



ACTIVITY REPORT 2022

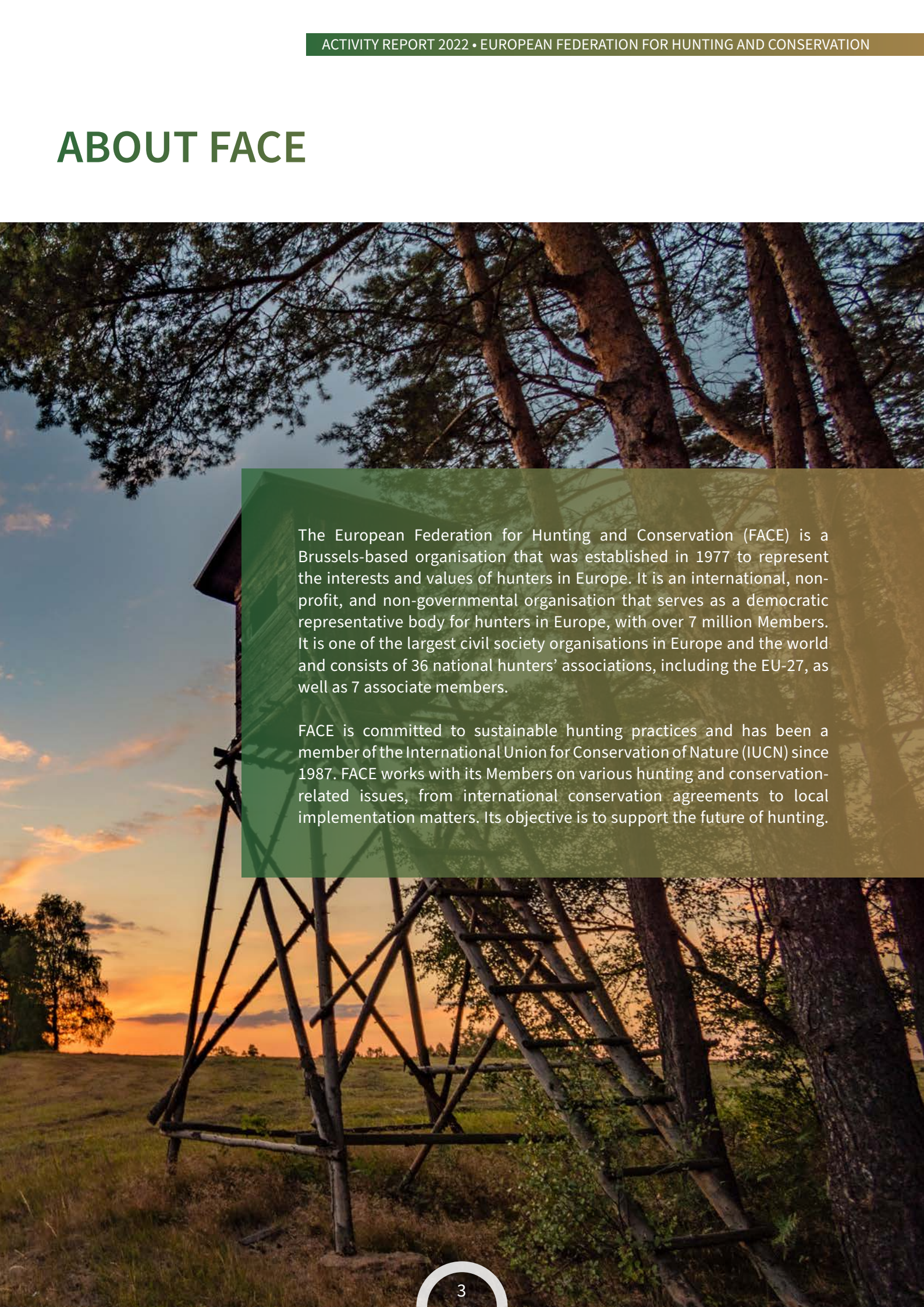


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ABOUT FACE

A photograph of a wooden hunting stand in a forest at sunset. The stand is made of dark wood and has a ladder leading up to a platform. The background shows tall trees and a colorful sky with orange and yellow hues. A semi-transparent green box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

The European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE) is a Brussels-based organisation that was established in 1977 to represent the interests and values of hunters in Europe. It is an international, non-profit, and non-governmental organisation that serves as a democratic representative body for hunters in Europe, with over 7 million Members. It is one of the largest civil society organisations in Europe and the world and consists of 36 national hunters' associations, including the EU-27, as well as 7 associate members.

FACE is committed to sustainable hunting practices and has been a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1987. FACE works with its Members on various hunting and conservation-related issues, from international conservation agreements to local implementation matters. Its objective is to support the future of hunting.

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD



Dear Members, friends and partners,

2022 has been a year to remember! Covid-19 restrictions ended, a war started in Europe, inflation increased, but Europe's hunters responded with resilience. Whilst all this was happening, **FACE turned 45 years old**, adopted a new strategy for 2027, launched the European Hunters' Campaign, and purchased a new office in Brussels.

The speed of decision-making continued during 2022 and importantly FACE remained active on all files affecting hunting and conservation.

As I write in early 2023, we are dealing with amendments to the new nature restoration regulation, the opinion from the European Chemicals Agency to ban all lead in ammunition, a more difficult system than ever to manage large carnivores, more new infringements to end regional hunting activities, new processes on migratory bird hunting, new work on protected areas, and a revision of the EU Firearms Regulation.

In our new 2027 FACE strategy, we set ourselves an ambitious work programme to be delivered within three strategic pillars: 1) FACE; 2) Hunting & Conservation; and 3) Society. If we work actively together, we can make a major difference in achieving our new vision: **A Europe rich in biodiversity and hunting opportunities.**

The journey will be both exciting and challenging, but very rewarding, making FACE an even stronger and more effective organisation. More will follow on this important work.

The **European Hunters' Campaign**, which was established in 2022 because of several problematic cases of decision-making for hunting and conservation, was also a major highlight. It's clear that Brussels policy-making for hunting and conservation has a major impact throughout Europe. Currently, more than 80% of the rules and regulations affecting hunting and conservation come from Brussels. As I write, the European Hunters' Campaign is approaching a quarter of a million signatures. This is now one of the largest campaigns in Brussels aiming to secure a strong future of hunting and conservation for Europe's 7 million hunters.

Finally, it was great to see that the European Parliament's **"Biodiversity, Hunting, Countryside" Intergroup** organised another series of successful events with great participation.

FACE is nothing without its Members and together we must continue our work to ensure that the interests of Europe's 7 million hunters take centre stage when decisions are made with regard to hunting and conservation.

For your continuous support, we are very grateful!

Torbjörn Larsson

FACE President

FACE SECRETARIAT

The FACE Team is based in Brussels and makes up the Secretariat. This team combines a passion for hunting and conservation with expertise in a range of key areas to promote hunting and conservation in Europe.

2022 STAFF

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Dr David Scallan

ADMINISTRATION

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Konstantina Katrimpouza
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Seppo Puustinen
Policy Advisor

FACE MEMBERS

FACE works with its Members, partners and the EU institutions to facilitate understanding, action and information exchange. FACE is nowhere without its Members.

FACE Members encompass the expertise, knowledge, structures and influence that represent European hunting. FACE is made up of national hunters' associations from 37 European countries, including the 27 EU Member States as well as other countries Members of the Council of Europe.

