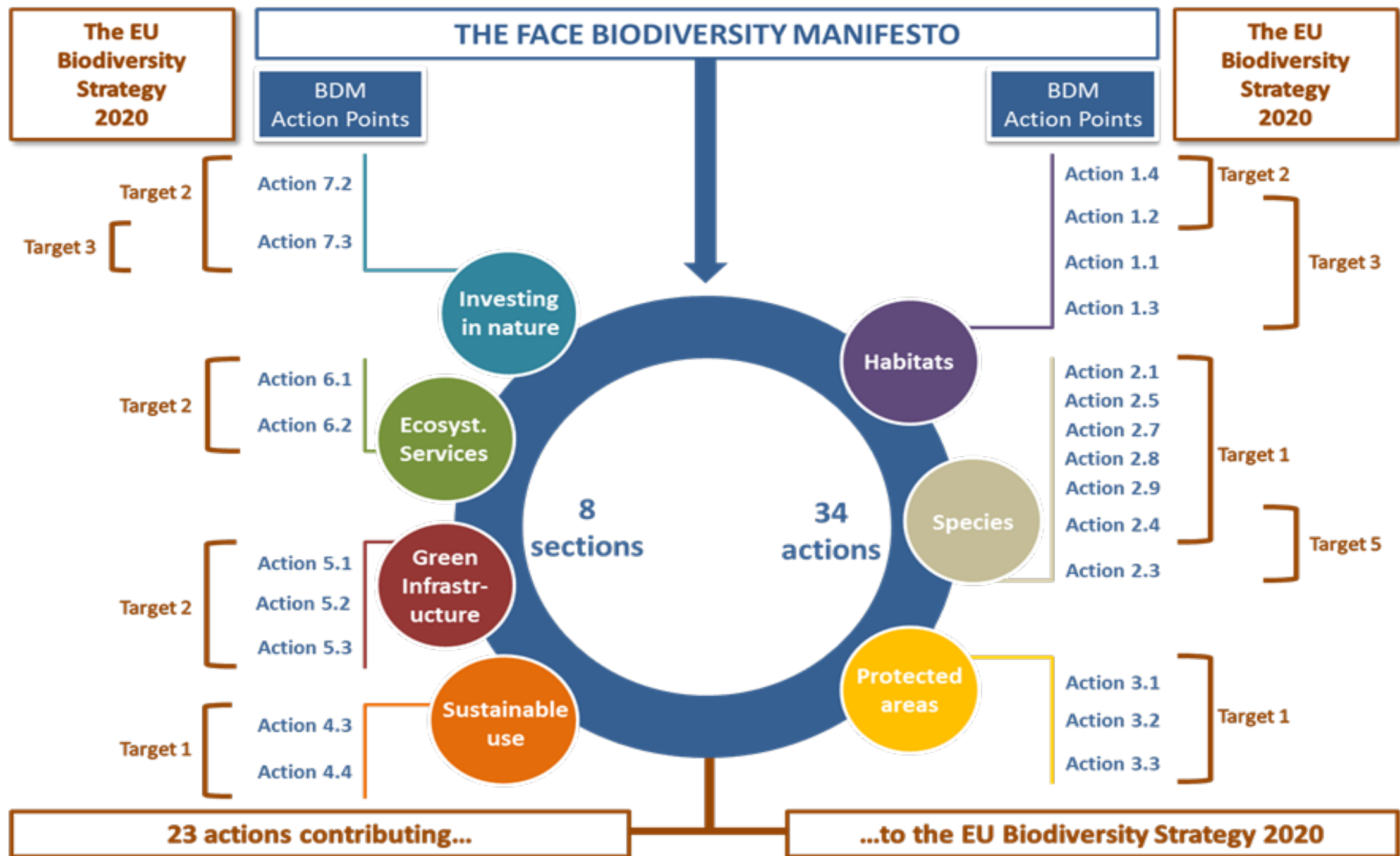
This report presents the trends of the current knowledge base that FACE has gathered since January 2013. It is important to point out that the 181 case studies used for presenting this overview cannot be considered as an exhaustive list of what is actually happening on the ground. In the coming years, more examples will be gathered thereby improving our understanding of the conservation actions conducted by European hunters.

After presenting the relationships between the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto and the EU Biodiversity Strategy, an overview of the trends based on the case studies is presented together with some relevant highlights.

Thereafter, a more detailed assessment of the case studies related to each of the 8 sections of the Biodiversity Manifesto is presented.

Finally, best-practice examples are presented to illustrate in greater detail how hunting contributes to nature conservation.

The FACE BIODIVERSITY MANIFESTO Related to the The EU BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY 2020



Relevant targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020:

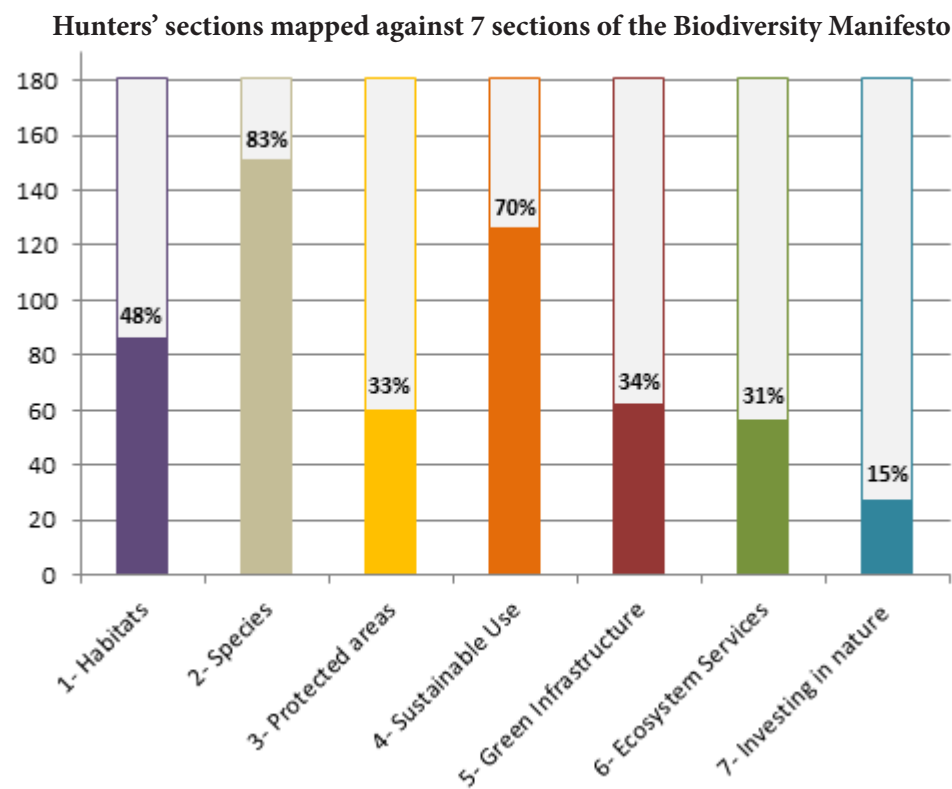
Target 1: Enhance implementation of nature legislation
Target 2: Restore ecosystems and establish Green Infrastructure

Target 3: Sustainable agriculture and forestry
Target 5: Invasive Alien Species

OVERVIEW, TRENDS AND HIGHLIGHTS

2015

This section summarises where the 181 case studies gathered from January 2013 to October 2015 fit in relation to the key BDM sections, relevant features, as well as the geographic distribution of the projects.



Graph 1: Number of case studies contributing either fully or partly to each of the 7 sections from the BDM. One case study can contribute to several sections.

Species and sustainable use are the most represented categories in the case studies, demonstrating that they underpin hunting across Europe.

Investing in nature is the least represented category and this can be attributed to the fact that most of the action points are specific to engaging with EU processes, such as the rural development programme under the Common Agricultural Policy or engaging with economic tools. The huge investment hunters make in creating and managing habitats and action for species is not reported under this category.

