

FACE position on combatting wildlife crime

Reaffirming FACE's commitment at all levels to ensure wildlife crime is combatted;

Recalling the European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity adopted by the Council of Europe's Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and other initiatives with the Bern Convention, the European Commission, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to combat wildlife crime;

Referring to the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT), which has been established under [CMS COP Resolution 11.16](#), and to the Rome Strategic Plan prepared by the Bern Convention and CMS which has the vision of a 50% reduction in the scale and scope of illegal killing of birds (IKB) by 2030.

Stressing FACE's continued strong commitment towards "zero tolerance" of wildlife crime;

Highlighting the role of the hunting community in promoting compliance with the law and the role of active hunting associations/clubs in preventing illegal activities.

Regretting that enforcement is often lacking due to insufficient financial, training and scientific capacities, which is essential to successfully combatting wildlife crime;

Taking into account that revenue from hunting is important for funding enforcement and supporting local communities in protecting wildlife;

Highlighting the need for sanctions to be proportionate to the offences committed, namely that a minor administrative offence is punishable by an administrative fine or sanction, whilst a more serious and deliberate wildlife crime results in a more significant sanction or penalty.

Further highlighting the importance of using correct terminology in Europe as agreed by the international conventions regarding the distinction between "illegal killing" and "hunting", the latter being the legal sustainable use of wild resources;

Underlining that certain types of wildlife crime can be damaging to the reputation of sustainable hunting;

Considering that motivations for wildlife crime can be complex and dependent on a wide variety of factors such as legislation, country, socio-economic situation, and livelihood dependence;

Highlighting that national and regional laws should be appropriately designed to deal with the specificities of wildlife crime, taking into account the best available science on socio-cultural and economic factors, whilst respecting the international frameworks for the conservation of wildlife;

Calling on scientists, universities and others intending to research wildlife crime to work closely with the hunting community to explore effective solutions to combat wildlife crime;

Acknowledging the work of hunting associations throughout Europe in advising and helping enforcement authorities in practice with combatting wildlife crime;

Stressing FACE's support for action plans at national level to combat wildlife crime;

At its General Assembly on 25 October 2022, FACE:

- Expresses its continued strong support for “zero-tolerance” towards wildlife crime.
- Calls for a better understanding of the root causes driving wildlife crime as a basis for decision-makers to appropriately design policy responses and legislation.
- Appeals to policy-makers to work together with the hunting community in order to combat wildlife crime.
- Supports the need for effective and efficient enforcement of legislation related to wildlife crime.