FULL MEMBERS

Albania: *Federata Kombetare Shqiptare per Gjueti dhe Konservim*

Austria: *Jagd Österreich*

Belgium: *Asbl wallonne du Royal Saint-Hubert Club de Belgique*

Belgium: *Hubertus Vereniging Vlaanderen vzw*

Bosnia and Herzegovina: *Lovački Savez Herceg Bosne (LSHB), Lovački Savez Republike Srpska (LSRS), Savez Lovačkih organizacija BiH (SLOBiH)*

Bulgaria: *Съюз на ловците и риболовците в България*

Croatia: *Hrvatski Lovački Savez*

Cyprus: *Κυπριακή Ομοσπονδία Κυνηγίου Kai Διathphosis Αγριας Ζωης*

Czech Republic: *Ceskomoravská Myslivecká Jednota (CMMJ)*

Denmark: *Danmarks Jægerforbund*

Estonia: *Eesti Jahimeeste Selts*

Finland: *Metsästäjiliitto*

France: *Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs*

Germany: *Deutscher Jagdverband e.V.*

Greece: *Κυνηγική Ομοσπονδία Ελλάδος*

Hungary: *Országos Magyar Vadászklubok*

Hungary: *Országos Magyar Vadászati Védegylet*

Iceland: *Skotveiðifélag Íslands*

Ireland: *FACE Ireland c/o National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC)*

Italy: *FACE Italia*

Latvia: *Latvijas Mednieku Asociācija*

Lithuania: *Lietuvos Medžiotojų ir Žvejų Draugija*

Luxembourg: *Fédération Saint-Hubert des Chasseurs du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg asbl*

Malta: *Federazzjoni Kaċċaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti (FKNK)*

Montenegro: *Lovački Savez Crne Gore*

Netherlands: *Koninklijke Nederlandse Jagersvereniging*

Norway: *Norges Jeger- og Fiskerforbund*

Poland: *Polski Związek Łowiecki*

Portugal: *Federação Portuguesa de Caça (FENCAÇA)*

Romania: *Asociația Generală a Vânătorilor și Pescarilor Sportivi (AGVPS)*

San Marino: *Federazione Sammarinese della Caccia*

Serbia: *Lovački Savez Srbije*

Slovakia: *Slovenská poľovnícka komora*

Slovakia: *Slovenský Poľovnícky Zväz*

Slovenia: *Lovska zveza Slovenije*

Spain: *Real Federación Española de Caza (RFEC)*

Sweden: *Svenska Jägareförbundet*

Switzerland: *JagdSchweiz / ChasseSuisse / CacciaSvizzera / CatschaSvizra*

United Kingdom: *FACE UK*

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Association Européenne de Commerce d'Armes Civiles (AECAC)

Association of European Manufacturers of Sporting Firearms (ESFAM)

Conservation Force

Dallas Safari Club (DSC)

European Bowhunting Federation (EBF)

Safari Club International (SCI)

Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF)

PARTNERS

Association européenne des chasses traditionnelles (AECT)

Institut européen pour la gestion des oiseaux sauvages et de leurs habitats: Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental (OMPO)

Nordic Hunters' Alliance (NHA)

FACE BOARD

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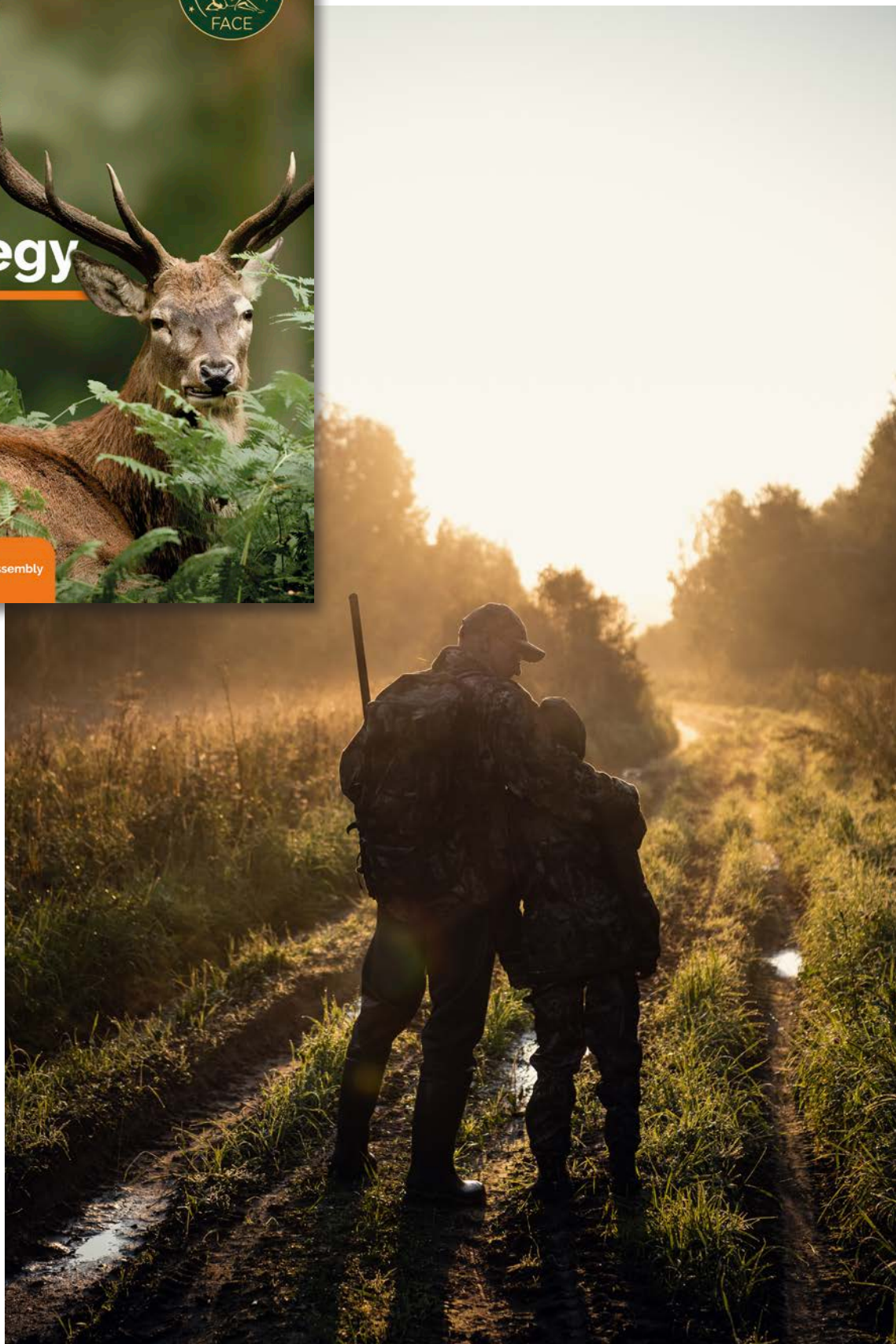
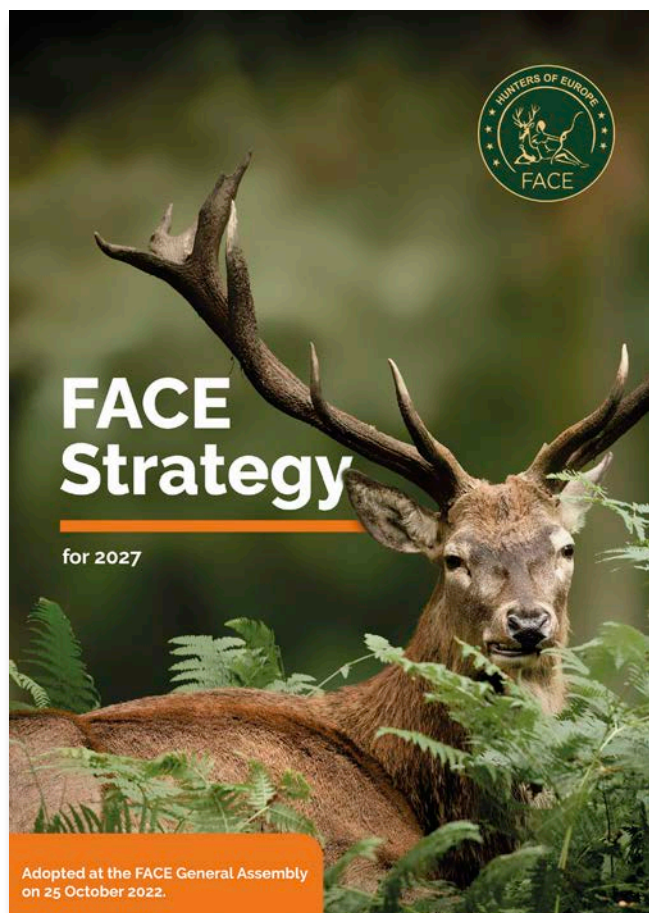
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Vice-President, South-East Region - Vasil VASILEV





