

Shooting Wildlife III

WHO MAKES YOUR BINOCULARS, SPOTTING SCOPES AND OPTICS?



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Executive summary

This report explores the debates surrounding the ethics and impacts of sport hunting and updates the 2016 and 2018 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ reports – examining how 30 optics companies approach this sensitive subject.

It also expands on the scope of the first two Shooting Wildlife reports to explore optics companies’ links with the military (due to this industry’s large impact on the environment and therefore wildlife), and their approaches to managing their own environment and climate impacts in line with international agreements such as the Paris Agreement on climate change.

As part of the research, we contacted all 30 optics companies featured in the 2018 report, asking for thoughts on the issues raised and requesting information about current environment and climate policies and changes to company policy and practice since 2018. 29 companies are reviewed in this report as the Alpen brand is now distributed by Bresser USA and is therefore included in Bresser’s profile in this report.



Hawke vista front riflescope frontier ffp, winter 2018

Hunting links

- 90% of companies have some connection to hunting compared to 83% in the 2018 report. 69% target specific forms of sport hunting: trophy, driven or 'big-game' hunts (compared to 66% in 2018). And 48% have additional ties through pro-staff hunters, sponsorship of hunting organisations, TV shows or events, or through their own 'academies' for teaching skills for hunting (45% in 2018). Nonetheless, the number of companies explicitly referencing 'big-game' or trophy hunting in their product marketing text has fallen by 2% (from 40% to 38%) since the last report.
- Kenko Tokina, which was recommended as one of the few companies without links to hunting in 2018, was found to also own the Sightron brand, which sold riflescopes and marketed its optic products to hunters. Optical Hardware, which owns the Visionary brand that was also recommended for not having links to hunting in 2018, mentioned hunting in its technical guide, which was now on the frontpage of its website. Its owner was also found to have an outlet website that marketed a pair of binoculars for hunting. Two more companies were found to have sponsorship links with professional hunters. This means that more links were found between the optics industry and sports hunting than in 2018.
- Two companies (Carson and Fujifilm) had removed their riflescopes from their website, and Nikon had announced it was ending its production of riflescopes. Although this is an encouraging development, riflescopes for all three companies were still for sale at the time of writing. Olympus said it was withdrawing from the optics business altogether in 2021.

It is clear that companies are feeling the pressure of increased public scrutiny since the publication of the last 'Shooting Wildlife?' report. 75% of companies that still have strong links to hunting have removed some photos, website sections or text references to hunting from their marketing work. However, for most companies, these changes seemed to be mostly that: a change in marketing strategy and not a genuine move towards 'wildlife-friendly' optics. None of them had stopped marketing to hunters completely.

Changes in companies' marketing strategies and what appears to be the quiet withdrawal of three companies from the riflescopes business suggest that the industry feels there is less public support for its involvement in sports hunting. The question is whether these changes are a genuine move towards 'wildlife-friendly' optics brands, or if they are mostly a cosmetic exercise.



Vortex 2020 Catalogue 2020

Military links

69% of companies were found to supply optics or other imaging equipment to the military directly and/or market their optic products for military or tactical use.

Links were also found with the gun rights movement in the US. 28% of companies were found to have industry links with the National Rifle Association, while 10% were deeply embedded in the world of “hunting, shooting, public lands, the second amendment and good food”.¹ One company was also found to use imagery related to militia and white supremacy in its marketing.

Environment

Companies’ approaches to managing their own environmental and climate impacts often fell short of those required to meet the science-based targets agreed in Paris in 2015. 83% of companies were considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting, either because they had no sustainability reporting at all (52%) or because they reported in very general terms, without publishing environmental reduction targets and concrete plans to lower greenhouse gas emissions (31%).

Of the five companies with reasonable environment reporting, four were considered to have good carbon management and reporting and reasonable environmental reporting. They had climate change mitigation strategies that were in line with international agreements such as the Paris Agreement. All four were Japanese electronics companies, and so it’s likely that they did well because of Japan’s mandatory greenhouse gas accounting and reporting system and its support for developing science-based decarbonisation targets.



How environmental are your binoculars?

Who to buy from

Buying second hand is always recommended from an environmental point of view. If buying new, different ethical issues need to be weighed up.

Recommended companies to buy from are Canon, Olympus and Opticron as they could not be directly linked with the sport-hunting industry. However, of these companies, only Canon has good environment and climate reporting and all of them had links to the military.

The other six companies with weaker links to sport hunting may also be a good choice: Celestron, Pentax, Kowa, Viking, Visionary, and Barr & Stroud. Of these companies, Pentax is the only company with reasonable environment and climate reporting. Viking, Visionary, and Barr & Stroud are the only companies without military links.

¹ soundcloud.com/vortexnationpodcast/ep-151-identical-draw, viewed on 6 November 2020

Introduction

‘Sport optics’, such as binoculars, spotting scopes and monoculars, are used by many wildlife watchers. They are also essential pieces of equipment for conservationists, hunters and military personnel, as are rifle sights and optical rangefinders. It is therefore no surprise that 90% of the optics companies covered in this report continue to have links to hunting and 69% have links to the military and the arms industry.

Perhaps of surprise is the fact that most optics companies don’t appear to be proactively addressing their own environmental and climate impacts despite appealing to wildlife watchers and conservationists on both sides of the hunting debate.

As part of this research, we contacted all 30 optics companies featured in the 2018 report requesting information about current environment and climate policies and changes to company policy and practice since 2018. As Alpen Optics closed, 29 companies are reviewed in this report.

Ethical tensions

There is an obvious crossover amongst the optics industry’s key stakeholders. Optics technologies were advanced initially for military use, and many national parks and reserves within the former British colonies and the USA can be traced back to hunters who wanted to protect ‘game’ species and their habitat from unregulated killing and destruction. Controlled, ‘ecologically sound’ hunting (one form of wildlife management), continues to be used by conservationists globally, who also enjoy wildlife watching.

However, contradictions and ethical tensions are raised by optics companies endorsing wildlife watching whilst endorsing hunting. These arise from the complexity that surrounds hunting ethics and the environmental and sociopolitical impacts certain forms of hunting may have.

Some optics companies use language and imagery that promote trophy and ‘big game’ hunting – a form of selective hunting which tends to favour the killing of animals with large or distinct sexually selected features such as horns, manes, tusks and antlers.

This situation raises concerns for some conservationists who may advocate controlled hunting as a form of wildlife management, but oppose trophy hunting (especially where it is not well regulated and managed under the guidance of those with knowledge of the ‘game’ species and ecosystem in question). As discussed in Part Four of this report, selective hunting has been linked to observed changes in animal behaviour, demographics, population health, and migration.

In addition, those who uphold the ‘right to life’ concept believe that killing animals in any instance is unacceptable as the animal’s life is not ours to take. An optics company that endorses hunting through marketing materials or sponsorship therefore poses an ethical problem for animal rights supporters.



Vortex Optics Facebook image



Steiner Optics USA FB Smile in the face of adversity

Military tensions

Optics companies' military links also pose some ethical dilemmas for conservationists when considering the huge environmental and sociopolitical impacts of this industry.

As highlighted in Part Five of this report, armed conflicts have occurred in “more than two-thirds of the world's biodiversity hotspots over the past six decades” – having implications on local wildlife populations and ecosystem health. The significance of the military's environmental impacts are perhaps best highlighted by the fact that the US Department of Defence is the world's single largest consumer of oil and, as a result, one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters and contributors to climate change.

For the purpose of this report, our definitions of sport hunting and trophy hunting are:

Sport Hunting Hunting undertaken for leisure, irrespective of whether the animal is eaten. Trophy, driven, and 'big-game' hunts are all considered to be forms of sport hunting in this report.

Trophy When an animal is hunted and the whole animal or part of the animal is kept and usually displayed, irrespective of whether the rest of the animal was eaten. Animals hunted as trophies are usually the biggest in body size or the most ornate, meaning that they are often male. For this report, trophy animals are considered to be those which had large antlers, horns, ivory tusks, or which were ornate in another way (e.g. male lion with large mane, or an animal with an unusual coloured skin or coat). Traditional examples of trophy animals include elk, whitetail deer, bighorn sheep, caribou, moose, black bears, mountain lions, roebuck, buffalo, bears, male lions, elephants and rhinos.

Driven hunt 'Game' animals (such as boar, red deer and a range of birds), are encouraged to move towards stationary hunters by an organised team of 'beaters' and dogs.

'Big game' hunting The hunting of large animals for a range of purposes, including for meat, a 'trophy', sport and other animal by-products such as horns and antlers. 'Big game' animals include elephant, buffalo, lion, rhinoceros, kudu, antelope, moose, elk, whitetail deer and bear.

2.1 Companies reviewed

29 optics companies are covered in this report, all of which sell birding optics, amongst other products. They all appear in the table on page 15.

The optics companies reviewed are those that featured in the 2016 and 2018 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ reports. These were initially selected based on market reports of the industry, in addition to correlating key manufacturers with recommended and accessible brands in the UK. Top-selling binocular brands on Amazon were also viewed and recommendations from birding forums, bird optics websites and product reviews were taken into account.

(a) Company Profiles

A company profile has been created for each optics company covered in this report. Profiles briefly explore the culture and history of the companies behind the optics brands and examine the types of consumer products sold. Where hunting accessories were found on sale, the type of products sold and how they were sold and promoted was reviewed. Where information was displayed on websites, the promotional text used, animal species used in images, and company links to the sport hunting industry through sponsorship or membership were recorded. In particular, the promotion of trophy and ‘big game’ hunting was noted due to the potential impacts of selective hunting on an animal population’s health and resilience – as discussed in the literature review in Part Five of this report.

Profiles also review companies’ environment and climate policies and practices and their links to the military and the arms industry.

2.2 Developments and changes

For most companies, links to hunting remain deeply entrenched. 90% marketed at least some products for hunting and 69% continue to have strong links to hunting, by selling riflescopes and/or marketing products for sports hunting. Only two companies fell into a different category than in the last report. These were Kenko Tokina and Optical Hardware, which owns the Visionary brand. Kenko Tokina moved from ‘no links to hunting’ to ‘strong links with hunting’ because it was found to own a brand that produced riflescopes and marketed to sports hunters. Optical Hardware moved from ‘no links to hunting’ to ‘weak links to hunting’ because it mentioned hunting in its technical guide, which was now available from the frontpage of its website, and its owner was found to have an outlet website that marketed one pair of binoculars for hunting.

Nonetheless, the number of companies explicitly referencing ‘big-game’ or trophy hunting have fallen by 2% (from 43% (2016) to 40% (2018) to 38%) since the last report: this could be an important shift if built upon, considering scientific evidence that it is these kinds of hunting that pose the greatest risk to animal populations.

2.2 *Developments and changes* CONTINUED

(a) Companies with strong links to hunting (69%)

26 (90%) of the 29 companies covered in this report had some connection to hunting.

Of the 29 companies, 20 (69%) were considered to have strong links to hunting – selling riflescopes and/or marketing products for sports hunting. 27 (93%) sold numerous sport hunting accessories, such as riflescopes, range finders, or night-vision equipment. 16 marketed products specifically for trophy, ‘big-game’ and/or driven hunts in their promotional text and were therefore considered to market to sports hunters. 15 (52%) had further links to hunting, through pro-staff, ownership by hunters, or the sponsorship of events.

Seven companies – Beretta, Bresser, Eschenbach, Leupold & Stevens, Meopta, Swarovski, Vista and Vortex – explicitly referred to trophy shooting on their websites, although many more used images of traditional trophy animals. This was one fewer than in 2018:

“Know the size and the distance of your next trophy ... Trophy Scale™ lets you know if your target measures up.”²

“When you are on the move, and a quick, precise shot is necessary, the ability to have both eyes open for a quick, snap shot can mean the difference between the one that got away and the prize trophy of a lifetime.”³

“Easily the best way to make your trophy selection without putting a mile on your boots.”⁴

By glamourising trophy hunting through imagery and language, optics companies promote a form of selective sport hunting that has been linked to changes in animal demographics, population health and animal migration – as discussed in Part Four, below.

² www.leupold.com/rangefinders/hunting-rangefinders/rx-800i-compact-digital-rangefinder, viewed on October 2020

³ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/meostar-r1-1-4x22-rd/mr-721/, viewed on 1 November 2020

⁴ vortexoptics.com/vpr-65a.html, viewed on 1 November 2020

2.2 *Developments and changes* CONTINUED

(b) Companies that do not market to hunters (10%)

Disappointing developments have occurred in this category since the last ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ report, with three companies (10%) (as opposed to five in 2018) not having any connection to hunting: Canon, Olympus and Opticron. All of these did not have any connection to hunting at the time of the last report.

The most significant change is the move of Kenko Tokina from this category to ‘companies with strong links to hunting’. While the previous reports had marked the company as having no links to hunting, this time the company was found to own a subsidiary named Sightron that not only produced riflescopes but also marketed its products for sports hunting. Kenko Tokina’s main brand, Kenko, still did not market to hunters and it seemed the company was careful to avoid it being linked to Sightron in its English marketing and corporate communications, which is why this connection had not been picked up in previous reports.

Like last time, Optical Hardware, which owns the Visionary brand, only once mentioned hunting on its website, in a technical guide. However, this guide was now a website section linked from the front page. The company’s owner was also found to have an outlet website that marketed one pair of binoculars for hunting. Visionary was therefore no longer considered to fall within this category.

Opticron was included because no references to hunting were found at the time of writing. However, during the first round of research for this report, in October 2020, two references to hunting were found in product descriptions. These have since been removed. In November 2020, the company confirmed that it “does not promote its products for and does not directly support sports hunting”.⁵



Leupold #fullcurlfriday

⁵ Response to Ethical Consumer questionnaire – Optics, from Opticron, received on 19 November 2020

2.2 *Developments and changes* CONTINUED

(c) Companies with weak connections to hunting (21%)

Six companies (21%) had very weak links to hunting, perhaps mentioning in catalogues that a product could also be used by hunters but without having a dedicated 'hunting' section on their website. Five of the brands in this group are the same as in the last report: Barr & Stroud, Celestron, Pentax, Kowa and Viking. Visionary was added to this category in this report.

Viking Optical Limited (the sole supplier of optics to the RSPB) still had no direct links to hunting with its own-branded products, however, on its online optical centre it sold branded optics, such as Zeiss, which were marketed to the sport hunting industry.

Companies with no, or very weak, connections with sport hunting (31% of the total) have perhaps the most to gain, and the least to lose, by considering whether to orientate themselves more firmly towards the market for wildlife enthusiasts.

(d) Reflections on changes

Since our first report, it is clear the industry has felt consumer pressure to distance itself from sports hunting. 75% of companies who continue to have strong links to hunting, use fewer photos of trophy animals and less text referencing hunting in its marketing efforts. Some companies have stopped marketing products for specific types of hunting, while others now featured images of their products instead of animals in their product descriptions or on social media. Other companies had removed hunting-related content from its UK or English-language websites but continued to target sports hunters in its marketing for other countries or in other languages.

For some companies, changes seemed to be largely cosmetic. Sections with customer pictures of trophy kills or hunting lifestyle content were moved from their corporate website to a separate blog or social media. Or social media posts that did not mention hunting in the caption included hashtags like #huntingseason and #biggamehunting. One company had simply replaced the categories "hunting" with "shooting", and "varmint-coyote" with "varmint-predator".

We also found that 38% of companies had ended a sponsorship relationship with one or more organisations or media outlets that support hunting. Three companies had removed the list of organisations they supported and some of these organisations had removed their partnership lists, which meant it was not clear who they still supported. Only one company stopped having any kind of sponsorship relationship with organisations supporting hunting or professional hunters.

Two companies that did not have sponsorship links in the previous report, were now found to sponsor professional hunters through a social media endorsement programme. This type of collaboration with hunters with a strong social media presence also replaced the more formal arrangement of 'pro staff' for some other companies. In exchange for gear and sometimes payment, these 'hunter influencers' endorse optics products in their own social media stories. This marketing technique allows companies to reach trophy hunters without explicitly marketing products for sports hunting or showing the more gruesome imagery that customers are turning away from.

Many of these changes reflect a growing realisation in the optics industry that it needs to control 'the story of hunting' if it wants to keep its non-hunting customers on board. As Remi Warren, a professional hunter with an extensive resume in hunting media puts it: "In the past you couldn't give hunting content to people who didn't want it. Today, you can just be scrolling for kitten pictures and a mountain lion hunting video will pop up that you might not want to see ... If used properly, all these online videos could be one of the most beneficial tools we have for promoting hunting. But if used poorly, it could also be something that ruins hunting for future generations."⁶

6 Vortex, 2020 Catalogue, p. 81. [indd.adobe.com/view/ed1e20c4-597f-49c6-a455-009292b07523](https://www.adobe.com/view/ed1e20c4-597f-49c6-a455-009292b07523)

2.3 *Military links*

Historically, optics manufacturers have had close relationships with the military and the firearms industry, including several of the companies in this report that were originally part of weapons manufacturing companies e.g. Beretta and Vista Outdoor.

Beretta (Steiner and Burris), Blaser (Minox) and Vista Outdoor (Bushnell and Tasc) were the only three found to still produce firearms or ammunition.

20 out of the 29 companies (69%) supplied optics or other imaging equipment to the military directly or marketed their optic products for military or tactical use. Six of these companies (21%) did both.

Two companies (7%) had ethical policies about supplying to the military. Nikon verified that exported goods would not be used for the development of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons. And Swarovski sold only observation optics to the military and did not develop custom products.

Leupold has been criticised for its military links, specifically its supply of sniper rifle scopes to the Israel Defense Forces. The Portland Trail Blazers basketball team ended a partnership with the company in 2019, after protests against Leupold by organisations such as the Portland Democratic Socialists of America, Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land, Portland's Resistance and Jewish Voice for Peace.

Gun rights movement

We also included links to the US gun rights movement in this category. Debates about the second amendment to the US Constitution (“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed”) traditionally focus on the right to carry arms for “self-defense, prevention of tyranny, maintenance of the militia, or some combination of those three things”. But around half of American gun-owners own a gun foremost for hunting or sport shooting⁷ and it is, therefore, not surprising that some of the companies that market to hunters have links with the movement to protect gun rights in the US.

Three of the companies in this report (10%) – Beretta, Leupold and Vortex – seemed to be deeply embedded in this world, where hunting is considered a pillar of the second amendment, together with protection of shooting rights and access to public land.

Likely the most well-known organisation lobbying against gun control laws in the US is the controversial National Rifle Association (NRA). Eight companies reviewed in this report (28%) had planned to have a booth at the (cancelled) 2020 industry exhibition that would have run alongside the NRA's annual meeting. Three of these companies – Beretta, Leupold and Vista Outdoor – were ‘industry allies’ of the organisation.

Beretta released a limited-edition shotgun named Second Amendment 687 EELL Classic at the 2017 NRA annual meeting, to celebrate the second amendment and its supporters.⁸ Its Steiner brand used some imagery related to militia and white supremacy in its marketing.

Vista Outdoor has been the target of a consumer boycott over its refusal to participate in the debate on gun control and its close relationship with the NRA after a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in 2018, in which 17 people were killed and 17 more injured. Outdoor recreation retailer REI and its Canadian counterpart Mountain Equipment Co-op stopped stocking Vista Outdoor brands until the company sold its firearm brands, Savage Arms and Stevens, in 2019. Vista, however, is still an industry ally of the NRA and still produces ammunition.

The nine companies (31%) for which no links to the firearms industry, military or gun rights movement were found, are: Carson, Eschenbach, Bresser/Alpen, Nikon, Optical Hardware, Optical Vision, Vanguard, Viking and Visionking.

⁷ Blocker, Joseph. “Hunting and the Second Amendment.” *Notre Dame Law Review* 91.1 (2015): 133-176.

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5YBCMOpRf0>, viewed on 19 November 2020

2.4 Companies' approach to managing environmental impacts

None of the companies reviewed had both good environmental reporting and good carbon reporting and management.

a) Environment reporting

24 out of the 29 companies (83%) were considered to have poor environmental reporting. 15 (52%) did not have any sustainability reporting, while the other nine (31%) did not have quantified environmental reduction targets and did not demonstrate how they were planning to reduce their carbon emissions impact.

To have good environmental reporting, a company needed to demonstrate a reasonable understanding of its environmental impact, have at least two quantified environmental targets, have a report that was dated within the past two years, and have been independently verified.

Five companies (17%) were considered to have reasonable environmental reporting (as opposed to good). Four of these were Japanese companies that did not have a policy on the management of the toxins commonly present in materials they used, like plastics and textiles.

The other company – Zeiss – had environmental and decarbonisation targets but did not show a reasonable understanding of its climate change impact and how to mitigate it, and its environmental data had not been externally verified.

It is interesting to note that none of the companies discussed the environmental impact of hunting itself, even if they discussed biodiversity or conservation in their environmental reporting.

b) Carbon reporting and management

26 out of the 29 companies (90%) were considered to have poor carbon reporting and management.

To have good carbon management and reporting, a company needed to show that it had a reasonable understanding of its areas of climate impact and how to ameliorate them, and to appear to be taking steps to do so. It should annually report greenhouse gas emissions released by its production process, purchased energy and its first-tier suppliers; and have a future decarbonisation target that was in line with international agreements on climate change, like the Paris Agreement.

Four companies (14%) were considered to have good carbon management and reporting – Canon, Fujifilm, Nikon and Ricoh – all of which were Japanese producers of consumer electronics.

Japan has had a mandatory greenhouse gas accounting and reporting system for large companies since 2006 and, in 2017, Japan's Ministry of Environment started to support the private sector with funding to help companies set science-based targets together with the Science Based Targets initiative.⁹ These efforts have clearly paid off for these four corporate giants.

However, Olympus, another Japanese conglomerate, was considered to have poor carbon reporting and management, since it was involved in several industries with a high climate change impact (aerospace, oil and gas, and cars) and therefore was considered not to have taken enough steps to ameliorate its climate impact.

In total, three companies were involved in industries with high climate impacts. Leica made tools for companies involved in energy generation and transportation, and Meopta made glass components for aeroplanes.

⁹ <https://www.wri.org/blog/2019/06/japan-leading-business-climate-engagement-will-ambitious-policies-follow; sciencebasedtargets.org/>

2.5 Who to buy from

“As a consumer, I have a choice to make my own protest by avoiding brands that I know to be involved [in sports hunting]. The more people who do it, the more chance they have of making a difference.”

2018 SURVEY RESPONDENT

Buying second hand is always recommended from an environmental point of view. If buying new, different ethical issues need to be weighed up around hunting, environmental impacts and military links – as highlighted by the table on page 15.

Recommended companies to buy from are Canon, Olympus and Opticron, which are the only companies covered that could not be directly linked with the sport hunting industry.

However, of these companies, only Canon has good environment and climate reporting and all of them had links to the military.

The other six companies with weaker links to sport hunting may also be a good choice: Celestron, Pentax, Kowa, Viking, Visionary, and Barr & Stroud.

Of these companies, Pentax is the only company with reasonable environment and climate reporting. Viking, Visionary, and Barr & Stroud are the only companies without military links.

