

WILDLIFE ESTATES Initiative

“WE act for biodiversity”



WILDLIFE ESTATES SCOTLAND AT THE SCOTTISH GAME FAIR

Scottish Land & Estates (SLE), representing landowners from all across Scotland, held a reception for representatives of accredited Wildlife Estates in Scotland at the Scottish Game Fair, in the delightful grounds of Scone Palace near Perth. The occasion was also used to present four awards: three of them being re-accreditation awards following the expiry of the estates' first five-year period of validity. These estates have successfully achieved the targets for biodiversity management set five years ago and have now declared and agreed programmes for further improvement.

A total of 57 estates in Scotland are now accredited with the WE label at Level 2. They cover 508,000 hectares, ranging in size from 109 hectares to almost 59,000 hectares. No fewer than 34 of these estates have interests focusing on driven grouse shooting. .

The estates re-accredited at Level 2 were:

- The Hopes (S.E. Scotland) where peatland management and ditch blocking has improved habitat and where input with Scottish Natural Heritage aims to recalculate the basis of managing land where a large population of rabbits exists;
- Allargue (Aberdeenshire) where the conservation of Black Grouse (*Lyrurus*

tetrix) has been the main focus since Level 2 accreditation was first discussed in 2011;

- Threepwood (Borders) where the principal focus is on overwintering birds. There has, for example, been a 500% increase in overwintering Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*).

Level 2 accreditation was also awarded to Glenquich (Perthshire), an estate of 2300 hectares where the principle focus is on flood mitigation, woodland restructuring, carbon capture and peatland management, and where 111 species of birds were recorded in 2017.

SLE has declared a target to expand the WES scheme to 1 million hectares by 2023.



Viscount Chelsea and his head gamekeeper receive a plaque to recognise the accreditation of the Glenquich Estate in the Wildlife Estates Scotland scheme.

l. to r. Lord David Johnstone (chairman Scottish Land & Estates), Viscount Chelsea and head gamekeeper of Glenquich Estate, Dee Ward (vice-chairman, Scottish Land & Estates)

Collaboration Agreement Wildlife Estates Spain - Spanish Rural Policy (SEPRONA)

From Wildlife Estates Spain and Friends of the Countryside Spain, alliances are constantly being sought that have a value for its members and associates.

In this line of work, on April 29, 2019, a delegation of FCS Spain and WE Spain, met with the General Directorate of the Nature Protection Service - SEPRONA (the Spanish Rural Police- Guardia Civil rangers) to renew the collaboration agreement that is maintained between both, and by which the Wildlife Estates territories are recognized as collaborators of SEPRONA. These recognize the members of Wildlife Estates as territories with exemplary management.

All Wildlife Estates Spain farms have a very visible signage through Official Identification Plaques. Thus, its location is geared to SEPRONA members, to facilitate mutual collaboration in the prevention of crimes in rural areas and the preservation of nature and biodiversity.

Dr. C. Otero



Representatives of WE-FCS Spain with Mr. Antonio Tocón (General Chief of SEPRONA) and Mr. Francisco Monedero (Colonel Chief SEPRONA)



Signalling through official Wildlife Estates plates.

Wildlife Estates Habitat Improvement Areas (WEHIA). Fuerteventura Island Spain.

The Biosphere Reserve of the island of Fuerteventura (Canary Islands, Spain-Macaronesian Bioregion) is certified as a Wildlife Estates in July 2017. This certification recognizes excellence in wildlife management for a unique territory, which has some recognized values: a well-preserved coastline, numerous colonies of seabirds, unique botanical endemisms, a notable population of vulture and the presence of the *hubara canaria*, among many others.

During 2019, the two WEHIA for the conservation of the Hubara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata fuerteventura*) were visited in Fuerteventura.

The project, which will last 5 years, will start with the Island Council of Fuerteventura and with the Biosphere Reserve, up to a total of 18 WEHIA. These WEHIAs are strategically projected by the area of maximum interest of the target species, the hubara bustard.

What is a WEHIA?

It's a territory (usually with a low surface, but depending on the objective/s specie/s) in which some measures are developed to implement the habitat holding capacity for some particular species.

The main goal is to increase the population and the conservation of some wildlife species, through a improvement of the habitat.

The management of a group of these small areas, with low cost measures, will have a really positive influence in a large territory.

Dr. C. Otero



Hubara Bustard



Construction of more than 150 m of dry stone walls

Owners and livestock breeders: Guardians of biodiversity

On November 5, a round table organized by ELO and the UCTL (La Unión de Criadores del Toro de Lidia) took place in the European Parliament where farmers and private owners from Spain, Portugal and France discussed their role as protectors of biodiversity.

