

29<sup>th</sup> October 2008

### **EU to fund campaign against trapping...**

On 10.05.2007, ironically on the very day that the Malta Government imposed the unjust 'collective punishment' on hunters by stopping short the Maltese traditional socio-cultural passion of spring hunting, the EU Commission besides others, acknowledged that:

“Culture lies at the heart of human development and civilisation. Culture is what makes people hope and dream, by stimulating our senses and offering new ways of looking at reality. It is what brings people together, by stirring dialogue and arousing passions, in a way that unites rather than divides. Culture should be regarded as a set of distinctive spiritual and material traits that characterise a society and social group. It embraces literature and arts as well as ways of life, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”

So why is the EU yet again substantially funding BirdLife (Malta) to the tune of €175,000 (following the €1,000,000 for the shearwater project), whilst flatly refusing funds from the same LIFE+ EU programme to the Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) for a 'Communications & Awareness' project, in order that the Maltese traditional socio-cultural passion of finches trapping is abolished!

Where is the Maltese Government that had promised and documented that 'trapping will still be permitted, even in spring, with Malta an EU Member State!

Why does the EU back-up such a campaign which as usual is based on the lies transmitted by BirdLife (Malta) and certain journalists who do not bother to verify facts before putting pen to paper!

Just as BirdLife (Malta) were lying through their teeth when they stated that spring hunting was only permissible in Malta, journalists should not publish similar fallacies such as 'trapping with clap-nets is illegal across the EU'.

How many thousands of protected birds will BirdLife conjure up as having been taken by trappers!

Why is the Maltese hunter's EU right to shoot in spring on a lower level when compared to an English hunter's EU right to shoot throughout the whole year including in spring!

Why can Spanish and Austrian trappers practise their passion of finch trapping on the same finch species that are traditionally trapped in Malta and using the same clap-nets system used in Malta, while the Maltese trappers may be prevented from the same right in the future!

Why should Italian, French and other EU citizen trappers be allowed to trap several species of thrushes, golden plover, lapwing, turtle dove, quail and other, whilst the Maltese EU trappers' citizens may soon be deprived of similar rights!

The FKNK is hereby warning BirdLife (Malta) not to expect any sort of 'dialogue' with trappers in their bid to realise this sham of a project and further fill BirdLife's coffers.

Shame on the EU that is deceitfully and discriminately treating Maltese citizens in spite of other EU citizens' rights, apparently because Malta happens to be the EU's tiniest Member State.

Shame on the '*idejn sodi*' (firm hands) and '*flimkien kollox possibbili*' (together everything is possible) Maltese Nationalist (PN) Government, the same PN Government that promised heaven on earth to Maltese hunters and trappers prior to EU membership whilst rebutting FKNK warnings as lies in the process. Will we ever have a true Maltese Government with the genuine Maltese spirit and political will to ensure Malta's sovereignty and guarantee equal human rights to the Maltese nationals as enjoyed by other EU nationals! Is it at all possible that Malta's authorities fail to grasp the social and moral damages that are being unjustly and indiscriminately imposed on Malta's family values!

The FKNK which as previously stated is in the process of finalising a report with new proposals regarding the future of trapping, which will be presented to the two main political parties for implementation by a Maltese Government now or in the immediate future, also expects that the Malta Labour Party in opposition should voice its opinion at this stage.

BirdLife (Malta) and the PN Government may be encouraged by the outcome of the European Court Interim Ruling regarding spring hunting in 2008, thus this move against trappers. However both entities can be assured that the FKNK and the odd 15,000 hunters' families are doing anything within their powers and will never give up in their efforts to regain what is rightfully theirs, whilst they await the outcome of the final European Court verdict before proceeding to the next phase as necessary.

Similarly the FKNK and around 8,000 trappers' families will not let anything stand in their way and will do anything within their prerogative to ensure the future of the Maltese traditional socio-cultural passion of trapping.

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