



Government's Refusal to Open the Golden Plover Trapping Season

Government's refusal to open the Trapping Season for the Golden Plover this autumn/winter is simply and totally illogical and insensible.

Following last Monday's Press Conference by the Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) which addressed this issue, officials from the Federation carried out further talks with personnel from the Office of the Prime Minister. The FKNK was again informed that Government was still unsure about the conservation status of the species in question and this has prevented Government from opening this year's trapping (live-capturing) season as it has always done and as was already recommended by the Malta Ornis Committee.

The fact that this species is hunted and killed in several other member states at this same Autumn/Winter, and simultaneously Malta is hesitating to allow the live-capture of a relatively negligible number, renders this situation totally illogical and completely insensible to trappers' sufferings.

Since the FKNK has already supplied Government with the necessary scientific studies, dossiers and documents, and also since it is still in time, the FKNK yet again appeals to Government to immediately and correctly apply a derogation and open the trapping season for the golden plover together with that of the song thrush. Government has to heed the warnings and clear indicators offered by the Commission such that both application as well as eventual justification will be in order and respect the Directive's strict requirements. The lack of clear and direct action so far by Government to make good its promises and written declarations to trappers is evident in this state of affairs wherein these species can be killed but not captured alive.

As an initial measure, the FKNK has already suspended its participation from the scientific Study commissioned by Government which should have commenced in the forthcoming days. The FKNK believes that it is only appropriate that certain structures are respected and not used by Government for its convenience – The FKNK here specifically refers to the Malta Ornis Committee. Hence and in this regard, and also since the Committee's recommendations to Government have been ignored on a regular basis, as the second step, the FKNK is, with immediate effect also suspending its participation on the Malta Ornis Committee, until this farcical situation, whereby a species can be shot and killed but not captured alive, is resolved and Government decides to apply a correct derogation.

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