2.6 Table

Brand	Sells Riflescopes	Markets other optical products to hunters	Product descriptions market optical products for sports hunting	Other hunting links or sponsorship	Military links	Climate rating	Environment reporting	Company	Turnover
Barr & Stroud		x				poor	poor	Optical Vision Limited	£8 million
Barska	x	x	x		Market and design for military/ tactical use	poor	poor	Micro World Corp	£3.2 million
Bosma	x	x			Market for military/ tactical use	poor	poor	Guangzhou Bosma Corp	£14 million
Bresser, Alpen	x	x	x	x		poor	poor	Jinghua Optical & Electronics Co. Ltd. (China)	£61 million
Bushnell, Tasco	x	x	x	x	Market for military/ tactical use. Links to gun rights movement	poor	poor	Vista Outdoor Inc.	£1.75 billion
Canon					Supply to the military	good	reasonable	Canon Inc.	£25 billion
Carson	(x) *	x		x		poor	poor	Carson Optical Inc.	£5.7 million
Celestron		x			Market for military/ tactical use	poor	poor	Synta Technology	£45 million
Eschenbach		x	x			poor	poor	Eschenbach Holding GmbH	£115 million
Fujinon	(x) **	x			Supply to the military	good	reasonable	Fujifilm Holdings Corporation	£16 billion
Hawke	x	x	x	x	Market and design for military/ tactical use. Link to NRA.	poor	poor	Rockbay Capital Limited	NA
Kenko, Sightron	x	x	x		Market and design for military/ tactical use. Link to NRA	poor	poor	Kenko Tokina Co. Ltd.	£114 million
Kowa		x			Market and design for military/ tactical use	poor	poor	Kowa Group	£3 billion
Leica	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military. Link to NRA.	poor	poor	Socrates Private Foundation	£263 million
Leupold & Stevens	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military. Links to gun rights movement.	poor	poor	Leupold & Stevens Inc.	£78 million
Meopta	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military.	poor	poor	Meopta-optika s.r.o.	£94 million
Minox	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military.	poor	poor	Blaser Group	£1.2 million
Nikon	x	x	x	x		good	reasonable	Nikon Corporation	£4.2 billion
Olympus					Market and design for military/ tactical use.	poor	poor	Olympus Corporation	£5.7 billion
Opticron					Market and design for military/ tactical use.	poor	poor	Opticron	NA
Pentax		x			Supply to the military.	good	reasonable	Ricoh Group	£14 billion
Steiner, Burris	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military. Links to gun rights movement.	poor	poor	Beretta Holding SpA	£600 million
Swarovski	x	x	x	x	Likely supply to the military. Link to NRA.	poor	poor	Swarovski Group	£3.2 billion
Vanguard	x	x	x	x		poor	poor	Vanguard World	NA
Viking		x				poor	poor	Viking Optical Limited	NA
Visionary		x				poor	poor	Optical Hardware	£148,000 (est.)
Visionking	x	x	x			poor	poor	Visionking Optical Technology Co. Ltd.	NA
Vortex	x	x	x	x	Market for military/ tactical use. Links to gun rights movement	poor	poor	Sheltered Wings Inc.	£69 million
Zeiss	x	x	x	x	Supply to the military	poor	reasonable	Carl Zeiss Stiftung	£5.6 billion

* Carson stopped selling riflescopes on its own website but they were still available from third-party retailers.

** Fujinon stopped selling riflescopes on its own website but they were still available from third-party retailers.

2.7 Campaigning for change

As well as changing who you buy from, there are a number of other actions you can take to support a culture shift towards more wildlife-friendly optics.

As an individual you can:

- Tell friends, family and conservation networks about the 'Shooting Wildlife?' reports and the issues raised. Perhaps even host an event to discuss the topic in your local area.
- Contact your optics brand and let them know your concerns, encouraging them to increase their transparency by publishing a policy statement on trophy hunting, sponsorship of hunting activities, and how it aims to reduce its climate and wider environmental impacts.
- Ask manufacturers to adopt an ethical position on marketing their products to hunters which addresses: the glamourisation of 'big game' and trophy hunting; the use of hunting imagery that contains animals that have been impacted by hunting (evidenced in scientific literature); sponsorship of sports hunting; and animal rights.
- Contact the companies with no links to hunting that are working to reduce their environmental impacts, encouraging them to use this in marketing materials, and to develop 'wildlife-friendly' optics ranges.

As an organisation you can:

- Tell your staff, customers and networks about the 'Shooting Wildlife?' reports and the issues raised. Perhaps even host an event to discuss the topic in your organisation.
- Adopt a policy to only stock and use 'wildlife-friendly' optics – those not linked to sport hunting or the military. If you change optics brands as a result of this, contact the company and let them know your concerns.
- If you work with optics manufacturers, ask them to adopt an ethical position on marketing their products to hunters which addresses: the glamourisation of 'big game' and trophy hunting; the use of hunting imagery that contains animals that have been impacted by hunting (evidenced in scientific literature); sponsorship of sports hunting; and animal rights.
- Develop a policy on sponsorship. Are you willing to accept money from an optics company that endorses trophy hunting or has no strategy for reducing its environmental impacts and achieving net zero by 2030?

Sport hunting ethics in brief

Ethical debates surrounding hunting are complex and yet are often simplified and, as a result, polarised. Hunting animals for sport or recreation, however, is increasingly opposed in the UK and by broader Western society (particularly amongst urban dwellers), especially when it is considered ‘unnecessary’ or cruel. This was perhaps symbolically highlighted by ‘Cecilgate’ – the global (predominantly US and Europe) outrage, social media response and campaigning that followed the trophy shooting of a ‘celebrity’ Zimbabwean lion in 2015 by American dentist and tourist, Walter Palmer.¹⁰

Public opinion around hunting

In 2016, Ipsos MORI, a market research firm, was commissioned to conduct a British national poll exploring public opinion on a number of hunting activities. The British public favoured the continuing ban of fox hunting (84%); deer hunting (88%); hare hunting and coursing (91%); dog fighting (98%); and badger baiting (94%) in the Hunting Act.¹¹ Byrd et al¹² similarly conducted a survey with 825 US residents to assess public opinion on hunting in the USA. Although 87% of respondents agreed that it was acceptable to hunt for food, only 37% agreed that it was acceptable to hunt for a trophy.¹³ This is supported by the findings of Grandy et al¹⁴ that a higher percentage of people are found to oppose hunting conducted primarily for sport or recreation, or trophy hunting, compared to hunting for food.¹⁵



Animal rights rally

Academics have also observed a slow shift in published ethical discourse among Western hunters over the past 30+ years towards being more concerned about animal welfare and environmental management.^{16 17}

¹⁰ Mkono, Muchazondida. “The age of digital activism in tourism: Evaluating the legacy and limitations of the Cecil anti-trophy hunting movement.” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 26.9 (2018): 1608-1624.

¹¹ www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/attitudes-hunting-2016

¹² Byrd, E et al Perceptions of Hunting and Hunters by U.S (2017) *Animals*, www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/7/11/83/htm 2017

¹³ www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/7/11/83/htm 2017

¹⁴ Grandy, J.W., Stallman, E., & Macdonald, D. (2003). The science and sociology of hunting: Shifting practices and perceptions in the United States and Great Britain. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II: 2003* (pp. 107-130). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.

¹⁵ Grandy, J.W., Stallman, E., & Macdonald, D. (2003). The science and sociology of hunting: Shifting practices and perceptions in the United States and Great Britain. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II: 2003* (pp. 107-130). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.

¹⁶ von Essen, Erica, and Michael Allen. “Killing with kindness: When hunters want to let you know they care.” *Human Dimensions of Wildlife* (2020): 1-17.

¹⁷ Caro, Jesús, et al. “Exploring the views on hunting of Spanish hunters: effect of age and public vs. anonymous opinions.” *European Journal of Wildlife Research* 63.6 (2017): 88.

Ethical hunting?

Ethical considerations regarding hunting,¹⁸ particularly in the US, often examine notions such as ‘fair chase’; humaneness of hunting methods used; whether hunting is conducted primarily for recreation; whether the final product is used (for meat, etc.); the level to which hunting serves a wider purpose (for example, can it help prevent a people/wildlife conflict?); and whether hunters respect laws and regulations.

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation contains seven key principles that can be used to assess whether hunting is appropriate. However, as discussed by Vucetich et al,¹⁹ the principles are not often fully met, as was the case with wolf (*Canis lupus*) hunting in Michigan, USA where hunting went ahead despite it being deemed inappropriate in retrospect.

An animal welfare perspective

From an animal welfare perspective, the degree of suffering (pain and psychological trauma) caused by an action can also determine whether an action is deemed cruel and socially acceptable or not. A couple of studies have tried to examine the animal suffering caused by hunting through observations of animal behaviour, and measuring glycogen and cortisol levels and muscle damage.^{20 21}

They suggest that a high level of skill can reduce the suffering experienced when an animal is hunted. For example, red deer appear to suffer more when wounded and not killed cleanly (in a single shot), or when forced to flee in a chase compared to deer instantly killed by a quiet and skilled deer stalker. The type of weapon used, the number of shots taken to kill an animal, the time from impact until death, and how hunters deal with dependent young are all factors that can impact on perceived suffering.

Whether it is deemed socially acceptable to kill an animal also appears to be dependent on the species in question^{22 23} and whether it can feel, or is perceived to feel, pain. Society tends to have ‘favourite species’, with a slight preference shown towards mammals, and less concern being shown towards the killing of ‘pests’ and ‘vermin’ such as rats compared to a dog, for example.

The notion of basing moral boundaries around whether a species can feel pain or not is an interesting philosophical discussion and one that has been widely critiqued, including recently by Morris²⁴ in response to Hsiao’s simplified argument in ‘A Moral Defence of Trophy Hunting’.²⁵

An animal rights perspective

Animal rights groups oppose hunting in all forms as they uphold the ‘right to life’ concept. Killing animals in any instance – whether for sport or food – is considered unacceptable as the animal’s life is not ours to take.²⁶

Due to the complexity that surrounds hunting ethics, this report merely seeks to offer transparency for those using optics products, allowing consumers to make informed purchasing choices that align with their own ethics. In reviewing optics companies, this report focuses on sports hunting – reflecting UK society’s growing distaste for this form of hunting.

- 18 Grandy, J.W., Stallman, E., & Macdonald, D. (2003). The science and sociology of hunting: Shifting practices and perceptions in the United States and Great Britain. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II: 2003* (pp. 107-130). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.
- 19 Vucetich et al (2017) Evaluating the principles of wildlife conservation: a case study of wolf (*Canis lupus*) hunting in Michigan, United States, *American Society of Mammalogists*,
- 20 Bateson P. and Harris R (2000) Report of contract 7 on welfare to the Committee of Inquiry into hunting with dogs
- 21 Loveridge et al “Does sport hunting benefit conservation.” *Key topics in conservation biology* 1 (2007): 222
- 22 Baker, Sandra E., et al. “Not in My Backyard: Public Perceptions of Wildlife and ‘Pest Control’ in and around UK Homes, and Local Authority ‘Pest Control’.” *Animals* 10.2 (2020): 222.
- 23 Feber, Ruth E., Paul J. Johnson, and David W. Macdonald. “Shooting pheasants for sport: What does the death of Cecil tell us?” *People and Nature* 2.1 (2020): 82-95.
- 24 Morris, S. P. “A Moral Defense of Trophy Hunting and Why It Fails.” *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* (2020): 1-14.
- 25 Hsiao, Timothy. “A Moral Defense of Trophy Hunting.” *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 14.1 (2020): 26-34.
- 26 Culture & Animals Foundation, viewed 18/9/2015, www.cultureandanimals.org/pop1.html
- 27 Milner, Jos M., Erlend B. Nilsen, and Harry P. Andreassen. “Demographic side effects of selective hunting in ungulates and carnivores.” *Conservation Biology* 21.1 (2007): 36-47.

What are the impacts of sports hunting? An updated review.



As discussed in the 2016 and 2018 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ reports, the impacts of hunting appear to vary depending on the sociopolitical and ecological context in which hunting occurs. Motivations for hunting, the financial transactions involved, the species and animals targeted, the social and ecological awareness of the hunter, and the type of weapon used can all affect the size of impact, if any. In addition, many academic studies utilise theoretical models to predict the impacts of hunting, the predicted impacts of which do not always match field observations.²⁷

We summarise the key impacts that have been observed – updating the literature review completed as part of the previous two reports.

Animal Population Impacts

Population size

There are a number of historic and modern-day examples of hunting leading to population decline and, in some cases, extinction due to ecologically insensitive hunting or over killing.^{28 29 30} This has been observed for both target and non-target species. For example, unsustainable hunting has been identified as an ‘immediate threat’ to the survival of South East Asia’s endangered vertebrates, and is said to be facilitated through easier access to forests, improvements in hunting technologies, and increased demand for wild meats in affluent urban areas.³¹ Lopez et al reviewed 176 studies and found that bird and mammal populations across the tropics had declined by 58% and 83% respectively as a result of hunting,³² with hunting pressures being greater where forest areas were easily accessible to urban populations. Ripple et al similarly found that at least 301 terrestrial mammal species were threatened with extinction due to bushmeat hunting by humans.³³

However, where hunting has been well regulated, or a species has proved resilient to hunting, population numbers have remained static and, in a few instances, have increased, so long as the female to male ratio does not surpass an ‘optimum’.^{34 35} After the ‘optimum threshold’ is surpassed, pregnancy and birth rates may decrease, potentially leading to population decline.

- 28 Leader-Williams, Nigel. 2009 “Conservation and Hunting: Friends or Foes?” *Recreational Hunting, Conservation and Rural Livelihoods*: 9.
- 29 Chang, C. H., Williams, S. J., Zhang, M., Levin, S. A., Wilcove, D. S., & Quan, R. C. (2019). Perceived entertainment and recreational value motivate illegal hunting in Southwest China. *Biological Conservation*, 234, 100-106.
- 30 Dobbins, M., Sollmann, R., Menke, S., Almeyda Zambrano, A., & Broadbent, E. (2020). An integrated approach to measure hunting intensity and assess its impacts on mammal populations. *Journal of Applied Ecology*.
- 31 Harrison, R.D., Sreekar, R., Brodie, J.F., Brook, S., Luskin, M., O’Kelly, H., Rao, M., Scheffers, B., Velho, N., (2016). “Impacts of hunting on tropical forests in Southeast Asia.” *Conservation biology* www.researchgate.net/profile/Rhett_Harrison/publication/294609598_Impacts_of_hunting_in_forests/links/58c6b11eaca272e36dde963e/Impacts-of-hunting-in-forests.pdf
- 32 Lopez et al (2017) The impact of hunting on tropical mammal and bird populations. *Science* 356:180–183 pdfs.semanticscholar.org/47a3/f1d848466466f1761bd70a29fd3871091b5e.pdf
- 33 Ripple, William J; Abernethy, Katharine; Betts, Matthew G; Chapron, Guillaume; Dirzo, Rodolfo; Galetti, Mauro; Levi, Taal; Lindsey, Peter A ; Macdonald, David W; Machovina, Brian ; Newsome, Thomas M ; Peres, Carlos A ; Wallach, Arian D ; Wolf, Christopher ; Young, Hillary. (2016) Bushmeat hunting and extinction risk to the world’s animals, *Royal Society Open Science*, 3(10)
- 34 Milner, Jos M., Erlend B. Nilsen, and Harry P. Andreassen. “Demographic side effects of selective hunting in ungulates and carnivores.” *Conservation Biology* 21.1 (2007): 36-47.
- 35 Solberg, E.J., Loison, A., Ringsby, T.H., Sæther, B-E. & Heim, M. (2002): Biased adult sex ratio can affect fecundity in primiparous moose *Alces alces*. *Wildlife Biology*. 8: 117-128

Animal Population Impacts CONTINUED

Quotas are commonly used to ensure optimum 'harvests' are sought. However, it has been suggested that quotas are sometimes based on guesswork due to the poor monitoring of populations.³⁶ This can result in inappropriate quotas and 'harvest optimums' being surpassed. Muposhi et al have also suggested that fixed quotas can encourage 'harvesting of young or prime breeding individuals as an attempt by concessionaires to utilize the entire fixed portion of the quota regardless of its sustainability'.³⁷

Ralf Buckley also argues that sport hunting, particularly when it concerns rare species, can also send mixed sociopolitical messages globally, resulting in local actions potentially having global conservation impacts.³⁸ By allowing some hunting of a rare animal, you arguably whet the appetite for more hunting of rare animals,³⁹ potentially contributing to their extinction. Buckley argues that the hunting of rare or endangered species for leisure may lead to:

- **Reduced donations to conservation work if donors believe their money is subsidising hunters.**
- **Potential profits realised from releasing expensive hunting permits may lead to an increase in permits rather than reduction, if managed by corrupt personnel.**
- **The commercial tourism industry may reduce its financial support towards conservation work, particularly in areas that allow sport hunting.**



'Trophy' animals are usually the biggest in body size or the most ornate

³⁶ Lindsey, P. A., P. A. Roulet, and S. S. Romanach. Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa. *Biological conservation* 134.4 (2007): 455-469.

³⁷ Muposhi, Victor K.; Gandiwa, Edson; Bartels, Paul; Makuza, Stanley M.; Madiri, Tinaapi H. (2016). *Trophy Hunting and Sustainability: Temporal Dynamics in Trophy Quality and Harvesting Patterns of Wild Herbivores in a Tropical Semi-Arid Savanna Ecosystem.*

³⁸ Buckley, Ralf. "Mixed signals from hunting rare wildlife." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 12.6 (2014): 321-322.

³⁹ Dellinger, M., (2016) "Trophy Hunting Contracts: Unenforceable for Reasons of Public Policy."

Population demographics

When killing is restricted to a few animals via a quota, or a population's size shows little change, the demographics of a population may still be altered through the process of selective hunting: hunting targeted at animals with desirable features (or sometimes undesirable features).

For example, trophy hunters, attracted by large or distinct sexually selected features such as manes, tusks or antlers, may target mature or old males. This can result in hunted populations having female-biased sex ratios, and/or a younger male population,^{40 41 42 43 44} which can in turn affect population dynamics and mating behaviour, and may make certain sub-populations more vulnerable to competing groups. For example, larger lion prides, with a higher number of mature males, are less prone to losing kills to hyenas. If mature males are killed for trophies, prides potentially become more vulnerable to hyena 'robbings', creating an energy drain by increasing the need to hunt.^{45 46}

Smaller prides with fewer mature males are also vulnerable to incoming sexually mature males. Cubs sired by rival (hunted) males may be killed by immigrant lions to reduce the inter-birth period of new mates.^{47 48} This behaviour, known as sexually selected infanticide, has also been suggested as a cause of reduced cub survival rates of lions and brown bears (*Ursus arctos*).^{49 50} Awareness of this potential issue has resulted in studies proposing guidance to wildlife managers on the 'specimen types' that should be allowed for killing.⁵¹

Milner et al also highlight a number of studies that suggest that young adults can be socially disruptive, prolong the mating season, and show immature courtship behaviour within certain species, including elk and bighorn sheep. This can affect the willingness of females to mate, and the weight and timing of newborns – potentially affecting winter survival rates and vulnerability to predators. Younger animals and populations are potentially more vulnerable during cold winter periods, resulting in younger hunted populations experiencing greater population variability.⁵² Time of mating can also affect the sex of newborns, with later matings potentially increasing the likelihood of female calves in whitetail deer, reindeer and Norwegian moose.⁵³

- 40 Dellinger, M., (2016) "Trophy Hunting Contracts: Unenforceable for Reasons of Public Policy." COLUMBIA JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW, Vol 41 www.animallaw.info/sites/default/files/Trophy%20Hunting%20Contracts%20Unenforceable%20for%20Reasons%20of%20Public%20Policy.pdf
- 41 Milner, Jos M., Erlend B. Nilsen, and Harry P. Andreassen. "Demographic side effects of selective hunting in ungulates and carnivores." *Conservation Biology* 21.1 (2007): 36-47.
- 42 Noyes, J. H., Johnson, B. K., Bryant, L. D., Findholt, S. L., & Thomas, J. W. (1996). Effects of bull age on conception dates and pregnancy rates of cow elk. *The Journal of wildlife management*, 508-517.
- 43 Setsaas, T., Hunninck, L., Jackson, C. R., May, R., & Røskaft, E. (2018). The impacts of human disturbances on the behaviour and population structure of impala (*Aepyceros melampus*) in the Serengeti ecosystem, Tanzania. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 16, e00467.
- 44 Khan, M. Z., Begum, F., Riaz, M., Khan, B., Karim, R., Ali, K., & Aman, S. (2019). Predicting the potential impacts of trophy hunting on population structure of Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*) in northern Pakistan. *Polish Journal of Ecology*, 67(3), 264-270.
- 45 Cooper, S. M. "Optimal hunting group size: the need for lions to defend their kills against loss to spotted hyaenas." *African Journal of Ecology* 29.2 (1991): 130-136.
- 46 Loveridge, Andrew J., Jonathan C. Reynolds, and E. J. Milner-Gulland. "Does sport hunting benefit conservation." *Key topics in conservation biology* 1 (2007): 222.
- 47 Pusey, A. E., & Packer, C. (1994). Infanticide in lions: consequences and counterstrategies. *Infanticide and parental care*, 277-299.
- 48 Whitman et al. (2004). Sustainable trophy hunting of African lions. *Nature*, 428(697p.175-178 faculty.washington.edu/wirsinga/Whitman2004.pdf)
- 49 Swenson, J.E., F. Sandegren, A.S. Oderberg, A. Bjarvall, R. Franzen and P. Wabakken Infanticide caused by hunting of male bears, *Nature* 386: 450-451
- 50 Leclerc, M.; Frank, S.C.; Zedrosser, A.; Swenson, J.E.; Pelletier, F. (2017) Hunting promotes spatial reorganization and sexually selected infanticide, *Science Reports*, 7
- 51 Whitman, K., Starfield, A.M., Quadling, H.S. and Packer, C., (2004). Sustainable trophy hunting of African lions. *Nature*, 428(6979), pp.175-178 faculty.washington.edu/wirsinga/Whitman2004.pdf
- 52 Gordon, I. J., Hester, A. J., and Festa-Bianchet, M. "Review: the management of wild large herbivores to meet economic, conservation and environmental objectives." *Journal of Applied Ecology* 41.6 (2004): 1021-1031.
- 53 Milner, Jos M., Erlend B. Nilsen, and Harry P. Andreassen. "Demographic side effects of selective hunting in ungulates and carnivores." *Conservation Biology* 21.1 (2007): 36-47.



Scottish highland

Removing older males can also impact a group's knowledge and ability to interact with other groups. For example, trophy hunters may be attracted to elephants with longer tusks – a trait that is associated with age. Older males in elephant groups are thought to have greater discriminatory ability than younger males, which can affect the social knowledge of a whole group if removed.⁵⁴ Slotow et al⁵⁵ also observed more aggressive behaviour amongst young bull elephants when mature bulls were not present – with 40 white rhinoceros being attacked and killed over a five-year period. This behaviour ceased once mature males were introduced into the population.

Selective hunting can also occur when hunters are encouraged to avoid 'trophies' or target different 'problem' species, in an attempt to increase the health of a population or ecosystem. Examples of this include antlerless moose hunts (hunting of females for example) in Alaska that are used in an attempt to control a growing population.

As a baseline (in terms of reducing potential impacts), the closer hunting mimics 'natural' mortality rates, the less of an impact it should arguably have.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ McComb, K., Moss, C., Durant, S. M., Baker, L., & Sayialel, S. (2001). Matriarchs as repositories of social knowledge in African elephants. *Science*, 292(5516), 491-494.

⁵⁵ Slotow, R., van Dyk, G., Poole, J., Page, B., & Klocke, A. (2000). Older bull elephants control young males. *Nature*, 408(6811), 425-426.

⁵⁶ Brinkman, Todd J. "Hunter acceptance of antlerless moose harvest in Alaska: importance of agency trust, proximity of hunter residence to hunting area, and hunting experience." *Human Dimensions of Wildlife* 23.2 (2018): 129-145.

Genetic impacts

By selecting healthy and strong specimens, hunters may leave weaker animals, or animals with 'less desirable' traits. This arguably results in a process that opposes the natural evolution of a species, one where natural predators often kill the weak, old and young.⁵⁷

The impact of this selection bias on the long-term evolution of a population is unclear due to the difficulty of conducting such long-term studies. In addition, few studies have focused on the genetic impacts of sport hunting.

However, if 'desirable features' are inheritable, hunting presumably has an impact on genetics and inherited traits. For example, changes in the phenotypes of a hunted population of big-horn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), were documented by Coltman et al, with the population's average horn size and body weight decreasing over time as hunters selected large male specimens.⁵⁸

As these inheritable features are correlated with fitness, it could be argued that this selection bias resulted in the population's average fitness decreasing over time. The literature review by Harris et al also suggests that sport hunting could both increase and decrease gene flow (depending on the species and habitat in question), which could potentially threaten locally adapted gene complexes and reduce genetic variability respectively.⁵⁹

Migration and behaviour

Selective hunting can affect migration patterns of certain species, at the potential detriment to long-term population growth. For example, female grizzly bears in hunted populations have avoided food-rich areas in order to protect their cubs from potentially infanticidal immigrant males.⁶⁰ North American grizzly bears, cougars (*Puma concolor*) and elk (*Cervus elaphus canadensis*) have similarly avoided food-rich habitats in order to avoid hunting,⁶¹ as have Apennine brown bear (*Ursus arctos marsicanus*), due to disturbance from dogs used in driven boar hunting.⁶² Such disturbance can be particularly significant for bear populations if it occurs during hyperphagia, the phase in a bear's yearly cycle during which it builds up fat reserves required for hibernation, and in pregnant female bears, for reproduction and lactation.⁶³

Ordiz et al also observed that Brown Bears (*Ursus arctos*) in Scandinavia alter their sleeping patterns in response to hunting.⁶⁴ Muposhi et al reference a number of studies that observed deer, sable antelope, impala and wildebeest changing habitat, sleeping patterns and avoiding certain areas as a result of hunting activity.⁶⁵

Studies have also observed birds changing migration routes and avoiding food-rich 'stop over points' in response to disturbances created by hunting. In some instances, this has led to longer flying distances for migratory birds, has caused birds to leave nests, parents to lose chicks, has increased vulnerability to predation, has increased human-bird conflicts, and has reduced the weight of migratory birds that are prevented from resting and landing in 'stop over points'.⁶⁶

57 Dellinger, M., (2016) "Trophy Hunting Contracts: Unenforceable for Reasons of Public Policy."

58 Coltman, D. W., O'Donoghue, P., Jorgenson, J. T., & Hogg, J. T. (2003). Undesirable evolutionary consequences of trophy hunting. *Nature*, 426(6967), 655.