The event was hosted by MEP Juan Ignacio ZOIDO, and began with an extraordinary welcome and went on to outline the problems faced by the owners and ranchers every day. The event was attended by Daniel CALLEJA CRESPO (Director-General DG Environment), Álvaro AMARO (member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Parliament), Carlos NÚÑEZ (President of the Lidia Bull Breeders Union), Jeremy DECERLE (Renew Europe MEP and President of the young farmers of France), and Karl-Heinz FLORENZ (former MEP) among others.



This framework served to present different points of view on how private and livestock owners contribute to rural development. One of the priorities of the agenda of the President of the European Commission, Ursula VON DER LEYEN, in the “European Green Deal” that is established by two defined lines: the challenges against climate change and the challenges for the loss of biodiversity. Both challenges are perfectly aligned in the defense of livestock rearing by their socio-environmental contribution. It was however also concluded that making farms viable is extremely relevant and that a strong and supportive CAP with farmers and agricultural managers must be guaranteed.



Wildlife Estates General Assembly '19 Esterházy - Austria



Participants of Wild Life Estates Steering Committee

In September the Wild Life Estates Steering Committee took place in the Esterházy property in (Austria) where members from eleven countries met to update and present new proposals for the Wildlife Estates project.

The chairman of the WE Scientific Committee reported that the Committee has improved and adapted the methodology for Estonia and Bulgaria, taking into account the requirements and legislation of each of these countries. An additional 9 evaluators were trained at a special training course in June at which the WE methodology and the questionnaire were explained.

All national delegations presented their local initiatives and how they are making

progress with national governments. Problems such as the wolf and African swine fever were during the meeting.

Belgium reported that in the Flemish region the Wild Life Estates label is now officially considered as a pre-management plan for subsidies. The Swedish delegation announced that it undertakes the task of promoting the WE Label in Norway and Iceland. The WE project will thus be represented in 21 countries in Europe.

The commercial use of the WE label was discussed at the Steering Committee. It was decided to allow the commercial use of the label for products produced in the estates that have the label under the mandatory condition that the label makes clear reference to the where the product comes from, but not to the product itself. It was also decided that the label cannot be used as an indicator of any services offered by the specific estate.



Nikolaus Draskovich, Günter Graf von Schulemburg, Matthias Grün, Verena Dunst, Thierry de L'Escaille, Johannes Ehrenfeldner and Anne Burrill during the "Cultivate and protect" Conference.

The next day, the “Cultivate and protect” conference took place in Forchtenstein where Verena Dunst gave us a warm welcome speech. Speakers like Nikolaus Draskovich gave us an overview of European forests and agriculture along with the objectives to be met in the medium terms taking into account the different factors and applicable European policies.

On the part of the European Commission Anne Burrill spoke, where she presented the problematic loss of biodiversity and the action plans that are going to be carried out. The Austrian delegation brought Johannes Niegl, Johannes Ehrenfeldner, and Klaus Schachenhofer with the PANNATURA project in Austria where successful sustainable forest and agricultural management has been achieved.

Martin Gerzabek, an ecologist and soil scientist, and former rector of the University of Natural Resources and Life Science (BOKU) in Vienna, gave a brilliant talk about the different soils present in the world, their functions, and their importance for a sustainable future. Finally, Jurgen Tack told us about the CONSOLE project that had a very good reception among the participants of the conference which will be explained below.

After the conference the members of the Austrian national delegation took us to different locations in the area to see the management models applied and the results obtained with this hard work.



Friedrich and Christina Hardegg received the Label for Isbary Bioland Estate

FFA Brussels.



The annual Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) will take place in Brussels on Tuesday 31 March 2020. The theme this year shall be “Accelerating Change”. Every year the FFA features as the unique Brussels event that deals with agriculture, climate, food, and the environment; however, this year it will devote itself to the changing political landscape, new methods of protecting our environment, re-shaping the ethics of the food chain, and most of all showcasing innovative farming models from across Europe.

At this crucial moment, where the world must change, must transition, and must transform; to overcome the climate crisis, it is vital that all stakeholders, farmers, and business leaders, not just engage with the topic, but show their willingness and courage to be a part of the solution. Thus, the purpose of FFA2020 is to allow the audience to not just view and experience the debate, but also to understand that we cannot wait for a silver bullet remedy to the climate crisis, and that they take note of the scalable, transferable, and sustainable models that are the solutions to our current situation.