A NEW FACE STRATEGY FOR 2027

The 2022 FACE General Assembly decided on a new mission, vision, and strategy for FACE until 2027. This is something FACE Members are immensely proud of.

This decision built on 11 months of hard work with FACE Members. There were several steps consisting of workshops with the Board and Members, external interviews with key stakeholders and mining data from FACE's annual surveys as well as many discussions and meetings.

The end goal for 2027 is clear: **A stronger future for hunting and conservation in Europe.** In doing so, we have set ourselves an ambitious work programme to be delivered within three strategic pillars:

1. FACE
2. Hunting & Conservation
3. Society

Each pillar sets out a series of “Big Picture” goals, which will only be achievable with active input from Members in close cooperation with the secretariat. The “Society” pillar sets out a new way of working to ensure we achieve higher social acceptance of hunting in Europe.

This pillar is profoundly important if we are to achieve our vision. The other two pillars set out the necessary steps for the future of hunting and conservation, and for FACE, which must remain a powerful and growing federation.

We know we can make a huge difference when we work together as a coordinated federation, sharing our experiences and recognising our diversity. This diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

The success of this strategy will depend on how well it is implemented. We have the right skills in the secretariat, the membership, and strong networks.

If we work consistently and actively, we will move towards our vision: A Europe rich in biodiversity and hunting opportunities. This strategy therefore represents our commitment for 7 million European hunters. Its successful execution will take more input than ever from Members, and we will actively track the strategy's implementation.

The Board will be updated five times per year along with the Members at the two annual meetings. I would like to thank the Board for their hard work in developing this document, the Members, the secretariat, and Dr. David Scallan for overseeing its delivery.

I look to the future with optimism.

Yours in hunting,
Torbjörn Larsson
FACE President



THE “BIODIVERSITY, HUNTING, COUNTRYSIDE” INTERGROUP

The “Biodiversity Hunting Countryside” Intergroup is a cross-party group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who work together on issues important for biodiversity, hunting, and the European countryside.

Intergroups are informal groups of MEPs that bring together members with a common interest to exchange ideas, promote initiatives, and raise awareness on specific topics.

Since its first establishment in 1985 this Intergroup has worked to enable an open dialogue with decision-makers, including European Commission (EC), European Parliament (EP) and numerous experts.

During 2022, FACE and the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) coordinated several policy-relevant events to discuss environmental hot topics, which were subject to media and political debate.

27 September 2022, Online Event **Delivering the Nature Restoration Law for rural stakeholders and biodiversity**

Organised by FACE in conjunction with ELO, this event was chaired by **MEP Álvaro Amaro** (Portugal, EPP), President of the Intergroup, with introductory remarks by **MEPs Maria Noichl** (Germany, S&D), **Christine Schneider** (Germany, EPP), **Alexandr Vondra** (Czechia, ECR).

The conference discussed opportunities and challenges for the ambitious European Commission's proposal for binding nature restoration targets.

The opening message was delivered by **MEP Álvaro Amaro**, who underlined that: *“The European Parliament has a key role to play [...] It is essential not to miss a ‘good start’ for this legislation and involve from the beginning the countryside community [...] in the process”.*

Stefan Leiner, Head of the Natural Capital and Ecosystem

Health Unit, European Commission, in his keynote speech highlighted that: *“The Commission proposal breaks new ground. It is the first EU-wide, comprehensive restoration law of its kind [...] All the scientific evidence [...] is clear: the biggest threats to food production and food security are climate change and biodiversity loss. By restoring healthy and biodiverse ecosystems the law will help ensure the sustainable economic activity of those who directly depend on such healthy ecosystems for their livelihoods: farmers, foresters and fishers”.*

28 June 2022, Online Event **Livestock farming and large carnivores in Europe: Discussing a way forward**

Organised by FACE in the framework of the Intergroup, the event was hosted by **MEP Simone Schmiedtbauer** (EPP, Austria) with introductory remarks from **MEP Thomas Waitz** (Greens, Austria).

In her opening message, **MEP Schmiedtbauer** emphasized that *“Brussels must pay attention to the human grief and farm animal suffering caused by the expansion of large carnivores. Rural communities are not ‘second class’ citizens and their needs must be taken seriously [...] I sincerely wish that we pave the way to find solutions to this long-standing conflict”.*

Dr. John Linnell, Senior Research Scientist, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, gave an insight into the scientific state of play and underlined that *“it is a conflict over trust, values and different visions for the European countryside. There is an urgent need for pastoralists and environmentalists to work together”.*

26 April 2022, Hybrid Event, Brussels **Is Africa being heard? Hunting, Conservation and Livelihoods**

The event was jointly organised by Intergroup's President **MEP Álvaro Amaro**, and Vice-President

MEP **Juan Ignacio Zoido** with the support of the European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), Safari Club International (SCI), the Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF), Dallas Safari Club (DSC) and the European Landowners' Organization (ELO).

The goal of the event was to bring together European and African decision-makers, with stakeholders from across the spectrum, to understand the leadership of African countries in the management and conservation of their wildlife and the role that local communities play.

The panel consisted of a broad range of stakeholders, representing different views on the subject, in particular African high-level representatives, European Commission, NGOs and scientists.

Hon. Pohamba Shifeta, Namibia Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, set the context by stating: *"Hunting, conservation and livelihoods are very*

important. [...] Through hunting, we have been able to fund conservation and community development projects"

In his keynote address, **Jorge Rodriguez Romero**, European Commission, stated that *"policies on trophy hunting management must be realistic, evidence-based, and responsive to emerging knowledge and conversations. The ongoing revision of the EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking will be an opportunity to evaluate the EU approach, and if appropriate, to strengthen the management of the trade of hunting trophies to align with the latest evidence"*.

Ms. Ivonne Higuero, Secretary General of CITES, **Dr. Dilys Roe**, Chair of IUCN SULi Group, **Dr. Rodgers Lubilo**, Community Leaders Network of Southern Africa, and **Mr. Ali Kaka**, Regional Councillor of IUCN, also participated in the conference.

More information can be found on:
www.biodiversityhuntingcountryside.eu



EUROPE'S BIODIVERSITY

Several new policies were launched in recent years to address environmental challenges, advance sustainability, and reverse biodiversity loss.

Some of the key initiatives are the **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030** and the new **EU Nature Restoration Law** which is the first-ever piece of legislation that explicitly targets the restoration of Europe's nature.