59 Harris, R. B., Wall, W. A., & Allendorf, F. W. (2002). Genetic consequences of hunting: what do we know and what should we do?. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, 634-643.

60 Wielgusa & Bunnell (2000). Possible negative effects of adult male mortality on female grizzly bear reproduction. *Biological Conservation*

61 Loveridge, Andrew J., Jonathan C. Reynolds, and E. J. Milner-Gulland. "Does sport hunting benefit conservation." *Key topics in conservation biology* 1 (2007): 222.

62 Maiorano, L., Boitani, L., Monaco, A., Tosoni, E., Ciucc, P., (2015), Modeling the distribution of Apennine brown bears during hyperphagia to reduce the impact of wild boar hunting. *European Journal of Wildlife Research*, 61:2, 241-253

63 Maiorano et al 2015

64 Ordiz, A., Støen, O. G., Sæbø, S., Kindberg, J., Delibes, M., & Swenson, J. E. (2012). Do bears know they are being hunted?. *Biological Conservation*, 152, 21-28.

65 Muposhi, V.K., Gandiwa, G., Makuza, S.M., Bartels, P., (2017) "Ecological, physiological, genetic trade-offs and socio-economic implications of trophy hunting as a conservation tool: a narrative review." *JAPS, Journal of Animal and Plant Sciences* 27, no. 1: 1-14. www.researchgate.net/profile/Gandiwa_Edson/publication/314437269_Ecological_physiological_genetic_trade-offs_and_socio-economic_implications_of_trophy_hunting_as_a_conservation_tool_A_narrative_review/links/58c2351b45851538eb7ceabc/Ecological-physiological-genetic-trade-offs-and-socio-economic-implications-of-trophy-hunting-as-a-conservation-tool-A-narrative-review.pdf

66 Kirby, Jeff S., Alison J. Stattersfield, Stuart HM Butchart, Michael I. Evans, Richard FA Grimmett, Victoria R. Jones, John O'Sullivan, Graham M. Tucker, and Ian Newton. "Key conservation issues for migratory land-and waterbird species on the world's major flyways." *Bird Conservation International* 18, no. 1 (2008): S49.

Environmental Impacts of Hunting

Economic incentives

Conservation work and hunting are argued by some to be closely linked, with hunting placing an economic value on wildlife and leading to greater habitat protection globally. For example, in the UK, private landowners have a role in conserving fragmented habitat and biodiversity, with sport hunting offering an economic incentive to improve conservation management on farmland and to plant new, and preserve existing, woodlands and hedgerows to provide habitat for 'game' species.^{67 68}

In the USA, hunting directly contributes to conservation work through a tax on sport hunting equipment under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (1973). This money pays for the buying of habitat, research, conservation training and education, and the provision of access to hunting and recreation facilities. Similarly, trophy hunting generates approximately \$201 million a year in sub-Saharan Africa, creating incentives for habitat protection that might otherwise be used for agriculture or livestock grazing (trophy operators manage approximately 1.4 million km² in sub-Saharan Africa).⁶⁹

Disputed economic claims

Sport hunting is also argued to provide a more reliable income stream to remote areas and countries experiencing political instability compared to photographic tourism, for example. A report by the League Against Cruel Sports disputes this claim however, stating that photographic tourism can provide all-year-round trade, and benefits more people through varied job opportunities compared to sport hunting.⁷⁰ Economists at Large have also questioned the value of the sport hunting industry to local communities⁷¹ when studies have found that few benefits trickle down to local communities and in some cases only 3% of a hunting company's revenue have been found to reach communities living in hunting areas.⁷² The study by Ochlenget al. of two areas in Uganda following the re-introduction of sport hunting in 2001 similarly questioned assumptions around the idea that receiving benefits from sport hunting will result in greater appreciation for wildlife and conservation work⁷³ – especially where the social context forces other issues to be of a higher priority.

⁶⁷ Oldfield, T. E., Smith, R. J., Harrop, S. R., & Leader-Williams, N. (2003). Field sports and conservation in the United Kingdom. *Nature*, 423(6939), 531-533.

⁶⁸ Feber, Ruth E., Paul J. Johnson, and David W. Macdonald. "Shooting pheasants for sport: What does the death of Cecil tell us?" *People and Nature* 2.1 (2020): 82-95.

⁶⁹ Lindsey, P. A., Frank, L. G., Alexander, R., Mathieson, A., & Romanach, S. S. (2007). Trophy hunting and conservation in Africa: problems and one potential solution. *Conservation biology*, 21(3), 880-883.

⁷⁰ A League Against Cruel Sports (ALACS) submission to Environment Minister, Elliot Morley MP, (2004), *The Myth of Trophy Hunting as Conservation*, available online: www.league.org.uk/~media/Files/LACS/Reference-material/League-Against-Cruel-Sports-2004-The-Myth-of-Trophy-Hunting-as-Conservation.pdf

⁷¹ ordbø, Ingeborg, Bakyt Turdumambetov, and Bilgehan Gulcan. "Local opinions on trophy hunting in Kyrgyzstan." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 26.1 (2018): 68-84.

⁷² Economists at Large, 2013. *The \$200 million question: How much does trophy hunting really contribute to African communities? A report for the African Lion Coalition*, prepared by Economists at Large, Melbourne, Australia www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/Ecolarge-2013-200m-question.pdf

⁷³ Ochieng, Amos, Ingrid J. Visseren-Hamakers, and René Van Der Duim. "Sport Hunting to Save Nature? The Case of Uganda." *Conservation & Society* 18.4 (2020): 340-354.

Nature connections

Academics have suggested that hunting has a role to play in alleviating human-wildlife conflicts; potentially improving public opinion on controversial species conservation (e.g. carnivores⁷⁴); offering an economic incentive to conserve wildlife; and preventing the conversion of habitat to less biodiverse landscapes such as farmland.^{75 76} It is also suggested that sport hunting, as an outdoor recreational activity, connects individuals with the broader environment – raising environmental awareness and increasing the likelihood of participation in relational activities such as conservation work⁷⁷ (in order to become a good hunter, you need to understand the behaviour, habitat and food preferred by the animals being hunted).

However, studies have also questioned this rationale and highlighted the need to explore the role of alternative activities in building nature connection. There is evidence to suggest that sport hunters are not always willing to change their hunting preferences for broader conservation purposes,⁷⁸ and controlled hunting as a wildlife management tool does not necessarily lead to reduced poaching or improved opinions on some controversial species such as wolves and other carnivores.^{79 80} It is also difficult to identify causality: whether hunting leads to conservation or whether hunters would have conserved habitat in the first place, whether or not hunting was involved.⁸¹

Single focus issues

Conservation undertaken to preserve a ‘game’ species may benefit other ‘non-game’ wildlife through preserving habitat. However, its species-specific approach to conservation can also have detrimental impacts on biodiversity and the health of the broader ecosystem. There are instances where ‘game’ populations have been maintained at unsustainable levels, resulting in habitat degradation and social conflict. For example, red deer populations in the Scottish Highlands have been maintained at high levels to the detriment of native woodland regeneration and moorland conservation.^{82 83}

A hunter’s desire to maintain high ‘game’ population levels can also conflict with proposed measures to improve ecosystem health, e.g. through the re-introduction of natural predators, or through the creation of more diverse habitat that may not necessarily benefit ‘game’ species.⁸⁴ It can also lead to the killing of species that threaten game e.g. buzzards (*Buteo buteo*), a protected bird of prey, may be killed under licence in order to protect pheasants.⁸⁵

In addition, where unsustainable hunting occurs and animal populations severely decline, ecological functions (herbivores, seed predators, seed dispersers, and carnivores) can be lost, which can have implications of biodiversity.⁸⁶

- 74 Hogberg, J., Treves, A., Shaw, B., Naughton-Treves, L., (2015) Changes in attitudes toward wolves before and after an inaugural public hunting and trapping season: early evidence from Wisconsin’s wolf range, *Environmental Conservation*, www.faculty.nelson.wisc.edu/treves/pubs/Hogberg_Treves_Shaw_Naughton-Treves_2015.pdf
- 75 Lindsey, P. A., Frank, L. G., Alexander, R., Mathieson, A., & Romanach, S. S. (2007). Trophy hunting and conservation in Africa: problems and one potential solution. *Conservation biology*, 21(3), 880-883.
- 76 Vucetich, John A., et al. “The value of argument analysis for understanding ethical considerations pertaining to trophy hunting and lion conservation.” *Biological conservation* 235 (2019): 260-272.
- 77 Cooper, C., Larson, L., Dayer, A., Stedman, R., & Decker, D. (2015). Are wildlife recreationists conservationists? Linking hunting, birdwatching, and pro-environmental behavior. *The Journal of Wildlife Management*, 79(3), 446-457.
- 78 Holsman (2000). “Goodwill hunting.” Exploring the role of hunters as ecosystem stewards. *Wildlife Soc B* 28.4
- 79 Epstein, Y., (2017), Killing Wolves to Save Them? Legal Responses to ‘Tolerance Hunting’ in the European Union and United States, *Review of European, Comparative & International Environmental Law*. onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/reel.12188/full
- 80 Chapron, G., Treves, A., ‘Blood Does Not Buy Goodwill: Allowing Culling Increases Poaching of a Large Carnivore’, (2016) 283:1830 *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* redwolves.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/wolf_culling.pdf
- 81 Loveridge, Andrew J., Jonathan C. Reynolds, and E. J. Milner-Gulland. “Does sport hunting benefit conservation.” *Key topics in conservation biology* 1 (2007): 222.
- 82 Grandy, J.W., Stallman, E., & Macdonald, D. (2003). The science and sociology of hunting: Shifting practices and perceptions in the United States and Great Britain. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II: 2003* (pp. 107-130). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.
- 83 Feber, Ruth E., Paul J. Johnson, and David W. Macdonald. “Shooting pheasants for sport: What does the death of Cecil tell us?” *People and Nature* 2.1 (2020): 82-95.
- 84 Holsman, Robert H. “Goodwill hunting.” Exploring the role of hunters as ecosystem stewards. *Wildlife Soc B* 28.4 (2000): 808-816.
- 85 Parrott, Dave. “Impacts and management of common buzzards *Buteo buteo* at pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* release pens in the UK: a review.” *European Journal of Wildlife Research* 61.2 (2015): 181-197.
- 86 Harrison, R.D., Sreekar, R., Brodie, J.F., Brook, S., Luskin, M., O’Kelly, H., Rao, M., Scheffers, B., Velho, N., (2016). “Impacts of hunting on tropical forests in Southeast Asia.” *Conservation biology* www.researchgate.net/profile/Rhett_Harrison/publication/294609598_Impacts_of_hunting_in_forests/links/58c6b11eaca272e36dde963e/Impacts-of-hunting-in-forests.pdf

Sociopolitical Impacts

Distribution of benefits

The economic benefits created by hunting in remote regions, particularly within less economically developed countries, is often raised as an argument in favour of the sport hunting industry. Ensuring that local communities benefit from the presence of wildlife recreation is also recognised as important on both sides of the conservation debate as it has the potential to minimise wildlife-people conflicts and contribute to rural development.^{87 88}

In many cases however, the potential benefits created by the hunting industry are not currently fairly distributed, most notably in less economically developed countries experiencing poor governance. Money from the industry is reported to end up in the pockets of government officials and foreign businesses with only approximately 3% of sport companies' revenue ever reaching communities within hunting zones.⁸⁹ Some organisations, such as Safari Club International (SCI), gain hugely from trophy hunting and related commercial activities. SCI was said to have earned \$14.7 million from its annual convention and auction in 2014 – “money it uses to fight animal protection measures around the world.”⁹⁰

Money that does reach local communities is also not necessarily enough to protect local wildlife from persecution or to prevent the conversion of habitat to other land use types, such as farmland.⁹¹

Corruption

Corruption has also been identified as a barrier to benefits being realised by local communities and to good regulation and conservation.^{92 93 94} Reports of bribes being paid to ‘turn a blind eye’ to species killed during hunts, killing over quota numbers, and controversial hunting methods used, appear common.⁹⁵ For example, Kenya banned trophy hunting in 1977 due to overshooting and corruption. The ban was predicted to cost the country approximately \$20-40 million per year in lost revenue.⁹⁶ Also, controlled hunting for wildlife management purposes does not always reduce illegal hunting or poaching, as has been argued.^{97 98} Legal hunting can act as a cover for poaching, as highlighted by Yasuda's case study of Northern Cameroon.

In addition, the revenue generated by the sport hunting industry at a national level is perhaps minimal compared to other, arguably less controversial wildlife industries, such as eco-tourism. Some researchers have also pointed out that the jobs created by the trophy hunting industry are rather low considering how much land is used for the sport. “For the 11 countries where big ‘game’ hunting is most widely practised, hunting reserves take up about 15% of national territory, but account for less than 1% of their respective country's GDP.”⁹⁹ Eco-tourism has also been argued to offer more job and career opportunities compared to sport hunting.¹⁰⁰

87 Lindsey, P. A., P. A. Roulet, and S. S. Romanach. Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa. *Biological conservation* 134.4 (2007): 455-469.

88 Angula, H. N., Stuart-Hill, G., Ward, D., Matongo, G., Diggle, R. W., & Naidoo, R. (2018). Local perceptions of trophy hunting on communal lands in Namibia. *Biological Conservation*, 218, 26-31.

89 Economists at Large, 2013. The \$200 million question: How much does trophy hunting really contribute to African communities? A report for the African Lion Coalition, prepared by Economists at Large, Melbourne, Australia www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/Ecolarge-2013-200m-question.pdf

90 Wayne, P., Cecil's Revenge, 1/22/2016, Huffington Post, www.huffingtonpost.com/wayne-pacelle/cecils-revenge_b_9054682.html

91 Loveridge, Andrew J., Jonathan C. Reynolds, and E. J. Milner-Gulland. “Does sport hunting benefit conservation.” *Key topics in conservation biology* 1 (2007): 222.

92 Economists at Large, 2013.

93 Smith, R. J., Muir, R. D., Walpole, M. J., Balmford, A., & Leader-Williams, N. (2003). Governance and the loss of biodiversity. *Nature*, 426(6962), 67-70.

94 Ochieng, Amos, Ingrid J. Visseren-Hamakers, and René Van Der Duim. “Sport Hunting to Save Nature? The Case of Uganda.” *Conservation & Society* 18.4 (2020): 340-354.

95 Lindsey, P. A., Frank, L. G., Alexander, R., Mathieson, A., & Romanach, S. S. (2007). Trophy hunting and conservation in Africa: problems and one potential solution. *Conservation biology*, 21(3), 880-883.

96 Lindsey, P. A., P. A. Roulet, and S. S. Romanach. Economic and conservation significance of the trophy hunting industry in sub-Saharan Africa. *Biological conservation* 134.4 (2007): 455-469.

97 Epstein, Y., (2017), Killing Wolves to Save Them? Legal Responses to ‘Tolerance Hunting’ in the European Union and United States, *Review of European, Comparative & International Environmental Law*. onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/reel.12188/full

98 Chapron, G., Treves, A., ‘Blood Does Not Buy Goodwill: Allowing Culling Increases Poaching of a Large Carnivore’, (2016) 283:1830 *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* rdwolves.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/wolf_culling.pdf

99 Dellinger, M., (2016) “Trophy Hunting Contracts: Unenforceable for Reasons of Public Policy.” *COLUMBIA JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW*, Vol 41 www.animallaw.info/sites/default/files/Trophy%20Hunting%20Contracts%20Unenforceable%20for%20Reasons%20of%20Public%20Policy.pdf

100 A League Against Cruel Sports (ALACS) submission to Environment Minister, Elliot Morley MP, (2004), *The Myth of Trophy Hunting as Conservation*, available online: www.league.org.uk/~media/Files/LACS/Reference-material/League-Against-Cruel-Sports-2004-The-Myth-of-Trophy-Hunting-as-Conservation.pdf

Access denied

Where hunting reserves operate on national land, local communities often have little voice in decision making and, in some cases, have been banned from grazing livestock, hunting wildlife and using other natural resources (cutting down trees), whilst wealthy foreigners are allowed to hunt 'game' for large sums of money.¹⁰¹

As local communities are often unable to afford or access hunting licences, they are prevented from legally accessing local resources – resources their ancestors have grown up with – encouraging illegal hunting and, potentially, leading to arrests. This situation has been described as 'colonialism reborn', where hunting for food was once considered 'savage' compared to hunting for sport. This dynamic appears to have continued¹⁰² but with 'sustainability' at its core.^{103 104} Yasuda's case study of Northern Cameroon documents a village that was forced to relocate as it was inconveniently located within a key hunting area, for example.

Although the above case studies relate specifically to sport hunting, similar issues are associated with conservation as a whole when social and economic issues are not taken into account.¹⁰⁵

Distorting conservation policy

The hunting lobby can place pressure on governments and wildlife management organisations to distort conservation policy towards a more human and species-oriented approach to land management, rather than a holistic ecosystem approach.¹⁰⁶ For example, a 2019 article in the Independent questions the influence the pro-hunting group Conservation Force has had on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) – two organisations that aim to ensure trade in animals and plants does not threaten their survival. It highlights Conservation Force's successes, which appear at odds to the IUCN and CITES, including: "The organisation lobbied for a US big-game hunter demanding trophies from endangered lions in Tanzania be allowed into the country. In 1992, it won a lawsuit that reopened elephant trophy imports from South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Cameroon ... In 2016, when US environmentalists called on the government to reclassify African leopards as endangered, preventing importation of their parts, CF opposed the plan".¹⁰⁷

Holsman cites examples where hunter groups blocked the reintroduction of the wolf (*Canis lupus*) in Yellowstone and the whooping crane (*Grus americana*) in several western US states.¹⁰⁸

Wildlife Legislative Fund of America's (now known as the Sportsmen's Alliance), an organisation that represents over 1000 hunting organisations, suggested that a 'hunting impact analysis' should be required before species are listed on the ESA. Holsman also references the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America's proposed amendments to the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

101 Yasuda, A. (2012). Is sport hunting a breakthrough wildlife conservation strategy for Africa? A case study of northern Cameroon. *Field Actions Science Reports. The journal of field actions*, 6.

102 Batavia, C., Nelson, M. P., Darimont, C. T., Paquet, P. C., Ripple, W. J., & Wallach, A. D. (2019). The elephant (head) in the room: A critical look at trophy hunting. *Conservation Letters*, 12(1), e12565.

103 A League Against Cruel Sports (ALACS) submission to Environment Minister, Elliot Morley MP, (2004), *The Myth of Trophy Hunting as Conservation*, available online: www.league.org.uk/~media/Files/LACS/Reference-material/League-Against-Cruel-Sports-2004-The-Myth-of-Trophy-Hunting-as-Conservation.pdf

104 Yasuda (2012)

105 Chapin, M. 2004. A challenge to conservationists. *World Watch* 17(6): 17-31 www.worldwatch.org/system/files/EP176A.pdf

106 Grandy, J.W., Stallman, E., & Macdonald, D. (2003). The science and sociology of hunting: Shifting practices and perceptions in the United States and Great Britain. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II: 2003* (pp. 107-130). Washington, DC: Humane Society Press.

107 <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/trophy-hunt-cites-iucn-conservation-force-african-elephant-lion-giraffe-leopard-a8937491.html> (2019)

108 Holsman (2000) "Goodwill hunting." *Exploring the role of hunters as ecosystem stewards. Wildlife Soc B* 28.4

Conclusion



Re-connecting with nature

If hunting is well regulated and is managed under the guidance of ecologists with knowledge of the ‘game’ species and ecosystems in question, sport hunting may have minimal impacts on ‘game’ population dynamics and the broader ecosystem. Whether this situation is realistic, however, is questionable – especially within countries where corruption acts as a barrier to effective management, and the hunting lobby puts pressure on wildlife managers to take a species-oriented approach to conservation rather than an ecosystem-oriented and more compassionate approach. Other, less lucrative forms of wildlife management may be preferable, such as eco-tourism, but poor regulation may still act as a barrier to reducing tourism’s environmental and social impacts.

Even if well managed, the long-term impacts of hunting on the evolution of species is still poorly understood, suggesting precautionary principles should continue to be used. This precautionary approach should particularly be taken to trophy hunting where detrimental impacts have been observed in lion, elephant, grizzly bear, brown bear, cougar, elk, and bighorn sheep populations.

To better understand the long-term impacts, and to enforce ‘optimum’ quotas, detailed monitoring is needed which has a financial cost (and barrier) associated with it. This monitoring should arguably be independent of the sport hunting industry to ensure it is unbiased.

Many arguments placed in favour of sport hunting appear to boil down to economic benefits and associated financial incentives. For example, its contribution to protecting habitat through placing an economic value on wildlife, has resulted in landowners protecting the habitat of ‘game’ species, which can benefit other non-target species. With this argument in mind, there are a number of questions that might be asked, including: could alternative outdoor recreational activities (such as wildlife watching) be used to financially replace hunting and raise more revenue for conservation?

As public opinion in Europe and the US moves towards being anti-sport, big ‘game’ and trophy hunting, it becomes increasingly difficult to justify the presence of exploitative sport hunting on land managed for conservation purposes, and for conservation organisations to continue to endorse and have ties with forms of sport hunting where the socio-economic and conservation value has been questioned.

As such, this report seeks to review optics companies against this backdrop – drawing on this literature review to focus on species where the conservation value of hunting has been questioned.

Military links



Following the invention of the riflescope (where a scope was fitted to a rifle), developments in optics technologies have had a close knit relationship with war, experiencing huge technological advancements during the first and second world wars in response to demand and need for strategic advantage.^{109 110}

As the range and accuracy of rifles have expanded, optics technologies have simultaneously advanced to facilitate increased accuracy of long-range shooting in both broad daylight, and low light and night-time conditions. These innovations have then passed into citizen's hands – facilitating technological advancements in hunting and wildlife-watching equipment for example. Military innovation has also offered tools for conservation work e.g. through GPS and drone technology.

It is therefore no surprise that many of the optics companies covered in this report continue to have close ties with the military and the arms industry today. These ties raise some interesting ethical questions for 20th century wildlife watchers and conservationists – particularly considering the military's complex and widespread environmental impacts on ecosystems and wildlife around the world, not to mention the millions of human deaths and human rights abuses experienced during wartime.

Catherine Lutz, a professor on war and its impacts at the Watson Institute for International Studies, commented on the inherent 'ecocide' of war in an article that explored the environment impacts of modern-day warfare. She stated: "in the military 'the environment goes out the window even outside of war' ... The maintenance of standing armies just to counter the threat of war exerts enormous strain on environmental resources".¹¹¹

This is perhaps best highlighted by the fact that the US Department of Defence is the world's single largest consumer of oil and, as a result, one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters^{112 113} and contributors to climate change.

In addition, armed conflicts have occurred in "more than two-thirds of the world's biodiversity hotspots over the past six decades"¹¹⁴ and, globally, military training areas are estimated to cover around 6% of the Earth's surface – covering a range of diverse ecosystems.¹¹⁵

Militaries around the world (and the companies that enable their work), therefore have a significant role to play in tackling the climate and ecological emergency; supporting humanity to decarbonise swiftly enough to meet the science-based targets agreed in Paris in 2015.

What are the conservation impacts of war?

It is tricky to quantify the environmental impacts of war unless baseline data was collected prior to military activities taking place. However, military activities have been evidenced to adversely, and in some specific situations, positively, affect wildlife populations – including threatened and endangered species. The size of environmental impacts observed appears to depend on a place's unique social and ecological context.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ www.osa-opn.org/home/articles/volume_27/january_2016/features/how_the_great_war_changed_the_optics_industry

¹¹⁰ www.warhistoryonline.com/guest-bloggers/brief-history-rifle-optics-united-states.html

¹¹¹ www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/nov/06/whats-the-environmental-impact-of-modern-war

¹¹² watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/social/environment (viewed 19 November 2020).