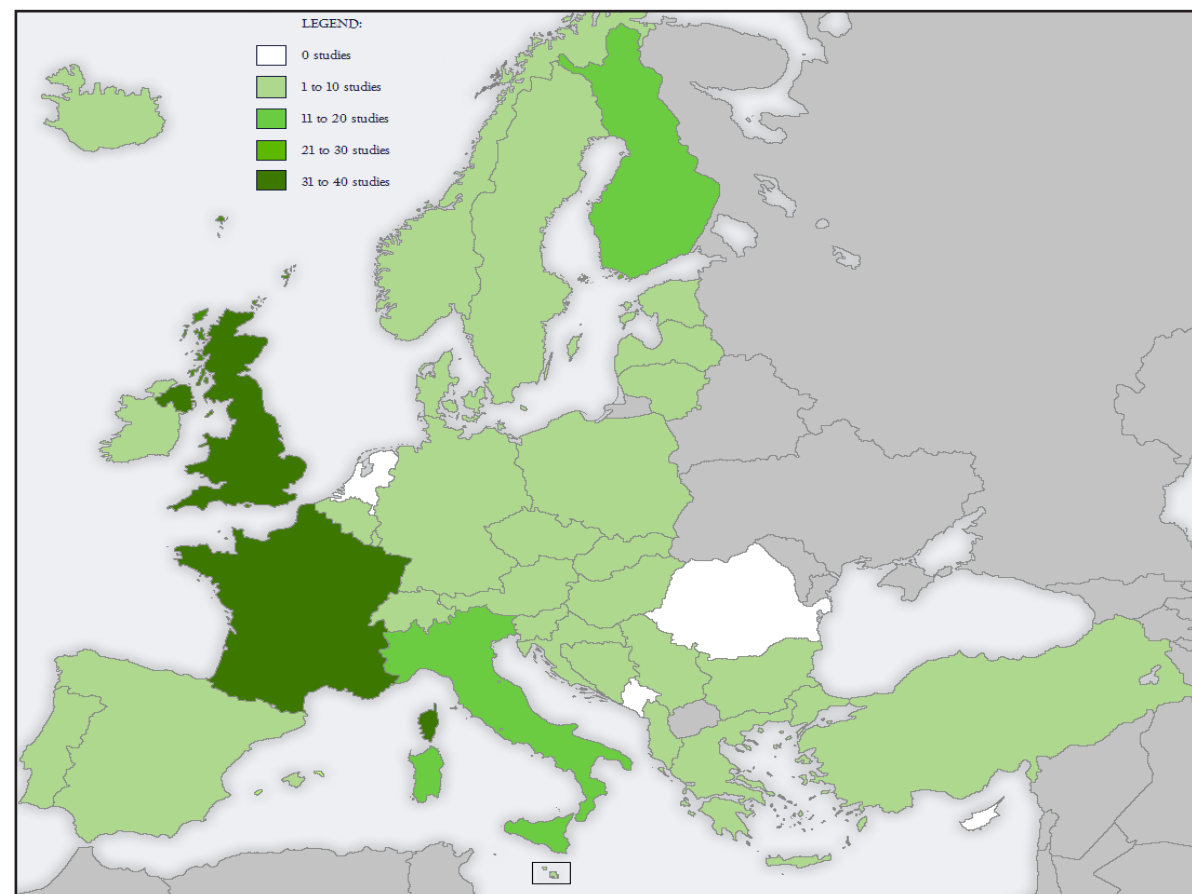


Figure 1: European countries concerned by the case studies gathered under this report

SOME INTERESTING HIGHLIGHTS

Through all the projects which hunters are involved in, various collaborations are undertaken:

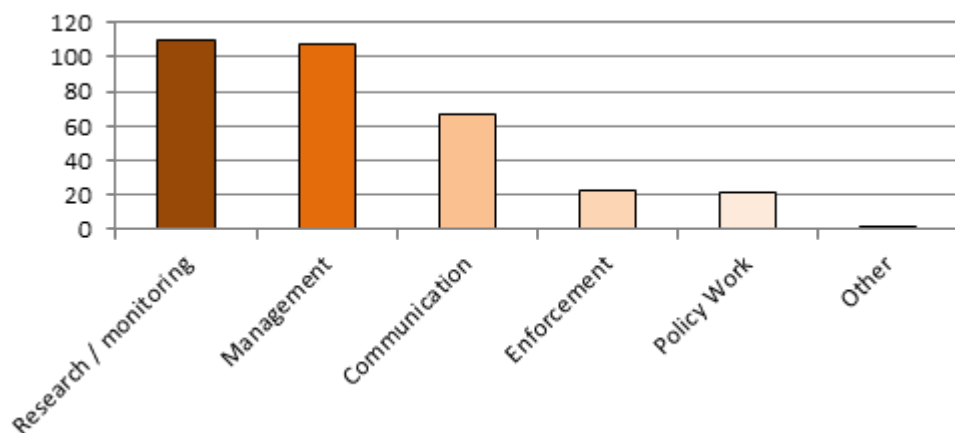
- **Environmental NGOs/trusts** are involved in a **third** of the projects gathered
- Collaboration with **universities or research bodies** has been demonstrated in a **quarter** of the 181 case studies

Despite the fact that action point 7.1 (“Improve the understanding of how hunters spend their resources within the context of ecosystem”) is not being reported in the current figures, it is relevant to highlight hunters’ investment in activities contributing to nature conservation:

- **42 case studies** contribute fully or partly to 7.1 action point.
- **Hunters financially support(ed) 35% of the 181 case studies**, either entirely or partially
- **24 case studies** were also partly or entirely supported by **EU funds**

AMONGST THOSE 181 CASE STUDIES, OTHER FEATURES WERE IDENTIFIED:

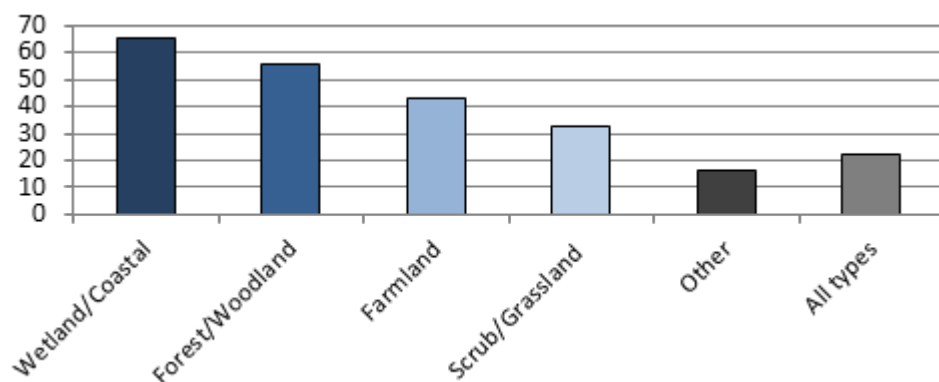
Types of actions conducted by hunters



Graph 2: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

Research/monitoring and management of habitats/species are the most represented actions in the current dataset.

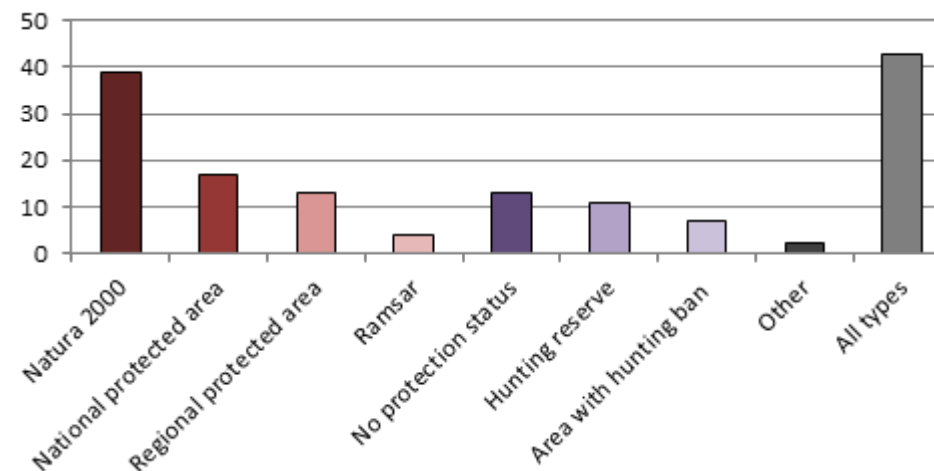
Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



Graph 3: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

Wetlands and forests are the most common habitats managed by hunters (where specified). For projects not directly related to management, there is no distinction for the habitat type (i.e. All types).

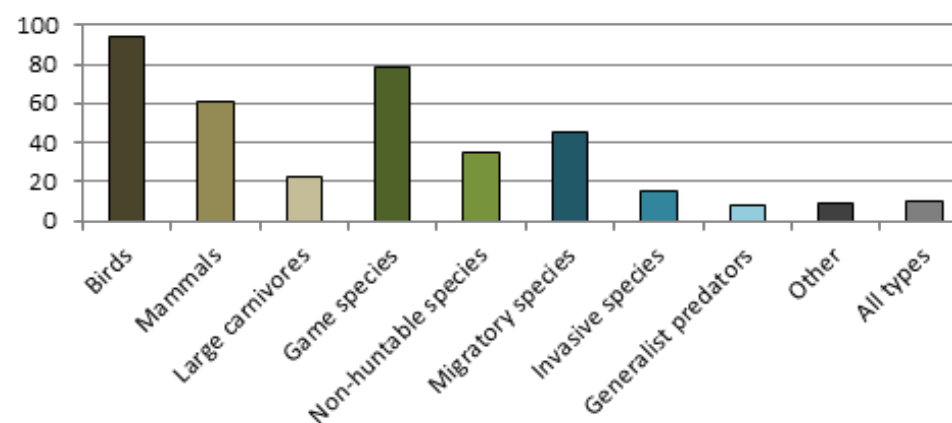
Status of the areas where actions are undertaken



Graph 4: Number of case studies per area status; one case study can be conducted on several types of area.

Around a fifth of the case studies are conducted on Natura 2000 sites. For many activities not directly related to management of species/habitats or communication, there was no distinction between the areas' status.