Hunters play a key role in implementing environmental EU policies as they have direct interactions with natural environment and wildlife.

As showed by the **FACE Biodiversity Manifesto**, hunters contribute by supporting and promoting sustainable

agriculture, participating in habitat conservation projects, such as the restoration of wetlands and grasslands, managing wildlife, including controlling populations of overabundant species and managing invasive alien species (IAS), helping raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity conservation and the need for sustainable land use practices.

Overall, rural stakeholders and hunters are key partners in implementing environmental EU policies.

Their contributions can help ensure that policies are effective, and that Europe's natural resources are conserved for future generations.

FACE Biodiversity Manifesto

How hunters conserve Europe's Biodiversity

The FACE Biodiversity Manifesto answers the question of where and how hunting contributes to the conservation of biodiversity.

The projects vary from those supporting the recovery of endangered species like the Iberian Lynx to long term restoration projects resulting in the planting hundreds of thousands of trees. It provides strong evidence showing that hunters make a crucial contribution to habitat restoration, protected areas, species monitoring and much more. Some statistics on progress:

- 500+ hunting-related conservation projects
- 33% of all projects focus on habitat restoration
- 25% of all projects take place on "Natura 2000" sites

In light of the new Nature Restoration Law proposal, the **BDM report 2022** focuses on hunters' contributions to nature restoration. Nature restoration is and always was a key concern for Europe's hunters. While the EU failed to reach its 2020 target to halt biodiversity loss, the projects captured in the BDM demonstrate that hunters

deliver important restoration work to support the recovery of ecosystems, habitats, and species throughout Europe.

Moreover, every month, FACE choses a hunting-related conservation project in Europe as its **Project of the Month** – underlining its importance to current policy matters. These projects highlight some of the many great initiatives hunters are undertaking to conserve biodiversity. We encourage you to inform us of your conservation projects, to best support our work in representing Europe's hunters.

New projects can include: habitat and species management, monitoring and research, as well as awareness-raising and education activities.

The key criterion of any project is that biodiversity benefits somehow through hunters' contribution.

Official website: www.biodiversitymanifesto.com



HOW HUNTERS CONSERVE EUROPE'S BIODIVERSITY

BiodiversityManifesto.com

NEW WEBSITE ONLINE!

FACE'S BIODIVERSITY MANIFESTO

The Biodiversity Manifesto shows how hunters benefit nature conservation across Europe.

A substantial and growing database of over 500 conservation projects supports FACE's advocacy work in Brussels.

500+

HUNTING-RELATED CONSERVATION PROJECTS GATHERED UNTIL NOW



33%

OF ALL PROJECTS FOCUS ON HABITAT RESTORATION



25%

OF ALL PROJECTS TAKE PLACE ON "NATURA 2000" AREAS



We now have strong evidence to show how hunters are successfully implementing the **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030** and make a crucial contribution to habitats restoration, protected areas, species monitoring and much more.



EU Green Deal

Biodiversity Strategy, Farm To Fork

The European Commission's work on several initiatives under the **Biodiversity Strategy** and **Farm to Fork Strategy** intensified throughout 2022.

While the work on protected and strictly protected areas was largely concluded at the EU level with the publication of the Commission Staff Working Document on "Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations" in early 2022, the EC presented two legislative proposals concerning the **sustainable use of pesticides** and binding restoration targets in June 2022.

FACE devoted particular attention to the latter, which is key for the future of huntable species. It introduces binding restoration targets for the EU as a whole (restoration measures should be put in place on 20% of the EU's land and sea areas) and specific targets for ecosystems.

FACE welcomed the proposal as a major step to ensure that key habitats for huntable species are restored but also underlined the need to define better the scope of the proposal, which is at the moment extremely broad, including, in addition to the restoration obligations for terrestrial, coastal, freshwater and marine ecosystems, also restoration obligations for all the habitats of species listed in the **Birds** and **Habitats Directives**.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

After the official adoption of the CAP Regulations in December 2021, Member States continued their work on their national **CAP Strategic Plans** throughout 2022. The Commission reviewed the draft plans and sent specific recommendations to Member States to ensure they were in line with the new CAP Regulations. As a result, all plans were approved by the Commission by the end of December 2022 to ensure their entry into force on 1st January 2023.

FACE and its Members continued to advocate for effective eco-schemes and agri-environment schemes to reverse biodiversity loss on Europe's farmland and provide suitable habitats for small game species. In this context, **FACE organised a CAP webinar** with the participation of the European Commission, amongst others. While some plans are not ambitious as they could be in terms of effective measures for biodiversity, the new CAP rules allow for adjustments of CAP Strategic Plans even after their official adoption.

Bern Convention

The Bern Convention is the first international agreement (formed 1979) dedicated to nature conservation – protecting both, habitats and species. It covers most of Europe and some African countries (total: 50 States).

Throughout 2022, FACE followed the work under the Bern Convention by attending several expert group meetings. In this way, FACE ensured that interests and needs of hunters as well as the sustainable use of resources are high on the agenda. From 28th November to 2nd December 2022, FACE was attending the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

The most relevant topics for FACE related to the **protection status of the wolf** under the Bern Convention, **illegal killing of birds**, progress on the eradication of the Ruddy Duck, and the case file around the Akamas peninsula in Cyprus.

Switzerland put forward a proposal to move the Wolf from Appendix II (strictly protected) to Appendix III (protected) under the Bern Convention.

Unfortunately, a block vote against by EU-27, decided in advance by the **European Commission** and the **Council of the European Union**, meant that the necessary two-thirds majority could not be reached. A disappointing political decision to do nothing.

The EU-27 position should have given more weight to that fact that the wolf is listed Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive in 9 Member States (i.e. not Strictly Protected as required under the Bern Convention).

This is yet another example of the barriers that exist to adjusting the protection status of species in both directions under international law.



MIGRATORY BIRDS

FACE was founded in 1977 by national hunting associations in Europe to take part in the process of shaping the EU Birds Directive by providing hunters' extensive knowledge of nature and the governance of hunting.



A similar role was taken at international level, with FACE's involvement, together with other partners in the establishment of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) in the 1990s.

Since those early days, FACE has remained very close to its origins by engaging with these legal instruments as well as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). FACE continues to respond to the challenges of conserving migratory birds and ensuring sustainable hunting of the species which we cherish.

EU Task Force on the Recovery of Birds

In 2022, FACE was active in the new EU Task Force on the Recovery of Birds, which was created to deal with all unsecure bird species, starting with the species that are

hunnable under Annex II of the Birds Directive.

So far, the focus has been the adaptive harvest management mechanism for the Turtle Dove but also a process to prioritise action for Annex II species. This process concerns 33 species of migratory birds which are for the most part waterbirds hunted in Europe.

It is therefore important that the hunting community is involved in the process and that decisions are taken based on scientific evidence and proportionality. FACE is advocating for a careful **case-by-case approach** to understand the drivers of population declines in the EU and if needed at international flyway level.

A first observation is that EU breeding populations of waterbirds are in decline, while the trend in numbers of birds arriving in winter is much better. This is why FACE is advocating for more attention to the restoration of breeding habitats for birds.

Of the 33 species, only three have been identified as high priority for action, as hunting is considered to play a role on their survival. These are **Bean Goose**, **Common Eider** and **Turtle Dove**. Thankfully these three species are already covered by international species action plans and measures are underway to regulate hunting to sustainable levels.



Turtle Dove

In 2022, the work on the Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) of the Turtle Dove was undertaken through the two meetings of the EU Task Force on the Recovery of Birds, which mainly deals with the Turtle Dove so far.

