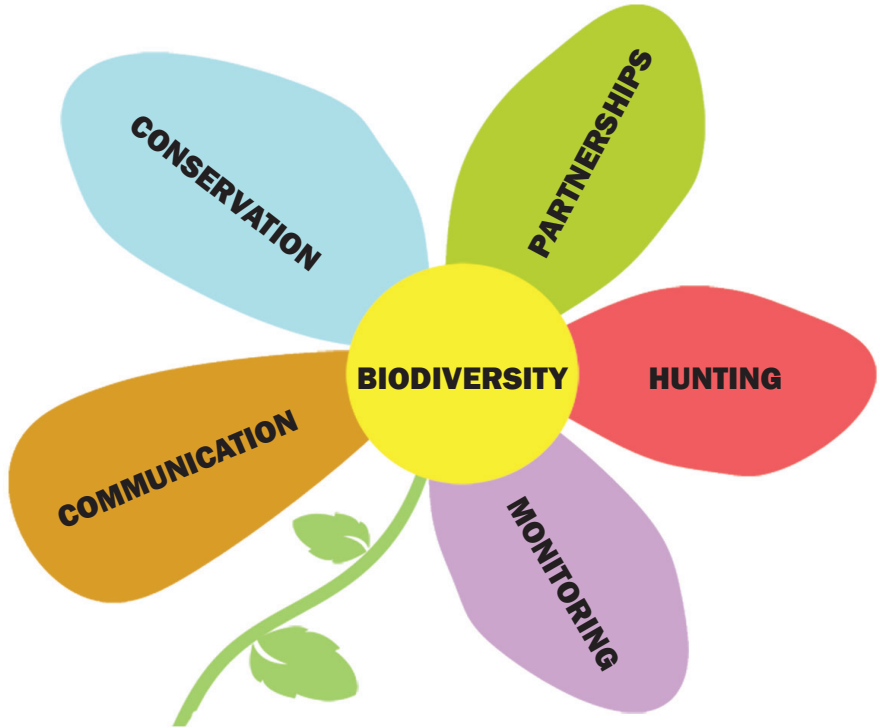


THE HUNTERS' CONTRIBUTION TO BIODIVERSITY



7 MILLION VOLUNTEERS IN 36 COUNTRIES



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...conservation, monitoring, communication and partnerships go hand in hand for biodiversity:

conservation is the actual work that benefits biodiversity. This can include certain types of land management, sustainable use of resources, habitat restoration and increasing habitat connectivity, all of which also benefit species.

monitoring is an indispensable part of biodiversity conservation. One cannot conserve biodiversity, without knowing where and how much there is, how it's doing and what its trends are. Monitoring is also providing an important base for further research, for improving conservation practices and acquiring better knowledge on species and habitats.

communication is crucial to sensitise policy makers, other stakeholders and the wider public to biodiversity related issues and to make them respect the positive contribution of each stakeholder. Without the right communication, conflicts may arise which do not benefit biodiversity.

partnerships are a key to successful monitoring, communication and ultimately conservation,. It goes without saying that positive and more significant results for biodiversity can be achieved, if stakeholders engage with each other.

Hunters are a highly motivated and important ally for biodiversity. To its benefit, they spend vast amounts of voluntary hours in the field, cover a vast surface of the European landscape and invest vast amounts of money.

This publication summarises 14 examples of how European hunters, bring these four elements into practice for biodiversity.



Green Shoots – Hunters delivering on UK Biodiversity Action Plan [United Kingdom]

Green Shoots is a programme launched in 2000 by the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC).

The programme involves UK hunters in the implementation of local or national biodiversity action plans.

Green Shoots involves a biological audit of shooting land (mainly privately owned), performed by BASC members. Over 7 700 km² have been audited since 2000 and the number of biological records generated exceeds 52 000.

This data is then be used with both statutory and voluntary conservation partners to target effort on priority species and habitats.

Headline successes are e.g. native dormice discovered in Cheshire after a 100-year absence; establishing the Environment Agency's cordon sanitaire of mink detection and removal from the Bristol Channel to the Dorset coast to assist water vole recovery in the South West; linking habitats to mitigate the effects of climate change in North Wales; and others.

Green Shoots has instigated many hundreds of small-scale biodiversity projects on privately held land which, collectively, have produced big gains for biodiversity.

