European BirdLife Partners take action against European bird crime

Title Across Europe, birds suffer from a wide range of persecution: illegal poisoning, shooting, trapping, and the theft of chicks for the bird trade are common practices. Recently, five European countries were confronted with cases of illegal killing. The common, even if illegal, practice of using poison baits to eradicate carnivores and rodents causes huge damage to wildlife as well as to livestock and crops. In some cases it can explain the decline of specific bird populations in Europe. Moreover, the poisons used are usually unnecessarily strong and often illegal. The BirdLife Partners in Hungary, Greece, Cyprus, France and Malta have s taken different types of measures to halt illegal killing of bird practices and to limit their damages on biodiversity. Image type unknown http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/White-tailed-Eagle-JCS01-Scotland-John-Ca **In Hungary, illegal killing of birds threatens rare majestic birds** Over the last decade in Hungary, more than a thousand protected birds have been poisoned including White-tailed Eagles, Saker Falcons, and Common Buzzards. More birds have been, and are still, the victims of other illegal practices such as trapping or shooting. MME (BirdLife in Hungary) has just begun the coordination of a new Life+ project (co-financed by the EU) in cooperation with eight other organisations, aimed at supporting the slow growth of the Eastern Imperial Eagle population in Hungary, and more widely, at finding solutions to control illegal hunting of birds. Image type unknown http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/B **In Greece and Cyprus, poisoned bait targeting wild animals is killing rare birds** In Greece and Cyprus, poisoned baits against carnivores are a very common practice. However, it causes huge damageable to wildlife and especially birds. For example, it has been a key factor in the Griffon Vulture population decline in Cyprus, now on the brink of local extinction. Since the beginning of the year, in Greece, several Griffon Vultures, Golden Eagles, Common Buzzards and Egyptian Vultures, were found poisoned because people targeting wolves, bears and other carnivores had put out dead horses, foxes and dogs laced with Carbofuran, a very toxic insecticide that is illegal in most of the European countries. Both organisations

strongly advocate for their governments and the EU to take effective measures. Read HOS (BirdLife in Greece) and other environmental NGOs? letter to Commissioner Poto?nik here. Also, they are active on the ground. For example, BirdLife Cyprus together with three partners in Cyprus and Greece will implement the ?Cross Border Cooperation Programme Greece-Cyprus? (co-funded by the European Commission and Greek national funds), launched in 2011, with the ambition of restoring the Griffon Vulture population in Cyprus. BirdLife Cyprus has also just published a new report on winter trapping s highlighting the 2.8 million birds illegally trapped in the country in 2011. See here. Image type unknown http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/red-kite-F01-Fran **The French fashion of ?chemical treatment campaigns? endangers birds** Despite the alarm sounded by LPO (BirdLife in France) about the damage they cause to wildlife in the French region of Auvergne, ten new French regions have asked the French Ministry of Agriculture to implement, in their territories, chemical treatment campaigns targeting rodents like the vole and wild carnivores such as foxes, ferrets and others weasels. However, since November 2011, 86 Red Kites (33 of which were victims of poisoning by bromadiolone - ongoing analysis on other suspected cases) have been discovered dead by poisoning in Auvergne, indirect victims of the treatment campaign targeting the vole. Red Kite is the species hit most by this in the country (58% of birds). The French population of this species is the second largest in Europe. Consequently, France has a responsibility in its conservation at a European level. Moreover, the ?treatment substances? commonly used are strong toxins like bromadiolone but also forbidden substances such as anticoagulants or pesticides like Lindane. LPO is actively advocating for the French government to stop the treatment campaigns and to implement measures ensuring the protection of Red Kite. Image type unknown http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Fran **In Malta, hunting of endangered birds during the migratory season remains an issue** In Malta, carcasses of protected birds, including gulls, Ospreys, Western Marsh-harriers, Common Kestrels, Common Swifts and European Bee-eaters, can be discovered throurough the island. Illegal hunting of birds is a tradition in the country that seems difficult to end. BirdLife Malta has been leading a campaign for several years against illegal hunting and trapping activities. Actions include the coordination of two annual conservation camps: Spring Watch in April and Raptor Camp in September. Spring Watch 2012 has just ended: More than 50 volunteers from across Europe joined Maltese conservationists on the ground to record data on migratory species from Africa passing through Malta on their way to Europe, and to report illegal hunting incidents to the police. This year?s spring hunting season BirdLife Malta recorded more than 730 hunting illegalities (751 in 2011), including hunters targeting protected species, exceeding quotas, hunting outside legal hours and not wearing the legally required armbands. BirdLife Malta is actively advocating for the Maltese government to take action against these uncountable illegal practices in the country, and on the other hand, to put an end to the hunting derogation existing in the country, decreed illegal by the EU and that dangerously threatens the wildlife. **BirdLife in Hungary (MME), in Greece (HOS), Cyprus, France (LPO) and Malta hope that there action will permit the recovery of threaten species populations that are suffering from uncontrolled illegal killing in their countries, and also, that it will contribute to the halt of illegal hunting in Europe.**

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