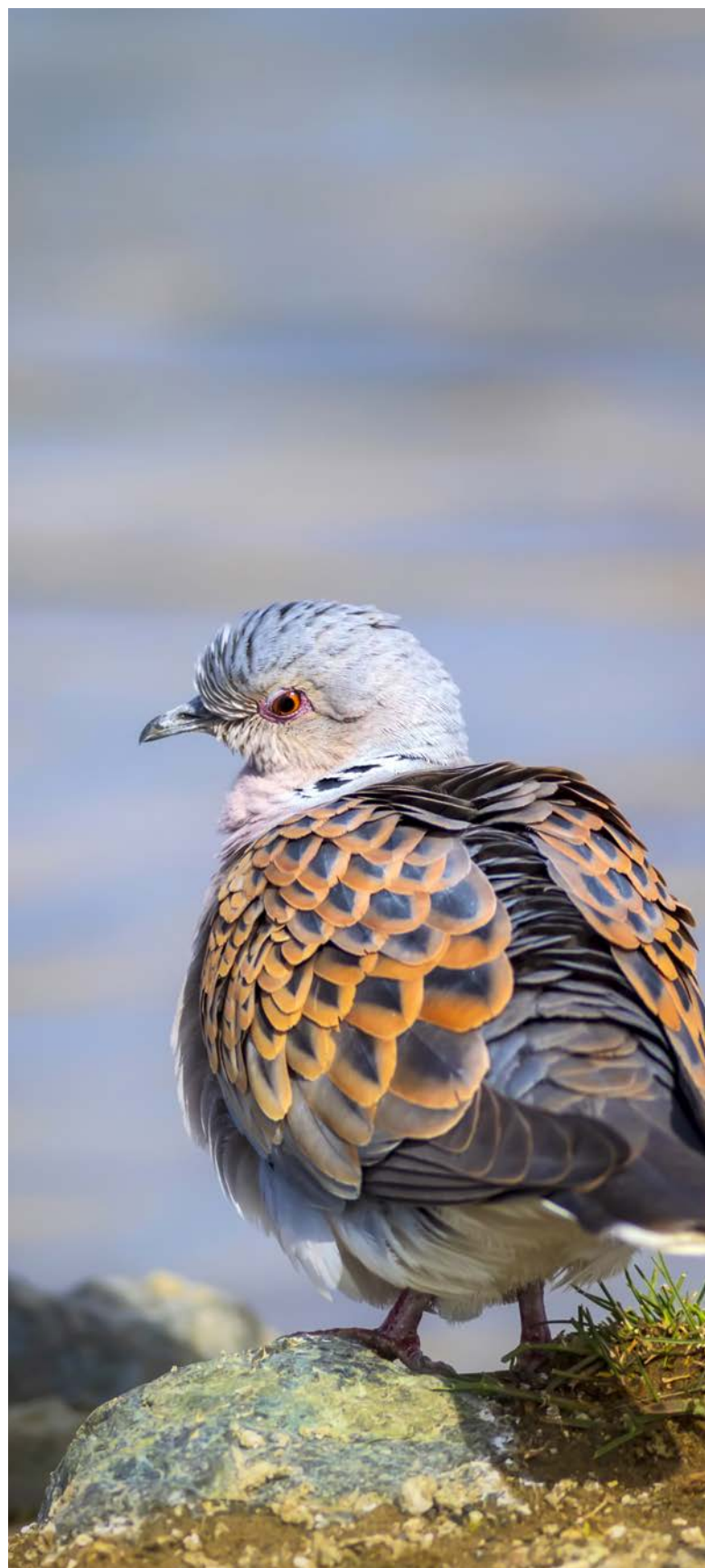
In June, FACE published its [second report on the Turtle Dove](#) which provides an update on the first year of implementation of Turtle Dove AHM in the EU and how hunters have been actively supporting and contributing. According to the 2021 recommendations by the European Commission (EC), Turtle Dove hunting was closed in the Western flyway and reduced by more than 50% in the Central/Eastern flyway. The population models show that there is scope for a small harvest in both flyways.

However, at the March meeting of the Task Force, the EC recommendation for the Central/Eastern flyway changed with the update of the population data by the Pan European Common Birds Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS), which showed a continued decline in the flyway.

Instead of the reduction, a moratorium was recommended. However, the update only covers the population trend until 2020 so does not detect the reduction in hunting in 2021. In the following NADEG meeting, several Member States opposed this new recommendation, as benefit of this reduction in hunting is not yet known.

During the November meeting of the Task Force, a highlight was the impressive amount of evidence presented on actions that for the habitat conservation for Turtle Dove and other farmland birds.

Efforts have also been made by Member States on research and monitoring of Turtle Dove, and the enforcement of hunting regulations.



Report on conservation and management of huntable birds in Europe

The report commissioned by FACE has been finalised by OMPO - European institute for the management of wild birds and their habitats.

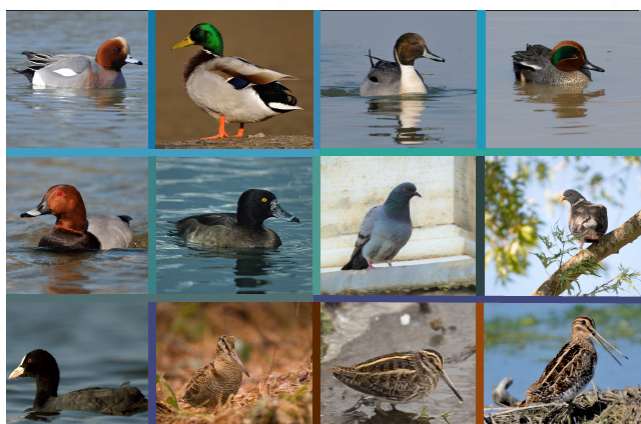
This provides an in-depth account of the conservation status, population trends, ecology, hunting data and management measures of the huntable birds listed in Annex II, part A of the Birds Directive. Due to expressed interest from FACE Members, the Common Eider (listed in Annex II, part B) is also included.

Each species account has been drafted by leading ornithologists from across Europe and is available in French and English versions.

It is essential for FACE to have a strong knowledge-base on all huntable species, particularly for migratory birds. This publication will be helpful when discussing conservation recommendations and creating greater understanding on the contribution of hunters to the species they hunt.



Conservation and Management of Game Birds in Europe



As is stated in the foreword “*Hunters do not just harvest a renewable natural resource: by protecting natural habitats and territories, preserving their functions, optimizing their carrying capacities, they have a key part to play in maintaining biodiversity and, therefore, contribute to the preservation of protected species which, for many of them, are in difficulty or threatened. The hunting community is a key player in the management of biodiversity in Europe*”. More info [here](#)

AEWA - The 8th Meeting of Parties

The 8th Meeting of Parties to the **Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Waterbirds** (AEWA) took place in Budapest at the end of September.

The outcomes included final decisions on changes to the legal text of the agreement, the status of waterbirds, and approval of action plans and resolutions. This included changes to the status of the **Greylag Goose** (*Anser anser*) population from Iceland, UK and Ireland being up-listed to a higher level of protection, and the **Red-breasted Merganser** (*Mergus serrator*) from the northwest and central Europe being down-listed.

The Action Plan for the **Common Eider** (*Somateria mollissima*) was also finally adopted, allowing the work on adaptive harvest management of the species to continue.

Aside from the procedural matters, FACE was invited on the panel for a side-event on lead shot in wetlands titled **End game for lead poisoning? How to ensure a successful final push**. The message provided was that FACE has been supportive of phasing out lead shot over wetlands.