More results and information can be found under www.basc.org.uk/en/conservation/green-shoots



WILD - Programme for wildlife monitoring [Germany]

WILD (Wildtier-Informationssystem der Länder Deutschlands) is a self-funded monitoring programme of the German Hunting Association DJV (Deutscher Jagdschutz-Verband) and its regional hunting associations.

The most important goal is to support and develop strategies for conservation and sustainable use of wild animals, through the assessment of population densities and trends. It also serves as a base for further research.

This nation-wide monitoring Programme collects data on the sightings, frequency and populations of wild animals (e.g. brown hare, red fox, badger, carrion crow and partridge + 24 other species).

Data collection is based on wild animal numbers in selected areas (so so-called reference areas), as well as on population estimates in hunting grounds. The fieldwork is done voluntarily by local hunters and the statistical analysis is carried out by three different centres, also in collaboration with Universities.

Over 30,000 hunting areas voluntarily took part in 2006, corresponding to some 50% of districts nation-wide.

The results of annual data collections are published in detail in the WILD annual reports under www.jagdnetz.de/wild.



Swedish hunters help conserve Amur tiger in Russia [Sweden]

The number of tigers worldwide is lower than ever. Only three percent of the population of a hundred years ago remains. To break this trend, WWF has started a campaign to safeguard thirteen tiger landscapes. In Russia, the only place where the Siberian tiger (also called the Amur tiger) is still found is the Primorsky Region in Far East.

As the tigers need vast areas with a lot of prey, the aim for WWF Russia and the Russian heads of hunting estates was to learn methods from the Swedish Hunters' Association SJF (Svenska Jägareförbundet) of managing wild ungulates numbers to benefit both for tiger and human.

WWF-Sweden and WWF-Russia organised a trip for the Russian team to visit hunting estates in the north and east of Sweden.

Seminars focused on types of feeding grounds, feeders' models, types of forage, organization of trophy hunting, relations of game users with those of farmlands and foresters, attitude of Swedish people to predators, training courses for beginning hunters, educational programs for youth, nature conservation in Sweden and more.

Back in Russia the participants of the tour have already started to put learnt lessons into practice in their estates. WWF plans to organize a series of seminars to share gained experience and knowledge with other hunting estates of Primorskii and Khabarovskii Provinces, those interested in conservation of wild ungulates which is the main prey for the Amur tiger and Far Eastern leopard.

More information can be found under www.wwf.ru/resources/news/article/eng/6490.



DinaRis - project on the Dinaric lynx [Slovenia]

The "Cross-border cooperation in the management, conservation and research Dinaric lynx population (DinaRis)" project was lead by the Society Dinaricum from Slovenia and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Zagreb, Croatia.

The Slovenian hunters' Association LZS (Lovska zveza Slovenije) was also a partner in the project, as their members actively cover almost the whole territory of Slovenia.

The Project was funded by the European Union (INTERREG IIIA) and was carried out between 2004 and 2006.

The overall objective was to establish a network of partnerships that will contribute to the implementation and long-term conservation of high nature value areas in the Slovenian-Croatian border areas of the Dinarides. This included setting up a common management strategy Dinaric lynx population between Slovenia and Croatia as well as developing joint monitoring method of the lynx population.

The Slovenian Hunters' Association and its members were particularly active on the field for the monitoring work. They were also involved with the common management strategy with Croatia. Through this work the good management of Lynx in these areas continues today.

More information can be found under <http://dinaris.org>.



ARTEMIS - initiative for game monitoring [Greece]

ARTEMIS is an initiative undertaken and financed by the Hellenic Hunters Confederation since 1994. It has an annual budget of 70.000 €.

The main target of ARTEMIS is to monitor the populations of game species and record the hunting harvest.

It is based entirely on the direct collaboration of hunters. A team of scientists, forest engineers, environmentalists, game biologists and statisticians, are also involved in the realisation of the programme.

Each year, 30.000 hunters from all 252 official local hunting clubs collect information on the hunting season. This information consists of (a) species and number of hunted game, (b) dates of hunts, (c) hunting area, (d) number of hunters in a group, (e) time spent hunting, (f) number of each species encountered, but not harvested, (g) time spent hunting, (h) number of shots fired, (i) number of partridge flocks encountered and (j) number of partridges in each flock.

Since the launch of ARTEMIS, the data is statistically analysed in 15 annual reports. It is the only existing tool in the country for the monitoring of game species' populations and has been used as a tool for management decisions.