Groups of species concerned by hunters' actions



Graph 5: Number of case studies per type of species; one case study can be related to several types of species.

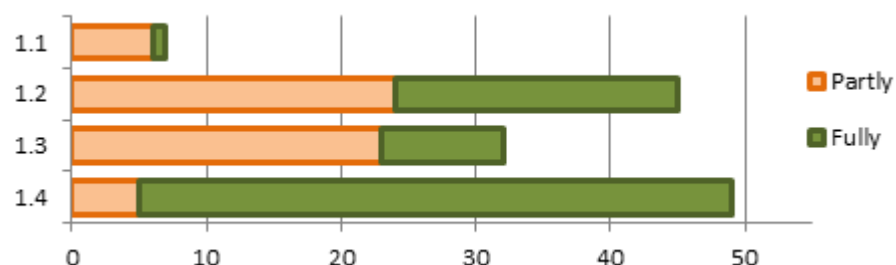
The majority of hunters' actions focus on birds and/or game species. Out of the 181 examples gathered, a fifth deals with non-hunttable species and/or migratory species.

HABITATS

“Protecting habitats is a fundamental means to conserve wild flora and fauna, thereby maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services. Ultimately it is through individual actions at grass-roots level that a difference can be made.” FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

This BDM section covers actions contributing to Target 3 (actions 6a and 7) and Target 4 (actions 8, 11 and 12) of the EU Biodiversity Strategy through the maintenance and improvement of habitats as well as the inclusion of sustainable agriculture and forestry principles.

Case studies mapped against the action points¹



Graph 6: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “habitats”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters have undertaken actions aiming to maintain, restore or improve habitats in 86 case studies

When directly related to habitats management, the case studies show slightly different trends from the overview (See annex 1 for more details):

- **Wetlands** remain the **most represented** habitat type concerned by hunters’ activities (47 case studies)
- **Farmland** has the second position with **29** case studies related to actions 1.1 and/or 1.2 while **forest areas** are represented in **26** case studies

¹Action points from “Habitats” section of the BDM:

- 1.1 Develop strategies and policies to address habitat provisioning within the Common Agricultural Policy (through Pillar 1 and Pillar 2).
- 1.2 Continue to collaborate with farmers and conservation organisations to maintain and restore farmland biodiversity through local actions.
- 1.3 Work with landowners, forestry interests and conservation organisations to develop policies and strategies that seek to achieve a balance in the management of forest ecosystems that is positive for biodiversity.
- 1.4 Continue efforts at the local level to maintain and restore wetlands

Wetland creation in Italy’s Emilia-Romagna region



Photo by Gabriele Fasoli

Across Europe, agricultural exploitation and the development of human settlements has resulted in the loss of wetlands and wetland species. Since 1995, Italian hunters in the Emilia-Romagna region have been participating in agri-environmental schemes that conserve and restore both wetland habitats and the biodiversity that they contain.

Hunters provided financial incentives for farmers to set-aside agricultural land, which they then flooded. This scheme has resulted in the creation and maintenance of hundreds of wetlands: around 1,100 hectares of permanent freshwater wetland, around 2,470 hectares of marshy meadows (including temporary and/or seasonal floodplains and meadows) and 2,357 hectares of permanent meadows with scrub patches. A pond of 4-5 hectares costs between €6,000-8,000 a year to maintain; wetland creation was co-funded by EU and around 75% is on private land.

This land provides migratory and breeding habitat for a range of waterfowl species, as well as permanent habitat for amphibian and reptile species. The scheme has resulted in a documented increase in waterbird numbers in all seasons and an increase in breeding numbers of many species such as lapwings, ducks, waders, coots and herons. The growth of these species’ populations has also resulted in an increase in raptor populations in the surrounding area, making these sites important for Natura 2000 designation and extension.

This work by hunters to support Italy’s declining wetlands has restored degraded habitat and aided the recovery of species and biodiversity that had been affected in the region.

Contacts and Sources

Michele Sorrenti (Scientific Coordinator, Migratory Birds Office Federazione Italiana della Caccia) – Email: acma_ricerche@yahoo.com

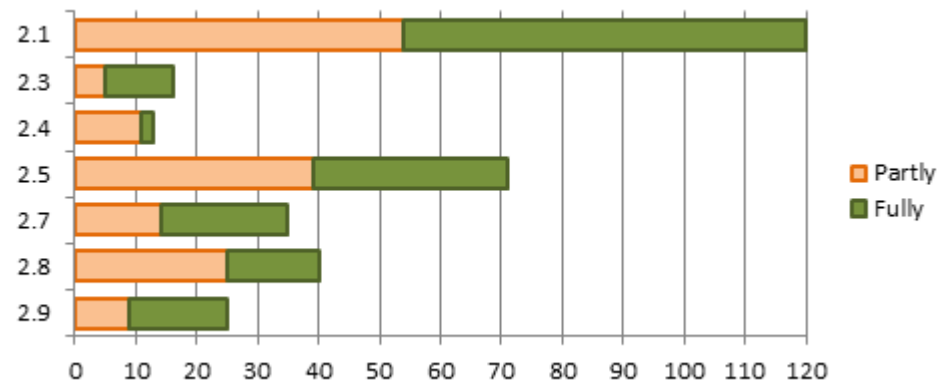
[More information can be found here.](#)

“While maintaining the habitats in good condition is critical for fulfilling the general ecological requirements of species, there are circumstances where certain species need particular attention.”

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7 out of the 9 actions from this BDM section contribute to Target 1 (action 4) and Target 5 from the EU Biodiversity Strategy through: policy work on Invasive Alien Species, improving knowledge on wildlife and the conservation of species considered to be at risk.

Case studies mapped against the action points²



Graph 7: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “Species”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters have undertaken actions aiming to improve knowledge and manage particular species of interest in 151 case studies

While the “Species” examples demonstrate the same trends as the overview for the groups of species concerned by hunters’ actions (see graph 5), these are some interesting highlights (See annex 2 for more details):

- 107 out of 151 case studies are related to **monitoring activities and research**
- The main habitats where those actions are undertaken are **forests** (49 case studies), **wetlands** (45 case studies) followed by **farmland** (38 case studies)

²Action points from “Species” section of the BDM:

- 2.1 Encourage hunters to continue engaging in programs to monitor and assess the status of huntable and other wild animal species, and implement appropriate conservation measures.
- 2.3 Communicate to hunters the necessity to identify, control and avoid the introduction of alien animal and plant species.
- 2.4 Contribute to policy formulation for issues such as the control of Invasive Alien Species and large carnivore conservation.
- 2.5 Promote the development and implementation of management and action plans especially for species considered to be at risk.
- 2.7 Continue to contribute to the conservation of endangered species.
- 2.8 Collaborate for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory birds and the conservation of habitats along their flyways.
- 2.9 Promote the sustainable use and ecologically balanced control of widespread opportunistic species and generalist predators.

Slovenian - Croatian cross-border collaboration for lynx conservation

After 2000, the lynx (*Lynx lynx*) population of the Dinaric Alps was at risk of extinction. In 1973 six individuals had been introduced from Slovakia to Slovenia by hunters: this population grew until the late 1980s, when the decline started. By the late ‘90s this population was once again in critical danger and now survives at a very small size.



Lynx muni d’un collier dans le cadre du projet DinaRis. Photographie de Vedran Slijepcevic

In 2004 the Hunting Association of Slovenia began cooperating with forestry services and conservation groups from both Slovenia and Croatia and the Universities of Ljubljana and Zagreb in ‘Transboundary Cooperation in Management, Conservation and Research of the Dinaric Lynx Population’ (DinaRis).

The DinaRis project conducted a range of actions, including:

- ▶ tracking individuals (including their genetics) and monitoring prey consumption
- ▶ conducted a survey examining the local tolerance for lynx presence
- ▶ creating a website and distributing leaflets, working with schools, communicating with the media and holding lectures to raise awareness of Dinaric lynx

The Hunters’ Association of Slovenia and its members were particularly active in the field and in monitoring work until the project ended. When a joint lynx management plan was developed the Slovenian Hunters’ Association were involved in this process as well.

The DinaRis project concluded that the Dinaric lynx population should be urgently augmented with new individuals to increase the genetic diversity as the remaining animals were heavily inbred. Now the Slovenian and Croatian researchers, with the help of hunting organizations are striving to initiate another project to perform the needed augmentation.

The collaboration of the Slovenian Hunters’ Association with the other organisations of DinaRis helped to “establish a network of partnerships in the northern Dinarics, which will contribute towards promotion and long-term conservation of natural values of the area.”

Contacts and Sources

Djuro Huber (Professor, University of Zagreb) – Email: Huber@vef.hr

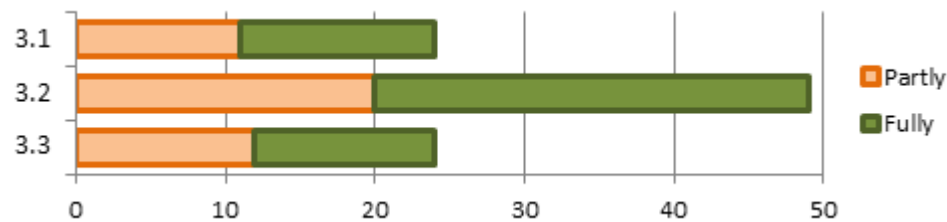
Ivan Kos (Professor, University of Ljubljana) – Email: Ivan.Kos@bf.uni-lj.si

[More information can be found here.](#)

“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

This BDM section covers actions contributing to Target 1 (actions 1 and 3) from the EU Biodiversity Strategy through the implementation and management of protected areas and more specifically the Natura 2000 network.

