

**INTERGROUP on**  
**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
**DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE**  
**NACHHALTIGE ENTWICKLUNG**

**INTERGROUP on**  
**SUSTAINABLE HUNTING, BIODIVERSITY**  
**& COUNTRYSIDE ACTIVITIES**  
**CHASSE DURABLE, BIODIVERSITÉ**  
**& ACTIVITÉS RURALES**  
**NACHHALTIGE JAGD, BIODIVERSITÄT**  
**& LÄNDLICHE AKTIVITÄTEN**

**Joint Intergroup Meeting**  
**20<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

***EU Upland Game Conservation And Rural Development:  
The Scottish Model***

**Dr Michl EBNER MEP**, welcomed the initiative of this Joint Intergroup meeting, the topic of which is very relevant to many European areas whether it be the north of Sweden or Finland or the mountain regions of other far flung areas.

**Louis Manuel CAPOULAS SANTOS , MEP** highlighted that this meeting came at a very opportune moment since the future models for farming and rural development are being discussed under the CAP reform, were the prospects for rural development in the future are being debated. Scotland is an area closely linked to conservation and rural development in mountain areas and constitutes thus a good example.

**Geva BLACKETT** on behalf of **Alasdair LAING, Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA)**, raised the following points:

- The hunting of red grouse has shaped Scotland's landscape, the management of which supports the social fabric of remote areas, maintains a rare and important ecosystem, and suggests that this is probably the only activity in these areas that can provide these benefits without public subsidy.
- The sustainable hunting of this bird has had a significant positive impact on Scotland's upland areas. The Scottish upland landscape is a unique combination of social factors, that have allowed Scotland's landscape to evolve in this way. It is private investment that has produced this landscape and its associated wildlife. 90% of moorlands are privately owned land.
- The benefits of the economic activity that grouse shooting generates (for the landowner, the gamekeepers as well as the local services – hotels, restaurants etc) are recycled directly back into the local economy: 23 million € each year to the Scottish economy, for 2001.
- Happy clients and the jobs supported by this private investment in driven grouse shooting need a very particular range of management activities, without which

these moors and all their benefits could not function. Social and policy pressure are making it increasingly difficult to carry out this management, which Dr. Adam Smith will address further .

**Dr Adam SMITH, Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust** , pointed out that:

- Grouse hunting is cornerstone for the existence of the heather moorland
- Heather moor ecosystems need to be managed for the following reasons, which bring multiple benefits:
  - Predators , concerning their legal control
  - Parasites, that affect grouse & mammals
  - Habitat management issues such as the use of Muirburn (managed fires) as well grazing
- The predators, parasites and habitat management practices outlined above are under pressure.
- Called upon policy makers to :
  1. Accept that driven grouse hunting is key to the effective management of moorland ecosystems
  2. Help improve (and not remove) management tools
  3. Aid education/training of public & managers
  4. Support further research into the above mentioned issues

**Robert Kenward, Regional Chair, Sustainable Use Specialist Group (Europe) of IUCN-SSC – World Conservation Union (IUCN)** covered the following:

- A brief introduction of the principle of sustainable use was given and its evolution over the years through the various international meetings and conventions.
- Grouse moorland, but also many other areas of land use in Europe can benefit from sustainable use.
- The European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG) has looked into the development of policy tools to enhance the sustainability of hunting management and practices in Europe, and has undertaken a survey across the whole of Europe on the sustainable use activities such as hunting, angling etc.
- At least 40bn€ are being spent in Europe on activities involving the principle of sustainable use, constituting thus a significant turnover.

- For a long time there has been one pillar for conservation which equaled protection, laws for species and habitats, protecting a small amount of the land, which was polarising and producing conflicts. The Convention on Biological Diversity has introduced a second pillar, based on incentives that arise not just through the state subsidies but also from conservation by use; this form of conservation through multifunctional land use is more complex than protection.
- The next challenge is to deliver the complex knowledge and empower those using local resources to manage them most effectively for livelihoods and conservation.

**Struan STEVENSON, MEP** pointed out that destroying peatlands release CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere, increasing further the C footprint of an area as well as the fact that destruction of heather and grouse habitats results in a loss of jobs.

**Michi EBNER, MEP** stated that the protection of nature goes hand in hand with the sustainable use of nature, which generates a significant amount of resources. This has to be brought forward and the various interested parties have to join efforts. The draft resolution of the two Intergroups should serve to this effect.

**Louis Manuel CAPOULAS SANTOS , MEP** welcomed the wealth of information presented at the meeting, which would feed into the current debate on the future challenges of agriculture and rural development.