More information can be found under www.ksellas.gr/artemis_en.asp.



Environmental management and wildlife [France]

The Regional Council of Languedoc-Roussillon (South Mediterranean Region of France) is putting into place its strategy for preserving natural heritage and biodiversity in view of the land abandonment due to the wine crises.

French Hunters from Corbières (le Groupement d'intérêt cynégétique - GIC - des Corbières maritimes) with support of the Parc Naturel Régional (PNR) de la Narbonnaise en Méditerranée is contributing to this strategy. The hunters are taking a holistic approach integrating environmental concepts of ecological corridors and mosaic farming, whilst respecting the flowering periods, wildlife reproduction periods and habitats for protected species.

This includes the production of an inventory (location, area, crop type, cover and soil type), statistical analysis and mapping as well as testing new management methods (crop diversification, seed mixtures adapted to local conditions).

Following the results of the analysis, the actual field work was carried out in spring and autumn 2009 and in spring 2010. Nearly 200 hectares needed to be sown by hand with the new seed mixes (without pesticides).

The new plots are being monitored for their impact on wildlife as well as for optimising practices.

More information can be requested under www.parc-naturel-narbonnaise.fr/infos_pratiques.



Monitoring game abundance [Finland]

Sustainable harvesting of game populations and the corresponding determination of hunting quotas require reliable information on the size and development of game populations. Reliable information on game abundance and the annual game harvest benefits conservation, hunting and scientific research.

Continuous monitoring of game populations is an important task of the Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute (FGFRI) and is carried out in cooperation with hunters.

Volunteer hunters do the actual fieldwork. Some 10,000 hunters participate in the monitoring schemes annually. The aim of the research is to organize the counting and analyse results.

Different game species groups have their own monitoring programmes. Forest game is monitored through wildlife triangle schemes, alongside with field triangle monitoring, which has been developed for agricultural areas and areas with dense housing. The method was developed by the Hunters' Central Organisation and the FGFRI.

More than 30 forest game species are monitored since 1988.

The population and breeding success of geese and ducks are monitored with pair counts in May and brood counts in July. Other counting methods have been developed for large carnivores, seals, moose, beavers and wild forest reindeer.

More information can be found under http://www.rktl.fi/english/game/monitoring_populations.



Create space for the Grey Partridge on your farm [Denmark]

“Create space for the Grey Partridge on your farm” is a demonstration project, where a group of hunters, farmers and land managers have cooperated to show the best methods to improve the habitat for the Grey Partridge in the Danish farmland.

The Danish Hunters' Association have responsible for the project (2006-2008), which resulted in a publication, that shows all the good practices and experiences and which can serve as a “how to”-guide.

The project goal was to create interest for nature friendly farming, which meet the needs of game. Further more it aimed to demonstrate examples on nature friendly methods, that could be a part of the Rural Development Programme. The methods and best practices were the results of a former project: “Grey Partridge on South Sealand, Denmark”, which also involved Danish hunters.

A number of the proposed methods are, at the same time beneficial to a lot of other arable wildlife species eg. Skylark, Sand Lizard and the Grass Snake and all in all the initiatives bring an enrichment of the biodiversity.

More information can be found under www.agerhone.dk.



TESS - Transactional Environmental Support System [Pan-European]

Every day thousands of people across Europe take decisions about the management of the land and water that is under their care. Almost all of these individual decisions add up to affect the environment and the wildlife that it supports. Decisions need good judgment. They also need to be based on good information.

TESS (Transactional Environmental Support System) is a project to design a computer system that will support good decisions – good for people and their livelihoods and good for the environment. Support for individual decisions needs local information combined for forecasting with knowledge from previous decisions, over wide areas. This exchange of local knowledge for decision support could create a Transactional Environmental Support System.

TESS is Funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme and is running from 2008-2011. The Partners are from Universities, Research Institutes, Environment consultancies and NGOs. FACE is a part of the project, as hunters generate and require local level information for conservation.

More information can be found under www.tess-project.eu



Agreement between hunters and other bird conservationists [Bulgaria]

The Union of Hunters and Anglers in Bulgaria UHAB (FACE Member) and the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds BSPB (BirdLife Partner) have reached an agreement on ten points which will enable hunting to continue within a well-regulated framework, whilst fully respecting the provisions of the Birds Directive. This was signed in Sofia on 31st January 2006.