Case studies mapped against the action points³



Graph 8: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “Protected Areas”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters undertake actions related to management and awareness raising about protected areas in 60 case studies

Highlights (See annex 3 for more details):

- **Half** of the case studies include actions undertaken in **Natura 2000 sites** (33 case studies)
- **Management of species/habitats** is the most represented type of actions (45 case studies) followed by **communication activities** (36 case studies)
- The trends for the habitats concerned by the case studies within this section are similar to those shown in graph 3 (page 12)

³ Action points from “Protected Areas” section of the BDM:

3.1. Engage in dialogue facilitation and conflict resolution between stakeholders within protected areas.

3.2. Continue to promote hunters’ engagement in the management of protected areas in collaboration with the relevant competent authorities and other stakeholders (especially in regards to Natura 2000).

3.3. Collate best practice examples to its hunting community and the public.

In 2008, a national survey conducted in the Republic of Ireland suggested that Irish Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus hibernicus*) suffered a 70% decline in 40 years to a population of roughly 4,200 birds. While many projects were initiated in response to this, the Boleybrack Mountain Red Grouse Project stands out as a best case example.



Photo by Billy Clarke

Glenfarne Gun Club began a habitat management program to increase the red grouse population on neighbouring Boleybrack Mountain Special Area of Conservation.

In doing so, Glenfarne Gun Club collaborated with other conservation organisations, the local farmers, state wildlife and farming agencies and the National Association of Regional Game Councils to begin a program of:

- controlled heather burning in order to create the patchwork of heather preferred by grouse;
- predator control;
- grit provision to aid heather digestion by grouse;
- public awareness, education and stakeholder consultation measures.

The Boleybrack Mountain Red Grouse Project is lauded as a huge success, not just because it increased the local red grouse population and the populations of other upland birds including breeding waders and raptors, but because its educational activities have supported a new generation of upland managers and farmers.

It has helped shape agri-environmental measures for the Irish uplands as well as conservation policy and action (i.e. it has provided a best-practice template for other red grouse projects to follow).

Contacts and Sources

David Scallan (Project advisor) – Email: davidscallan1@gmail.com

[More information can be found here.](#)

“More specifically the EU, the Council of Europe and the Convention for Biological Diversity as well as other major international environmental agreements (Convention on Migratory Species; African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement; etc.) all recognise the legitimacy of hunting as a use of nature.” FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

2 out of the 5 actions from this BDM section contribute to Target 1 (actions 3 and 4) of the EU Biodiversity Strategy by: improving knowledge and scientific research on wildlife as well as encouraging the involvement of local actors in promoting good management.

Unlike much of the rest of the world, in Hungary Eurasian woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*) hunting occurs during the spring migration period in March. The Hungarian Hunters’ National Association began to collaborate with the Szent István University and the University of West Hungary in 2009 to monitor the migrating Eurasian woodcock population size and demographics. Their aim was to assess the effect of Hungarian spring hunting on the woodcock’s population and ascertain whether Hungarian woodcock hunting is sustainable.



Photo by Gergely Schally

To do this, participating hunters collected observation and hunting bag data regularly in around 900 locations spread over the whole country covering the whole migration period.

Analysis of the data collected in the period 2009-2014 revealed that the number of woodcock shot in Hungary may constitute just about the 0.1-0.2% of the total European mortality. Thus the Hungarian springtime hunting of Eurasian Woodcock can be considered as sustainable use meeting all requirements of strict legal regulations, and it has no significant impact on the European population.

This is a very important finding; hunting in Europe should be conducted on the basis of sustainable use, i.e. hunting should not endanger the conservation of a species. It is therefore important that hunters can prove what the Biodiversity Manifesto shows: hunters are fundamentally linked to the environment and its conservation.

Contacts and Sources

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Gergely Schally (Assistant Professor, Szent István University)

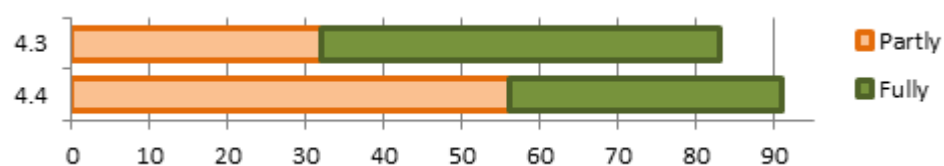
Email: sgergo@ns.vvt.gau.hu

For more information:

SCHALLY, L., SZEMETHY, L. and BLEIER, N. 2013. Woodcock Report from Hungary - Spring 2013. WI/IUCN-WSSG Newsletter 39: 8-10.

FARAGÓ, S., LÁSZLÓ, R. and BENDE, A. March 26-27, 2012. Consequences of Eurasian Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*) Hunting on the Population in Hungary. International Scientific Conference on Sustainable Development & Ecological Footprint.

Case studies mapped against the action points⁴



Graph 9: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “Sustainable Use”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters undertake actions related to population monitoring and sustainable use in 126 case studies

As action 4.3 and 4.4 are related to these issues, the majority of the examples are related to **monitoring** and **management activities**. There are some other interesting trends (See annex 4 for more details):

- At least a third of the case studies involve conservation work in either **forest** (40) **and/or wetland areas** (40)
- **More than half** of the examples gathered concern **game species** (68 case studies), while **birds** are represented in a similar proportion (67 case studies).
- A **fifth** of the case studies include monitoring and/or management actions for **non-hunttable species** (25 case studies)

⁴Action points from “Sustainable Use” section of the BDM:

4.3. Encourage the collection of hunting and population statistics and facilitate research to assess the sustainability of hunting practices.

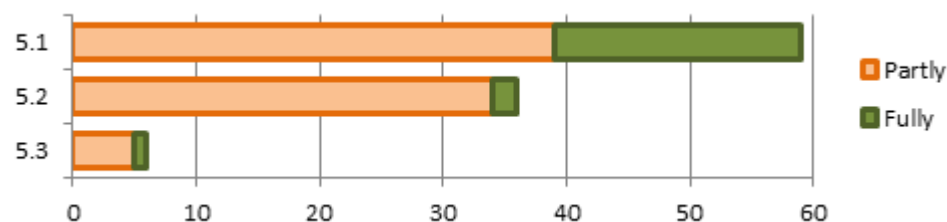
4.4. Seek ways to involve and organise local hunters, their knowledge and experience in promoting good management and best practice for the implementation of EU Nature and Biodiversity Policies.

“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.”

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This BDM section covers Target 2 and more specifically action 6b of the EU Biodiversity Strategy by encouraging the implementation, management and policy working under the development of a Green Infrastructure.

Case studies mapped against the action points⁵



Graph 10: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “Green Infrastructure”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters undertake actions contributing to Green Infrastructure principles in 62 case studies

The majority of the examples are related to **management of species and/or habitats** (56 case studies).

Other trends are interesting to highlight (See annex 5 for more details):

→ The **second most common activity** relates to **communication** (33 case studies)

→ **Half** of the case studies include activities conducted on **wetlands** (35) with **birds** and **migratory species** being the **most represented** groups of species.

⁵Action points from “Green Infrastructure” section of the BDM:

5.1. Continue to promote the sustainable management of hunting areas, whenever possible within voluntary cooperation and coordination schemes which maintain a fundamental green infrastructure for the conservation of nature at a landscape level, thus securing ecosystems, increasing landscape connectivity and its capacity to respond to environmental change.

5.2. Actively demonstrate and explain ‘tried-and-tested’ management measures undertaken within hunting areas that underpin a green infrastructure.

5.3. Actively contribute to the policy development for a Green Infrastructure within the EU.



In the UK the population of hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) is declining in both numbers and range. In order to prevent its extinction it is therefore the focus of conservation efforts.

During a survey assessing the biodiversity of land over which its members shot, the BASC (British Association for Shooting and Conservation) discovered an isolated population of dormice near to a released population in the Wych Valley (southwest Cheshire). In 2011 BASC began a project to build a network of hedgerows between these populations and an area that had been identified as having high connectivity of woodland and hedgerow habitats. This network would extend the habitat area of the dormouse population, allow population growth and allow migration in the face of climate change. In order to achieve this, the project conducted:

Basc.org.uk

- hedgerow and woodland surveys, allowing the project to make informed decisions on habitat management on the projected route
- recruitment and training of local volunteers to carry out surveys and practical work
- planting of new hedges and woodland where necessary and woodland management
- agreements with landowners and hunters on the long term management requirements of the habitat and for dormice

These actions allowed BASC to conserve habitat that was in a favourable condition, restore areas that were not and create new habitat by linking hedgerows and woodland. The role of landowners and hunters was essential in gaining permission to undertake the project and to secure long term management. In addition BASC worked in partnership with other conservation organisations to pool resources and skills and secure funding for the project.

