

## Hunting in Sicily: hearing on the 2026/2027 hunting calendar takes place today

*The Associations: ‘Wildlife management plan expired in 2018 and data is patchy. Without a plan and without effective monitoring, hunting cannot take place’*

**Rome, 20 October 2026** – The hearing on the merits of the appeal against the Sicilian Region’s 2026/2027 hunting calendar, brought by the National Pro Natura Federation APS and LEAL Anti-Vivisection League ETS, with the support of CABS, Green Impact ETS and Attivisti Gruppo Randagio (AGR), took place today before the **Regional Administrative Court of Palermo. The judgement is expected in the coming weeks.**

The calendar had been suspended by the Palermo Regional Administrative Court (Order No. 481 of 29 July 2026). The Council of Administrative Justice for the Region of Sicily (CGARS), by Order No. 296/2026 of 4 September, subsequently reinstated it, but upheld the **ban on hunting wild turtle doves during the pre-season**, ruling that it was necessary to *‘give priority to environmental protection over economic and sporting interests’*.

The CGARS also noted that the **regional wildlife and hunting plan remains unchanged since the 2013–2018 period** and that the data collected by the Region consists of *‘fragmentary information’*. This shortcoming *‘appears potentially capable of undermining the rationale’* behind the calendar, particularly where the Region deviates from ISPRA’s opinion.

### The issue of monitoring

For the **wild turtle dove** alone, the Region has set up an online register, in which hunters themselves declare the number of birds shot by midnight on the day of the hunt. Even for the turtle dove, therefore, monitoring is based on self-declarations, not on independent monitoring. For all other species, the Region relies on paper record cards, the data from which is only received at the end of the season.

### The Skylark and the Case for Legal Action

During the court hearing, specific attention was also given to the additional ground relating to the huntability of **the skylark**, a species for which ISPRA had already requested a suspension of hunting. In response to the clarifications sought by the Court, it was highlighted that the skylark is not in a favourable conservation status and that there are still no effective systems in place for monitoring catches.

**The continued existence of a legitimate interest in bringing the appeal, including for the future, was also discussed:** the Court took note of this, thereby confirming the usefulness and relevance of a ruling on the merits of this point.

*“The CGARS reaffirms a consistent stance: the ‘supreme precautionary principle in environmental matters’ and the ‘precedence of wildlife and environmental interests’ over hunting practices, as already established in 2022. We hope that the judgement will confirm the findings of the CGARS in Order No. 296/2026. Hunting quotas cannot be authorised without an up-to-date plan and without knowing how many animals are being culled. We call on the Region to review the wildlife and hunting plan, excluding, as a matter of principle, from the cull all species that are threatened at any level or in an unfavourable conservation status, and to introduce effective monitoring of culls, subject to independent scrutiny.”*

— National Pro Natura Federation, LEAL, CABS, Green Impact ETS and AGR

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