

Review of 2017 for European Sustainable Use Group & IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management's thematic group on Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems

This year has been busy. ESUG had its general meeting in Brussels, and a number of us got together for meetings at other times in Brussels, Montpellier, Paris, Kyrgyzstan and even Lima. In between we worked on translation for Perdixnet and made many contributions to the discussions of SULi. ESUG also strongly supported SUME, with a website and administration for its meetings in Kyrgyzstan, Peru and Croatia.

In fact, there were significant events in every month of the year except January:

- February: Wildlife Trade meeting in Brussels;
- March: IPBES on Sustainable Use in Bonn;
- April: Completed phase I of Perdixnet translation;
- May: ESUG meeting in and launched Perdixnet in Brussels;
- June: Completed report of Saker Portal contract, talks in Paris;
- July: Drafted for Sakernet II, completed website for SUME;
- August: presented on Perdixnet at IUGB in Montpellier, ESUG dinner;
- September: Kyrgyzstan meeting of SUME;
- October: Meeting of SUME in Lima, Peru;
- November: planning for Croatia meeting of SUME;
- December: reunion in Abu Dhabi for veterans of 1976 Falconry Festival.

For the resulting reports, please visit the SUME and ESUG websites (addresses below).

We had kind help from IUCN with the Lima meeting, but the main reason we've been able to achieve this level of activity is thanks to financial and moral support from the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey. IAF, as an organisation heavily engaged in conservation based on sustainable use of raptors and prey species, was defending the existence of falconry in the 1970s. With some 5,000 years since falconry's origin on the steppes of Asia (and much help from Abu Dhabi), IAF recently secured the inscription by UNESCO of falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. IAF also understood the value of our internet tools (the legacy of TESS) for outreach to organise conservation work and inform the public. IAF's commissioning of Sakernet and Perdixnet has helped us, but we've not yet extended that effect to other hunting interests, let alone to angling, gathering and other groups whose passion depends on the riches of nature.

We need to do that in 2018, because crutches at <http://esug.sycl.net/news.aspx> reflect medical advice that the efforts of 2017 are unsustainable. We all need to work in 2018 to persuade sustainable use interests to support ESUG/SUME by commissioning the global-with-local networks that we can create, to take IUCN and CBD's global ideals and efforts in simple terms and national languages to local people everywhere. Outside protected areas, it is local use of land and species that should underpin conservation. Maybe a system devoted to information and national projects on conservation through sustainable use could help build public understanding, and thus divert for real conservation some of the hundreds of millions of Euros which flow annually to organisations opposing sustainable use. So please visit <http://sume.sycl.net/classifieds.aspx> and plan to come to the meeting with SUME in Karlovac during 11-12 April 2018; Croatia is a very lovely country to visit in early spring.

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