This project has supported the dormouse population’s conservation by creating new habitat and linking existing patches, but it has also benefited a host of other animal, fungi and plant species as it encourages biodiversity-friendly land management.

Contacts and Sources

Ian Danby (Head of Biodiversity Projects, BASC)

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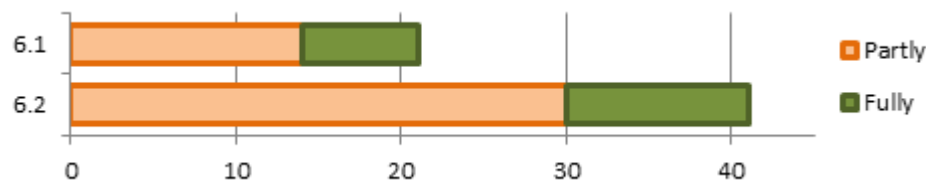
[More information can be found here.](#)

"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."

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2 of the 3 actions from this BDM section contribute to Target 2 (actions 5, 6a and 6b) from the EU Biodiversity Strategy by improving both the knowledge on biodiversity features (including ecosystem services) and awareness on the importance of those features.

Case studies mapped against the action points⁶



Graph 11: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section "Ecosystem Services". One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters undertake actions contributing the understanding and management of ecosystem service in 56 case studies

The **majority** of the examples are related to **management of species and/or habitats** (41 case studies).

Other trends are interesting to highlight (See annex 6 for more details):

- The **second most common activity** is related to **communication** (33 case studies) and therefore to the action point 6.2
- As it is in line with action 6.1, the **third type of activity** represented is **research and monitoring** (28)

It is interesting to note that **39 case studies** present a **combination** of either two or all those three types of activity.

In Denmark populations of grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) are falling. The Danish Hunters' Association has been working on several projects to encourage the recovery of farmland species including producing and distributing a publication on wildlife-friendly farming methods, published in 2008, and the Markvildt project which began in 2013.



Photo by Thomas Iversen

By producing the document on wildlife-friendly farming the Danish Hunters' Association laid the groundwork for population recovery in farmland species.

The publication gave details on the appropriate management of crops, hedges and other farmland features, methods of mowing, winter planting and feeding that benefited the species and much more.

The main purpose of the Markvildt project is to create nationwide, voluntary collaborative guilds of farmers, hunters and other stakeholders in areas of 1,000 to 1,500 hectares, within which stakeholders work together to manage the land in an optimal way for farmland species (especially partridge and hares). The Danish Hunters' Association assists the process by providing educational support and advice to landowners on how to improve habitat on their land. The populations of partridge, hare and other species are then monitored by volunteers in order to quantify the effort of habitat improvements and to assess the biodiversity of the site.

These projects highlight an often-overlooked facet of hunters' conservation work: hunters are very knowledgeable regarding ecology and they often possess expertise on species' requirements and preferences. The document on wildlife-friendly farming and the markvildt project both help establish the conditions for a recovery in the grey partridge, brown hare and other species' populations and highlight that hunters are valuable sources of environmental information. The monitoring of biodiversity and the maintenance of natural habitat in agricultural land both contribute to the preservation and enhancement of functioning ecosystems.

Contacts and Sources

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[More information can be found here.](#)

⁶Action points from "Ecosystem Services" and related to the EU biodiversity Strategy:

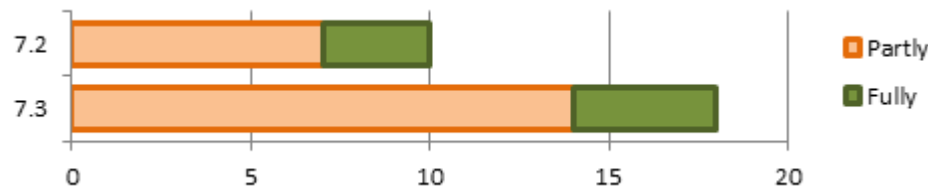
6.1. Endeavour to improve information on ecosystems and the services that they provide by continuing to be involved in collaborative research and monitoring that contributes to the placing of a true value on biodiversity assets.

6.2. Endeavour to improve understanding of the importance of healthy and resilient ecosystems and the services that such ecosystems provide, by collaborating in awareness raising programs as well as educational activities, both for hunters and the public.

“Hunters have long paid their way both financially and in kind. Hunters and other wildlife users invest considerable time and effort in carrying out conservation work all year round. This not only has positive impacts on the environment but also improves our knowledge of nature.” FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

2 of the 3 actions from this BDM section contribute to Target 2 (action 7b) and Target 3 (action 9) from the EU Biodiversity Strategy by promoting processes such as biodiversity banking and rural development programs linking both economic activities and nature conservation.

Case studies mapped against the action points⁷



Graph 12: Number of case studies either partly or fully contributing to one or several actions from the section “Investing in Nature”. One case study can contribute to several actions.

Hunters undertake actions related to rural development programs and other economic tools in 27 case studies

Some trends are interesting to highlight (see annex 7 for more details), as out of those 27 case studies:

- Hunters **financially contribute(d)** to 12 projects
- **6** are covered by **EU funding**; more specifically rural development programs
- **14** are supported by **other funding** from public authorities, NGOs or parks

It is also relevant to note that almost **half of the case studies** gathered under this category (10) present activities conducted on **Natura 2000 sites**.

⁷Action points from “Investing in Nature” section of the BDM:

7.2. Examine and promote economic tools (e.g. biodiversity banking, fiscal incentives, subsidies, funding mechanisms) to support conservation measures associated with sustainable uses such as hunting, to provide sustainable solutions for biodiversity conservation.

7.3. Encourage actions associated with hunting through rural development programs creating jobs, businesses and other economic activity that sustains nature.

By the 1960s, the vultures that were one abundant in the south of France faced extinction due to biodiversity-unfriendly farming practices and by vultures’ bad reputations.

Since the ‘60s, conservation efforts have enabled black, bearded and griffin vultures (*Aegypius monachus*, *Gypaetus barbatus*, *Gyps fulvus*) to recover slightly, however populations are still highly localised. The valleys of Gorges du Tarn et de la Jonte (France) Natura 2000 sites are potentially ideal habitats for vultures; so in 2008 the Departmental Hunting Federation of Lozère, being the site’s managers, began a campaign to assist the recovery of the local vulture population.



Fédération Départementale des Chasseurs de la Lozère

To tackle vultures’ conservation issues, the Lozère hunters worked with farmers, hunters and tourism bodies to:

- adopt farming methods that benefited all parties and reach agreements ensuring the land was kept open by grazing and land management by hunters
- establish feeding posts for the vultures and thus constitute economic gains for farmers
- organise meetings between interest groups, communicate with the media and conduct educational activities for schools and students to garner public acceptance
- feature vultures as a ‘Made in Lozère’ brand, open new tourist accommodation facilities and promote the ‘Vulture House Information Centre’ which now attracts 30,000 people per year
- participate in monitoring activities
- consider the use of alternative munitions through the GypConnect LIFE program, in association with other conservation organisations

The Departmental Hunting Federation of Lozère successfully achieved coexistence between local stakeholders and vulture populations and stimulated a tourism sector that helps to maintain the conservation efforts. To celebrate these successes, the hunters managing the ‘Gorges du Tarn de la Jonte et des Causses’ Natura 2000 site won the 2016 Natura 2000 Award in the socio-economic benefits category.

Contacts and Sources

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[More information can be found here.](#)

Hunters for Nature – Concluding remarks

“Biodiversity is nature. Nature needs people who understand its complexity and are willing to work with it. Across Europe, millions of hunters work for nature conservation, mainly by undertaking actions at local and regional levels.”

– FACE Biodiversity Manifesto, “Hunters for Nature” section

This report is a demonstration of the local engagement for nature conservation undertaken by hunters together with other rural actors.

By fulfilling the engagements set in the Biodiversity Manifesto, hunters’ actions can directly relate to the implementation of targets set out in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020. Having highlighted this contribution, it further demonstrates that hunters are important and effective partners for concretely implementing the frameworks developed at national and European level.

However, it is important to point out that hunters did not wait for the development of those frameworks to act for the preservation of wildlife and habitats. Indeed, some areas have been maintained by hunters for generations and are now part of the Natura 2000 network due to these management activities most often conducted on a voluntary basis.

