



5 January 2012

Evaluation of BirdLife Malta's EU LIFE+ Project on Bird Migration and Trapping

The Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) which also stands for the rights of its thousands of trapper-members besides the hunters, was adequately informed that with Malta's EU Membership both local traditional hunting, but especially live-finch capturing (colloquially referred to as trapping) practices would have to change. Therefore now, the FKNK cannot ignore "BirdLife Malta's EU LIFE+ Project on Bird Migration and Trapping" Final 10-page Report, also because the same unchallenged Report has been unfairly used by the EU Commission to commence infringements procedures against Malta by means of its Letter of Formal Notice last June, which in turn has lead Malta to unjustly not permit the live-capture of the otherwise legally *hunnable* species turtle dove, quail and golden plover last autumn for the first time in living memory, based on totally illogical grounds.

In January of 2009 on the approval of the Maltese Government, BirdLife Malta (BLM) together with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK) and Media Today (Malta), and in consultation with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) embarked on a thirty-month EU LIFE+ Project, which has cost the European taxpayer €375,000.

BLM's ultimate aim was the total eradication of a Maltese indigenous socio-cultural way-of-life, the passion of live-finch capturing. To reach this final objective the Project's stakeholders, both local and foreign, disregarded one crucial issue, the human element – the thousands of Maltese trappers. The same Maltese trappers, who, prior to casting their Yes vote for Malta's EU Membership were continuously being reassured by all relative authorities that the future of their passion was not simply being pledged with EU Membership, but that it would thrive. Even though the EU may have had other interpretations in respect of these assurances, it never transmitted different versions to the Maltese people, thus demonstrating tacit agreement to the information being supplied at the time.

The Report findings are supported by scant, at times uncorroborated evidence. The FKNK further considers certain malicious declarations and false inaccurate statements made in the Report aimed to negatively affect the very lives of trappers as very serious. The only two positive points raised in the Report are that BLM themselves admit that trapping forms part of Maltese tradition and culture.

The FKNK has now prepared an Evaluation Report based on just facts regarding the BLM Project, which Report has been circulated to the Maltese Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, the EU Environment Commissioner and the Head of EU Unit of LIFE Nature (DG ENV E3).

FKNK's detailed Report can be viewed here: [Evaluation](#).

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