

HUNTING FOR SUSTAINABILITY (HUNT)

RESEARCH ON GAME SHOOTING AND DEER STALKING IN SCOTLAND

HUNT seeks to understand what influences attitudes to hunting, how these attitudes determine the traditions, institutions and rules surrounding hunting and the consequences this has for the management of biodiversity.



This project is funded by the European Union and coordinated by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute. HUNT is an international project with partner organisations based in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, Sweden and Norway.

In Scotland the team are investigating four main questions :

1. What are the cultural meanings and values that people associate with hunting?

We have been conducting interviews and focus groups with people who have varying degrees of connections with game shooting and deer stalking. By exploring attitudes to hunting we can better understand the cause of hunting related conflicts.



2. How do the rules and regulations surrounding hunting contribute to conflicts or collaboration?

Hunting has multiple facets including economic, cultural and conservation functions. In some cases, trade-offs between these functions cause conflict due to the different rules and regulations that govern hunting. Together with key stakeholders we will design management scenarios to analyse potential solutions for resolving tensions over deer management in landscapes of multiple ownerships and objectives.

3. What are people's attitudes toward the economic implications of different hunting management scenarios?

This element of our research seeks to understand how people make decisions in relation to the economic aspects of upland management. We are using choice experiment techniques to gauge how people view trade-offs between factors such as local employment, estate income, densities of grouse and deer and biodiversity.



4. What are the consequences for biodiversity of alternative hunting management scenarios?

Management intensity for hunting objectives varies across estates. We will investigate how diversity of both plant and bird species responds to management practices across a variety of sites representative of hunting in Scotland.



Project outputs

The findings from the social, economic and ecological elements of the research will be integrated within and between countries in 2011-12. In Scotland, the work will contribute to the debate over managing biodiversity by demonstrating the need to understand and include the attitudes and motivations of the range of stakeholders involved. We will demonstrate new ways to bring stakeholders together to develop management options and solutions that enhance the value of hunting and its management whilst facilitating the achievement of biodiversity objectives. We are grateful to the Scottish Consultative Group for their contribution to the project activities.

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