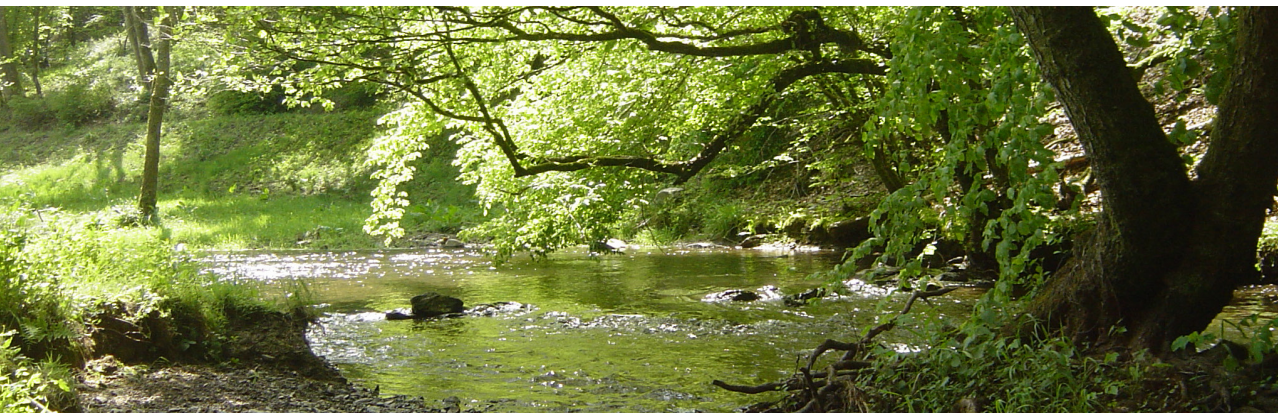
It is therefore not surprising to identify so many links between hunters’ activities and the objectives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

This report demonstrates how relevant the involvement of hunters and local actors can be for nature conservation. Increasing this engagement, while encouraging an integrative and multi-functional approach to rural land management, is therefore an important way forward.

Involving the local stakeholders at the very first stages of every process is also crucial for building a balanced approach between nature conservation and human activities while avoiding potential conflicts.

By sharing knowledge and working directly with the rural actors, capacity building and cost-effectiveness is more easily reached.

Therefore, efforts should be made in order to strengthen the dialogue with local actors, especially hunters, when developing and implementing actions while facilitating the access to subsidies and funding.



The Biodiversity Manifesto process – Next steps

“We will set in place a system for regular reporting and review our Manifesto to ensure that the hunters’ contribution to the conservation of biodiversity is in line with decisions taken by the European and Global Community and remains focused on agreed priorities and public needs.”

– 34th action point from the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

This report should be considered as our second fulfilment of this 34th action point. Indeed, FACE already developed a leaflet reporting hunters’ actions for birds’ conservation, published in 2014; you can find it [here](#).

Following this report and considering the amount of information gathered, some improvements will be made in order to align the Biodiversity Manifesto with the realities of the local actions, while considering the various European and international frameworks for biodiversity conservation.

During 2016, a website devoted to the Biodiversity Manifesto and the demonstration of hunters’ actions for biodiversity will be launched.

A report, similar to this one, which summarizes the results and highlights relevant trends will be developed and presented on a yearly basis.

While waiting for the website devoted to the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto, best-practice examples are available on [FACE’s website](#) and published on a monthly basis:

Contact details

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Limitations of the report

This report presents the first trends identified through the process of the FACE Biodiversity Manifesto.

The assessment was based either on the information provided by hunters or on the information publically available and therefore, the accuracy of the information provided for each case study was not always constant.

Some knowledge gaps should also be tackled in order to improve FACE's understanding of the types of collaboration undertaken with the hunters and the financial support or human resources used for the projects.

Improving the procedure for gathering information and to communicate with the hunting associations will be a priority in the coming years.

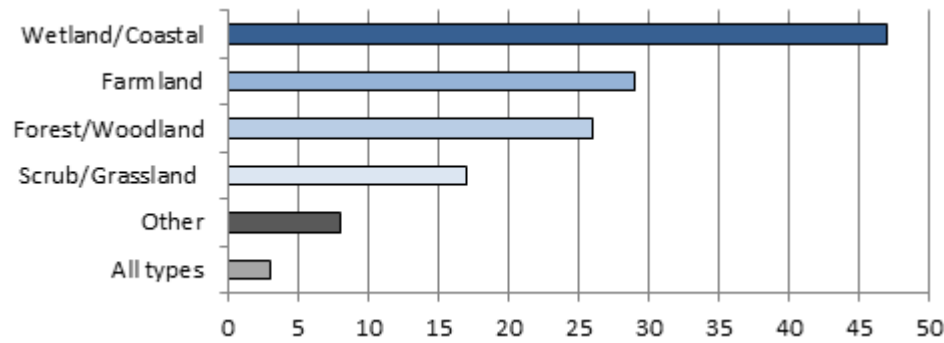
In addition we recognise the case studies we can provide evidence for will always only be a fraction of the actual work that is being done by hunters for biodiversity conservation.

- African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) - [website](#)
- The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto (BDM) - [link](#)
- Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds - [link](#)
- Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) - [website](#)
- Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) - [website](#)
- Council of Europe - [website](#)
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora - [link](#)
- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 - Our life insurance, our natural capital - [link](#)
- European Commission – DG Environment - [link](#)
- Green Infrastructure - [link](#)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - [link](#)
- Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020
 - [Press release](#)
 - Commission Report: [The mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020](#)
 - Accompanying Commission Staff Working Document: 'EU assessment of progress in implementing the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020':
[part 1](#), [part 2](#) and [part 3](#)
 - [Summary of progress towards the 2020 biodiversity targets](#)
- Natura 2000 network - [link](#)
- Progress towards the European 2010 biodiversity target - [link](#)
- Ramsar - [website](#)
- Rural Development Programmes - [link](#)
- State of Nature report 2015 - [link](#)

ANNEXES

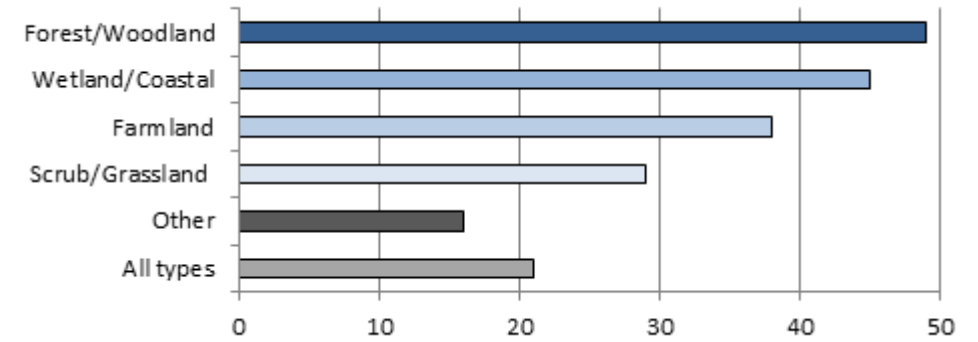
Annex 1 – « Habitats » section

Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



Annex 1.1: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

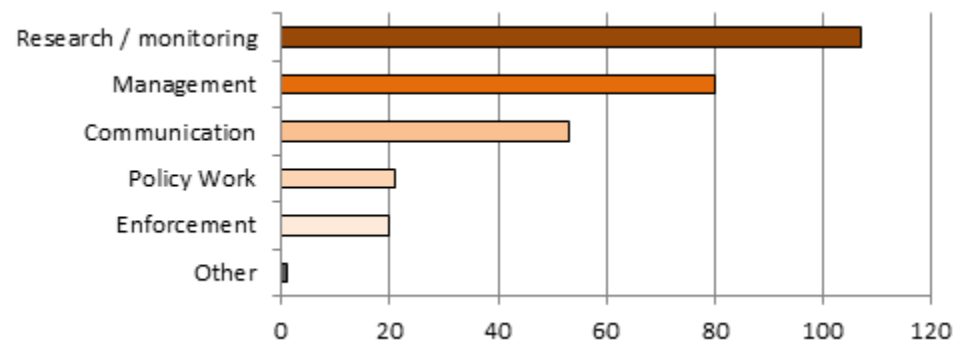
Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



