



## Nordic hunting – for Nature and People: a model for Europe

Strasbourg, 22.05.2008

The programme for the May meeting of the "Sustainable Hunting, Biodiversity & Countryside Activities" Intergroup was somewhat different in that it included three different events spread over two days during the plenary session week of the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

On Wednesday, lunchtime presentations were held in the European Parliament premises at which some 20 MEPs from Denmark, Sweden and Finland participated.



If to rt: T. MÖRNER (SW), T. MOLAND (NO),  
MEP H. GOUDIN (SW) & L. KONTRO (FIN)

Torstein MOLAND from Norway, President of the *Nordic Hunters' Cooperation* (the umbrella body for national hunters' associations from the three Nordic EU Member States, plus Norway and Iceland), presented the new publication "*Nordic Hunting – Securing Nature and Wildlife for Coming Generations*". It clearly demonstrates that hunting in that part of Europe is popular and democratic, well organised, a natural part of wildlife management, contributes to nature conservation and constitutes wise use (game meat accounting for up to 5% of total meat consumption).

Swedish hunters' President Dr. Torsten MÖRNER clearly explained how the announced plans by the European Commission, inspired by ill-conceived animal rights' considerations, to ban trade in products from seals would not only negatively affect the traditional and totally sustainable hunting of seals in Sweden and Finland (perfectly legal under the EU "Nature" Directives) but also would add little or nothing to improve welfare of wild seals. On the contrary, without well regulated hunting, seal populations would need to be controlled (because of their significant impact on wild fish stocks) by other means, while at the same time leading to wasting valuable seal products.

Lauri KONTRO, President of the *Finnish Hunters' Association*, briefed MEPs about the need for proper management of large carnivores – mainly Brown bear, Lynx and Wolf – in the Nordic countries, including through well regulated hunting. This would contribute not only to minimising conflicts with farmers and other rural communities, but also to conserving these emblematic species for the future.

In the evening, a working dinner took place in the historic centre of Strasbourg, when MEPs and Parliament officials and assistants from the UK and Italy were briefed on these same three topics.

Finally, similar presentations were made at the Intergroup meeting on the Thursday – chaired by Swedish MEP Héléne GOUDIN, with MEPs showing genuine interest for the various messages brought by the Nordic hunters' representatives, which, to a very large degree, also apply to hunting and wildlife management elsewhere in Europe. Michl EBNER (IT), President of the Intergroup, expressed the opinion that the excellent Nordic presentations deserve wider attention in the Parliament and he regretted that for the moment, Intergroups can no longer meet on the Wednesday of the Plenary week in Strasbourg, which results in far less MEPs participating. "*An Intergroup has an important role to brief MEPs on a wide range of issues; it is therefore an essential part of the democratic parliamentary process,*" he stated.

For more information on hunting and game management in northern Europe, visit [www.nordichunters.org](http://www.nordichunters.org) as well as the FACE website [www.face.eu](http://www.face.eu).

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Contact:

FACE - Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU  
For more information about FACE and the Intergroup, visit [www.face.eu](http://www.face.eu) or contact [publicaffairs@face.eu](mailto:publicaffairs@face.eu)