

Italy put in hot spot as Commission calls to end live bird decoy use in hunting

Title

Hunting practices in Italy have been put under fire recently by the European Commission due to the common hunting method involving the capture of wild birds to use as live decoys. The trapping of wild birds is illegal under EU law based on a number of reasons including the non-selectivity of trapping methods used, lack of controls and the lack of information on the number of birds caught. Due to this violation of the Birds and Habitats directive, [BirdLife Partner in Italy, LIPU](#), is calling on the Italian government to urgently remedy the situation.

Italy has defended its inaction by claiming that there are no alternatives to the practice so the decoys are included in the exemptions to the Directive. The European Commission disputes this claim on the grounds that birds can be successfully hunted without the use of live decoys and captive bred birds can be used instead of wild caught birds.

The European Commission has made it clear that there is no future for this practice so Italy has the opportunity to minimise the adverse effects of a judgment from the European Court of Justice by providing an absolute prohibition to capture wild birds for use as decoys. LIPU is campaigning and gathering signatures to present to decision-makers asking for a complete ban on the use of live decoys. Such a ban would avoid the embarrassment of a judgment and bring Italy in line with EU legislation.