Annex 2.2: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

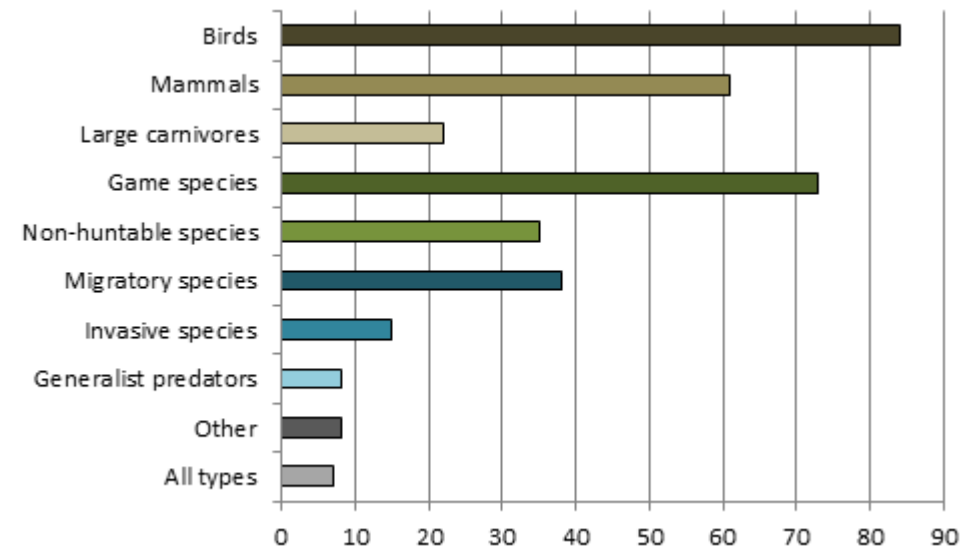
Annex 2 – « Species » section

Types of actions conducted by hunters



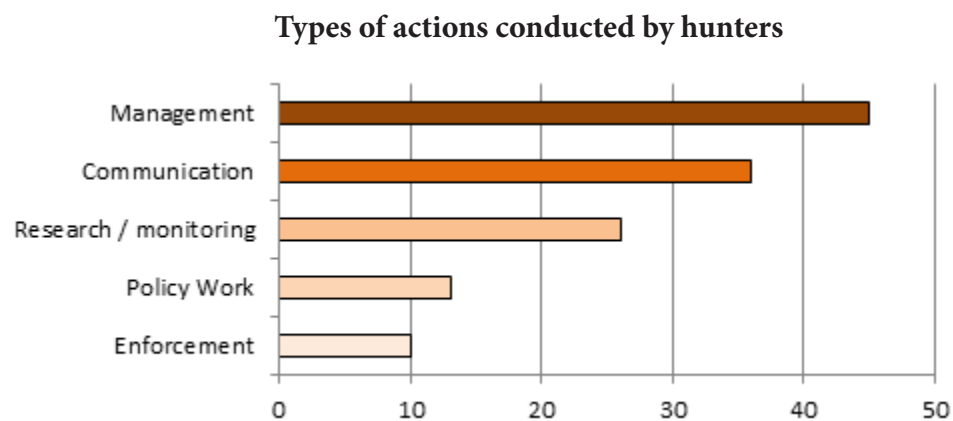
Annex 2.1: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

Groups of species concerned by hunters' actions



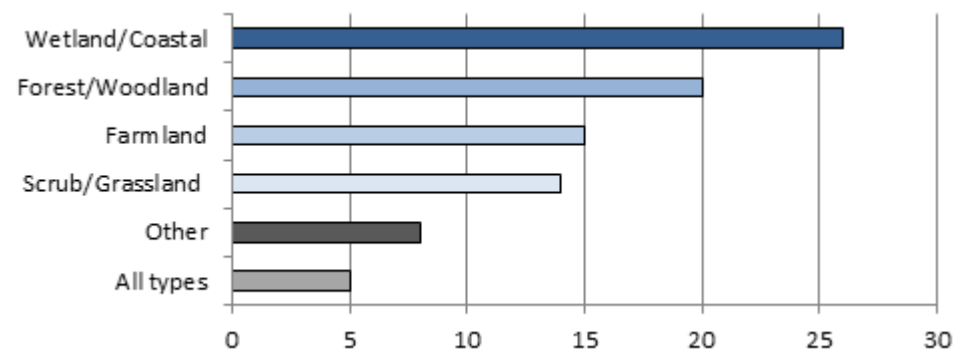
Annex 2.3: Number of case studies per type of species; one case study can be related to several types of species.

Annex 3 – « Protected areas » section



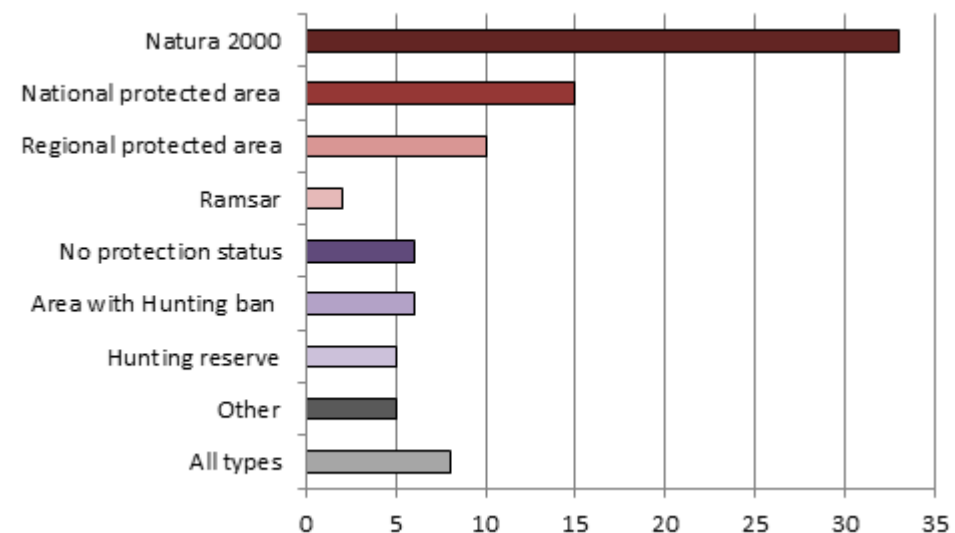
Annex 3.1: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



Annex 3.2: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

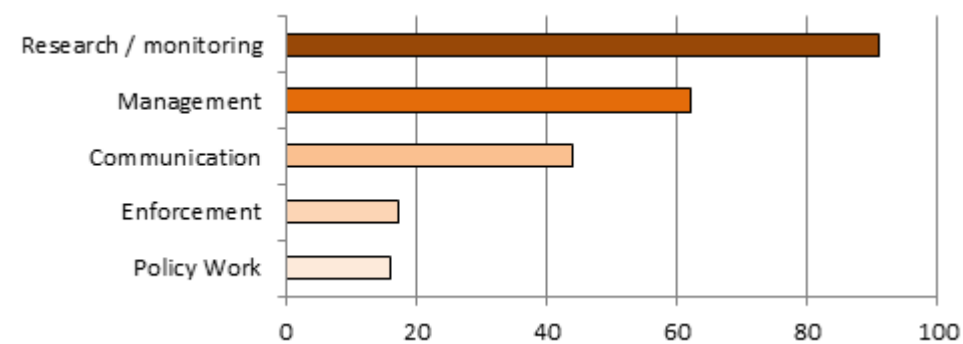
Status of the areas where actions are undertaken



Annex 3.3: Number of case studies per area status; one case study can be conducted on several types of area.

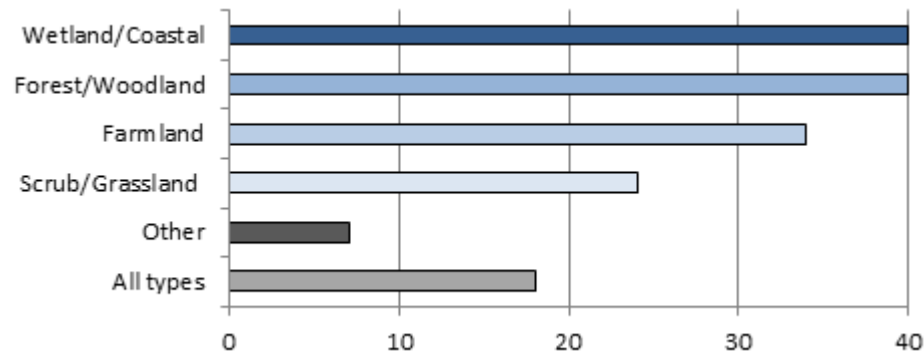
Annex 4 – « Sustainable Use » section

Types of actions conducted by hunters



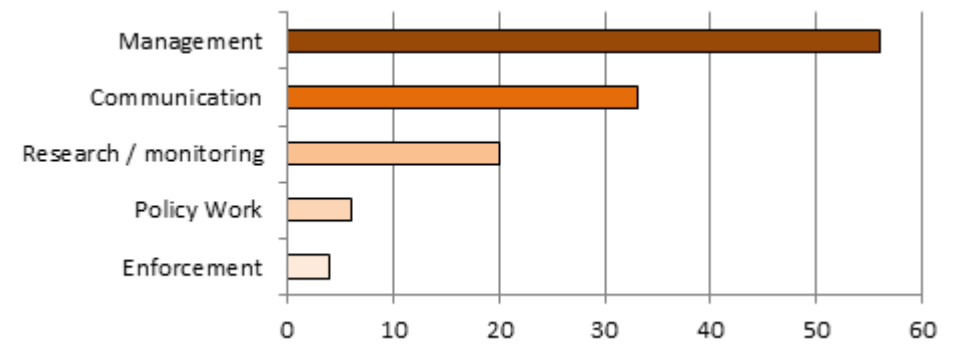
Annex 4.1: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



