

21st June 2007

P R E S S R E L E A S E

BIRDLIFE (MALTA) IS UNETHICAL

The report carried in the papers of the 19th instant titled “Hunters propose sweeping changes to regulations” is the latest in a series of unethical tactics resorted to by BirdLife (Malta) in their incessant campaign to curtail traditional hunting and trapping in the Maltese islands.

The article concerned a confidential document submitted by the Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) to the Chairman of the Ornithological Committee - Malta (OC) that was meant for discussion at the OC meeting of June 19. In all cases such documents are treated as confidential pending their discussion, and subsequently one can refer to such documents depending on the outcome of such discussions.

However, BirdLife (Malta) president Joe Mangion representing them on the OC saw fit to air and criticise such document in the media before this was even brought up at the OC meeting and before the FKNK even announced it to its members. A similar instance concerning the leak of a letter concerning the Malta Tourism Authority saw the resignation of all members sitting on the committee.

Joe Mangion was not satisfied with simply leaking the document to the media, however went even further by posting the document (translated into English) with a simultaneous criticism, on the BirdLife WebSite. In the now norm Birdlife style, the criticism is full of misinterpretations, half-truths, lies, stupidities and emotional.

Citing a few examples we find that whereas the FKNK called for “The selective use of traditional horizontal net for the trapping of quail should be allowed”, BirdLife mistook the quail for a turtle dove and stupidly misinterpreted the use of the traditional horizontal net for a mist net which is only used in a vertical position!

They also said that hunting from Sea-crafts which is only carried out between October and February, should not be allowed on Sundays and Public Holidays after 1:00 pm, because these months “coincide exactly with the times when most people will be out at sea in pleasure crafts,..”. As if no-one is aware at what times of the year most people use pleasure crafts. Can anybody really ever accept to believe BirdLife (Malta) in anything they say or do!!

On the emotional front they term bird-keeping in cages as “imprisonment”!
So on and so forth.

All this was an obvious tactic by Joe Mangion to mitigate the effect of the FKNK proposals and negatively influence those members on the OC who are independent. A tactic that the FKNK can only term as not only unethical but also vile.

In view of this unforeseen circumstance FKNK will now be sending this document directly to the Minister of the Environment and will also make it public.

In the opinion of the FKNK Mr. Mangion's unethical behaviour renders him unfit to be a member of the Ornis Committee – Malta, and the Chairman should demand his immediate resignation unless he chooses to resign of his own will.

Lino Farrugia
Secretary - FKNK