Although the current agenda for FFA2020 is still being formed, several names may be announced. Amongst these are Ted McKinney, Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, United States of America; Carlos Manuel Rodriguez Echandi, Minister for Environment & Energy, Republic of Costa Rica; Agnes Kalibata, President, A Green Revolution for Africa (AGRA); Janusz Wojciechowski, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission; Teresa Dent, CEO, Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust; David Nabarro, Strategic Director, 4SD; Terry Tamminen, President & Founder, Seventh Generation Advisors; Pascal Hardy, Founder, Agripolis: Example of urban farming

on the rooftops of Paris; Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Environmental Activist; and, John Gilliland, Director of Agriculture and Sustainability, Devenish.

The FFA are also delighted to announce that RaboBank and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs have formally joined the FFA family as partners. The current list of partners now entails; the European Landowners' Organisation (ELO), Syngenta, The Nature Conservancy, WWF, Cargill, Thought for Food, and now, RaboBank, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Under the direction of FFA Chairman, former EU Commissioner for Science & Research and former Commissioner for the Environment, Janez Potočnik, FFA2020 will bring together high-level speakers from EU and international institutions, academia, civil society, non-governmental organisations, the farming world and business to debate these key issues and more.

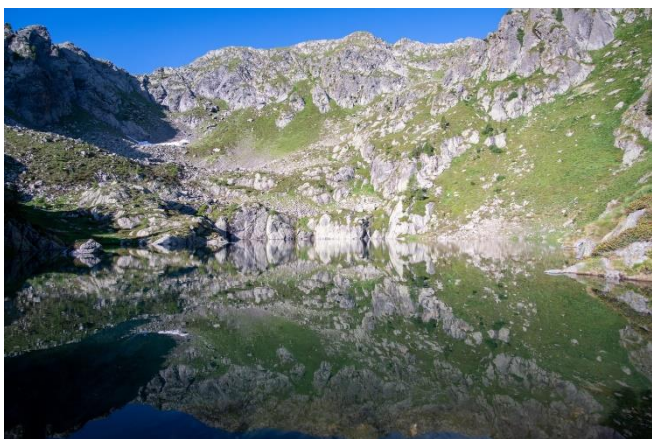
The debate will be expertly steered by internationally renowned Al Jazeera journalist and presenter, Femi Oke and long-time BBC journalist and Hardtalk presenter Stephen Sackur.



FORUM FOR THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Belleuropa Awards 2019

Each year, the Belleuropa Award honours a member of the Wildlife Estates Label for the exceptional work that they have undertaken in maintaining, protecting and improving the biodiversity of its land. The 2019 winning candidate was Valbelviso, which occupies a well conserved alpine territory, with forests, pastures, meadows and high altitude open areas with a dense water network, rocky areas and glaciers.



The whole environment is represented by natural habitats, without any human settlements. No form of agriculture is practiced and the husbandry of domestic animals, such as free grazing cattle and sheep, typical of the local culture, is present in very low densities.

A large area of the estate is protected by the Natura 2000 network. Many valuable and endangered species, both flora and fauna, are found in this estate, thanks to the valuable natural habitats. Hunting activities, concentrated over a few months each year, are

conducted with a strong commitment to reducing disturbance and the impact on all species present in the area. The management collaborates with parks and universities for conservation and scientific studies and management programs. The award was presented to the estate's owner Giampiero PESENTI by Piero MANZONI.



Alain Scriban, MEP Franc Bogovič, Giampiero Pesenti, Piero Manzoni and José Gómez-Acebo

The Belleuropa Ceremony took place at the European Parliament on December 10th as a grand finale for the European Biodiversity Conference, which discussed how the European Union environmental policies affect users.





YOUNG FRIENDS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE PRESENT **2020 Famigro Award for Entrepreneurship**

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Created by Mr Karl Grotenfelt in 2013,
the **Famigro Entrepreneurship Award** aims to reward
the best European rural entrepreneurship project of the year.

Entrepreneurial projects contribute to the evolution of our rural countryside, while the respect of the environment and social responsibility is endorsed by each rural entrepreneur. The aim of the Famigro Award is to increase the chances of these valuable projects succeeding and growing, letting them benefit from the support of the network of the Friends and Young Friends of the Countryside.

The prize includes:

- A EUR 5,000 check and diploma of recognition
- Advertisement on the communication of the YFCS, FCS and ELO channels
- An article in the Countryside Magazine (more than 4K readers)
- The opportunity to join us during the FCS & YFCS General Assembly in Córdoba, Spain (4-7 June, 2020)

The 2020 Edition is now open, and applications should be sent
before March 1. The form is available on the [ELO](#) and [YFCS](#) sites, where all the details and conditions are specified.

If you have any questions please send an e-mail to: alberto.hermosel@yfcs.eu.

Upcoming events

- **February 10th, 2020**– Wildlife Estates Belgium dinner.
- **March 30th, 2020** – Scientific and Steering Committee, Brussels



WE act for biodiversity

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