The only demands are that the laws should be fair and understandable, which is unfortunately not always the case. As the AEWA agreement has required a phase out of lead shot in wetlands for over 25 years, it is understandable that there are expectations for greater progress.

FACE was supported at the meeting with **BASC**, **CIC** and **OMPO** which helped to cover the proceedings of the meeting. The meeting was opened with a reception sponsored by CIC and Dallas Safari Club, giving a warm welcome to all.



Photos by Eszter Gordon

AEWA's working group on sustainable harvest

On 11 March 2022, the first meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee ad-hoc Working Group on **Sustainable Harvest** took place online. This group involving government representatives, academics, and organizations such as **BirdLife International**, **Wetlands International**, and the **Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust** was tasked to produce a set of terms of reference for 3 important areas of work:

- 1) the production of a Review on Sustainable Harvest and the Socio-economic Importance of Waterbirds
- 2) the development of a Guidance on Waterbird Harvest Data Collection and
- 3) the undertaking of a Rapid Assessment of Sustainability of Harvest of Waterbird.

It also helped with the preparation of a proposal for reporting templates for harvest data collection and other information needed to assess the implementation of the Agreement. **FACE** helped chair the work on developing guidance on harvest data collection.

The final terms of reference will be presented to the AEWA Technical Committee in early 2023, and depending on the availability of resources the work will be completed for the **next AEWA Meeting of Parties in 2025**.

If successful the importance and scale of waterbird harvest will be much better known, and new methods will be produced on how make assessments on its sustainability.

CMS - Is the goal to eradicate illegal killing of birds on track?

In Valencia, Spain from 7-9 June, governments and stakeholders from across the Mediterranean region met to discuss how to eradicate the illegal killing of birds (IKB).

In essence, the purpose of the meeting was to report back on developments and plan how to set a baseline to measure progress on the Rome Strategic plan 2020-2030, which has a goal to reduce IKB by 50% by 2030.

Is there progress? Yes, several countries reported major reductions in IKB, including from the host country Spain. Long-term data from wildlife recovery centers shows clear shift from deliberate persecution to accidental causes such as collisions with building and other infrastructure.

To measure progress towards the Rome Strategic Plans, governments will have until 2023 to send their own figures or indicators for the baseline.

For FACE it is important to promote hunters as part of the solution for surveillance and promoting good practices.

This was affirmed at the FACE General Assembly in September 2022 where a position paper on wildlife crime was adopted, restating FACE's zero-tolerance to illegal killing of birds.





LARGE CARNIVORES



In 2022, FACE observed much progress but also some setbacks regarding political moves at national level regarding the management of Europe's large carnivores.

The **European Parliament** was actively debating the increase of large carnivores and associated livestock damages and how to best achieve successful coexistence in Europe.

The European Parliament called for a procedure to **review the legal status of large carnivores** in both the resolution on protection of livestock farming and large carnivores in Europe ([link](#)) and the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas up to 2040 ([link](#)).

This was an evident win and made the position of the European Parliament as clear and strong as ever.

Also, several **EU Member States** were active in putting the topic of large carnivores high on the political agenda.

At the same time, many national problems emerged on large carnivore management:

- **Latvia** had to stop its successful approach to lynx conservation because of an unjustified legal infringement procedure launched by the European Commission ([link](#)).

- **Spain** and **Slovakia** lost their wolf management programmes due to decisions made by green governments in the capitals.

Hunters contribute to the conservation and management of large carnivores around Europe in a number of ways.

We have many examples of hunters investing their own time and resources in monitoring and the management of their habitats and prey across our continent, e.g. [hunters support Iberian lynx recovery in Spain](#)

The European hunting community will always be an active player in large carnivore conservation and management. In Europe's densely populated multifunctional landscapes, we need to find a way to coexist. Hunters are - and must be - part of the solution.

With this in mind, FACE will continue to work at several levels to promote large carnivore management and conservation.

This is based on the scientific knowledge of populations, as well as the human dimensions in order to effectively reduce conflicts.

European Parliament demands procedure to review the Protection Status of Large Carnivores

In November 2022, the **European Parliament** voted on a joint resolution on the protection of livestock farming and large carnivores in Europe.

The most important request from the Parliament was another call to implement **Article 19 of the Habitats Directive**. A fully and correctly implemented directive includes a procedure to amend the annexes of the directive to ensure that species are listed according to scientific and technical progress. It should be noted that moving a large carnivore population from one annex (e.g. strict protection) to another (e.g. protection, with exploitation) does not change the legal obligation for Member States to ensure favourable conservation status.

This is a critical request for rural stakeholders, including hunters, because the strict protection status of certain large carnivores is leading to legal and administrative deadlock in an increasing number of Member States.

The problem is based on an overly narrow interpretation of EU law by some stakeholders and continuous legal attacks by strict protection NGOs at national level.

According to FACE President, **Torbjörn Larsson**: *“This vote is good news and yet another clear call on the European Commission to put a procedure in place to amend the annexes of the Habitats Directive. This was a request of the previous European Parliament and other EU institutions, making it increasingly difficult for the Commission not to act.”*

Many large carnivore populations, especially Europe’s wolves, continue to expand. According to the latest **conservation status of wolves** in Europe, around 19,000 individuals have been reported in the EU with a range increase of over 25% only in the last decade. This is not properly reflected in the EU’s reporting procedure

whereby populations are reported at biogeographical level, which is unsuitable for highly mobile species like **wolf** and **lynx**.

The ranges of large carnivore populations can extend to thousands of square kilometres and are inevitably divided by state or other administrative borders. Conservation, monitoring and management measures as well as the conservation status assessments should be conducted at the biologically correct and transboundary levels. This is also confirmed by the **latest IUCN assessment** of the conservation status of the wolf in Europe.

Separating “hunting activity” and derogations for strictly protected species

There was a call in the motion for “hunting activity” to be excluded as legitimate management tool under Article 16 of the Habitats Directive. However, this was rejected by the **majority of MEPs**. Hunters are actively involved in large carnivore management and the use of derogations for populations that are strictly protected applies only under strict licensing systems to comply with the conditions set out in the directive.

Furthermore, it should be highlighted that according to the ruling of the **European Court of Justice**, large carnivore management “for population management purposes” is allowed when certain conditions are fulfilled. A quota (national or regional) can indeed exist and sets an upper limit with regard to the criterion of “limited numbers” and within such a quota it is possible to make targeted decisions for individuals which can be taken.

Many Member States rely on hunters to support conservation and management approaches, and to ensure good coexistence with local communities. This has also been increasingly documented in social science research. In Europe, some of the most successful examples of coexistence with large carnivores, such as brown bear, wolf, and lynx, exist where there is active management and engagement with hunters.

FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

FACE and its Members seek to ensure that hunters can acquire, possess, use and travel with firearms and ammunition safely and without unjustified bureaucracy, costs or restrictions.

With regards to firearms, many of these aspects are presently covered by EU law, either through full harmonisation or minimum rules.

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

Restricting lead in all ammunition under REACH

In 2022, the **European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)** was busy developing its option addressing the risks to wildlife and humans (via the consumption of game meat) from lead in all ammunition (shot and bullets) including target shooting. Lead in fishing weights is also included.

ECHA's draft opinion was assessed by its **Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC)** and its **Committee for Socio-Economic Analysis (SEAC)** during 2022.

There were consultations with relevant stakeholders including FACE.

Several issues emerged including how data were being handled, which resulted in a case of maladministration by the Ombudsman. FACE made a number of submissions to ECHA during 2022.

In November, ECHA's committees completed their work and aim to send their final joint opinion to the European Commission in the first quarter of 2023.

