

An Assessment of the Sustainable Hunting Initiative



Promoting Natura 2000 & Sustainable Wildlife Use

Brussels, 18th November 2009

Chantal van Ham

European Programme Officer
IUCN Regional Office for Pan-Europe





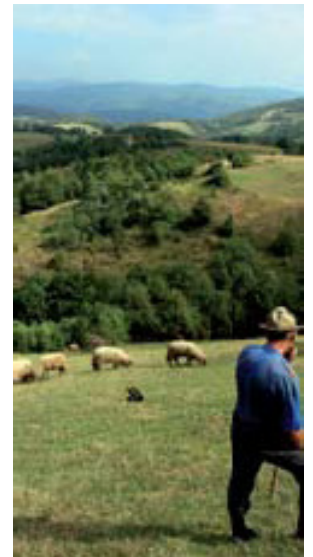
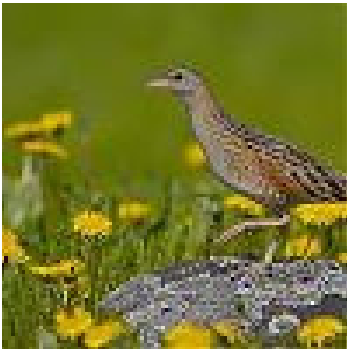
Contents

- The Sustainable Hunting Initiative (SHI)
- Background of the assessment
- Recommendations for Improvement of the SHI
- Questions

Sustainable Hunting Initiative



- Compatibility of hunting with the Birds Directive
- Preserving wild birds and their habitats
- Dialogue between key stakeholders
- Ten proposed measures



Measures



- Legal and technical understanding of the Birds Directive's provisions on hunting
- Monitoring and assessment of conservation of huntable species
- Development of management plans for Annex II species considered to be in an unfavourable conservation status (Annex II/II species)
- Collection of harvesting data
- Assessment of the impact of hunting and disturbance
- Promoting measures for conservation of habitats in the wider countryside
- Implementation of hunting legislation
- Implementation of Natura 2000
- Development of awareness and training programmes for hunters
- Development of a charter of sustainable hunting

Background of the assessment



- Focus on ten measures of Sustainable Hunting Initiative
- European, national and regional/local level
- Overview of response rates survey:

	National Level questionnaire	Personal interviews (in countries)*
<i>Key Stakeholders</i>		
Member State Ministries	8	12
BirdLife International Partners	18	17
FACE Partners	22	18
<i>External Stakeholders</i>		
IUCN members, NGOs, research institutions, European Parliament Intergroup	10	25
TOTAL	58	72

* Country interviews in Bulgaria, France, Italy and the United Kingdom

Recommendations – 1



Acceptance of Working with the Existing Text of the Birds Directive, and Improved Legal and Technical Interpretation of Provisions of the Directive Relating to Hunting

- Guidance Document
- National Legislation on Hunting
- Use of the Guidance Document and adoption in national and regional legislation

Recommendations – 2



Monitoring and Assessment of the Conservation Status of Hunttable Bird Species

- Collection of population data
- Consistency across EU Member States
- Financial resources

Recommendations – 3



Collection and Reporting on Qualitative and Quantitative Data on Harvests within all Member States

- Data on harvests across EU Member States
- Independent monitoring
- Standardised collection schemes
- Funding and communication on use of data

Recommendations – 4



Minimising the Disturbance Effects of Hunting in Protected Areas

- Phase out lead shot in wetland areas
- Science-driven dialogue
- Natura 2000 site management plans
- Communication and exchange of good practices

Recommendations – 5



Actively Promoting Positive Measures for Conservation of Habitats Throughout the Wider Countryside

- Promotion of habitat management
- Hunting and Rural Development Policy
- Local biodiversity action plans
- Dissemination of agri-environment funding opportunities

Recommendations – 6



Supporting the Completion and Implementation of Community Management Plans for Annex II Species with an Unfavourable Conservation Status

- Implementation of Species Management Plans
- Methodology for defining conservation status
- Communication on purpose of Management Plans
- Common approach across EU Member States

Recommendations – 7



Encouraging Training and Education Campaigns for Hunters as well as Initiatives to Control Illegal Hunting Activities

- Need for strengthening of training and education
- Differences across EU Member States
- Responsibility of key stakeholder groups
- Sharing of good practices

Recommendations – 8



Increasing Understanding about the Implementation of Hunting Legislation by Competent Authorities