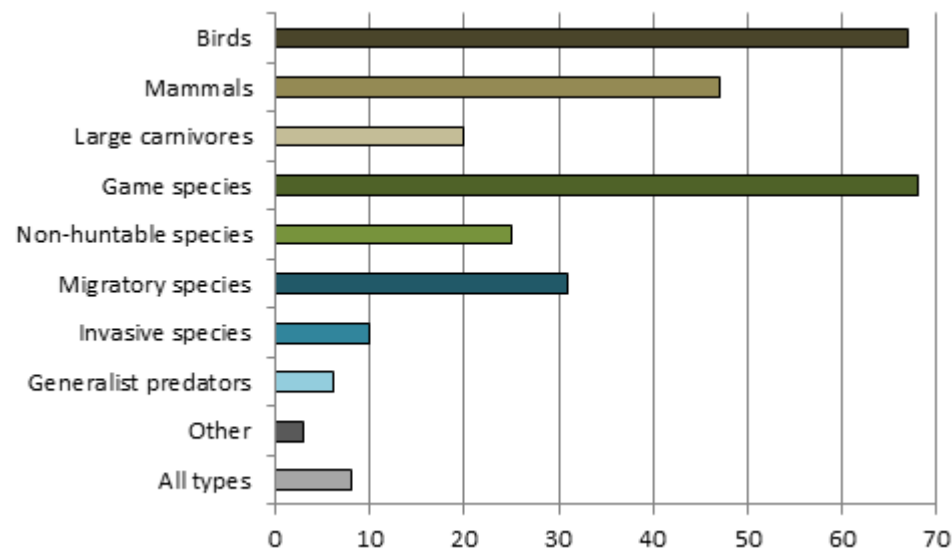
Annex 4.2: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

Types of actions conducted by hunters



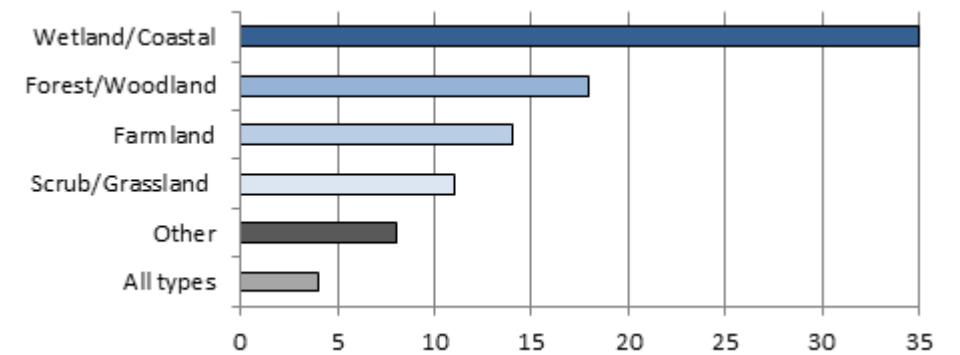
Annex 5.1: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

Groups of species concerned by hunters' actions



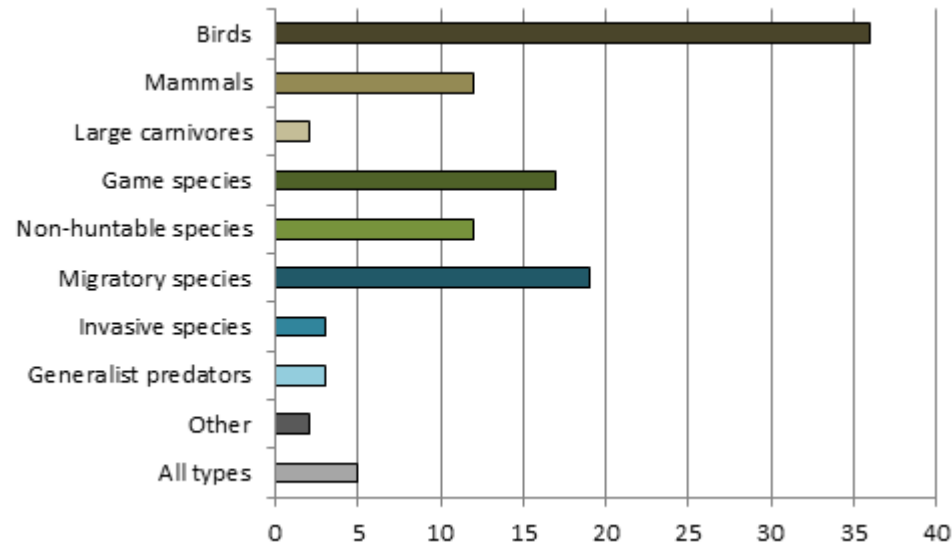
Annex 4.3: Number of case studies per type of species; one case study can be related to several types of species.

Types of habitats concerned by hunters' actions



Annex 5.2: Number of case studies per type of habitats; one case study can be related to several habitats.

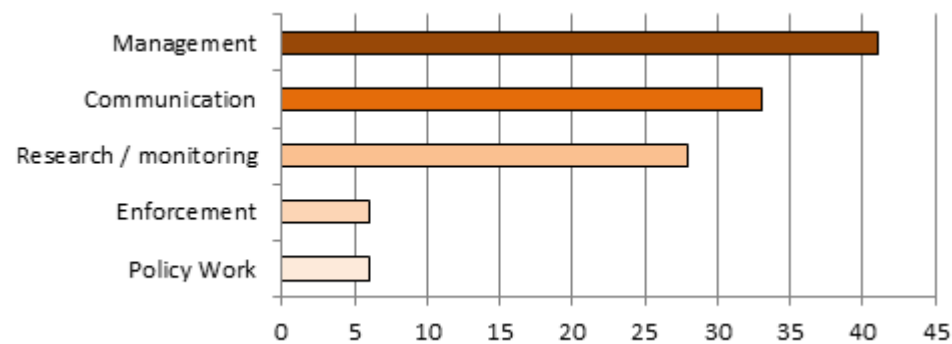
Groups of species concerned by hunters' actions



Annex 5.3: Number of case studies per type of species; one case study can be related to several types of species.

Annex 6 – « Ecosystem Services » section

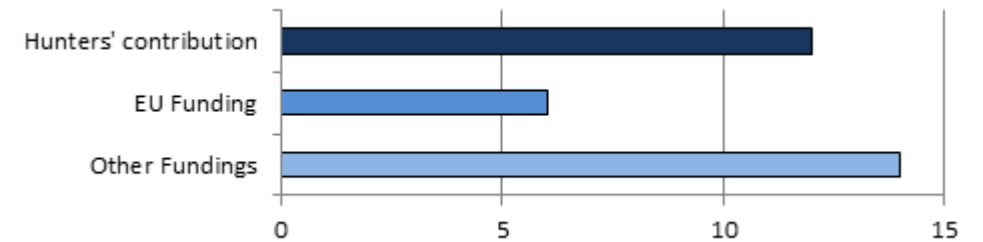
Types of actions conducted by hunters



Annex 6.1: Number of case studies per type of actions; one case study can contribute to several actions.

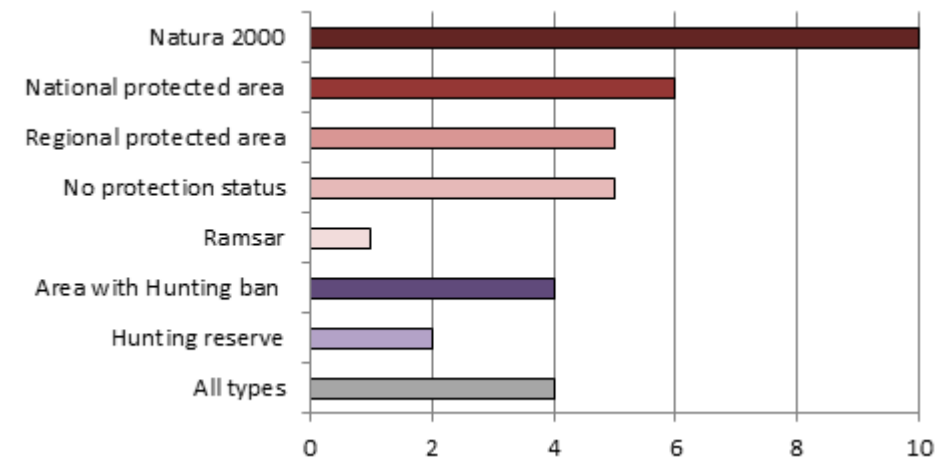
Annex 7 - « Investing in Nature » section

Financial contribution to projects



Annex 7.1: Number of case studies per type of financial support; one case study can be related to several origins of contribution.

Status of the areas where actions are undertaken



Annex 7.2: Number of case studies per area status; one case study can be conducted on several types of area.

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- Austria - Zentralstelle Österreichischer Landesjagdverbände
- Belgium - Royal Saint-Hubert Club de Belgique / Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen vzw
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 - Lovački Savez Republike Srpska (LRRS)
 - Savez Lovačkih organizacija BiH (SLOBiH)
- Bulgaria - Съюз на ловците и риболовците в България
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- Greece - ΚΥΝΗΓΕΤΙΚΗ ΣΥΝΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ
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- Luxembourg - Fédération Saint-Hubert des Chasseurs du Grand-duché de Luxembourg asbl
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- Portugal
 - Confederação Nacional dos Caçadores Portugueses (CNCP)
 - Federação Portuguesa de Caça (FENCAÇA)
- Romania - Asociația Generală a Vanatorilor și Pescarilor Sportivi din România (AGVPS)
- Serbia - Lovački savez Srbije
- Slovakia - Slovenský Poľovnícky Zväz
- Slovenia - Lovska zveza Slovenije
- Spain - Oficina Nacional de la Caza
- Sweden - Svenska Jägareförbundet
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