FACE has raised several concerns, for example, about the proposed transition periods, the lack of adequate derogations (e.g. for sports shooting) and exemptions where alternatives are lacking and/or technically unfeasible.

Firearms

During 2022, the **European Commission** published its proposal to revise the **EU Firearms Regulation**, which deals mainly with EU-third country firearms issues.

The revision aims to better facilitate the legal trade of firearms for civilian use, while tackling security





aspects linked to firearm trafficking through improved traceability of firearms and better and easier exchange of information between national authorities.

This comes as a follow up to the **2020-2025 Action plan on firearm trafficking**. For hunters, some issues have been highlighted and FACE is working closely with partners in the **European Shooting Sports Forum (ESSF)** to develop a single sector position.

During 2022, FACE continued to monitor national implementation of the Firearms Directive, which is still not finalised in some countries. FACE provided advice to its Members in cases whereby some governments attempted to introduce unjustified restrictions on firearms for hunting.

Regarding the **European Firearms Pass (EFP)**, FACE has been advocating for a digital system as well as calling for

correct implementation (e.g. in Sweden). In 2022, FACE further developed its map of national rules on travelling with firearms following Brexit where the EFP will no longer apply to UK citizens.

FACE Ammunition Working Group

The FACE Ammunition and Firearms Working Groups were active during 2022 to discuss important policy developments related to ammunition.

An example of a previous initiative from the Ammunition Working Group includes the development of a FACE website **Guidance on Managing Risks from Lead Ammunition**: www.leadammunitionguidance.com

CITES & INTERNATIONAL HUNTING

FACE actively engages in **key international agreements**, providing relevant expertise, coordination, synergies and awareness in collaboration with its partners and Members. In this way, FACE is informed about and involved in all international conservation decisions. This also provides an opportunity for FACE to raise awareness of the international profile of hunters as conservationists, as well as finding possibilities for working with other conservationists.



Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

CITES seeks to regulate international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants at sustainable levels to ensure that they are not threatened. This Convention is mainly relevant for hunters in relation to the **import/export of hunting trophies**.

CITES is one of the key international agreements for:

- setting the global conservation agenda
- establishing conservation principles
- providing the tools and means for cooperation



74th meeting of the Standing Committee

From 7-11 March 2022, FACE attended the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Lyon (France). The meeting brought together a wide range of government experts and NGOs to review strategic, policy and species-specific issues related to the implementation of the Convention.

Conference of Parties to CITES (COP19)

The 19th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES (COP19) held from 14 to 25 November in Panama.

FACE in close cooperation with its partners, advocated for legal, sustainable and equitable wildlife trade and stressed the valuable contribution of hunting to conservation around the world. During the two weeks more than 2.000 delegates discussed 52 listing proposals and many working documents.

FACE followed discussions on key listing proposals, such as **Hippopotamus**, **Southern White Rhino**, **African Elephant** and on many agenda items, such as livelihoods, engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in CITES process, and quotas for **leopard hunting trophies**.

Additionally, FACE attended 76th and 77th Standing Committee that took place before and after the conclusion of **CITES COP19**.



Image courtesy of NACSO/WWF Namibia

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

African Swine Fever (ASF) and Avian Influenza in 2022

Hunters actively monitor the health and welfare of wild animals. This includes rapid identification and response to diseases such as African Swine Fever (ASF), Rabies, and Avian Influenza (AI) – also known as “Avian Flu” or “Bird Flu”.

Furthermore, **Europe’s hunters are key partners** of European and international (World Organisation for Animal Health - OIE) initiatives that combat animal to human transmissible diseases (zoonoses).

FACE ensures that EU policies on animal health and welfare are workable for hunters in the field and provides hunters with guidance on how to best comply with administrative procedures linked to game meat, animal welfare, public and animal health. FACE also participates in many international events and conferences, including the meetings of the EC’s Animal Health Advisory Committee.

2022 saw a worsening situation with regard to **African Swine Fever (ASF)** and **Avian Influenza (AI)**. The former is now present in 11 Member States: Czech Republic (new) Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. Hunters play a key role in preventing, controlling and eradicating the disease. In this context, the cooperation with national and regional authorities cannot be overstated. The **European Commission** – DG SANTE – recognises hunters’ essential role in combatting ASF and reducing wild boar density.

The AI epidemic started in October 2021 and continued during 2022, affecting wild birds, poultry or captive birds in 25 EU Member States.

Overall, the 2021-2022 epidemic has been the largest observed in the EU so far. While hunting restrictions can be introduced according to EU legislation, they must be carefully managed. If adopted in a disproportionate manner, they would remove a key method of surveillance across Europe.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

IAS can significantly undermine efforts to protect and restore nature. Besides causing damage to nature and the economy, many IAS also facilitate the outbreak and spread of diseases, posing thereby a threat to humans and wildlife.

Of the 1,872 species now considered threatened on **European Red Lists**, 354 are under threat from IAS. Without effective control measures, the rate of invasion and the risks it brings to our nature and health will continue to rise. IAS are especially problematic for native threatened species that use the same niche or are declining due to a combination of factors such as climate change, habitat loss or diseases. Hunters are important contributors to the monitoring and management of IAS and thereby implementing European IAS regulations.

The **FACE Biodiversity Manifesto** hosts many examples of hunters’ good work in managing IAS, see here: [link](#)

One of the highlights in 2022 was FACE’s presence at the Neobiota conference in Estonia. This international conference aims at addressing theoretical and applied aspects of biological invasions by educating the public and consulting with policy makers.

FACE was one of the selected speakers from over 200 abstracts to present the European Code of Conduct on Hunting and Invasive Alien Species and its implementation reports.

Communicating this positive impact is crucial to create awareness for IAS management needs, increase public acceptance and to facilitate collaborations with researchers and decision makers.



HUNTING METHODS AND CULTURE

In the wake of its positions on bow hunting adopted in 2020 and on falconry in 2021, FACE was in close contact with the **European Bowhunting Federation (EBF)** and the **International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)** throughout 2022.

In July 2022, FACE participated in the final conference on the management of vertebrate invasive alien species (IAS) of EU concern, incorporating animal welfare, a project led by **IUCN** and funded the **European Commission**. FACE showcased the effective management of Nutria in urban area by bowhunters.

As IAS can cause severe impacts to biodiversity and ecosystems, effective management with the least impact on animal welfare is therefore required.

In urban areas, where the use of firearms and traps is difficult, bow-hunting provides a safe and effective method to manage wildlife. FACE used the example of the **Nutria** to demonstrate this case.

Sharing this project to a wider community of organizations involved in the control of IAS was a unique opportunity to showcase the work of the hunting community and to provide an alternative method that has been proven effective.

The project was well received, and interest of other wildlife organizations was peaked.





COMMUNICATION

2022 was a landmark year for FACE's communication. FACE has made large efforts to promote the work of Europe's hunters via social media, attending events, keeping closer relations with our Members and holding several Communication Working Group meetings.

The launch of the **European Hunters' Campaign** in May 2022 was a big success.

European Hunters' Campaign

The campaign is in response to the increasing number of problems for Europe's 7 million hunters coming from Brussels. It aims to highlight and solve these problems, to move away from a trend in finding fault with hunting, and recognise the value of hunting for biodiversity and uniting cultures across Europe.

FACE President **Torbjörn Larsson** stated: *"We are facing unprecedented challenges, particularly with proposals drafted behind closed doors for Europe's hunters. This campaign is a significant step forward to call on Brussels policymakers to change course and work with us!"*

The campaign was launched by FACE together with its 36 national hunting associations across Europe provides a platform – **www.SignForHunting.com** – to call on Europe's main policymaking institutions to "work with hunters" for hunting and conservation. The website was fully developed by FACE along with a FAQ and it was translated into 17 languages.

