

European Sustainable Use Group

General Meeting in Brussels, 14 October 2026

Brief biographies and hopes for ESUG from candidates for election of Chair and Committee members for the 2026-2028 period

Note: It is not a requirement of the ESUG statutes that these brief statements should be provided but the Nominations/Returning Officer thought it would be helpful. Candidates were asked to provide 100-150 words.

Candidate for Chair

Dr Julie Ewald: Julie grew up on a mixed farm in Nebraska and received her BS and MS (Parasitology) from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She moved to Glasgow University in Scotland as a Fulbright Scholar and completed her doctorate in Parasitology there. After working on malaria/mosquitoes in Thailand, Julie joined the Game Conservancy Trust (now Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust - GWCT) in 1995. Currently Principal Scientist – Farmland Ecology and GIS at the Trust, she supervises staff and students undertaking research utilizing the GWCT's long-term and GIS-enabled databases, including the National Gamebag Census, Grey Partridge Count Scheme and The Sussex Study, and manages the GWCT sandwich placement scheme from universities. Her current and past projects include Grey Partridge population dynamics in relation to changes in agriculture and predators, the role of agricultural intensification, climate change, and other factors on the declines of farmland birds and invertebrates, and the consequences of management for shooting on British wildlife. Julie and her GIS and Data Science teams support various GWCT research projects, as well as GWCT-facilitated Farmer Clusters (<https://www.farmerclusters.com/>). Julie joined ESUG while collaborating on TESS (Transactional Environmental Support System), worked on Perdixnet (<https://www.perdixnet.org>) after joining Committee in 2015 and, together with Prof Robert Kenward, has been the scientific coordinator on the Horizon and UKRI-funded Pro-Coast project for the last three years.

Candidates for Committee:

Dr David Scallan is the Secretary General for the European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE). His daily work involves overseeing the implementation of FACE's work programme. He has a strong background in project management, EU affairs, conservation policy, game management, sustainable agriculture and human-wildlife conflict. He received his Ph.D. from the National University of Ireland Galway with a dissertation examining the economic, ecological and social place of hunting in rural Ireland. David is also experienced in developing conservation/management plans for huntable species. Within ESUG, he was involved in the TESS (Transactional Environmental Support System) project as the country coordinator for Ireland. He represents FACE within IUCN and is a member of SULi. David is keen to improve the visibility of ESUG's work at the national and international level to a broad range of stakeholders and decision-makers.

Dr Tetiana Gardashuk has a background in biology, with degrees from Kyiv University, an MSc from the University of Amsterdam, and scholarships at Iowa State University and ITAS/KIT (Karlsruhe). She is a member of the National Committee on Bioethics, Ukraine (from 2014). She has 200 scientific publications (5 monographs) in sustainable development and sustainable use, traditional and local knowledge, environmental education, citizen science, and biodiversity conservation. Tetiana participated in several national and international projects and has expertise in nature conservation, environmental education, and public participation. Tetiana joined ESUSG in 1997, WCPA in 2012, and CEM-SUME in 2015, as continental coordinator for Europe. Projects have included "Freshwater Fisheries in Central and Eastern Europe" and TESS for ESUSG. Since February 2022 she has focused on researching the war-environment interaction, the methodology of environmental peacebuilding and ESUG's Pro-Coast project.

Julian Mühle has served as CEO of the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) since 2024 after ten years of engagement within the organization, as a member of its Secretariat and in various roles and engagement focusing on the Conservation WG, Biodiversity WG, Latin America WG and Education WG. A practising falconer, he is passionately committed to sustainable use and believes that people who live with and use nature have an essential role in its conservation. His background in political science complements practical experience in international advocacy. He holds a BSc with Honours in Politics and International Relations from the University of Exeter and is currently finalising an MA in European Studies: Transnational and Global Perspectives at KU Leuven. He has represented IAF at IUCN, the Bern Convention, the CMS Raptors MoU, IPBES, UNESCO and EU institutions. For the past three years, he has contributed to the Horizon Europe project PRO-COAST, connecting biodiversity conservation with community participation and environmental governance. A German and Chilean national, he speaks English, German and Spanish fluently and has sustainable use and political experience across different cultures, regions and political systems.

Professor Robert Kenward grew up on a farm in southern England, took degrees at Oxford university and worked forty years in wildlife research. He taught and ran projects in four continents, mainly on raptors, game birds and squirrels. After founding a company for producing radio-tracking equipment and another for software, he left the government's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology as director of technology transfer and then supervised contracts for European Commission and United Nations. He served for 12 and 31 years on councils of international NGOs followed by 20 on ESU(S)G committee. After being a vice-chair in IUCN-SSC for Sustainable Use and Livelihoods, he led CEM's thematic group on Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems for 7 years. His scientific publications include books on radio-tagging, the northern goshawk and the common buzzard. A passion for helping people to improve rural areas has resulted in development of web-networking for nature conservation, to coordinating Pro-Coast with Dr Julie Ewald and to ESUG's Community Sustainability Platform.

Professor Dr. Elena Bužan is a molecular ecologist who graduated from the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, in collaboration with the University of Hull, UK. She has more than 15 years of experience in genetic and genomic data analysis. Her work involves the application of molecular genetic and genomic techniques to a variety of conservation and evolutionary problems, both basic and applied. She has a strong interdisciplinary background and broad research interests, including previous experience in linking disease occurrence to wildlife distribution and applying landscape genetic approaches—such as gene evolution and immunology. She applies evolutionary genetics to biogeography and conservation biology, focusing on the effects of habitat fragmentation and degradation on the genetic population structure of small mammals, ungulates, and selected model invertebrate species. She is particularly interested in fundamental questions about evolution, including the significance of species concepts and hybridization studies. She has served as the project leader for numerous international, national, and bilateral projects and has coordinated the study programmes Conservation Biology and Nature Conservation. She led international H2020 projects in bioscience research and coordinated the H2020 project STEP CHANGE (Science Transformation in Europe through Citizens' involvement in Health, Conservation, and Energy Research), which linked several pilot studies in Citizen Science Research across Europe and Uganda, including those focused on the role of citizens in wildlife conservation. She coordinated the national consortium ERGA.SI in Slovenia, connecting eight institutions working in the fields of molecular ecology and conservation, and was later elected as a Partnership Officer in the European Reference Genome Atlas Consortium. In her second mandate, she is actively involved in the Expert Group for Open Science at the European University Association. She is also the university representative for LifeWatch and Slovenian National Supercomputing Network (SLING) as well as being on the Scientific Board of the Slovenian Hunting Association.