This Agreement was based on a previous Agreement between BirdLife International and FACE, signed on 12th October 2004.

Both organisations meet regularly to discuss progress made under agreed points. Those include cooperation on strategic conservation objectives, supporting of Natura 2000, action against illegal killing, etc.

The Agreement was possible, as Bulgarian hunting traditions are sustainable and BSPB see hunting as a possible use for conservation.

The full agreement can be viewed under http://bspb.org/files/documents/BDZP_SLRB-en.pdf.



Lernort Natur - Environmental education [Germany]

Hunters from the German Hunters Association DJV offer free education for children and adults on environment related topics (e.g. forestry, sustainable development and biology). It is also a possibility to experience nature directly in the field (e.g. following tracks, watching wild animals).

The aim of the DJV is to counter the progressive alienation of humans from nature. Great emphasis is placed on the principle of sustainable use. This works on the example of hunting as well as the example of the modern forest management.

This service is offered since 1991 and already hundreds of thousands of students from all age groups were guests to this initiative. The hunters adapt their teaching programme upon the request of teachers and requirements from the Länder.

The education programme was awarded by the UNESCO as "UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" project.

More information can be found under www.lernort-natur.de.



Wildlife Habitat Improvement Programme [Greece]

The Wildlife Habitat Improvement Programme is an initiative undertaken and funded (annual budget of 684.000 €) by the Hellenic Hunters Confederation. It was initiated in 2004.

The Programme's main target is conservation, management, and enrichment of Wildlife Habitats in order to improve game species' and fauna biodiversity.

Following a technical guide, all Hunting Federations of Greece (7 in total), prepare every year their "Wildlife Habitat Improvement" programmes according to the needs of each region. The Hellenic Hunters Confederation approves or modifies the programmes and allocates the budget.

The actual field work is carried out by hunters and game rangers with support of the hunting associations.

The activities have been mainly directed towards securing habitat quality and diversity, restoring destroyed and degraded habitats as well as securing conditions for breeding grounds, nesting spaces, food and water resources for all game species.

Actions often imply sowing seeds, tree planting, reforestation, construction of water receivers, hedge planting, construction of small dams, improvement of natural water sources, leaving stripes of cultivated agricultural field plots non-harvested, improvement of forest islands in agricultural areas.

More information can be found under www.ksellas.gr/contact_en.asp.



Red Deer - Sustainable management project [Denmark]

“Red Deer - Sustainable management” is a project (2008/2009 – 2012/2013) of the Danish National Environmental Research Institute and The Danish Forest and Nature Agency.

The goal is to collect biological data on the populations of the Red Deer, since the species is in significant increase in Denmark. This data will help the sustainable management of the species.

The project involves individual hunters, who are requested to submit samples (jaws) and other information (eg. sex and weight) about the harvested individual animals in order to determine age, size, condition and reproduction.

The monitoring areas are two selected regions in Denmark, which both have significant populations of Red Deer. 198 samples were submitted in 2008/2009, which is approx. 45% of the hunted deer according to the bag statistics. In 2009/2010, 324 samples were submitted and even though the numbers for the bag statistics are not available, they are expected to constitute approx. 70% of the totally hunted deer.

More information can be found under http://www.dmu.dk/Dyr_planter/Dyr/kronvildt.



FACE & BirdLife joint statement on the EU’s “post 2010” Biodiversity policy [EU level]

23rd April 2009, FACE and BirdLife International were extremely concerned by the fact that the EU was likely to fail on its 2010 target to halt the decline of biodiversity. Both organisations are convinced that human well-being and economic prosperity are inseparably linked to the health of ecosystems and biodiversity.

Through a joint statement, FACE and BirdLife International called upon EU Institutions, Member States and all stakeholders to intensify efforts for implementing the EU’s 2010 Biodiversity Action Plan.

Both organisations recognise the important role that all land-users and their representative bodies, including hunting and conservation NGOs, can and must play to preserve Europe’s biodiversity, as most European landscapes are influenced by human activities.

Specific points addressed were the better implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, a call for a comprehensive legislation on Invasive Alien Species, the need for reform of sectoral policies and strategies (e.g. agriculture and fisheries), etc.

The full joint statement can be viewed under www.face.eu/Documents/BirdLife_FACE_Statement_Biodiversity_FINAL.pdf



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