The website also includes a **9-point petition** that demands necessary change on key topics related to hunting and conservation. The campaign is expected to end in June 2023. As of February 2022, we have gathered more than **230,000 signatures**.

More information on **www.signforhunting.com**

Communication Working Group

In 2022, the **FACE Communication Working Group** met 8 times to coordinate actions to best promote hunting and conservation throughout the year. A great team, made up of more than **30 communications experts** from all major national hunting associations in Europe, and the FACE staff participated in every meeting. In 2022, the work especially revolved around the European Hunters' Campaign. The team created coordinated social media posts, a **toolkit**, shared best practice examples and kept members motivated and engaged.



#SignForHunting

EUROPEAN HUNTERS' CAMPAIGN

JOIN US - SIGN NOW!

EUROPEAN HUNTERS' CAMPAIGN

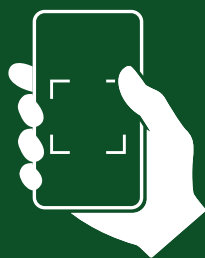


**Sign now
for the future of hunting
and conservation!**

#SignForHunting



Scan me!



www.SignForHunting.com



@faceforhunters

FACE PATRON PROGRAMME



In 2019, FACE developed its **Patron Programme** to provide support to the hunting sector for a strong future for hunting and conservation in Europe. The FACE Patron Programme is the foundation for developing an essential and well-connected network.

FACE needs support from stakeholders to:

- represent the interests of hunters and the hunting sector in EU decision-making
- ensure decision-making affecting hunting and conservation is in the best interest of the hunting industry
- ensure a strong basis for handling complex EU and international policy affairs
- promote hunters' important conservation work for biodiversity
- highlight the benefits of hunting to nature and society

FACE Patrons have a direct contact with the FACE team in Brussels and benefit from insight on relevant hunting-related activities and topics.

FACE appreciates the support from each of its Patrons:

BLASER with the support of Mauser, Sauer, Lemke and Minox, is a FACE Gold Patron. As a leading innovator in the manufacturing of premium hunting and sporting firearms, accessories and outdoor apparel, Blaser is one of the most successful lifestyle brands in the hunting sector. We strive for excellence in every design and manufacturing step, every new product claims to be a true innovation and to provide our customers with a genuine benefit. But true perfection arises only through the unrelenting commitment of the more than 500 Blaser employees at our location in Isny who bring their willingness to show initiative and implement ideas independently. www.blaser.de

BIOAMMO is an ammunition manufacturer dedicated to the development, manufacturing and distribution of 100% biodegradable, bio-compostable and non-toxic wads and cases with 0% plastic. BioAmmo's mission is to

manufacture high-quality, high-performance cartridges for both Game and Sports shooting and to help to eradicate any pollution from plastic in ammunition.

JAGD&HUND is Europe's largest hunting exhibition with around 82,000 visitors and 850 exhibitors every year. It is hosted by the Messe Dortmund GmbH, which is one of the largest exhibition centres in Germany.

HUNTER & CO. In late 2020, FACE was also proud to welcome the Munich-based company, and their hunting application "MyHunt" to the FACE patron programme. Hunter & Co. brings together hunters, software developers and nature enthusiasts, whose shared vision is made possible through the MyHunt app, the "faithful companion that is always in the hunter's pocket, providing assistance before, during and after the hunt, allowing you to simply enjoy nature."

ONE WITH NATURE was FACE's latest Gold Patron in 2021, with both assisting each other to achieve their goals. One with Nature (OWN) was one of the world's largest nature exhibitions in 2021, which took place from 25 September to 14 October 2021.

KRIEGHOFF is a famous German manufacturer of high-end hunting and sporting firearms, based in Ulm, Germany. First founded in 1886, they have over 130 years of experience producing world – class hunting arms especially shotguns. Reflecting its roots, Krieghoff continues to build and offer hunting arms, such as drillings, rifles including double rifles and shotguns including a bespoke line of true sidelock arms.

STEYR ARMS is a firearms manufacturer based in Sankt Peter in der Au, Austria. First founded in 1864 STEYR ARMS expanded to an international entrepreneurial group with premises in Austria and the USA. High-quality outdoor products are developed and world wide marketed by STEYR ARMS. These products are primarily hunting and sporting weapons, knives, apparel and accessories. Furthermore, STEYR ARMS is planning, together with selected partners, to create new product lines in the near future.

AIMPOINT is a Swedish optics company based in Malmö, Sweden that manufactures red dot sights. Aimpoint products are used by various armed forces, and are marketed to civilians for hunting and sport. During our more than 45 years of working closely with experienced hunters and marksmen as well as professional users around the world, the Aimpoint electronic red dot sight has revolutionized mid-range to short-range moving target shooting techniques, and become the number one choice for reliability, durability and performance. There are millions of hunters, sport shooting enthusiasts, police and military personnel who use Aimpoint® red dot sights.

AMMOTEC For Ammotec, precision and reliability are key aspects of every product, and are what make this constantly growing division the European market leader in small-calibre ammunition, pyrotechnic elements and components. With factories based in several countries around the world, they herald their precision ammunition for special forces is in high demand worldwide.

HARKILA is a brand by hunters for hunters. Established 1985 at the Härkila kennel in Västra Götaland in southern Sweden. Innovation and specialization were key factors when Kjell Lennartsson founded Härkila. The very first set was developed specifically for moose hunting and established their partnership with GORE-TEX as the first in the hunting industry. Since then, They've expanded to more than 50 countries and have established themselves as industry leaders with ever-evolving technologies, design, and products.

When unveiling the Patron Programme, Torbjörn Larsson, FACE President stated: *"Today, we are facing unprecedented challenges and major threats, our common mission is to ensure hunting and conservation for future generations in Europe. This is an excellent launch of the FACE Patron Programme that has opened the door for a much stronger FACE to set the best context for hunting and conservation in Europe. The Patron Programme will improve FACE's influence and success at the European level, where 80% of the national rules affecting hunting*

 GOLD PATRON 	 GOLD PATRON 	 GOLD PATRON 	 GOLD PATRON 	 GOLD PATRON 
 GOLD PATRON 	 GOLD PATRON 	 SILVER PATRON 	 BRONZE PATRON 	 BRONZE PATRON 

FINANCES

FACE delivers cost-effective support to its Members. This represents great value for European hunters considering the extent of work carried out by the FACE Secretariat and the fact that Membership subscriptions represent around 10 cents per hunter. It is in this ethos that FACE offers cost-effective and transparent management of finances to its Members and partners, generating maximum impact with limited expenditure. While the core funding of FACE comes from the Memberships fees, a portion of FACE's budget is also financed by the European Commission's Directorate Environment through LIFE NGO Funding.

Transparency

FACE is fully signed up to the EU Transparency Register (Reg No 75899541198-85), which is operated by the European Parliament and the European Commission. FACE operates by their Code of Conduct in all our relations with the EU Institutions and their Members, officials and other staff.

For more details on the register, please see:

<http://europa.eu/transparency-register/>

PERIOD FROM JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2022

INCOME

Membership fees	60%
EC Subvention (LIFE NGO Grant)	18%
Sector Partners	10%
Patron Programme	6%
European Hunters' Campaign	6%

EXPENDITURE

Staff costs	68%
Work programme costs	9%
Office costs	6%
Administration	6%
European Hunters' Campaign	6%
Missions	4%
Depreciation (annual liability)	1%





European Federation for Hunting and Conservation

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