- Differences in implementation across EU Member States
- Mechanisms of operating hunting legislation
- Enforcement of hunting legislation
- Tools and supportive legislation

Recommendations – 9



Raising Awareness about the Importance and Benefits of the Birds Directive and the Natura 2000 Network

- Natura 2000 and sustainable hunting management
- Role of communication within EU Member States
- Demonstration of win-win situations

Recommendations – 10



Development of a Charter of Sustainable Hunting in the Context of Implementation of Birds Directive

- Agreement signed Birdlife International and FACE
- National level agreements
- Joint initiatives and guidelines



AGREEMENT
between *BirdLife International* and FACE
on Directive 79/409/EEC



As part of the European Commission's Sustainable Hunting Initiative (SHI), and following a number of meetings, FACE (the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU) and BirdLife International reached the following Agreement:

- 1) Both organisations recognize that the Birds Directive is an appropriate legal instrument for the conservation of both wild birds (including huntable species listed in Annex II of the Birds Directive) and their habitats at a favourable conservation status at EU level. Both organisations agree that the priority is to make the Directive work along the lines indicated in the Guidance Document on Hunting under Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds.
- 2) As a result of Point 1, neither organisation has the intention of taking or supporting initiatives aimed at amending the text of the Birds Directive. In the longer term, the two organisations do not rule out the possibility of a consolidation of the existing EU legal instruments for wildlife conservation, respecting their fundamental principles and without weakening the current provisions of the Birds Directive.
- 3) Both organisations acknowledge the historic and continuing significance of the compromises embedded in the Birds Directive in regard to hunting, and that such compromises form the basis for jointly promoting strategic conservation priorities such as working towards the target of halting biodiversity decline by 2010, the protection of sites and CAP reform.
- 4) Both organisations support the establishment of the NATURA 2000 Network and recognize the importance of effective habitat protection and active management for biodiversity conservation. Both organisations stress that in principle NATURA 2000 designation is not incompatible with hunting. They acknowledge that properly managed hunting inside NATURA 2000 sites can continue or take place so long as it is compatible with the site's conservation objectives. In this respect, they refer to the relevant Chapter 1.5 "Conservation of Habitats" of the Guidance Document.
- 5) Both organisations agree that it is desirable to reach local, regional or national agreements on bird hunting practices, to establish constructive dialogue between local stakeholders, and to achieve a rational assessment of effects and of measures to be taken. National Partners or Members of both organisations are free to work towards achieving more ambitious targets for biodiversity, sustainable hunting and bird conservation.
- 6) Both organisations are of the opinion that rational assessment of effects and measures, including those to be adopted in legislation and other rules on hunting, must be based on the best available and reliable data, especially for bird populations and hunting activity. The collection of hunting bag statistics, along with their scientific interpretation and proper use, is necessary.
- 7) Both organisations call upon the Commission and the Member States to develop, adopt and implement Management Plans for Annex II-species considered to be in an unfavourable conservation status.
- 8) Both organisations call upon the competent authorities to take appropriate initiatives to ensure the respect of all bird conservation legislation, in particular through proper enforcement but also by education and awareness raising initiatives. They offer their assistance in this respect.
- 9) Both organisations ask for the phasing out of the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands throughout the EU as soon as possible, and in any case by the year 2009 at the latest. They also underline the risks resulting from the release into the wild of non-indigenous bird species or subspecies.
- 10) It is further agreed by both organisations to establish a regular bilateral dialogue of consensus seeking, and to that end to meet at least twice a year, plus each time they consider such meeting as useful or necessary to address a specific topic. They will further exchange information, publications, etc. and promote this agreement among their national Partners or Members as well as collaborate with other relevant organisations and bodies (such as Wetlands International, IUCN, CIC, ELO, etc.).

BirdLife International

FACE

Brussels, 12th October 2004

Michael Rands
Director and Chief Executive

Gilbert de Turckheim
President

I would like to extend warm congratulations to BirdLife International and FACE on the signing of this important Agreement which I greatly welcome. This represents a central achievement of the Sustainable Hunting Initiative, which the Commission has promoted for the past 3 years. The constructive and cooperative work shown by both your organisations in reaching this valuable Agreement is appreciated by all the Commission services concerned.

Margot Wallström
Commissioner for the Environment



Thank you !

Chantal van Ham

European Programme Officer

IUCN - Regional Office for Pan-Europe

chantal.vanham@iucn.org