¹¹³ watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/Pentagon%20Fuel%20Use%2C%20Climate%20Change%20and%20the%20Costs%20of%20War%20Revised%20November%202019%20Crawford.pdf

¹¹⁴ Gaynor, K. M., Fiorella, K. J., Gregory, G. H., Kurz, D. J., Seto, K. L., Withey, L. S., & Brashares, J. S. (2016). War and wildlife: linking armed conflict to conservation. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 14(10), 533-542. https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/fee.1433?samL_referrer

¹¹⁵ Lawrence, M. J., Stemberger, H. L., Zolderdo, A. J., Struthers, D. P., & Cooke, S. J. (2015). The effects of modern war and military activities on biodiversity and the environment. *Environmental Reviews*, 23(4), 443-460.

¹¹⁶ Pearson, C. (2012). Researching militarized landscapes: a literature review on war and the militarization of the environment. *Landscape Research*, 37(1), 115-133.



Exploring the environmental impacts of conflict

Environmental impacts of military activity can be indirect – through degrading habitat, contributing to soil erosion and chemical contamination. They can also be direct – through physical damage and the incidental or planned killing of animals, and activities disturbing normal patterns of wildlife behaviour.¹¹⁷ These impacts can also occur throughout the military sector’s infrastructure: at the weapons and optics manufacturing stage; during transport and the construction and maintenance of training bases; in the landscapes that armed conflict occurs; and in the military graveyards and nuclear waste stores around the world.^{118 119 120}

Gaynor et al reviewed 144 case studies from around the world that explored the effects of armed conflicts on wildlife, categorising impacts under the following categories:

- **Tactical impacts – including mines, bombs and chemicals killing wildlife; the environment being purposefully damaged as a war tactic; habitat being created as a by-product of a war tactic; high-value wildlife products being used to finance war efforts; wildlife being killed to feed military personnel; politicised killing of wildlife; politicised conservation of wildlife.**
- **Non tactical impacts – including a decline in conservation and research activities; traditional resource management being weakened; displaced people killing wildlife for food and harvesting natural resources; the creation of wildlife refuges as people avoid conflict zones; new trade routes established for wildlife and natural resources, trade routes for natural resources and wildlife close; extractive industries expand or decline; decline in agriculture and commerce increases natural resource demand; decrease in ecotourism and conservation livelihoods.**

¹¹⁷ Larkin, Ronald P., Larry L. Pater, and David J. Tazik. Effects of Military Noise on Wildlife. A Literature Review. CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING RESEARCH LAB (ARMY) CHAMPAIGN IL, 1996.

¹¹⁸ www.ipb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/briefing-paper.pdf

¹¹⁹ www.fastcompany.com/90470463/the-massive-environmental-impact-of-americas-constant-readiness-for-war

¹²⁰ ceobs.org/publications/

Of the case studies reviewed, 94% referenced impacts that had a negative impact for wildlife; 33% referenced positive impacts. Examples highlighted included the deforestation of Turkey's Kurdistan region, the extreme defoliation of habitat during the Vietnam War, and Iraqi military forces deliberately setting fire to hundreds of oil wells in the Persian Gulf region damaging marine fauna. The review by Gaynor et al also highlighted how different animal taxa experience different impacts, with mammals appearing to be more vulnerable. Examples highlighted included weaponry resulting in the death of mountain gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla beringei*) in Rwanda and African elephants (*Loxodonta africana*) in Angola.

Localised wildlife population declines have been observed where vast expanses of habitat have been destroyed, animals killed, and soil destabilised through aerial assault. Noise pollution has been found to cause both short- and long-term hearing loss and changes in migration patterns and behaviour, the combination of which can lead to population decline. Military aircrafts and boats have also introduced 'exotic' plants and creatures into ecosystems, which have then gone on to out-compete native species'.¹²¹

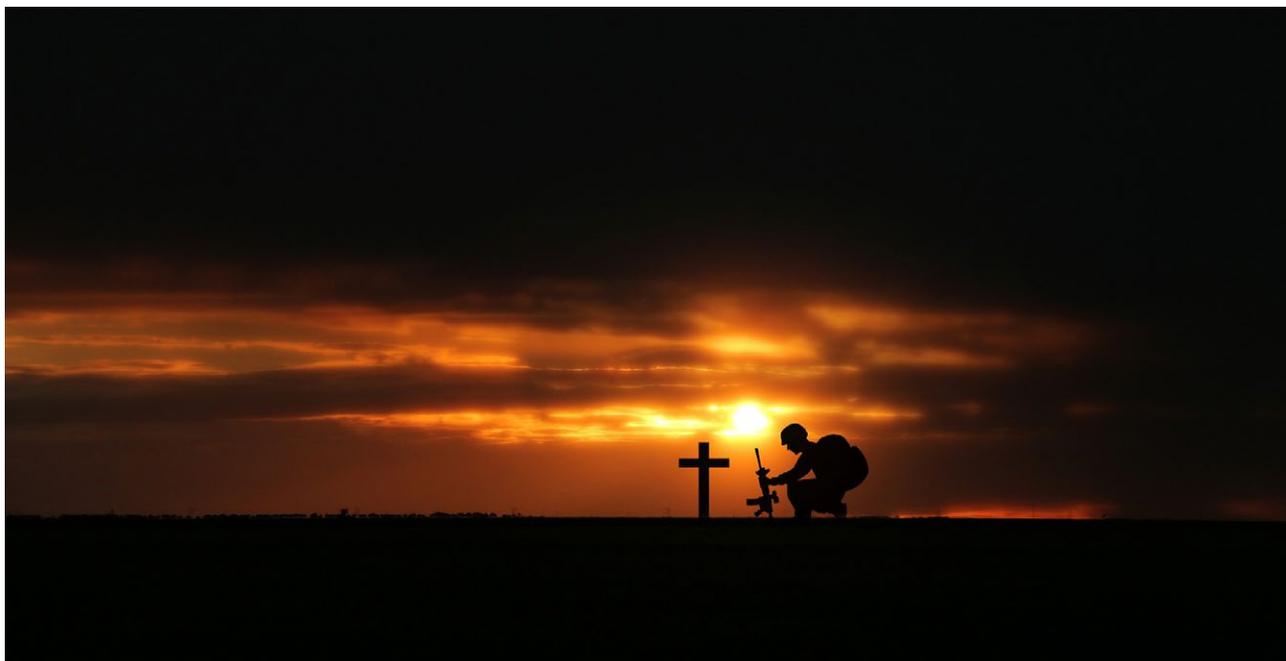
Terrestrial conflict has also been found to lead to poaching by military personnel¹²² and, where based in biological hotspots, can lead to the incidental killing and disturbance of endemic or endangered species. Weapons can also completely alter and degrade landscapes and reduce biodiversity. In addition, the destruction of infrastructure such as dams can also lead to the death of aquatic wildlife and the altering of local ecosystems.

Turning militaries into conservation organisations?

Some animals adapt well and may benefit from some military intervention, e.g. carnivores feeding of carcasses during conflict. And landmines, in some cases, have created 'no man's zones' which act like protected areas that enable ecosystems to regenerate following armed conflict. Marine environments have also sometimes benefited from conflict, through fishing decreasing and new habitat being created around sunken ships, etc.

Military bases can also result in large areas of wilderness being protected from commercial and human developments. Although this may positively contribute to localised conservation work, it has been questioned whether this diverts attention away from the military's wider ecological impacts whilst "naturalising military ownership of land."¹²³

In addition, so long as militaries take an anthropogenic, rather than an eco-centric, view of natural landscapes during periods of armed conflict, environmental casualties are inevitable.



Sunset over another casualty of war

¹²¹ Lawrence, M. J., Stemberger, H. L., Zolderdo, A. J., Struthers, D. P., & Cooke, S. J. (2015). The effects of modern war and military activities on biodiversity and the environment. *Environmental Reviews*, 23(4), 443-460.

¹²² Pearson, C. (2012). Researching militarized landscapes: a literature review on war and the militarization of the environment. *Landscape Research*, 37(1), 115-133. www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01426397.2011.570974?needAccess=true

¹²³ Pearson, C. (2012). Researching militarized landscapes: a literature review on war and the militarization of the environment. *Landscape Research*, 37(1), 115-133.

Assessing environment and climate reporting

6

In an era of climate and ecological emergency declarations, everyone will need to do their part in reducing their climate and environment impact – optics companies included. We have therefore assessed company approaches to these issues by applying Ethical Consumer's climate change and environment reporting ratings. These have been designed to cut through company greenwash in order to identify those who really are walking the path to net-zero and one-planet living.

(a) Climate change rating

Companies are expected to publicly discuss plausible ways in which they have made real cuts to their emissions in the most significant areas of impact, and will continue to do so. A company that owns a coal plant talking about changing the light bulbs in its head office really doesn't cut it. In the case of optics companies, we would expect a discussion of any high-impact sectors e.g. aviation, and the life cycle impacts associated with product manufacture.

Secondly, the company has to be taking the calculation and public reporting of its emissions seriously, which means including major portions of its 'scope 3' emissions. These are emissions from the factories in company supply chains, or in company investments, or in the use of a companies' products. Scope 3 emissions can easily amount to 90% of a company's impact, but regulatory requirements tend not to require them, not least because they are very difficult to measure. This is not good enough given the emergency we are in.

We then judge climate targets. In order to assess a company's emission reduction targets, we use the methodology used by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), which is an international collaboration between the Carbon Disclosure Project, World Resources Institute, WWF, and the UN Global Compact.

As the name suggests, the aim of the project is to get companies to sign up to science-based emission reduction targets – ones that are "in line with what is necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement – to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels".

How to get a good climate rating?

To have 'good' carbon management and reporting, a company needed to show that it has a reasonable understanding of its areas of climate impact and how to ameliorate them, and to appear to be taking steps to do so. It has to annually report greenhouse gas emissions released by its production process, purchased energy and its first-tier suppliers; and have a future decarbonisation target that is in line with international agreements on climate change – to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

(b) *Environment reporting rating*

The environmental reporting rating takes a broad sweep approach to assessing companies' environmental policies and reporting. Companies are expected to publicly discuss their key environmental impacts and the steps they are taking to reduce these impacts, publishing at least two future dated environmental reduction targets. In the case of optics companies, this would include a discussion of energy, water and raw material use, waste, use of toxic chemicals, and climate change. If optics companies have significant links to hunting, the military or the aviation industry, we would also expect a discussion around the environmental impacts of these activities and how it seeks to reduce them.

To evidence ongoing monitoring, companies are expected to publish an environment report at least every two years, which contains independently audited environmental performance data for key impact areas.

How to get a good environment rating?

To receive a good rating for environment reporting a company must show a reasonable understanding of its key impacts; have a report dated within two years; publish at least two environmental reduction targets; and publish independently audited environmental performance data.



Cutting through the corporate greenwash

Beretta Holding SpAOptics brand reviewed
Steiner and Burris**Summary**

“Once you’re after that trophy, nothing can hold you back ... Even after countless monster-obsessed pursuits, Steiner optics are eager for more and ready to go. Not unlike yourself.”¹²⁴

As highlighted by this marketing quote, Steiner continues to have strong links to hunting, with images and videos referencing trophy hunting throughout its website. Products were listed by activity, one of which was hunting, and the ‘Riflescope Selector’ allowed you to find the right riflescope according to the target prey. The brand’s owner has previously described his own passion for hunting and has expanded the business to include high-end hunting lodges.

Beretta produces all types of guns, from hand weapons to machine guns, and has long-standing links to the military and the gun rights movement. Steiner Optics USA urged visitors of its social media profiles to vote for Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential elections and published images containing imagery linked to militia and white supremacy.^{125 126}



Steiner Optics USA: Who has Fallow Deer on the hunting bucket list?

¹²⁴ www.steiner-optics.com/binoculars/hunting, viewed 4 November 2020

¹²⁵ www.facebook.com/SteinerOpticsUSA/photos/a.378984313660/10157871462663661/

¹²⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/jun/11/how-do-you-stop-the-far-right-using-the-punisher-skull-make-it-a-black-lives-matter-symbol>

Background

Beretta Holding SpA owns the Steiner brand, along with Beretta, Benelli, Franchi, Sako, Tikka, Stoeger, Chapuis, Steiner, and Burris – all listed as hunting brands on the company’s website www.berettaholding.com.¹²⁷

Based in Italy, Beretta owns brands that specialise in light arms for hunting, sporting and personal defence. Sporting firearms accounted for 90% of its production.¹²⁸ In 2017, 70% of its revenue also appeared to be from firearm sales (as 30% was said to be from non-firearm products).¹²⁹

In 2018, Beretta’s turnover was €678 million (approximately £600 million). Sales in the US made up 49% of this business.¹³⁰ With a turnover of €106 million (£94.33 million) in 2016, the company’s optics division accounted for around 15% of the business.¹³¹ Turnover of the whole group grew a little over 1% in 2018 compared to the previous year. No more recent financial information was found.

Shooting Accessories

The Steiner optics brand was created in Germany in 1947. Its products are primarily marketed at hunters, marine and military personnel, and wildlife watchers.

A video promoting trophy hunting still dominated the Steiner Optics website’s homepage (www.steiner-optics.com). Trophy animals depicted include bighorn sheep, bear and large antelope. Shooting accessories listed were riflescopes, binoculars, battle sights and e-optics (including laser devices and thermal optics). Binocular and riflescope products were still split into categories based on activity type which included hunting, tactical, military, adventure and marine.



A video named ‘We Are Steiner’ featured a hunter carrying a large antler trophy on his back and a dead coyote. Steiner Optics YouTube channel

The promotional text accompanying Steiner’s riflescopes named different types of shooting and prey:

“The perfect choice for anyone who’s after game: turkey hunters, bow hunters, black powder enthusiasts, anyone who hunts the early season or in heavy cover where prey likes to hide.”¹³²

“Versatile enough for prairie dogs, big game or the bean field.”¹³³

“Gives varmint and hog hunters sharp images at night and in dim light.”¹³⁴

Steiner’s ‘Riflescope Selector’, designed to help customers choose the optimum product, similarly asked the user to select an activity and, under ‘hunting’, type of prey. Options given were western big ‘game’, eastern whitetail, dangerous ‘game’, ‘varmint’, predator/hog hunting and turkey hunting.¹³⁵

Steiner sold four binocular ranges, all of which were listed under hunting, including the ‘Predator’ series and the HX series, which was described as “a new arsenal of optics to match your style and quarry.”¹³⁶ Photos of the binoculars in use featured a dead whitetail deer with large antlers, a dead grey wolf and a severed caribou head.

A photo gallery named ‘Hunter Lifestyle Images’ had been removed from the website.

¹²⁷ www.berettaholding.com/en/group-profile, viewed 5 September 2020

¹²⁸ www.beretta.com/en-uk/world-of-beretta/today/, viewed 4 November 2020

¹²⁹ www.berettaholding.com/en/press/26, viewed 4 November 2020

¹³⁰ www.berettaholding.com/en/financial-highlights, viewed on 5 September 2020

¹³¹ www.berettaholding.com/en/press/26, 4 November 2020

¹³² www.steiner-optics.com/faqs, viewed 4 November 2020

¹³³ www.steiner-optics.com/riflescopes/hunting/g3-4-20x50, viewed 4 November 2020

¹³⁴ www.steiner-optics.com/riflescopes/hunting/g3-3-15x56, viewed 4 November 2020

¹³⁵ www.steiner-optics.com/riflescope-selector, viewed 4 November 2020

¹³⁶ www.steiner-optics.com/binoculars/hx-15x56, viewed 4 November 2020

Other links to hunting

On its Facebook pages, Beretta no longer reposted lots of images from customers' trophy shoots. However in its product descriptions, catalogue and social media, Steiner Optics featured many professional images of trophies and dead trophy animals. A video named 'We Are Steiner' on the Steiner YouTube channel featured a hunter carrying a large antler trophy on his back and a dead coyote.¹³⁷

The 2016 'Shooting Wildlife?' report identified several articles that described the current CEO Pietro Gussalli Beretta's passion for hunting.¹³⁸ Pietro remained CEO of the company in 2020. With his brother, he was said to have expanded the family business to include high-end hunting lodges.¹³⁹

Steiner had stopped sponsoring Whitetails Unlimited, an American organisation that supported both hunting and conservation.¹⁴⁰

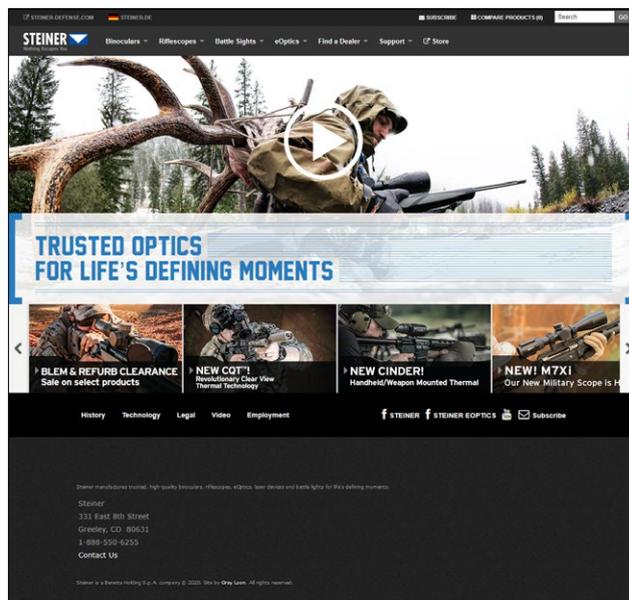
Other subsidiaries

Several other subsidiaries of Beretta Holdings continued to sponsor sports hunting organisations. For example, Benelli was listed as a sponsor of the National Wild Turkey Federation¹⁴¹ and Delta Waterfowl, two organisations that supported both hunting and conservation.¹⁴² And Beretta continued to be listed as a partner for Shoot Like a Girl¹⁴³ – an organisation that aims to empower women in the hunting and shooting industries.¹⁴⁴

Several of these subsidiaries also promoted their products through images around the 'hunting

lifestyle'. Beretta sold hunting wear for men and women, including footwear and a clothing range called 'Gentleman Hunt'.¹⁴⁵ Its Brown Bear product line was said to be "perfect for big game hunts"¹⁴⁶ and the St James line was "entirely devoted to those who enjoy driven hunts for pheasant and red partridge".¹⁴⁷

A list of sponsors was no longer available for TV shows Beyond the Hunt¹⁴⁸ and Steve's Outdoor Adventures,¹⁴⁹ which had previously listed Burris as a supporter. Burris now sponsored Into the Wild TV.¹⁵⁰



Steiner Timber wolf, the Predator 10x42 binoculars. An all-around favorite. Versatile enough for western big game hunters or eastern whitetail hunters. www.steiner-optics.com.png

¹³⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPQxAWxYs5s, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹³⁸ www.pietrogussalliberetta.it/en/biography; archive.fortune.com/2008/01/23/lifestyle/The_family_business_Beretta.fortune/index.htm, viewed on 19 november 2020

¹³⁹ Franco Gussalli Beretta defends the family-run gunmaking company, The Financial Times, www.ft.com/content/5d9ed1c4-2bf5-11e6-bf8d-26294ad519fc, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁰ www.whitetailsunlimited.com/support/national-sponsors/, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴¹ www.nwtf.org/about/partners, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴² deltawaterfowl.org/partners/, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴³ shootlikeagirl.com/partners/, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁴ shootlikeagirl.com/about-us/, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁵ estore.beretta.com/en-eu/store/fall-winter-hunting-collection/gentlemen-hunt/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁶ estore.beretta.com/en-eu/brown-bear-jacket/gu8v2295/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁷ estore.beretta.com/en-eu/gentlemen-hunt-st-james-coat/gu732t1623/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁸ beyondthehunttv.com, website no longer available, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁴⁹ www.stevesoutdooradventures.com, viewed 4 November 2020

¹⁵⁰ www.intothewildtv.com/sponsors.html, viewed 15 November 2020

Arms and military links

Beretta started producing musket barrels in fifteenth-century Italy and is said to be the oldest firearms manufacturer in the world.¹⁵¹ It currently produces around 1,500 weapons a day, including semiautomatic pistols and assault rifles.¹⁵² A video from 2016 on the Steiner Optics YouTube channel showcased the production and testing of weapons made by Beretta Defense Technologies, “the strategic alliance of four Beretta Holding defense companies: Beretta, Benelli, Sako and Steiner” on a mission to create “a totally integrated combat weapon system”.¹⁵³

Beretta Holding Group considers itself a “key partner of the governments worldwide” as a supplier of “integrated solutions” for defence departments and law enforcement.¹⁵⁴ Steiner is a “primary supplier” to the US military and NATO.¹⁵⁵ Beretta sponsors the West Point Military Academy’s Skeet and Trap shooting team cadets.¹⁵⁶

Steiner’s riflescope selector listed police/law enforcement as an activity that was divided into precision long-range shooting and tactical shooting.¹⁵⁷ The brand’s website also had a section for tactical¹⁵⁸ and military¹⁵⁹ riflescopes, “based on the outstanding success of the M5Xi used today by Special Forces around the globe”.¹⁶⁰



Beretta Steiner Timber wolf, the Predator 10x42 binoculars. An all-around favorite. Versatile enough for western big game hunters or eastern whitetail hunters. www.steiner-optics.com

Beretta was one of the few companies covered in this report that were ‘industry allies’ of the US National Rifle Association.¹⁶¹ Steiner presented its products at the annual NRA trade fair¹⁶² and its P4Xi riflescope was the NRA’s optic of the year in 2018.¹⁶³ Beretta had even released a limited-edition shotgun named Second Amendment 687 EELL Classic at the 2017 NRA annual meeting to celebrate the second amendment and its supporters.¹⁶⁴

CEO Franco Gussalli Beretta is opposed to further gun control in the US, because he considers it would violate the rights of those living in isolated places to defend themselves from “criminals” or “jaguars and bears”.¹⁶⁵

151 www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/fabbrica-d-armi-pietro-beretta-s-p-a-history/, viewed on 4 November 2020

152 www.beretta.com/en-uk/world-of-beretta/today/, viewed on November 2020

153 www.steiner-optics.com/riflescopes/m7xi-4-28x56 time stamp 0:48, viewed on 4 November 2020

154 www.berettaholding.com/en/group-profile, viewed on 5 September 2020

155 www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPQxAWxYs5s timestamp 0:38, viewed on 4 November 2020

156 www.facebook.com/BERETTAuk/photos/2449592438472741, viewed on 4 November 2020

157 www.steiner-optics.com/riflescope-selector, viewed 4 November 2020

158 www.steiner-optics.com/t-series, viewed on 4 November 2020

159 www.steiner-optics.com/riflescopes/military, viewed on 4 November 2020

160 www.steiner-optics.com/riflescopes/m7xi-4-28x56, viewed on 4 November 2020

161 nraindustryally.nra.org/become-an-ally/amazing-brands/, viewed on 12 November 2020

162 www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2346853405599827&ref=watch_permalink, viewed on 4 November 2020

163 www.steiner-optics.com/optic-year, viewed on 4 November 2020

164 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5YBCMOpRf0>, viewed on 19 November 2020

165 www.ft.com/content/5d9ed1c4-2bf5-11e6-bf8d-26294ad519fc, viewed on 4 November 2020

Steiner Optics USA is also a vocal advocate of gun rights on social media. Its Facebook page (linked from the www.steiner-optics.com website) and Instagram profile contained many posts with hashtags such as #2a, #2amendment, #gunporn, #gunsofinstagram and #igmilitia. On the 2020 US election day, Steiner Optics USA urged visitors of its Facebook and Instagram profiles to “vote – vote now... those wishing to destroy the 2nd amendment are coming for our rights. Don’t waste that precious

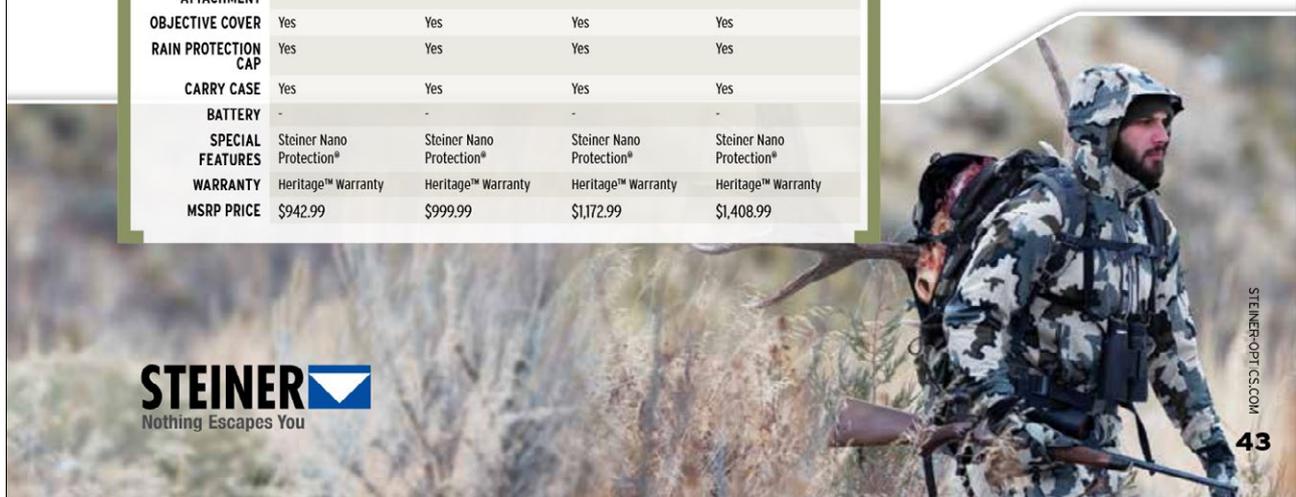
right to vote that so many have fought and died to preserve”.^{166 167}

Some of Steiner’s social media content also contained militant dog-whistle imagery, such as men wearing military attire with prominently placed patches of the Texan lone star flag¹⁶⁸ and the Punisher’s skull¹⁶⁹ which, in recent years, has been adopted as a symbol of force by police and military personnel¹⁷⁰ and white supremacists.¹⁷¹

	Non-Long Eye	Non-Long Eye	Non-Long Eye	Non-Long Eye
ARMORING				
WATERPROOF	Submersion to 10 ft.			
WEIGHT (OZ.)	27.7	28	42.3	44.1
DIMENSIONS (IN.) (HxWxD)	5.8 x 4.9 x 2.6	5.8 x 4.9 x 2.6	7.1 x 5.6 x 3.1	7.1 x 5.6 x 3.1
NECK STRAP	Neoprene	Neoprene	Neoprene	Neoprene
NECK STRAP ATTACHMENT	ClicLoc®	ClicLoc®	ClicLoc®	ClicLoc®
OBJECTIVE COVER	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
RAIN PROTECTION CAP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CARRY CASE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BATTERY	-	-	-	-
SPECIAL FEATURES	Steiner Nano Protection®	Steiner Nano Protection®	Steiner Nano Protection®	Steiner Nano Protection®
WARRANTY	Heritage™ Warranty	Heritage™ Warranty	Heritage™ Warranty	Heritage™ Warranty
MSRP PRICE	\$942.99	\$999.99	\$1,172.99	\$1,408.99

product-warranties

- No warranty card needed.
- No receipt required.
- Warranty is fully transferable to future owners of the product.
- Electronic components are covered by a 3-year warranty.



