

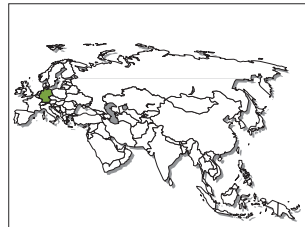
TROPHY HUNTING FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES

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Abstract. Trophy hunting for endangered species is a subject tackled from two angles within the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation: (a) in its general discussion on the subject of “nature conservation and sustainable consumptive use” and (b) by acting as national CITES Scientific Authority. The first approach is described below.

Key words: CITES, trophy hunting, sustainable use, endangered species

1. Sustainable Consumptive Use of Wildlife

National workshops were organised by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (FANC) on the subject of sustainable consumptive use (SCU) in both 1999 and 2000. Representatives of administrative authorities, various non-governmental organisations and scientific institutions discussed a definition and criteria for SCU, as well as measures for its promotion and introduction. Twenty-five criteria for SCU were identified, which can be categorized into four different areas:

- basic biological data on the population level (including population size, reproductive system, mortality, population structure, social structure, behaviour, health status, habitat, genetic variability, conservation of evolutionary potential);
- basic biological data on the ecosystem level (including effects of the species on/within the ecosystem, effects of ecosystem changes on the species);
- management and monitoring (including organizational and institutional framework, management plan with regular internal monitoring of several aspects, feed-back mechanisms, and monitoring of external factors such as the effects of demand on the international market);
- socio-cultural acceptance and economic effectiveness (including socio-cultural and ethical acceptance, economic aspects, involvement of local communities).

2. Position statement “Trophy Hunting for Endangered Species Abroad”

In order to develop a position statement on “Trophy Hunting for Endangered Species Abroad”, FANC collected available information from various sources, such as official publications and statements of specialists and organisations with interest in this subject. Compiled information was classified in relation to the criteria identified in the SCU workshops, and evaluated with regard to the question: “Is scientific evidence available to decide whether or not trophy hunting has negative effects on the target population of the respective species or its ecosystem?” The study revealed that most information available refers to carnivore and *Caprinae* species, and that long-term studies comparing the development of a hunted population with that of a population undisturbed by hunting activities are lacking. The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

Trophy hunting abroad by German hunters is primarily carried out in other European countries, Africa and Central Asia. Main targets are deer and pig species, antelopes and gazelles as well as small game and waterfowl.

In many countries, trophy hunting is a very lucrative way (few tourists, high income) to simultaneously make use of and manage wildlife. In comparison with photo (mass) tourism, expenditures on infrastructure, such as hotels and roads, are regarded to be considerably lower. Projects such as CAMPFIRE and the Torghar Conservation Project, in which the responsibility for the sustainable use of “their” wildlife is transferred to the local communities, often cause value to be attributed or reattributed to wild animals, which previously were only regarded as competitors for food, or even as direct threats to human lives. Some programs for sustainable consumptive (trophy) use of endangered wildlife have resulted in a decrease in poaching and in slowing down the expansion rate of agricultural areas. Various examples worldwide (Zimbabwe, Pakistan, South Africa) have shown that conservation areas (such as national parks and game reserves) can be expanded and interlinked with each other through such projects. This helps the target species to expand and multiply on the one hand, and serves to preserve the original natural environment and its biological diversity on the other. It is not known, whether trophy hunting alone, independent of such programs, would yield such positive effects as well, because the needed information for such an assessment is not available.

An assessment of trophy hunting must not be limited to quantitative aspects, such as stock size and reproduction rates. Possible negative effects on the population and social structure as well as genetic variability within each species have not yet been sufficiently investigated, and will require greater attention in trophy hunting management in the future. Therefore, research on reference areas not affected by hunting will be especially significant in the future. The one-sided promotion of purely hunting-related interests (such as hunting for predators of the target species or the introduction of foreign species) is to be strictly renounced.

3. Minimum Requirements for Acceptable Trophy Hunting

Against this background and assessed from a nature conservation point of view, trophy hunting for endangered animal species can only be regarded as acceptable in individual cases, as long as - in addition to the strict implementation of any necessary legal regulations - at least all of the following minimum requirements are met:

- Animals are removed on the basis of an adaptive wildlife management plan that is changeable at any time;
- trophy hunting provides direct local conservation benefit (e.g. preventing planned agricultural use or settlement in the hunting area);
- the local communities receive a financial benefit from the trophy hunt;
- there is no predator control in order to increase the population of target species;
- there is no introduction of non-native species (either entire populations or individuals) for the purpose of trophy hunting.

In addition, with ongoing projects, all following requirements in particular should be met over the medium and/or long term, when introducing trophy hunting into new areas or assessing whether to expand trophy hunting to previously un hunted species or not:

- Poaching is effectively eliminated;
- the effects of trophy hunting on the gene pool, behavioural ecology and reproductive success of the target species are studied;
- a completely protected area without any hunting influence is available as a reference area for research;
- a completely protected area in the direct vicinity of the hunting areas is available serving as a refuge for species affected by hunting.

References

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*The great success of conservation through sustainable hunting: markhor. Kabul markhor (Capra falconeri megaceros).
(Photo: Dr. Nicolas Franco)*