



## Convention on Biological Diversity



### CIC Markhor Award

#### Finland Leading the Way in Wetland Conservation

**21 November 2018** - The two-year wait is over! Amidst the beating sun of Sharm-el-Sheikh comes a project from the cold, dark winter of Northern Europe. At the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wildlife Forum, the recipient of the sixth CIC Markhor Award was announced. The winner: the 'Return of Rural Wetlands LIFE+ Project'! This successful initiative has been running since 2010 in Finland.

The project, led by the Finnish Wildlife Agency focuses on restoring rural wetlands through cooperation between landowners, hunters, local associations and regional authorities working with environmental issues.

The outcomes include an increase in the quality, variety and number of wetlands in rural areas under the project. Importantly, the project also led to the creation of a new working framework for the conservation, restoration and re-creation of wetlands. A framework that is heavily reliant on local community cooperation.

The motivation, skills and co-operation of local people, especially hunters, and regional authorities for the wetland conservation, restoration and re-creation at local and regional level increased substantially during the project.

CBD Executive Secretary, Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer who is also a member of the CIC Markhor Award Jury congratulated all those involved in the project. In her speech, Dr. Paşca Palmer recognized the crucial role of communities in nature conservation: *"This project shows how local communities from different backgrounds can successfully work together towards a common goal. It is good to see that the sustainable use of biological diversity, one of the three objectives set out in the CBD's first article, is seen as a crucial tool for achieving this common goal."*

This is the first CIC Markhor Award winner from the European continent. It shows that, despite an increasingly urban society in Europe there is still a way for local communities, hunters and regular landowners to shape the natural environment and to restore and manage wetland habitats on a voluntary basis, even in areas dominated by agriculture and forestry.

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) was founded 80 years ago and has members in 84 countries today. It is an intergovernmental organisation, working in the public interest, worldwide active as advisory body. The CIC Markhor Award recognizes and celebrates outstanding conservation performance by personalities, private, and government institutions, enterprises, or conservation projects that link the conservation of biodiversity and human livelihoods through the application of the principles of sustainable use, in particular hunting, as part of wildlife and ecosystem management. The name “Markhor” comes from Pakistan's threatened mountain goat species, which population numbers have been multiplied 25 times in recent years through sustainable hunting tourism. Hunting income benefits the local population and arouses its interest in conserving wildlife.

#### **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 171 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 114 Parties. For more information visit: [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int). For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 561 2720 or at [david.ainsworth@cbd.int](mailto:david.ainsworth@cbd.int); or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at [johan.hedlund@cbd.int](mailto:johan.hedlund@cbd.int)

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