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In its catalogue and on its Facebook page, Steiner Optics USA page featured several professional images of trophies and dead trophy animals. 2020 Steiner catalogue

Sustainability

No information on Beretta or Steiner’s sustainability policies or practices could be found. No evidence was found that demonstrated that the company was actively working to reduce its environmental

and climate impacts in line with international agreements. They were therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

¹⁶⁶ www.facebook.com/SteinerOpticsUSA/photos/a.10157235733318661/10158039810673661/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁶⁷ www.instagram.com/p/CHJPPW9Feet/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁶⁸ www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddtmA3H7qaE, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁶⁹ www.facebook.com/SteinerOpticsUSA/photos/a.378984313660/10157871462663661/, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁷⁰ www.forbes.com/sites/lisettevoytko/2020/06/11/the-creator-of-the-punisher-wants-to-reclaim-the-ionic-skull-from-police-and-fringe-admirers/?sh=7b42ff1cb434, viewed on 4 November 2020

¹⁷¹ www.theguardian.com/books/2020/jun/11/how-do-you-stop-the-far-right-using-the-punisher-skull-make-it-a-black-lives-matter-symbol, viewed on 4 November 2020

Summary

Canon continues to have no link to hunting. In 2017, it stated in response to an Ethical Consumer questionnaire: “Canon does not sell or market optics for the use of hunting, and does not include sport hunting as an activity associated within promotion of our product ranges”.¹⁷² No response was received as part of this 2020 research.

Background

Canon Inc, which is based in Tokyo, was founded in 1937 by a group of scientists, and initially focused on the production of cameras. Nowadays, its products include photocopiers, printers, cameras, binoculars, projectors, lenses, semi-conductor equipment, instruments used for eye examinations and photo printers.

In 2019, the company’s turnover was ¥3.6 trillion (£25 billion), from sales in Japan (24.3%), the Americas (28.6%), Europe (24.6%), and Asia and Oceania (22.5%).¹⁷³

In 2008, the company became the focus of a Greenpeace campaign that tried to pressure the CEO of the company, Fujio Mitarai, into making a public anti-whale hunting statement. Canon was targeted as the company had sponsored many wildlife advocacy groups and environmental conservation organisations, had promoted the conservation of endangered species, and had run a series of adverts entitled ‘Wildlife as Canon sees it’ in the National Geographic Magazine, which had a focus on endangered species.¹⁷⁴ Canon declined to make such a statement.

Shooting accessories

The only sport optics sold on Canon’s website, www.canon.co.uk, in October 2020 were binoculars. These were marketed for birdwatching, marine watching, stargazing, spectator sports and travel. Canon had also returned an Ethical Consumer questionnaire in September 2017 that confirmed: “Canon does not sell or market optics for the use of hunting and does not include sport hunting as an activity associated within promotion of our product ranges”.¹⁷⁵

Other links to hunting

No other links to hunting were found.

Arms and military links

The Canon USA website had a section named Military, which said Canon “offers a comprehensive range of award-winning products and services to support a wide range of mission requirements”.¹⁷⁶ The website www.usaspending.gov showed that Canon USA Inc and Canon Medical Systems combined had been awarded more than \$500 million in US government contracts since 2008, mostly for medical imaging equipment for the Department of Defense and the Department of Veteran Affairs. One of the largest was a contract to supply one hundred medical X-ray systems for field use by the US military in 2017.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Response to Ethical Consumer questionnaire – Optics, from Canon Inc., returned September 2017

¹⁷³ Canon Inc., Canon Annual Report 2019, global.canon/en/ir/annual/2019/canon-annual-report-2019.pdf

¹⁷⁴ Does Canon support shooting whales? Jan 2008, viewed Nov 2015; www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/features/canon-shooting-whales-240108/, viewed Nov 2015

¹⁷⁵ Response to Ethical Consumer questionnaire – Optics, from Canon Inc., returned September 2017

¹⁷⁶ www.usa.canon.com/internet/portal/us/home/explore/industries/government-solutions/military-solutions, viewed 6 November 2020

¹⁷⁷ www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/united-states-department-of-defense-invests-in-radpro-mobile-digital-x-ray-systems-300475842.html, viewed 6 November 2020

Sustainability

In 1988, Canon adopted the corporate philosophy of kyosei: all people living and working together for the common good. Canon's 2020 Sustainability Report was available to download from its website, www.canon.com, and discussed the company's environmental and social policies and practices.

In a section called 'Protecting and Conserving the Environment', the report discussed in detail issues such as carbon emissions, energy use and renewable energy, the use of hazardous substances in manufacture, the sustainable sourcing of materials, re-use and recycling and conservation of biodiversity. Canon's strategy was to focus on: "(1) contributing to a low-carbon society; (2) contributing to a circular economy; (3) eliminating hazardous substances and preventing pollution; and (4) contributing to a society in harmony with nature". The company had set two medium-term environmental targets for 2019 to 2021:

- **"3%-per-year average improvement in lifecycle CO₂ emissions improvement index per product**
- **"3%-per-year average improvement in raw materials and use CO₂ emissions improvement index per product.**

The report gave detailed information on its greenhouse gases emissions, from production and transportation to use and disposal of its products, and how the company planned to reduce them. Canon's goal was to improve lifecycle CO₂ emission by 3% on average and had achieved an improvement of 4.7% per year on average, which was in line with international climate change agreements.

Although Canon had policies to reduce the use of several types of toxic substances, they had no specific policies on the reduction of plastics and fire retardants – two substances often found in electronics products that have a significant negative environmental impact when released after disposal.

Canon was considered to have reasonable environmental reporting and good carbon management and reporting.

Summary

Carson seems to have quietly withdrawn from the riflescope business. Although no announcement was found, it had removed riflescopes from the product categories on its website. Its 2020 video brand promotion featured a crossbow hunter using the company's spotting scope but no hunting with firearms. However, since the company featured sports hunting in its brand promotion video trailer and referenced trophy and big game hunting in social media posts, the company was still considered to have a strong link to sports hunting.

Background

Richard Cameron, a former banker, established Carson Optical in 1990 from a basement on Long Island, USA. The business initially focused on importing and exporting products between Japan and the USA. Nowadays, Carson Optical products are also available outside the USA, through online retailers such as opticsplanet.com and amazon.com.

Carson Optical Inc.'s annual turnover was around £5.7 million according to estimates by the corporate database D&B Hoovers, viewed in October 2020.

Shooting Accessories

Products were separated by product type on the company's website www.carson.com. Those that could be used for hunting included one spotting scope, night vision equipment, laser range finding technology and binoculars.

In 2018, the website also featured riflescopes. A search of the website in October 2020 showed that although Carson still sold riflescope cases, it appeared the company had removed riflescopes from its product line. Third-party website Optics Planet¹⁷⁸ marked Carson riflescopes as "currently not available", although they were still for sale on Scope City.¹⁷⁹

Like in 2018, the text accompanying Carson's spotting scope did not reference hunting. However, several binoculars and binocular accessories were described as "ideal for hunting".¹⁸⁰

The website did not refer to any particular types of hunting and only one image of a hunter or 'game' animal was found: the box for Carson's HookUpz adapter, which connects mobile phones to binoculars "for hunting, bird watching, nature watching, sporting events or even law enforcement surveillance", featured a drawing of a deer with big antlers.¹⁸¹ A promotional video for a riflescope protector from 2009 depicted a deer seen through a riflescope viewfinder.¹⁸²



Carson's HookUpz adapter, "for hunting, bird watching, nature watching, sporting events or even law enforcement surveillance" carson.com

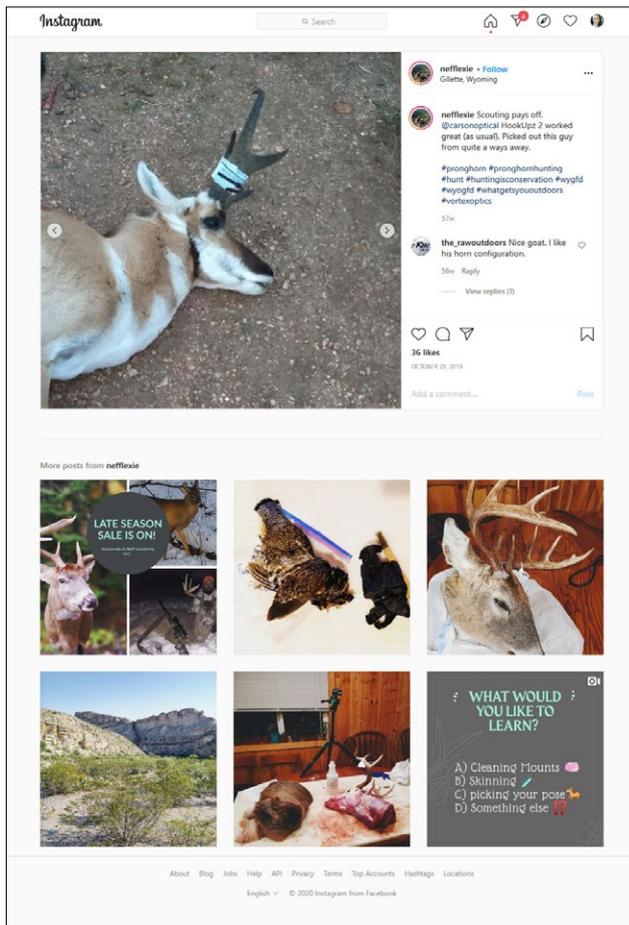
¹⁷⁸ www.opticsplanet.com/carson-riflescopes.html, viewed on 25 October 2020

¹⁷⁹ www.scopecity.com/riflescopes.cfm?tb=121&bn=Carson%20Riflescopes, viewed on 25 October 2020

¹⁸⁰ carson.com/products/3d-series-td-842/, viewed 25 October 2020

¹⁸¹ carson.com/products/hookupz-smartphone-binocular-adapter-ib-700/, viewed pm 25 October 2020

¹⁸² carson.com/products/scopearmor-deluxe-ba-15/, viewed on 25 October 2020



“Scouting pays off. @carsonoptical HookUpz 2 worked great (as usual). Picked out this guy from quite a ways away.” www.instagram.com/nefflexie/

Other links to hunting

Carson’s social media profiles marketed directly to hunters but, like in 2018, hunting was not their main focus. The 2020 Carson Optical brand trailer featured short clips of a hunter with a crossbow. These were taken from a video called Hunting with Carson Products that showcased various Carson products, including its spotting scope.¹⁸³ Product review videos also referenced hunting.¹⁸⁴

Some new posts on Carson’s Facebook page promoted optical equipment and also targeted hunters. In most, hunting was not mentioned in the photo or captions but referenced with tags such as #huntingknife and #biggamehunting¹⁸⁵ or #huntingseason and #huntinggear.¹⁸⁶

A picture of a nyala, tagged #hunting and #safari,¹⁸⁷ was linked to the Instagram account of Lexie Neff, a taxidermist “with a passion for hunting” trophy animals such as zebra.¹⁸⁸ One of her posts, featuring a pronghorn (that was killed soon after the photo was taken), tagged Carson Optical’s Instagram account, with an endorsement for its HookUpz phone adapter.¹⁸⁹

Arms and military links

No links between Carson and the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

No information on Carson’s sustainability policies or practices could be found. No evidence was found that demonstrated that the company was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements.

Carson was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

183 www.youtube.com/watch?v=04fqEzywyo, viewed on 25 October 2020
 184 carson.com/products/scopearmor-deluxe-ba-15/, viewed on 25 October 2020
 185 www.facebook.com/carsonoptical/photos/a.442475500069/10158628484255070, viewed 25 October 2020
 186 www.facebook.com/carsonoptical/posts/10157995548310070, viewed 25 October 2020
 187 www.facebook.com/carsonoptical/posts/10157231337660070, viewed 25 October 2020
 188 www.instagram.com/p/BzA9fp3FnFy/, viewed 25 October 2020
 189 www.instagram.com/p/B320G4FFrjg/, viewed 25 October 2020

Summary

The company referenced hunting on a few occasions, on its main sales website, www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com. It had a section on hunting and safari, and one of the lines of optics was named 'Trophy'. It was therefore considered to have a strong link to hunting, through marketing products to sports hunters.

Background

Eschenbach Holding GmbH was established by Josef Eschenbach in 1913. It has an annual turnover of £115 million according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers (viewed November 2020). In 2007, Barclays Private Equity (now Equistone Partners Europe) acquired a 70% stake in the Eschenbach Group and a 20% stake in its management.¹⁹⁰

Eschenbach's products fit into roughly three key areas: eyewear, vision technology products and consumer optics. The company sells a range of spectacles under the Brendel, Humphrey's, Fineline, Jos. Eschenbach, Freigeist and TITANFLEX brands in addition to Marc O' Polo, an eyewear brand that Eschenbach licenses. Eschenbach also sells magnifiers, lamps, meteorological equipment, binoculars, monoculars, spotting scopes and opera glasses.

Sporting accessories

On Eschenbach's main sales website, www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com, there was a section titled 'Areas of Use', which outlined the needs of different Eschenbach customers. This included a page on hunting and safari, with a banner of a drawing of a deer, beneath which four different binocular ranges were shown. Otherwise, products were sold by type or range rather than activity. The company sold binoculars, monoculars and spotting scopes.

The screenshot shows the Eschenbach website's 'Hunting and safari' section. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'AREAS OF USE', 'PRODUCT RANGE', 'FIND RETAILER', 'SERVICE', and 'ABOUT ESCHENBACH'. Below this is a large banner image of a deer in a forest. The text below the banner reads: 'Hunting and safari' followed by 'The ideal hunting binoculars: robust and bright'. It then describes the requirements for hunting binoculars and lists features like 'exceptional colour fidelity and highly detailed images due to lenses made of extra low dispersion glass'. Below this, it says 'The ideal specification for safari: a compact size and highly detailed image'. The next section features two product listings: 'trophy D 8 x 56 ED' with a list of features and 'farlux® SELECTOR V 8-15 x 35' described as 'POWERFUL ZOOM BINOCULARS WITH BEST VIEWING COMFORT FOR DAYTIME HUNTING'. The footer includes 'Product registration', 'Networks & communities', 'Why Eschenbach Optik?', 'Quick links', and a 'Product registration' button.

A section titled 'Areas of Use' included a page on hunting and safari, with a banner of a drawing of a deer, beneath which four different binocular ranges were shown. www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com

One spotting scope listed hunting under ‘example uses’. The product descriptions for five binoculars in the Trophy, Farlux and Sektor ranges mentioned hunting but not specific types of hunting or prey:

“Bright images showing every detail: Hunter’s binoculars for the discerning discoverer.”¹⁹¹

“Bright images showing every detail: hunting binoculars that meet the most demand[ding] requirements.”¹⁹²

“The first choice for hunters, ornithologists and discerning nature lovers.”¹⁹³

“Powerful zoom binoculars with best viewing comfort for bird watching and daytime hunting.”¹⁹⁴

“At only 1,038 grams one of the lightest hunter’s binoculars on the market.”¹⁹⁵

Other links to hunting

The Eschenbach Facebook page featured several photos of trophy animals with prominent horns or antlers, such as the Alpine ibex (with the caption, “the horns of the Alpine ibex can grow to over a metre long”),¹⁹⁶ fallow deer and elk. All of the photos referred to nature observation and not hunting.

Arms and military links

No links between Eschenbach and the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

No information on Eschenbach’s sustainability policies or practices could be found. No evidence was found that demonstrated that the company was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements.

Eschenbach was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

¹⁹¹ www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com/en-GB/431/product-range/detail/174/trophy-D-8-x-56-ED, viewed on 8 November 2020

¹⁹² www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com/en-GB/431/product-range/detail/280/trophy-reg-P-8-x-56, viewed on 8 November 2020

¹⁹³ www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com/en-GB/431/product-range/detail/181/farlux%20SELECTOR%20D, viewed on 8 November 2020

¹⁹⁴ www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com/en-GB/431/product-range/detail/182/farlux%20Selector%20V, viewed on 8 November 2020

¹⁹⁵ www.eschenbach-freizeitoptik.com/en-GB/431/product-range/detail/199/sektor%20D%208%20x%2056%20compact+, viewed on 8 November 2020

¹⁹⁶ www.facebook.com/eschenbach.freizeitoptik/photos/a.157868270998553/3382466771872004, viewed on 8 November 2020

Summary

In the 2016 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ report, no links between Fujifilm and hunting were found. In October 2017, however, the company’s US website sold riflescopes and marketed a pair of binoculars for hunting. In 2020, the company had removed riflescopes from its online stores and product listings, but they were still sold on third-party online stores, including Walmart. The same pair of binoculars was still marked as “ideal for hunters” on Fujifilm’s US website. Since the company had not announced that it had stopped producing riflescopes and they continued to be for sale on third-party websites, Fujifilm was still considered to have strong ties to sports hunting.

Background

Fujifilm Holdings Corporation is part of the Japanese Fujifilm group, and owns over 1,000 subsidiaries.¹⁹⁷

The group is based in Japan and was initially founded in 1934 as Fuji Photo Film Co. Ltd., a company that focused on manufacturing photographic film. The company was established as part of government plans to create a domestic photographic film manufacturing industry.

Fujifilm Holdings Corporation had a turnover of ¥2,315.1 billion (£16 billion) in 2019-2020.¹⁹⁸ Sales of optical devices and electronic imaging equipment accounted for just ¥103.7 billion (£720 million) of this (around 4%).¹⁹⁹

Its industries include photography and optical equipment, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, and office equipment such as printers and copy machines. The company entered the riflescope market in 2017.²⁰⁰

Shooting accessories

Although Fujinon’s Accurion riflescope range was still sold online by optics stores²⁰¹ and Walmart,²⁰² it was no longer present on Fujifilm’s US website. No announcement that the company had ceased its production of riflescopes was found.

Fujifilm’s binoculars catalogue provided mainly technical details²⁰³ and did not reference hunting. On its US website, though, Fujifilm still marketed its KF binocular series as “ideal for hunters, bird watchers and other outdoor activities”.²⁰⁴ No images of animals were found on the website.

No references to hunting were found on Fujifilm’s European website, www.fujifilm.eu, which only sold binoculars.

Other links to hunting

No other links to hunting were found.

Arms and military links

On its global and EU websites, Fujifilm did not market its optics for tactical use but according to the Fujifilm Americas website, based in Colombia,²⁰⁵ Fujinon supplied binoculars to the US military and other governments. The website listed three military series – named US Army, Defense Supply and Foreign Military²⁰⁶ – that were not found on the company’s other websites.

In 2017, Fujifilm won a \$768 million imaging contract with the US Department of Defense for use of its SYNAPSE system,²⁰⁷ a “medical IT solution that empowers users to comprehensively manage medical diagnostic images”.²⁰⁸ Fujifilm’s image management technology would replace the electronic health record system used by the department and associated Department Veterans Affairs. The system already gave access to medical images stored on the first virtual server of the European Department of Defense from 21 European military hospitals and clinics.²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁷ Fujifilm Holdings Corporation on www.hoovers.com, viewed on 16 October 2020

¹⁹⁸ ir.fujifilm.com/en/investors/performance-and-finance/earnings-summary/result1.html, viewed on 16 October 2020

¹⁹⁹ ir.fujifilm.com/en/investors/performance-and-finance/earnings-summary/segment1.html, viewed on 16 October 2020

²⁰⁰ www.fujifilm.com/us/en/news/optical-devices/fujinon-accurion-riflescopes-launch, viewed on 15 October 2020

²⁰¹ www.opticsplanet.com/fujinon-accurion-3-5-10x50-riflescope.html, viewed on 15 October 2020

²⁰² www.walmart.com/search/?query=accurion, viewed on 16 October 2020

²⁰³ asset.fujifilm.com/master/global/files/2019-10/045f7b8b5c70eb959d9a358f4449b019/FUJINON_Binoculars_catalog_EN.pdf, viewed on 15 October 2020

²⁰⁴ www.fujifilm.com/us/en/consumer/binoculars/kf#, viewed on 15 October 2020

²⁰⁵ www.fujifilmamericas.com.co/support/contactenos/index.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

²⁰⁶ www.fujifilmamericas.com.co/products/optical_devices/government-binoculars/index.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

²⁰⁷ www.healthcareitnews.com/news/fujifilm-wins-768-million-imaging-contract-dod, viewed on 4 November 2020

²⁰⁸ www.fujifilm.com/innovation/achievements/synapse/, viewed on 4 November 2020

²⁰⁹ axisimagingnews.com/radiology-products/radiology-software/pacs/fujifilm-deploys-first-synapse-pacs-to-european-military, viewed on 4 November 2020

Sustainability

In 2017, the company implemented a new Sustainable Value Plan (SVP), which looked at health, daily life, environment, and working conditions, among other things. Four environmental priority issues were identified: address climate change, promote recycling of resources, address energy issues to move toward a “non-carbon society” and ensure product and chemical safety.

The company’s 2019 Sustainability Report: SVP stories²¹⁰ outlined several measurable targets for the 2030 financial year (compared to 2013):

- **30% reduction in CO₂ emissions.**
- **Contribute to a reduction in the CO₂ emissions generated by society by 50 million tons.**
- **30% reduction in amount of water used for production.**
- **Contribute to the treatment of 35 million tons of water per year in society.**
- **30% reduction of amount of waste generated by the Fujifilm Group.**
- **30% improvement of the efficiency of Fujifilm resource use per unit of production.**

It discussed renewable energy, development of products with a lower environmental impact of its products and efficient use of resources, recycling and reuse of its products, and management of chemical substances.

The report also contained graphs representing its greenhouse gases emissions (from production and transportation to use and disposal of its products), broken down by type of product and energy source. The Science Based Targets initiative had certified the activities and Fujifilm planned to reach its 2030 targets for reducing CO₂ emissions, which meant they were in line with international agreements on climate change.

The report was accompanied by a management performance report that outlined the business risk, costs and opportunities associated with each target and summarised the progress made, as well as future activities and targets.

Fujifilm produced mainly electronics, which often contain plastics and fire retardants that have a significant negative environmental impact when released after disposal. Fujifilm Green Procurement Standards specified how much of certain chemical substances could be used in the raw materials, parts, and components of its products. The company also used chemSHERPA, a system to share information on chemical substances in products between companies in the supply chain. Although the company’s website discussed these systems in detail, it did not specify which substances it was trying to reduce.

Fujifilm was considered to have reasonable environmental reporting and good carbon management and reporting.

²¹⁰ Sustainability Report 2019, Fujifilm Holdings Corporation, holdings.fujifilm.com/en/sustainability/report/2019#link01, viewed on 11 November 2020

Summary

The promotional text accompanying Bosma products on www.bosmaoptics.com demonstrated only weak links to hunting, listing hunting as a possible use but not specifying the type of hunting or prey. However, the company also produced and sold riflescopes, and was therefore considered to have strong links to hunting overall.

Background

The Bosma optics brand is owned and manufactured by the Chinese company Guangzhou Bosma Corp. Established in 2000, Bosma researches, produces and markets sports optics products worldwide. Its key markets are the USA and Europe.

According to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, viewed October 2020, Guangzhou Bosma had a turnover of £14 million.

No publicly available annual accounts or annual report were found.

Shooting Accessories

The company's website, www.bosmaoptics.com, listed the following range of shooting accessories: riflescopes and spotting scopes, red dot sights, binoculars, rangefinders and riflescope mounts. Binoculars and spotting scopes were subcategorised by activity, one of which was hunting.

The text accompanying products was often marketed to hunters, although the website did not go into detail about hunting type or prey:

*"The BOSMA TSS (Thin Scope Shell) brand new riflescopes were made specifically for hunting or recreational shooting."*²¹¹

*"The Super Wide Angle optics design on the BOSMA brand new riflescope 1-6x24IR hunting Sight brings really amazing field of view and exciting experience for shooters ..."*²¹²

*"Bosma New Hunting 8x42/ 10x42 Binoculars, is the premium binoculars for hunting, hiking or nature-watching."*²¹³

The website used few images, except those of products. No pictures of animals were found.

Other hunting links

Bosma's most recent Twitter and Facebook posts, from 2016, encouraged customers to share the view through their scope²¹⁴ and their best hunting memory.²¹⁵ The company also participated in the 2020, 2018 and 2017 IWA Outdoors Classics,²¹⁶ "the world-leading trade fair for hunting, shooting sports, equipment for outdoor activities and for civilian and official security applications".²¹⁷

Arms and military links

Bosma marketed its three prismatic scopes as "a really military grade product [that meets] all demands from law enforcement and military professionals".²¹⁸

Sustainability

No environmental or carbon emission reporting was found on the Bosma Optics website.

In 2015, Bosma Optics invested \$500,000 in 4Deep, a Canadian start-up that developed holographic and fluorescence microscopes for the real-time analysis of particles and microorganisms in liquids. The two companies established a joint research and development venture in Silicon Valley.²¹⁹ 4Deep technology had a variety of applications, from oil and gas exploration²²⁰ to detecting harmful algae bloom.²²¹

Bosma Optics was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

²¹¹ www.bosmaoptics.com/showproducts.asp?id=789, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹² www.bosmaoptics.com/showproducts.asp?id=779, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹³ www.bosmaoptics.com/showproducts.asp?id=849, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹⁴ twitter.com/Bosmaoptics/status/715052013441167361/photo/1, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹⁵ twitter.com/Bosmaoptics/status/700134351539826688/photo/1, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹⁶ www.iwa.info/en/ausstellerprodukte/iwa20/exhibitor-53486412/guangzhou-bosma-corp; travelsdocbox.com/72469202-Theme_Parks/Exhibitorlist-2018-iwa-outdoorclassics.html; www.bosmaoptics.com/shownews.asp?id=914, viewed 28 October 2020

²¹⁷ www.iwa.info/en/exhibition-info, viewed on 28 October 2020

²¹⁸ www.bosmaoptics.com/showproducts.asp?id=868, viewed on 28 October 2020

²¹⁹ www.newswire.ca/news-releases/4deep-inwater-imaging-receives-500000-investment-gains-access-to-key-chinese-market-and-forges-forward-with-joint-rd-venture-552176391.html, viewed on 10 November 2020

²²⁰ 4-deep.com/applications/oil-gas/, viewed on 10 November 2020

²²¹ 4-deep.com/applications/algae/, viewed on 10 November 2020

Summary

Avocet Capital Limited, which owns the direct parent company of the Hawke brand, Deben Group Industries, changed its name to Hawke Optics Limited. It is now a subsidiary of Rockbay Capital Limited, a company that is owned jointly by the directors of Hawke Optics and Deben.²²² Since 2018, Deben Group Industries has started distributing air rifles and accessories in the UK.²²³ The Hawke website's product descriptions and catalogue feature considerably fewer images of hunted animals but the company's Hawke Life webpage and sponsorships still link the company firmly to sports hunting.

Background

Hawke is a family-run business, established 40 years ago in the UK. It now operates in 60 counties and has offices in Indiana, USA. It sells optics under its trademarks: Hawke, Frontier, Endurance, Panorama, Vantage, Sidewinder, Airmax, Nature-Trek, and Sapphire. No accurate turnover figure for the company could be found.

Deben Group Industries, owned by Hawke Optics Limited (previously named Avocet Capital Limited), distributes Hawke products in the UK. In 2018, Deben Group Industries had a turnover of £15,369,124, which showed a 12% increase compared to the previous year. 46% of this came from the UK, 38% from the rest of Europe, and 16% from the rest of the world.²²⁴ The accounts of both Hawke Optics and Deben stated that Rockbay Capital Limited had bought Hawke Optics (then Avocet) and was now the company's ultimate parent company.



The website Hawke Life and Hawke's Facebook page featured videos and pictures of an annual moose and caribou hunt in Alaska

²²² Rockbay Capital Ltd, Certification of Incorporation, Companies House

²²³ Deben Group Industries, Annual Report and Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2018, Companies House

²²⁴ Deben Group Industries, Annual Report and Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2018, Companies House



Hawke supported several hunting programmes aired online and on US TV, including Hitmen. hitmentv.com

The owners of Hawke Optics registered Hawke Sports Optics Limited with Companies House in September 2020 but, confusingly, applied for a voluntary strike-off of the company in the same month.

Deben Group Industries sells a range of products for shooting that include optics, air rifles, ear defenders, gun cleaning equipment and other accessories. Since 2018, it has stopped producing 'ferret and terrier finders' and is looking to sell its Ferret Finder trademark.²²⁵

Shooting accessories

Hawke divided products into two key categories on its website: 'Nature' and 'Sport'. The latter contained a range of hunting gear, including riflescopes, crossbow scopes, airgun scopes, red dot sights, targeting systems, range finders, sidewheels (for improving accuracy of scopes), and a range of other accessories for riflescopes. The Hawke Sport catalogue for 2020, aimed at hunters, also contained spotting scopes and binoculars. The catalogue

featured images of shooters in hunting gear with aimed rifles but no longer included pictures of animals other than a hunting dog.

Product information on the website and in the catalogue was largely technical, but some references to different types of hunting were found, including big 'game' and driven hunts:

*"Be it winning target competitions on the world stage, or trekking on a hunt through the plains of Africa, the Sidewinder feels perfectly at home and is totally adaptable to suit your shooting discipline."*²²⁶

*"Designed for all hunting disciplines - from varmint to big game."*²²⁷

*"Realtree's newest camo pattern, Edge, will extend your hunt with the perfect camouflage, the first camo pattern that allows you to blend into your hunting environment at close range, with natural elements arranged in a way to disrupt the human form at a distance."*²²⁸

*"Ideal For Pistols, ARs And Hunting Rifles"*²²⁹

*"... Designed specifically to help fast target acquisition during Battue and driven hunt."*²³⁰

*Honeycomb Sunshade sun shades: "The other key advantage is they stop any reflections from the objective lens reaching the game, making the scope more covert in a hunting situation."*²³¹

Several commercials for Hawke riflescopes featured hunting. In the commercial for the 'Endurance 30 WA' model, a hunter was shown aiming at a large deer.²³² In a commercial for the 'AirArms S510 Ultimate Sporter & Hawke Airmax Scope', a hunter was shown killing a squirrel and later holding up the dead animal.²³³

Hawke had ended development and support for its Ballistic Reticle Calculator (Chairgun) and Pellet Trajectory Software (X-Act) software.²³⁴

²²⁵ www.ferretfinder.co.uk/, viewed on 11 October 2020

²²⁶ uk.hawkeoptics.com/sidewinder-riflescopes.html#Sidewinder30FFP, viewed 5 October 2020

²²⁷ uk.hawkeoptics.com/endurance-riflescopes.html, viewed 5 October 2020

²²⁸ uk.hawkeoptics.com/black-fleece-beanie.html, viewed 5 October 2020

²²⁹ uk.hawkeoptics.com/endurance-red-dot-1x25-weaver.html, viewed 5 October 2020

²³⁰ k.hawkeoptics.com/frontier-30-1-6x24-circle-dot.html, viewed 5 October 2020

²³¹ uk.hawkeoptics.com/honeycomb-sunshade-objective-24mm.html, viewed 5 October 2020

²³² www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQclycFctrU&autoplay=1&rel=0&controls=1&showinfo=0, viewed 12 October 2020

²³³ www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcWmomXX4Y0, viewed 12 October 2020

²³⁴ uk.hawkeoptics.com/chairegun-and-x-act-end-of-life.html, viewed on 12 October 2020

Other links to hunting

Hawke also has a website called Hawke Life, described as “a lifestyle hub for the outdoor enthusiast.”²³⁵ The sport section featured news and blogs on hunting, as well as several video series with professional hunters, depicting all details of different types of hunts, from equipment preparation to the socialising afterwards.

For example, in a 9-part video series titled ‘Self guided’ Alaskan adventure²³⁶ from 2019, hunters Ian Halford and Steve Wild shot moose and caribou as part of an Alaskan ‘harvesting programme’. The videos featured the killing of a moose²³⁷ and two caribou bulls²³⁸ and gave tips on how to set up a hunting trip in Alaska; scope, call out and butcher animals; and pack their hide and antlers. The hunters were seen taking home antlers, with the meat said to be donated to a “family in need”.²³⁹ Other series covered the killing of a roebuck in Cornwall with a close-up inspection of the dead animal²⁴⁰ and a traditional post-hunt tableau of dead boar in Hungary.²⁴¹

The video ‘Hunting with Hawke’,²⁴² published on the company’s YouTube channel, showed images of a driven hunt of wild boar, shooting of deer in the UK and big game hunting in Alaska. The video featured a family of a brown bear with two cubs and a discussion of foxes.

Hawke was listed as a sponsor for Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation, an organisation protecting “hunting and fishing heritage” in Tennessee,²⁴³ and Whitetails Unlimited, a conservation organisation that was a staunch supporter of “the second amendment, hunter rights, and promoting the sport of regulated hunting.”²⁴⁴

It also supported several hunting programmes aired online and on US TV, including Backwoods Life²⁴⁵ and Hitmen.²⁴⁶ The website for the programme contained many images of trophy deer with big antlers, and two photos of dead black bears. The company was no longer listed as a sponsor for Airgun Web TV.

Arms and military links

Between 2008 and 2015, Deben Group Industries had applied to the UK government for 266 export licences for equipment designed for military use to countries all over the world.²⁴⁷

Hawke products were sold in online stores²⁴⁸ for military goods and the brand was featured in a market research guide on military rifle scopes.²⁴⁹ It also had a booth at the (cancelled) 2020 National Rifle Association exhibition, which ran alongside its annual meeting.²⁵⁰

Sustainability

At the time of writing, the only sustainability information on the Hawke website was a section on recycling,²⁵¹ which stated that Hawke recycles customers’ old products for free when they buy a new one. It warned against throwing electrical equipment in the bin and encouraged recycling to save natural resources and prevent hazardous substances from leaking into the environment, “harming wildlife and also human health”.

No further information could be found that demonstrated that Hawke was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. It was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

²³⁵ life.hawkeoptics.com/

²³⁶ life.hawkeoptics.com/category/self-guided-hunting-alaska/, viewed on 6 November 2020

²³⁷ life.hawkeoptics.com/moose-calling/ time stamp 12:55, viewed on 11 October 2020

²³⁸ life.hawkeoptics.com/packing-out-caribou/, viewed on 11 October 2020

²³⁹ life.hawkeoptics.com/packing-out-a-moose/ time stamp 15:28, viewed on 11 October 2020

²⁴⁰ www.youtube.com/watch?v=mns9WW0CvfE&feature=emb_logo, viewed on 6 November 2020

²⁴¹ life.hawkeoptics.com/wild-boar-hunting-traditions/, viewed on 6 November 2020

²⁴² www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_yudv_J3P8, viewed on 5 October 2020

²⁴³ www.twrf.net/sponsors/, viewed 12 October 2020

²⁴⁴ www.whitetailsunlimited.com/support/sponsors/, viewed on 20 November 2020

²⁴⁵ www.backwoodslife.com/partners/, viewed 12 October 2020

²⁴⁶ www.hitmentv.com/sponsors.html, viewed 12 October 2020

²⁴⁷ caat.org.uk/resources/company-export-licence-application-data-from-2008-2015/, viewed on 9 November 2020

²⁴⁸ www.militaryworldsrl.com/en/brands/hawke-optics/; weapon.bg/en/manufacture/22/hawke-optics.html?page=3, viewed on 12 October 2020

²⁴⁹ thedailychronicle.in/tag/military-riflescope-market-trends/, viewed on 12 October 2020

²⁵⁰ s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 9 November 2020

²⁵¹ uk.hawkeoptics.com/recycling.html, viewed on 12 October 2020

Summary

Bresser's parent company now also owned the Alpen brand. Bresser's USA website www.bresserusa.com continued to have a far greater focus on hunting than either its UK counterpart www.bresseruk.com, or its 'group of companies' one www.bresser.de. It no longer mentioned trophy hunting in the text on its website, but the profiles of its pro-staff still featured pictures of recently killed trophies such as deer heads and turkey tail fans. The UK website, however, had started marketing its spotting scopes to hunters. As the company sold riflescopes and referenced driven hunts, it was considered to still have a strong connection to sports hunting.

Background

Bresser GmbH was founded by Josef Bresser in Germany in 1957 and started out as an importer and distributor of binoculars. His son, Rolf Bresser, has shared ownership of the business since 2009, with the Chinese optics company Jinghua Optical & Electronics Co. Ltd. (JOC, also known as Guangzhou Jinghua Precision Optics Co.) and Helmut Ebbert (Bresser's CEO). Details of percentage ownership could not be found but according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, JOC was the company's ultimate owner. JOC has another optics subsidiary, Explore Scientific, which has a brand partnership with Bresser.²⁵²

Corporate database D&B Hoovers lists JOC's turnover as £88 million in 2019. Of this, £26 million came from Bresser GmbH and £14 million from Explore Scientific.

Bresser offers a broad range of optics products that are aimed at all ages and skill levels. Products include telescopes, binoculars, spotting scopes, riflescopes, night vision devices, photo studio equipment, microscopes, rangefinders, magnifiers, weather stations and other outdoor products, all of which are distributed globally. In 2012, the company signed a licensing agreement to market optics products and other outdoor devices under the National Geographic name.

In 2018, Explore Scientific bought the Alpen Optics brand, which is now distributed by Bresser USA together with the Bresser brand. Products are also sold under the Explore Scientific and Yukon brands.

Alpen Outdoor Corporation was established in 1997 and was based in the USA. The 2018 Shooting Wildlife report found that Alpen had strong connections to hunting and focused on reaching new markets, including youth hunters. In early 2018, Alpen Optics closed after the founder retired and Explore Scientific acquired all of the company's trademarks and designs.²⁵³

Shooting Accessories

The homepage of Bresser's USA website advertised the 'Hunters Specialities' range and featured photos of elk and a drawing of a pheasant. Products were listed by type and included both binoculars and the following hunting accessories: rangefinders, 'game' cameras, red dots, riflescopes, spotting scopes and a hunting blind. Product text often targeted hunters:



More than half of the profile pictures showed a pro staffer with a recently killed trophy. bresserusa.com

²⁵² bresserusa.com/pages/about-bresser, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵³ bresserusa.com/pages/about-alpen, viewed on 6 November 2020

“With its impressive magnification options and generous aperture, the Hunters Specialties 6-24x50 Riflescope can produce bright, detail-rich views that are essential in long-range hunting situations.”²⁵⁴

“Whether you are hunting game or shooting targets, making the perfect connection can hinge on having precision optics that offer accuracy and dependability.”²⁵⁵

“When hunting fast-moving game, Bresser’s TrueView Tactical Magnifier gives you the ability to easily and quickly adapt to changing range situations.”²⁵⁶

“In hunting, archery or even hiking, making that coveted connection often hinges on knowing the distance between you and your target.”²⁵⁷

“The ability to rotate the Spektar 60 spotting scope is especially useful when hunting or looking at astronomical objects.”²⁵⁸

“Made to meet a sportsman’s needs, Hunters Specialties binoculars combine superior Bresser optics and high-quality features in a streamlined package that is both waterproof and fog proof.”²⁵⁹

The news section on the Bresser USA website which, in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife report, was found to include a picture of a dead black bear, had been removed. Less pictures of ‘game’ animals were also found in Bresser USA’s 2020 Sport Optics Catalogue than in its 2016 catalogue. The catalogue pictured a male and female deer and a bighorn sheep.

Hunting and trophy animals were the focus of Bresser USA on social media as well. The Alpen/Bresser Facebook page until recently hosted a monthly game camera photo competition. Many of the entries were of trophy animals such as bear and deer.²⁶⁰ The page also featured pictures of dead turkeys and a dead deer.²⁶¹

On the ‘group of companies’ website, www.bresser.de, products were listed under product type and key uses. Product categories included astronomy, microscopy, sport optics, photo studio, weather & time, PULSAR thermal and night vision equipment, electronics and junior. Under the sport optics section of the website a number of shooting accessories were sold: riflescopes, spotting scopes, monoculars, night vision equipment, binoculars, cameras, rangefinders and tripods. Product searches could be narrowed by ‘field of application’, with ‘hunt’ as an option. Several product descriptions also referenced hunting:

“The Jaeger 1.5-6x42 is very versatile and is equally suitable for driven hunt as well as for shooting short and medium range moving targets.”²⁶²

On the UK website, products were again listed under a wide range of types (astronomy, photography, etc.). The website did not sell riflescopes, and rangefinders were listed in the spotting scope category. Other categories were binoculars, monoculars, optical accessories, night vision, opera & theatre, and camera. Product information was largely technical, and it was no longer possible to filter products by field of application. One binocular range was named ‘Hunter’.

While the 2018 report had not found any spotting scopes specifically linked to hunting, this time there were several. The new Pirsch spotting scopes range was made *“especially for the price-conscious observer and hunter”*²⁶³ and one other spotting scope listed ‘hunt’ as a field of application.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁴ bresserusa.com/collections/riflescopes/products/hunter-specialties-predator-series-rifle-scope, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵⁵ bresserusa.com/collections/riflescopes/products/condor-3-9x40-rifle-scope, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵⁶ bresserusa.com/products/red-dot-7?_pos=3&_sid=191156318&_ss=r, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵⁷ bresserusa.com/search?type=product&q=hunting, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵⁸ bresserusa.com/products/bresser-spektar-15-45-x-60-spotting-scope?_pos=13&_sid=838a63971&_ss=r, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁵⁹ bresserusa.com/collections/binoculars-hunter-specialties, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶⁰ www.facebook.com/AlpenBresser/photos/3853170781365124, viewed on 6 November 2020

²⁶¹ www.facebook.com/AlpenBresser/photos/2070090756339811, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶² www.bresser.de/en/Sport-Optics/Riflescopes/YUKON-Jaeger-1-5-6x42-Optical-Sight.html, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶³ www.bresseruk.com/binoculars-spotting-scopes/spotting-scopes/bresser-pirsch-20-60x80-45-spotting-scope.html, viewed on 5 November 2020

²⁶⁴ www.bresseruk.com/binoculars-spotting-scopes/spotting-scopes/bresser-15-45x60-zoom-spotting-scope.html, viewed on 5 November 2020

Other links to hunting

The Bresser USA homepage had a pro-staff section with the profiles of sixteen Bresser/Alpen pro-staff team members. These “seasoned hunters and outdoor enthusiasts who have decades of in-the-field experience” were “ready to share their knowledge of the outdoors as well as specific Bresser/Alpen products on social media, at shows and through direct interactions”. More than half of the profiles pictures showed a pro-staffer with a recently killed trophy such as a deer head or turkey tail fans.²⁶⁵ The pro-staff team members had hunted a variety of animals, including trophy ‘game’ such as bear,²⁶⁶ whitetail deer,²⁶⁷ elk, caribou,²⁶⁸ and Cape buffalo.²⁶⁹

Bresser no longer sponsored Texas Sportsman TV and was not found to sponsor any other hunting organisation.

A video series on Alpen Optics’ YouTube channel featured Rick White, a Bresser Pro-staffer and TV personality known from the Outdoor & Sportsman channel, scoping out deer with Alpen and Bresser hunting products. It advertised a competition to win a hunt and \$6,000 worth of products,²⁷⁰ organised by Whitetail Grounds, a company that sells ‘premium deer attractant’.²⁷¹

Alpen continued to sponsor Bighorn Outdoors,²⁷² a hunting programme aired online. US TV show On the Right Track, which it had sponsored as well, was found to no longer exist.²⁷³ It had previously run programmes to engage a diverse range of hunters. These included sponsoring junior deer hunts²⁷⁴ and a women’s hunting camp.²⁷⁵

Arms and military links

No links between Bresser or Alpen and the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

Although Bresser’s website contains a section on corporate social responsibility, this primarily talked about schemes the company is involved with rather than its own environmental and social policies and practices. For example, when viewed in October 2020, Bresser was working with the Jewish National Fund, a non-profit land developer that owns 13% of Israel’s land. The company had also partnered with three organisations linked to the Stars Shine for Everyone project, which provided astronomy education to students in Belgian special primary schools.²⁷⁶ No discussion could be found regarding how the company was working towards reducing its own environment and climate impacts in line with international agreements.

Bresser was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

²⁶⁵ [bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-directory](https://www.bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-directory), viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶⁶ [bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-michael-di-giovanni](https://www.bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-michael-di-giovanni), viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶⁷ [bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-steve-harnden](https://www.bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-steve-harnden), viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶⁸ [bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-brian-kasten](https://www.bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-brian-kasten), viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁶⁹ [bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-brenda-valentine](https://www.bresserusa.com/pages/prostaff-brenda-valentine), viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁷⁰ www.facebook.com/AlpenBresser/photos/2365970433418507, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁷¹ www.facebook.com/whitetailgrounds/, viewed on 28 October 2020

²⁷² www.bighornoutdoors.com/sponsors.php, viewed 14 November 2020

²⁷³ www.ontherighttrack.tv/sponsors/, viewed 14 November 2020

²⁷⁴ www.realtree.com/big-game-hunting/news/junior-deer-hunts-in-california, viewed 14 November 2020

²⁷⁵ www.womensoutdoornews.com/2015/05/nw-ladies-hunting-camp-to-host-2nd-annual-outdoor-training-seminar-for-women/, viewed 14 November 2020

²⁷⁶ www.bresser.de/c/en/bresser-gmbh/corporate-social-responsibility/, viewed on 28 October 2020

Summary

The Kenko brand appeared to have no connection to hunting. However, another brand owned by Kenko Tokina, Sightron, produced riflescopes and marketed its products to sports hunters. Kenko was therefore considered to have a strong link to sports hunting.

This was a major change from the 2016 and 2018 Shooting Wildlife? reports, which recommended Kenko as an optics brand without apparent links to hunting. It seems that Kenko Tokina deliberately leaves out its relationship with Sightron from its English marketing on kenkoglobal.com and sightronusa.com.

Background

Kenko Tokina, established in 1957, is headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. The company specialises in optical products that include binoculars, microscopes, filters, photographic and optical accessories, and bags. According to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, viewed in September 2020, the company had a turnover of £114 million in 2019-20.

Kenko Tokina also owns another optics company, Sightron Japan Inc., which produces riflescopes, binoculars and stargazing equipment.²⁷⁷ Although the company's Japanese website labelled Sightron USA as a trading partner, it also stated Sightron was founded in 1994 in the USA as a manufacturer of riflescopes for hunting and sports shooting.²⁷⁸ Sightron USA was therefore considered to be carrying Kenko Tokina's Sightron brand.



The Sightron Inc Facebook page contained two photos of dead trophy animals from 2016: an antelope and elk killed by customers

Shooting accessories

Although the Kenko brand sold binoculars and spotting scopes, no product could be found that was specifically marketed at hunters. Most binoculars and scopes were recommended for bird watching. No images of 'game' animals were displayed, and no further links to sports hunting could be found.

Sightron, however, produced riflescopes as well as binoculars, spotting scopes and electronic sighting devices. While its Japanese website, sightron.co.jp, gave mostly technical product descriptions, Sightron USA and Kenko Tokina's Russian website marketed Sightron optics at hunters and sports hunters in particular:

"The Sightron SIH 3-9x40 riflescope belongs to the SIH series and is specially designed for hunting at medium and long distances."²⁷⁹

"Designed, tested and retested by Sportsmen for Sportsmen ..."²⁸⁰

"Sightron outfits the optics market in various sport categories from Hunting, Target Shooting, nature viewing, exploration and spectator sports."²⁸¹

"From the SI series to the SIII Long Range series to the newer SVED Series Sightron is committed to offering the competitive hunters and shooters the most accurate and reliable optics."²⁸²

"No matter the task at hand the new SII Blue Sky HD binoculars are ready for all jobs from bird watching, to hunting or viewing the night sky."²⁸³

²⁷⁷ www.sightron.co.jp/product.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

²⁷⁸ www.sightron.co.jp/sightron.html

²⁷⁹ www.kenko-tokina.ru/product/sightron_sih_3_9x40_md/%23info, viewed on 8 November 2020 with Google Translate

²⁸⁰ sightronusa.com/, viewed on 8 November 2020

²⁸¹ sightronusa.com/about-us/, viewed on 8 November 2020

²⁸² Sightron 2020 Full Line Catalogue

²⁸³ sightronusa.com/binoculars/, viewed on 8 November 2020



Photos of trophy animals - moose, a family of brown bear, elk and fox - featured prominently on the pages for several of Sightron_s binocular ranges. sightronusa.com

Sightron USA carried a riflescope range titled the SIH Hunting Series. Photos of trophy animals – moose, elk, fox and a family of brown bear – featured prominently on the pages for several of its binocular ranges. Sightron riflescopes were also sold in the UK through online retailers such as Optics Warehouse and Elite Optical.

Other links to hunting

The Sightron Inc. Facebook page contained two photos of dead trophy animals from 2016: an antelope²⁸⁴ and elk²⁸⁵ killed by customers.

Arms and military links

Sightron produced a catalogue “for government offices only” that was labelled a Military & Law Enforcement Products Catalogue in the accompanying picture.²⁸⁶ It also had a booth at the (cancelled) 2020 National Rifle Association exhibition, which ran alongside its annual meeting.²⁸⁷ Kenko marketed one of its consumer binoculars for military use.²⁸⁸

Sustainability

No evidence of sustainability reporting could be found on the company’s websites. Products labelled as containing ‘eco-glass optics’ (said to be arsenic- and lead-free) found in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report were no longer available for sale.

No further information could be found that demonstrated that Kenko was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. It was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.



Kowa US website contained images of trophy animals

²⁸⁴ www.facebook.com/sightroninc/photos/962857320500517, viewed on 14 November 2020

²⁸⁵ www.facebook.com/sightroninc/photos/933738930079023, viewed on 14 November 2020

²⁸⁶ www.sightron.co.jp/catalog.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

²⁸⁷ s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 9 November 2020

²⁸⁸ kenkoglobal.com/product/m_model_7x50m_if/, viewed on 8 November 2020



The company's US website contained images of trophy animals. sportingoptics.kowa-usa.com/scopes

Summary

In October 2020, the company confirmed in an email to Ethical Consumer that it still followed the same ethical policies and practices as it did in 2017, meaning that none of its products contained reticles (used for targeting), and that they did not sponsor any shooting organisations or events. The company's global website no longer marketed any products to hunters, but its US-based website still did for one spotting scope. The company was considered to still have a weak link to hunting.

Background

Kowa was founded in 1894 in Japan and initially started out as a wholesaler of cotton fabrics. The company began producing non-fabric items in 1945 and now manufactures a broad range of products that include pharmaceuticals, electronic devices, optical equipment and broadcasting devices. Kowa also sells textiles (including organic cotton), machinery, building materials, chemicals, and other consumer products. Kowa started producing sport optics in 1952.²⁸⁹ The group had a turnover of ¥422,576 million (approximately £3 billion) for the financial year ending 31 March 2020.²⁹⁰

Shooting accessories

Kowa's websites, www.kowaproducts.com and sportingoptics.kowa-usa.com, both organise products by category. Optics products include spotting scopes, binoculars, telephoto and wide-angle lenses, digiscoping, eyepieces and accessories such as spotting scope cases.²⁹¹ No 'hunting section' was present on either website. In October 2020, the company confirmed in an email to Ethical Consumer that it still follows the same ethical policies and practices as in 2017 and did not make any products containing 'reticles' (used for targeting).²⁹²

Products marketed to hunters were no longer found on www.kowaproducts.com, but one spotting scope on the company's US site, sportingoptics.kowa-usa.com, still was:

"... the dream instrument of every bird watcher, hunter, and target shooter."²⁹³

"Ideal for bird watchers, hunters, and target shooters..."²⁹⁴

²⁸⁹ kowa.eu/, viewed 6 November 2020

²⁹⁰ www.kowa.co.jp/eng/company/, viewed 6 November 2020

²⁹¹ www.kowaoptic.com/faqs

²⁹² Email from Kowa, received October 2020

²⁹³ sportingoptics.kowa-usa.com/scopes/, viewed on 6 November 2020

²⁹⁴ portingoptics.kowa-usa.com/spotting-scopes/1271-tsn-82sv-angled-spotting-scope.html?search_query=hunt&results=3, viewed on 6 November 2020

The website also contained images of trophy animals.

The company had confirmed in 2017 that it did not sponsor any hunting events.²⁹⁵

Other links to hunting

Kowa Sporting Optics Facebook page contained a few references from 2012 and 2013 to hunting. In 2020, the only posts on its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds featuring animals were videos and images of birds and butterflies,²⁹⁶ none of which were hunting-related. A video from 2017 on the company's YouTube channel featured an Ibex and marketed an adapter ring that enabled customers to use their smartphone for digiscoping with one of its spotting scopes.²⁹⁷

Neither of Kowa's websites mentioned pro-staff, but a photo of a Kowa brand ambassador, Robert Wilson,²⁹⁸ labelled a Kowa pro-staff on Facebook, indicated that the company may have links to pro-staff.²⁹⁹ No further information could be found.

Arms and military links

The Kowa Lenses website had a section dedicated to Industrial and Safety Applications, with subsections for CCTV/Security and Border Control.³⁰⁰ Its zoom lenses for video monitoring systems "can detect small details from a distance of several kilometers and help many countries to secure their borders", to "prevent illegal border crossings" and "the smuggling of illegal goods such as drugs or weapons".

Kowa specifically marketed low-light optics for border security at night to police, military and border guards of different countries.³⁰¹ It produced a low-light camera and motor zoom lenses with long range focus that could easily shift focus from daylight to infrared light and can see through mist and materials such as plastic. Kowa offered on-site support for installing these systems and can assist in field tests.³⁰²

Sustainability

Kowa Group's website contained environmental policies for different locations and affiliate companies of the group.³⁰³ Kowa stated that it aimed to establish and implement an environmental management system (EMS) according to ISO 14001 standards. The company's policy contained commitments to reducing energy consumption, conserving resources, and reducing chemical pollution and waste.³⁰⁴

However, the company did not publish quantified environmental reduction targets or report on its environmental impact, such as its carbon emissions. Presentation of its environmental activities was limited to three projects: organic cotton production, production and installation of LED lighting and engagement in renewable energy generation.³⁰⁵

Kowa's business units included several that have a large environmental impact. It produced textiles, especially cotton,³⁰⁶ and its building division handled "building materials, exterior products, ceramic tiles, stone, ceramic raw materials, and large mining machines", and unspecified "environmental commodities".³⁰⁷ Many of the processes involved in the manufacture of textiles, especially the production of manmade fibres and dyeing of fabrics, release hazardous substances that have a significant negative environmental impact. The production of non-organic cotton involves the widespread use of pesticides.

Kowa also had a sole agency agreement for the sale of phosphoric acid in Japan with Hubei Xingfa Chemicals Group – one of the few manufacturers with mining rights for phosphate ore and a leader in the production of phosphoric acid in China.³⁰⁸ Phosphate mining and phosphoric acid have been linked to the release of potentially toxic and radioactive chemicals into the environment and have a negative impact on water and air quality.³⁰⁹

Kowa was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

²⁹⁵ Questionnaire from Kowa, received November 2017

²⁹⁶ www.facebook.com/page/134391616590896/search?q=hunt; twitter.com/KowaOpticsEU; www.instagram.com/kowasportopticsnature/, viewed on 22 September 2020

²⁹⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKPI7E94nMY, viewed on 22 September 2020

²⁹⁸ www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100005217128296, viewed on 7 November 2020

²⁹⁹ [www.facebook.com/SCBWF/photos/kowa-pro-staff-rep-@\[100005217128296:2048:robert/658170781031740/](https://www.facebook.com/SCBWF/photos/kowa-pro-staff-rep-@[100005217128296:2048:robert/658170781031740/), viewed on 22 September 2020

³⁰⁰ www.kowa-lenses.com/en/lenses-for-machine-vision-and-cctv, viewed on 22 September 2020

³⁰¹ www.kowa-lenses.com/en/security-low-light-camera, viewed on 22 September 2020

³⁰² www.kowa-lenses.com/en/lenses-for-border-control, viewed on 22 September 2020

³⁰³ www.kowa.com/csr/environment/environment_policy.html, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁴ www.kowa.com/csr/environment/environment_policy.html, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁵ www.kowa.com/csr/environment/index.html, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁶ www.kowa.co.jp/eng/company/division/textile.htm, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁷ www.kowa.co.jp/eng/company/division/non_textile/industry03.htm, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁸ www.kowa.co.jp/eng/company/division/non_textile/chemical01.htm, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁰⁹ medcraveonline.com/IJH/environmental-impact-of-phosphate-mining-and-beneficiation-review.html, viewed on 11 November 2020



The Leica Hunting Blog pictured many animals, either dead or live, although some more recent posts featured hunters, hunting dogs, landscapes and communities local to the area. leica-hunting-blog.com

Summary

Posts from 2012 on the Leica brand's Facebook page, Leica Sport Optics Hunting, referenced hunting elephants and male lions. Although product information on the company's website was largely technical, it made occasional references to driven hunts. Leica was therefore considered to have a strong connection to sport hunting.

Background

Four independent companies share the Leica brand: Leica Camera, Leica Microsystems, Leica Biosystems and Leica Geosystems.³¹⁰ These produce a diverse array of products that include microscopes, cameras, sport optics and laboratory equipment.

Around 96.3% of shares in Leica Camera AG are owned by the Austrian holding company ACM Projektentwicklung (a subsidiary of SOCRATES

Private Foundation).³¹¹ Leica Camera offers a range of cameras, lenses, projectors, binoculars and photographic accessories, and had a turnover of £263 million according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, when viewed in October 2020.

Shooting accessories

Leica's UK website marketed sport optics by the following uses: Experience Nature, Hunting, and Lifestyle and Leisure. The Hunting section listed riflescopes, rangefinders, thermal imaging cameras, binoculars and spotting scopes, and a website search brought up spotting scope cases.³¹² Its riflescope product finder categorised its riflescopes under stalking, mountain hunt, driven hunting, shooting from high seats and long-range target shooting.³¹³ The website also offered the Leica Hunting App, which allows hunters to connect rangefinders to their smartphone and calculate and save personal ballistic curve data.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ www.leica.com/

³¹¹ www.acm-projekt.at/httpdocs/daten/Schlussmeldung.pdf and D&B Hoovers entry Leica Camera Aktiengesellschaft., viewed 21 October 2020

³¹² uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics, viewed on 21 October 2020

³¹³ en.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Riflescopes/Leica-Riflescopes/Product-finder, viewed on 24 October 2020

³¹⁴ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-HUNTING-APP-and-Ballistic-Calculator/Leica-HUNTING-APP-and-Ballistic-Calculator?SearchText=ballistics%20programme&cat=suggesterList, viewed on 21 October 2020

In its marketing, Leica emphasised the technological features of its riflescopes, rangefinders and thermal devices, claiming that their accuracy enabled “ethical” and “contemporary and appropriate hunting”:

“Leica riflescopes stand for passionate hunting and perfect technology. With the riflescope series, we have developed target optics that offer the hunter detailed visual experiences – and enable a safe, ethically-placed shot ... Intuitively operable, systems of lasting value support ethical hunting ... The wide-angle field of view of the Leica riflescopes offers hunters the greatest possible overview for a safe and ethical shot.”³¹⁵

“The Leica Ballistics Calculator quickly and clearly calculates the information required for an ethically-placed shot.”³¹⁶

“The Leica Calonox Sight is the first choice when it comes to correct identification of game and ethical hunting.”³¹⁷

“Leica Calonox thermal imaging cameras for contemporary and appropriate hunting,”³¹⁸

Although product descriptions were largely technical, Leica referred to hunting in several places, and included references to sports hunts:

“... the right solution for all hunt types – from driven hunts to long-range hunting.”³¹⁹

“... a reliable companion in any hunting situation – for precision and flexibility when it counts.”³²⁰

“With the Leica Calonox thermal cameras, hunting becomes dynamic and exciting, especially at night.”³²¹

The product pages featured images of a hog, deer and mountain goat. The hunting testimonials page seemed to have been removed from the website. The only stories relating to hunting were found in the website’s news³²² and events³²³ sections and were product announcements.



The Leica Hunting Blog pictured many animals, either dead or live, although some more recent posts featured hunters, hunting dogs, landscapes and communities local to the area. leica-hunting-blog.com

³¹⁵ us.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Riflescopes/Leica-Riflescopes, viewed 21 October 2020

³¹⁶ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Rangefinders/Leica-Rangefinders, viewed 21 October 2020

³¹⁷ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Thermal-devices/Leica-Calonox, viewed 21 October 2020

³¹⁸ en.leica-camera.com/World-of-Leica/Leica-News/Global/2020/NEW-Leica-Calonox, viewed 21 October 2020

³¹⁹ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Riflescopes/Leica-Magnus-i, viewed 21 October 2020

³²⁰ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Riflescopes/Leica-Amplus-6, viewed 21 October 2020

³²¹ uk.leica-camera.com/Sport-Optics/Hunting/Leica-Thermal-devices/Leica-Calonox, viewed 21 October 2020

³²² en.leica-camera.com/World-of-Leica/Leica-News?category=Hunting&event-start=&event-end=, viewed 21 October 2020

³²³ en.leica-camera.com/World-of-Leica/Leica-Events/About-Leica-Events, viewed on 23 October 2020

Other links to hunting

Leica had a significant social media presence, with separate profiles on all major platforms for Leica Camera, Leica Birding and Leica Hunting.

The Leica Hunting Blog contained articles about hunting mountain goats in British Columbia,³²⁴ Java deer in Mauritius,³²⁵ nyala, Menelik's bushbuck, spotted hyena, bohor reedbuck, gerenuk, lesser kudu, Guenther's dik-dik and Grant's gazelle in Ethiopia,³²⁶ as well as moose,³²⁷ capercaillie, grouse,³²⁸ fallow deer,³²⁹ elk,³³⁰ and wild boar,³³¹ among other animals. Many of these animals were pictured, either dead or alive, although some more recent posts featured hunters, hunting dogs, landscapes and communities local to the area, instead.

The company's Facebook page, Leica Sport Optics Hunting, similarly contained multiple stories about, and images of, hunting animals such as roe deer, hogs and geese. In 2017, it ran a competition for Facebook users to post their "most impressive roebuck hunting photo".³³²

In 2018, Leica published a global hunting policy that stated it "does not support nor endorse trophy hunting and condemns all illegal and unethical hunting. Leica also opposes any hunting that threatens species or habitat sustainability".³³³ However, @LeicaHunting has since written and posted this now-deleted tweet: "Have you ever been to Namibia? We absolutely loved it! #leicasportoptics #huntingmoments", with a photo of two hunters looking towards giraffes.³³⁴ Its global hunting policy was not found referenced on any of the Leica websites visited for this report, other than in the one blog post.

Images of elephants and male lions were posted in 2012, with testimonials from Ivan Carter, presenter of the US hunting show Tracks Across Africa:

*"There is nothing in the world that will get you more focused than a large dangerous animal that's coming towards you. We had been tracking these lions in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe for several hours. They had killed a kudu bull. As we neared the kill, the dominant male saw us and came right in ..."*³³⁵

*"This was on a hunt in Zimbabwe, we had been following a group of twelve bulls and caught up to them as they reached the water."*³³⁶

Besides product reviews, the Leica Sport Optics Hunting YouTube channel featured videos titled Driven Hunt with Leica³³⁷ and Leica Fortis 6 – Hunting, moments of passion,³³⁸ as well as several atmospheric endorsements from August 2020 by hunting 'influencers'³³⁹ under the hashtag #forhunterslikeus.

The 2017 Leica hunting catalogue contained images of staff with captions that linked them to hunting. Simon K Barr, Head of Marketing, was quoted, saying: "Having hunted five continents with Leica Sport Optics, my only choice for dangerous game is the 1-6.3 x 24 i". And Udo Mayer, Head of Development, said: "As a hunter and Head of Development of a traditional company such as Leica, I aim at a certain standard: perfection in every single detail."

Leica no longer listed any corporate hunting and sport partnerships on its website,³⁴⁰ which indicated it had ended its partnership with Magic Safari Lodges, which produces guides to hunting lodges. Its sponsorship with Safari Club International, announced in an undated press release,³⁴¹ seemed to have continued since joint events had been scheduled for 2020.

³²⁴ leica-hunting-blog.com/goat-hunt-in-the-british-columbian-rockies/

³²⁵ leica-hunting-blog.com/hunting-on-mauritius-on-a-java-deer/, viewed on 24 October 2020

³²⁶ leica-hunting-blog.com/hunting-in-ethiopia-with-leica-to-the-stalk-in-the-cradle-of-mankind/, viewed on 24 October 2020

³²⁷ leica-hunting-blog.com/swedish-giants/, viewed on 24 October 2020

³²⁸ blog-leica-hunting.con-vergence.de/way-up-north/, viewed 24 October 2020

³²⁹ blog-leica-hunting.con-vergence.de/the-island-of-tenors/, viewed 24 October 2020

³³⁰ blog-leica-hunting.con-vergence.de/fire-and-ivory/, viewed 24 October 2020

³³¹ blog-leica-hunting.con-vergence.de/in-the-shadow-of-the-cathar-pines/, viewed 24 October 2020

³³² www.facebook.com/LeicaHunting/photos/a.322857441103322.80524.139399686115766/1370396323016090/?type=3&theater, viewed on 22 October 2020

³³³ leica-hunting-blog.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Leica-Hunting-policy.pdf, viewed on 20 November 2020

³³⁴ Email correspondence with Emily Joachim, received 19 November 2020

³³⁵ www.facebook.com/LeicaHunting/photos/a.382339611821771.92118.139399686115766/385858584803207/?type=3&theater, viewed on 22 October 2020

³³⁶ www.facebook.com/LeicaHunting/photos/a.371023742953358.89636.139399686115766/371027212953011/?type=3&theater, viewed 24 October 2020

³³⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsLuXFZDWk0, viewed on 23 October 2020

³³⁸ www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IvgtU9sFgs, viewed on 23 October 2020

³³⁹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IvgtU9sFgs, viewed on 23 October 2020

³⁴⁰ uk.leica-camera.com/World-of-Leica/Leica-Partnerships/Hunting-Sport-Optics, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁴¹ www.safariclub.org/what-we-do/media/press-room/press-release/safari-club-international-welcomes-leica-sport-optics-as-corporate-sponsor, viewed 7 November 2020

Arms and military links

Leica Geosystems manufactures optical systems for border control and for the identification of illegal crops,³⁴² including drones.³⁴³ One of its clients is the British Ministry of Defence.³⁴⁴ Its Hexagon division provides federal and local government agencies with imaging data that is “continuously updated and available 24/7 for download or streaming”.³⁴⁵

Leica Sport Optics had a booth at the (cancelled) 2020 National Rifle Association exhibition, which ran alongside its annual meeting.³⁴⁶

Sustainability

The only sustainability information available on the company’s website was Leica Camera AG’s Code of Conduct.³⁴⁷ With regard to environmental protection, it stated that the company would comply with all applicable environmental laws, standards and requirements and would take “a proactive and long-

term view on environmental matters to prevent pollution and continuously improve environmental performance”. No reporting on the company’s environmental impact, such as its carbon emissions, was found.

Leica supported the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust,³⁴⁸ “the UK’s leading wetland conservation charity”.

Leica Geosystems³⁴⁹ and Leica Microsystems,³⁵⁰ co-owners of the Leica brand, produced measuring and analysis tools for the mining, building, energy generation and transportation industries – all of which have a considerable impact on the environment.

No further information could be found that demonstrated that Leica was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. It was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.



See more, experience more... #asnaturalastheeyecanse. African water buffalo hunting in 2018

³⁴² [leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries/public-safety/leica-geosystems-public-safety/public-safety/border-control-and-crop-identification](https://www.leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries/public-safety/leica-geosystems-public-safety/public-safety/border-control-and-crop-identification), viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁴³ [leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries/public-safety/leica-geosystems-public-safety/border-crossing/boarding-incidents-mapping-and-visualisation](https://www.leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries/public-safety/leica-geosystems-public-safety/border-crossing/boarding-incidents-mapping-and-visualisation), viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁴⁴ [leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/case-studies/public-safety/british-military-leads-the-world-in-shooting-range-safety](https://www.leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/case-studies/public-safety/british-military-leads-the-world-in-shooting-range-safety), viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁴⁵ [hxgncontent.com/industries/safety-and-security](https://www.hxgncontent.com/industries/safety-and-security) viewed on 30 November 2020

³⁴⁶ s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 9 November 2020

³⁴⁷ n.leica-camera.com/content/download/182625/4958103/version/1/file/LCAG+Compliance+++Code+of+Conduct++EN+++v13_170203%282%29.pdf

³⁴⁸ www.wwt.org.uk/join-and-support/corporate-partnerships/, viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁴⁹ [leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries](https://www.leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries), viewed on 7 November 2020

³⁵⁰ [leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries](https://www.leica-geosystems.com/en-gb/industries), viewed on 7 November 2020

Leupold & Stevens Inc.

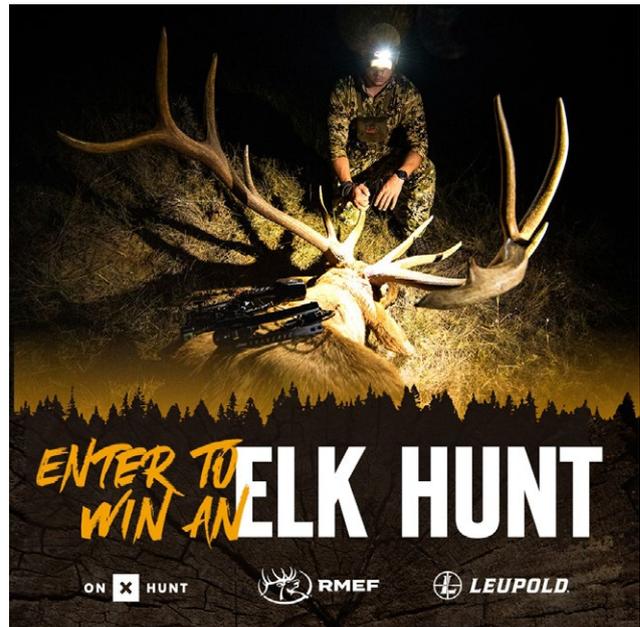
Summary

Fewer pictures of trophy animals were found on Leupold's website, but they still featured on the company's social media channels. No current references to Leupold's Optics Academy were found. In addition, the company had lost a partnership with the Portland Trail Blazer basketball team following protests over the company's supply to the Israel Defense Forces.

The company had become the official optics partner of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and still had multiple pro-staff members and connections to over ten hunting organisations. The company history section on its website continued to emphasise its background in hunting products, and featured multiple images of traditional trophy animals, including two images of a black and a brown bear overlaid with shooting graticules (used for targeting). Product text also referenced trophy hunts. Leupold was therefore still considered to have strong links to sports hunting.



The Leupold Optics Facebook page included many images of dead animals and trophy heads



"Friday is your LAST CHANCE to enter to win an elk hunt for the Fall of 2021 with RMEF and onX Hunt"

Background

The Leupold brand is owned by Leupold & Stevens Inc., a family-owned business founded in 1907 in Portland, Oregon, USA. The company was set up by Markus Friedrich (Fred) Leupold, a German immigrant, and his brother-in-law Adam Volpel. The company, initially called Leupold & Volpel, invented, manufactured and sold surveying equipment. Post-World War II, the company made its first 'fog-proof' riflescope in 1947.

Since 1947, the company has gone on to manufacture a wide range of sport optics aimed at golfers, wildlife watchers, hunters, shooters and the military. Leupold & Stevens started supplying the US military with optics products in 1985 and continues to supply them to this day.

According to corporate information database D&B Hoovers, viewed in October 2020, Leupold & Stevens had an estimated turnover of £78 million.



#FullCurlFriday – Counting rings... Lyle H. drops a dream ram in AK with his VX-6HD. #leupoldcore #wildsheep

“This scope is just at home on the side of a mountain chasing monster goats as it is at the range.”³⁵⁴

“The VX-3i 1.5-5x20mm is one of the most popular dangerous game/safari scopes in the world.”³⁵⁵

The sections titled #Leupold, where the company reposted customer photos found on each product page in the last report, had been removed.

The company history page on Leupold’s website still featured images of trophy deer with large antlers – one seen through a scope viewfinder, and another using night vision equipment. A third photo depicted a hunter carrying a large pair of horns. A fourth featured drawings of a deer with large antlers and a brown bear through a riflescope viewfinder with the accompanying caption highlighting the clarity of the graticule (also known as a reticle) that is used for targeting.

Other links to hunting

The company ran social media competitions such as #MeasureItMonday. Customers could win a Leupold hat for calculating the “trophy quality of an animal’s horns or antlers” from a picture of a new trophy animal each week.³⁵⁶

The Leupold Optics Facebook page included many images of dead animals and trophy heads. One showed the paw of a dead bear, shot by “Leupold’s own Meghan Travis”.³⁵⁷

The page on Leupold’s ‘Optics Academy’, which offered courses on the use of hunting optics, had been removed from the website and no current courses were found.

Leupold supported the following organisations, all of which had links to sports hunting:³⁵⁸ Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Boone and Crockett Club, Ducks Unlimited, Honored American Veterans Afield, Mule Deer Foundation, National Rifle Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Wild Sheep Foundation, Congressional Sportsman Foundation, Shoot For A Cure, and Oregon Hunters Association.

The company’s website states: “The future of hunting is in all of our hands. While we have a right to enjoy wildlife and wild places, it’s our responsibility to protect it. This is why Leupold supports so many organizations whose mission it is to conserve wildlife, as well as protect, enhance, and grow the habitat it depends on.”³⁵¹ Several of its listed partners supported sports hunting as well as ‘game’ control.

Shooting accessories

On its website, www.leupold.com, the company sold riflescopes, spotting scopes, rangefinders, binoculars, reticles, thermal technology, and scope mounts. These were arranged by product type rather than activity. The product descriptions frequently referred to hunting, and sometimes to specific types, including trophy hunts and “dangerous game/safari hunts”:

“Know the size and the distance of your next trophy ... Trophy Scale™ lets you know if your target measures up.”³⁵²

“With the trophy scale you can measure the antler spread on game before shooting”.³⁵³

³⁵¹ www.leupold.com/leupold-dna/partners, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁵² www.leupold.com/rangefinders/hunting-rangefinders/rx-800i-compact-digital-rangefinder, viewed on October 2020

³⁵³ www.leupold.com/rangefinders/hunting-rangefinders/rx-850i-tbr-with-dna-digital-laser-rangefinder, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁵⁴ www.leupold.com/scopes/compact-scopes/vx-5hd-2-10x42mm, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁵⁵ www.leupold.com/scopes/compact-scopes/vx-3i-1-5-5x20mm, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁵⁶ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/stories/measure-it-monday-with-boone-and-crockett, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁵⁷ www.facebook.com/LeupoldOptics/photos/10157718127757968/, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁵⁸ www.leupold.com/leupold-dna/partners, viewed on 3 November 2020

In 2020, Leupold became the official optics partner of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (REF).³⁵⁹ A video on the REF website from 2017 featured Leupold CEO Bruce Pettet (who said he has hunted from when he was a child), killing an antlered mule deer while presenting the Leupold company's work and products.³⁶⁰ His undated profile on the Congressional Sportsmen Foundation website said that Pettet also served on the Board of Governors for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the Board of Directors of Honored American Veterans Afield, and the Board of Directors of Stimson Lumber Company.³⁶¹

The company history section on the Leupold website also highlighted the hunting background of staff members such as Jack Slack. A news story on the Leupold website titled 'Lucas Burt Joins Leupold to Lead Digital Media Program', and dated to January 2017, described the staff member as "a lifelong hunter."³⁶²

Leupold sponsored a number of pro-staff, which it listed as a Core Community.³⁶³ Among these were individuals said to represent "hunters in Congress and state legislatures";³⁶⁴ present hunting TV shows; partake in hunt-conservation programmes, and lead antelope, elk, mule deer, whitetail deer, bear, mountain lion, and turkey hunts. One pro-staff member was said to have "harvested numerous African animals with a traditional bow."³⁶⁵ Images of traditional trophy animals found in pro-staff profile pictures in the previous report had been removed.

The website gave a full list of partnerships, including over ten that claimed to support



"Great engineering is born in the field. Leupold's own Meghan Travis brought down a bruiser spring bear this year."

hunters, provide hunting programmes or protect hunting environments. Among these were Safari Club International, Boone and Crockett Club and National Sports Shooting Foundation.³⁶⁶ Connections with the Youth Sports Shooting Alliance and JAKES (both of which supported youth hunters), found in the previous report had been removed.

Leupold was still listed as a sponsor for two hunting TV programmes: Jim Shockey's Hunting Adventures and Pigman TV. It was unclear if Leupold still sponsored Just Junie and it was no longer listed as a sponsor of The Bucks of Tecomate.

³⁵⁹ www.rmef.org/elk-network/leupold-named-official-optics-partner-of-rmef/, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶⁰ www.rmef.org/?post_type=post&p=10975, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶¹ congressionalsportsmen.org/about/staff/bruce-pettet, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶² www.leupold.com/leupold-core/core-insider/news/lucas-burt-joins-leupold-to-lead-digital-media-program, viewed 3 November 2020

³⁶³ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/core-communities/pro-team, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶⁴ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/core-communities/pro-team/randy-newberg, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶⁵ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/core-communities/pro-team/fred-eichler, viewed on 3 November 2020

³⁶⁶ www.leupold.com/leupold-dna/partners, viewed on 3 November 2020

Arms and military links

Leupold entered the ‘tactical optics’ market in 1985.³⁶⁷ Together with the military, it developed one of the first scopes specifically designed for the battle field.³⁶⁸ It supplies scopes to the US Army,³⁶⁹ US Special Forces, specialist units of American law enforcement,³⁷⁰ and the Israeli Defense Force.³⁷¹ Its Mark 6 riflescope is apparently “one of the most popular choices for military forces around the globe, elite law enforcement units here at home, and anyone else looking to add battle-tested performance to their AR or bolt-action platforms”.³⁷² Leupold was designated an essential business by the US Department of Defense during the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁷³

Leupold is one of few companies covered in this report that are ‘industry allies’ of the US National Rifle Association (NRA).³⁷⁴ It had a booth at the (cancelled) 2020 NRA exhibition, which ran alongside its annual meeting.³⁷⁵ It also sponsored the Army Sniper Association³⁷⁶ with product tests.³⁷⁷ Its VIP programme also gave discounts to active military, US military veterans, law enforcement and federal employees.³⁷⁸

In September 2019, basketball team Portland Trail Blazers ended a partnership with the company after protests from Members of the Portland Democratic Socialists of America, Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land, Portland’s Resistance, and Jewish Voice for Peace. They objected to Leupold supplying sniper rifle scopes to the Israel Defense Forces’ ground arm.³⁷⁹ Although the team later issued a statement that the decision had not been made because of the protests,³⁸⁰ its initial explanation suggested it was at least one of the reasons.

A comment on Leupold’s Facebook page that criticised the hunting of bears by staff members stated, “Shoot ANTIFA members by all means but a defenceless bear? Really?”. The comment had been there for 22 weeks at the time of writing.³⁸¹

Sustainability

No evidence of sustainability reporting could be found on the company’s websites. No evidence could be found that demonstrated that Leupold was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements.

Leupold was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

³⁶⁷ www.leupold.com/leupold-dna/a-living-history, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁶⁸ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/stories/30-years-of-service, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁶⁹ taskandpurpose.com/military-tech/army-precision-sniper-rifle-optic-leupold, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁷⁰ www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/29612, viewed on 27 October 2020

³⁷¹ www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/36279, viewed on 27 October 2020

³⁷² www.leupold.com/scopes/rifle-scopes/mark-6-3-18x44mm-m5b2, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁷³ www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwNmAjIMyUA, viewed on 24 October 2020

³⁷⁴ nraindustryally.nra.org/become-an-ally/amazing-brands/, viewed on 12 November 2020

³⁷⁵ s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 9 November 2020

³⁷⁶ www.armysniperassociation.org/about/our-donors/, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁷⁷ twitter.com/Qudckarhk/status/1307684551645306881, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁷⁸ www.leupold.com/leupold-core/vip-programs, viewed on 25 October 2020

³⁷⁹ www.oregonlive.com/blazers/2019/09/portland-trail-blazers-no-longer-partnering-with-scope-manufacturer-leupold-and-stevens.html, viewed 25 October 2020

³⁸⁰ www.nbcsports.com/northwest/portland-trail-blazers/trail-blazers-issue-statement-leupold-stevens-partnership, viewed 25 October 2020

³⁸¹ www.facebook.com/LeupoldOptics/photos/a.10150447824892968/10157718127757968, viewed 3 November 2020

Summary

The Meopta website referenced trophy hunting, and the brand's Sports Optics Facebook page contained images of dead black bear and live elephants and male lions. Optics, including riflescopes, were sold by activity, one of which was hunting and another tactical. Meopta had a strong link to sports hunting.

Background

Meopta-optika s.r.o. was initially established in 1933, under the name Optikotechna, and produced darkroom equipment such as enlargers and lenses. The company's focus has changed over time and in response to changing political climates. Nowadays it offers optical products for a diverse customer base: wildlife watchers, hunters, scientists, medical and military personnel. Its products include binoculars, spotting scopes, riflescopes, sniper scopes, scope adaptors, loose optic lenses, night vision equipment, periscopes, optoelectronic systems, image intensifiers for X-ray imaging devices and optical tweezers.



Images posted by customers in the Meopta Sports Optics Trophy Room featured traditional trophy animals

The company is predominantly based in the Czech Republic with the exception of one key subsidiary – Meopta U.S.A. Inc. It owns two other key companies, MeoMed s.r.o., for medical devices, and Meopta Systems s.r.o. which trades in complex military optics.³⁸² According to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, viewed in November 2020, it had a turnover of £94 million. The company stated that hunters were its “largest group of users”.³⁸³

Shooting accessories

The brand's website for sports optics was separated into the sections Nature, Hunting, and Tactical. The hunting section sold rifle scopes and binoculars, and other hunting accessories such as red dot sites and night vision riflescopes. Spotting scopes were listed under Nature. The website also featured a ballistic turret and calculator. Product text repeatedly referenced different types of hunting, including trophy and big game hunting:

“Dangerous game ... Delivered. An impressively wide 113 ft. @ 100 yds. FOV gives you a clear advantage over fast-moving dangerous game. An excellent scope for spot and stalk whitetail hunting on tightly forested terrain or chasing fierce wild hogs in the scrub.”³⁸⁴

“The European assembled MeoPro 4.5-14x44 is the perfect riflescope for mid to long-range hunting, varmints and target shooting.”³⁸⁵

“A true hunting riflescope, the 2.5-15x44 Optika6 features capped windage and elevation turrets to avoid unwanted adjustments when moving fast through heavy cover.”³⁸⁶

“The MeoStar 3-10x50 is a superior big game hunting scope.”³⁸⁷

“When you are on the move, and a quick, precise shot is necessary, the ability to have both eyes open for a quick, snap shot can mean the difference between the one that got away and the prize trophy of a lifetime.”³⁸⁸

³⁸² www.meopta.com/en/about/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁸³ www.meopta.com/en/social-responsibility-and-sponsoring/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁸⁴ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/meostar-r2-1-6x24-rd/mr-7666/, viewed 1 November 2020

³⁸⁵ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/meopro-4-5-14x44-1072/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁸⁶ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/optika6-2-5-15x44-sfp-13161/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁸⁷ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/meostar-r1-3-10x50-636/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁸⁸ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/meostar-r1-1-4x22-rd/mr-721/, viewed on 1 November 2020

Other links to hunting

The website linked to the Meopta Hunting Facebook page, which featured photos of a dead boar and deer but mostly professional photos of products and living trophy animals. The Meopta Sport Optics Facebook page, however, contained many images of dead animals, some of which were reposted from customers. Among these was a video reposted from The Hunting Wire Africa, that discussed using Meopta equipment to hunt dik-dik, eland and buffalo in Africa.³⁸⁹ The 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report had found posts from October and July 2016 featuring black and brown bears, captioned “Which Meopta optics would you take on an early season bear hunt? #Meopta #bearhunt”,³⁹⁰ and “Caption this photo! #Meopta #BearHunt #CaptionThis”.³⁹¹ It also contained a link to the Facebook group Meopta Sports Optics Trophy Room. Images posted in this group featured traditional trophy animals including dead mountain lion, black bear, elk, and bighorn sheep.³⁹²

Meopta continued to sponsor the Czech-Moravian Hunting Union.³⁹³ The website for the Sheepshape TV show that Meopta was found sponsoring in 2018 no longer existed.

Arms and military links

Meopta Systems s.r.o., a subsidiary of Meopta-optika, trades in complex military optics³⁹⁴ that include “soldiers’ personal systems” (compact and tactical riflescopes, enlarging modules, night vision devices and colimators);³⁹⁵ optics for “the most prestigious high-end brands in the industry, including the largest global military contractors” (marine and air force systems and components, optical and optronic subsystems and components, and training and simulation systems);³⁹⁶ and optical systems for armoured vehicles.³⁹⁷

Meopta had a long-standing relationship with the army of the Czech Republic “to develop and produce devices suitable for the extreme conditions of combat missions”. Meopta also supported sport and competitive activities for the army and police force.³⁹⁸

Meopta sold a range of tactical riflescopes, spotting scopes and binoculars on its sports optics consumer website,³⁹⁹ such as “a precision long range riflescope developed for sniper rifles in order to achieve deadly-accurate shot placement at extreme distances,”⁴⁰⁰ and a riflescope “designed for use by special forces ops, L/E snipers and world-class professional target shooters for distances up to 800 meters”.⁴⁰¹

Sustainability

Meopta referred to its social and environmental responsibilities on its website, but provided little detail about these, except for naming a number of sponsored organisations. Among these was the Czech Society for Ornithology.⁴⁰² Meopta had manufactured aviation instrumentation wedges, windows and cover glass for aeroplanes for over forty years. As an industry, aviation has a high climate change impact.

The company said it invested in technologies and activities that systematically eliminate environmental impacts, use renewable energy, enhance production efficiency and waste reduction, produce energy savings, reduce emissions of volatile organic compounds into the atmosphere, reduce emissions of other chemicals, recover and reuse solvents in distillation plant, re-use chemicals for different applications, use optical glass waste (prisms and lenses) as teaching aids in schools, and dispose of electrical and electronic equipment within the company.

However, the company did not publish any quantified environmental reduction targets or report its carbon emissions.

Meopta was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

³⁸⁹ www.facebook.com/Meopta/posts/10156286177280887, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹⁰ www.facebook.com/Meopta/photos/a.128904055886.117160.89642550886/10153920984655887/?type=3&theater, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹¹ www.facebook.com/Meopta/photos/a.128904055886.117160.89642550886/10153665648750887/?type=3&theater, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹² www.facebook.com/groups/283388112128385/media, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹³ www.meopta.com/en/social-responsibility-and-sponsoring/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹⁴ www.meopta.com/en/about/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹⁵ www.meopta.com/en/soldiers-personal-systems/, viewed on 11 November 2020

³⁹⁶ www.meopta.com/en/optical-systems-for-defense-applications/, viewed on 11 November 2020

³⁹⁷ www.meopta.com/en/combined-day-night-vision-devices/, viewed on 11 November 2020

³⁹⁸ www.meopta.com/en/social-responsibility-and-sponsoring/, viewed on 1 November 2020

³⁹⁹ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/, viewed on 1 November 2020

⁴⁰⁰ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/zd-6-24x56-rd-728/, viewed on 1 November 2020

⁴⁰¹ www.meoptasportsoptics.com/en/produkt/zd-4-16x44-rd-1016/, viewed on 1 November 2020

⁴⁰² www.meopta.com/en/social-responsibility-and-sponsoring/, viewed on 11 November 2020

Summary

Barska’s website referred to ‘big-game’ hunting and hunting as a sport on several occasions. Although no images of trophy animals were found on the company’s website, there were pictures of elk and brown bear in the 2019 product catalogue. While earlier Shooting Wildlife? reports found that Barska’s social media profiles featured pictures of dead animals reposted from customers, the main focus now was on rifles and other optical equipment. No pictures of animals appeared to have been posted since 2018, although captions and hashtags continued to reference hunting. Barska had a strong link to sports hunting.

Background

According to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, and the incomplete website microworldcorp.com, Micro World Corp is the “manufacturer of outdoor, hunting, and sporting equipment. Sold under the popular brand BARSKA”.

The corporate database D&B Hoovers, viewed in November 2020, estimated that the company had an annual turnover of £3.2 million. No further information or publicly available annual accounts for Micro World Corp or Barska Optics were found.

Founded in 1994, Barska is based in South California. Its products are distributed in over 40 countries worldwide. Its website states: “Every day, thousands of consumers around the world use and enjoy our products for a wide variety of outdoor activities. Barska outdoor products ‘Enhance the Consumer’s Lifestyle’”.⁴⁰³

Besides optical equipment such as shooting optics, microscopes and magnifiers, Barska’s products included biometric safes, firearm safes, metal detectors, tactical gear, and jewellery cases. It no longer referenced hunting in the ‘About Us’ section on its website.

Barska sells some of its products under other brands, including Loaded Gear (tactical vests, gear bags and pouches, and rifle cases), Winbest (metal detectors), Aus Vio (silk bedding, no products found) and Chéri Bliss (jewellery cases).



BARSKA’s Point Black series is specifically engineered for the .223 caliber bullet with a multi-grain bullet drop compensation chart (B.D.C) on the exterior elevation knob. The multi-grain B.D.C features three common med to heavy weight .223 bullet grains: 50 grain, 55 grain and 62 grain. The Point Black series of riflescopes are engineered to be versatile full featured riflescopes to be utilized with the large selection of firearms that chamber the high velocity .223 bullet. Point Black riflescopes work in perfect combination with such firearms as varmint rifles, bolt action rifles, semi-automatic rifles, AR-15 / M-16 assault rifles, Mini-14 and ranch rifles.

Point Black riflescopes also feature impressive fully multi-coated optics, high impact rated shockproof construction, side parallax



6-24x40 IR
AC11392





4-16x40 IR
AC11390





3-12x40 IR
AC11388



The 2019 Barska product catalogue contained pictures of elk with large antlers and a brown bear

403 www.barska.com, viewed on 9 November 2020

Shooting Accessories

Barska's website, www.barska.com, listed products by type rather than activity. Among the products were several types of shooting accessories – riflescopes and spotting scopes, as well as mounts and tripods for these; laser and night vision equipment; and cases and bags for rifles, scopes and other shooting gear. The website also sold binoculars and monoculars. These products, including the binoculars and monoculars, were marketed to hunters throughout the website.⁴⁰⁴ Barska continued to sell their 'Huntmaster' riflescope range, as a "high-value bang-for-the-buck" product.⁴⁰⁵

Product descriptions referred to particular types of hunt, including 'recreational' and 'big-game' hunts:

"From the serious tactical and long-range shooter to the varmint hunter or big-game hunter and recreational target shooter, there's a BARSKA riflescope that's a perfect fit for you and your firearms."⁴⁰⁶

"The Euro-30 Pro Scope combines European design features with world-class engineering to produce a scope that is ideal for big game hunting anywhere on the globe or local general hunting."⁴⁰⁷

"For recreational hunters, varmints can be spotted at great distances for removal from croplands where they damage cash harvests. Large animals can be sighted over great distances and accurately targeted with the tactical scope."⁴⁰⁸

"Hunting is a hobby, or sport, which requires a great deal of time. That, inherently, means that hunters need to be among the most patient people in the world, waiting for just the right moment and just the right shot to accomplish their goal for the day ... Added with the pressures of holding a gun or a rifle and constantly being ready to spring into action, patience is easier said than done in the field. That is unless, of course, the hunter in question is equipped with a high-quality tripod."⁴⁰⁹

The homepage to the Barska website no longer included reviews from hunters and its blog was

empty.⁴¹⁰ While no images of dead or live 'game' animals were found on the Barska website, the 2019 catalogue contained pictures of elk with large antlers and a brown bear.

Other links to hunting

The Barska Facebook page included images of a dead coyote and hogs from 2016 and 2017 that were reposted from customers. No images of animals had been posted since 2018 and photos on Facebook and Instagram now mostly featured guns and binoculars. Captions and hashtags still referenced hunting, however.

When viewed in 2016, Barska's Twitter account contained several images of dead trophy animals including dead deer and male sheep. One post, which was retweeted by Barska, contained an image of a young girl holding a dead deer's antlers and the statement: "we need more kids holding deer and less game controllers ...(sic)". Barska continued to tweet about varmint hunting and hunting in general but not other types of hunting or prey.

Arms and military links

Some of Barska's products, such as riflescopes,⁴¹¹ flashlights,⁴¹² and tactical vests,⁴¹³ were designed and tested for law enforcement and military use. Riflescopes could also be filtered for SWAT, sniper and tactical use.⁴¹⁴

Sustainability

No evidence of sustainability reporting could be found on the company's websites and no further information could be found that demonstrated that Micro World Corp or Barska Optics were actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. Micro World Corp and Barska Optics were considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁰⁴ www.barska.com/optics-rifle-scopes?specs=23687, viewed 9 November 2020

⁴⁰⁵ www.barska.com/3-9x40-silver-huntmaster-rifle-scope-by-barska.html, viewed 9 November 2020

⁴⁰⁶ www.barska.com/optics-rifle-scopes?specs=23529,23921&viewmode=list, viewed 9 November 2020

⁴⁰⁷ www.barska.com/optics-rifle-scopes-euro-30-pro, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴⁰⁸ www.barska.com/optics-rifle-scopes-tactical?specs=23980, viewed 9 November 2020

⁴⁰⁹ www.barska.com/tripods, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹⁰ www.barska.com/blog, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹¹ www.barska.com/3x30-ar-x-pro-prism-scope-by-barska-black.html, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹² www.barska.com/2000-lumen-high-power-led-tactical-flashlight-by-barska.html, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹³ www.barska.com/loaded-gear, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹⁴ www.barska.com/optics-rifle-scopes, viewed on 9 November 2020

Summary

Minox's product text repeatedly referred to hunting and now references driven hunting as well as 'game' keeping. The 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report found no photos of animals on the company's website; however, product descriptions now featured images of trophy animals. In 2018, no photos of animals explicitly linked to hunting were found on the Minox Optics Facebook page. In 2020, its Facebook page contained a photo of a dead roebuck and one of a big cat that was not explicitly linked to hunting but taken by a professional hunter influencer. The company no longer listed its partners on its website, and it was therefore unclear whether it still sponsored organisations with links to sports hunting. Overall, the company was considered to have strong links to hunting.

Background

Minox GmbH is a German company originally known for its photography products. It now offers a range of sport optics and compact digital cameras that are aimed at wildlife watchers, hunters, water sport enthusiasts and security forces. The company was briefly owned by Leica between 1996 and 2001. It became independent for several years after a management buyout but has been part of the Blaser Group since 2013.

Blaser is a leading manufacturer in the hunting and outdoor industry. Blaser brands produce firearms and optics, including riflescopes and target optics, for hunting, sports, state agencies and the military. They also organise safaris to "extraordinary hunting destinations all over the world" and sell outdoor apparel. The group also owns the firearm brands Blaser, Mauser, Sauer & Sohn and Rigby, and Liemke Thermal Optics.⁴¹⁵

Minox had an estimated annual turnover of £1.2 million, according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, when viewed in November 2020.



Minox Optics Facebook featured a picture of a big cat that did not explicitly mention hunting but was taken by a professional hunter influencer

Shooting accessories

Products were arranged into hunting, outdoor, birding, nautic and shooting sports on Minox's website. Under hunting, Minox sold riflescopes, binoculars, spotting scopes, trail cameras, night vision equipment, and accessories for these products. The product text repeatedly referred to hunting, specifically driven hunts and 'game' keeping. It did not reference trophy hunting or specific types of prey:

*"For driven hunting & sports shooting."*⁴¹⁶

*"When on a driven hunt for wild boar you are in your element. And for exactly that reason, we have the perfect companion for you..."*⁴¹⁷

*"See more and identify your game faster – even in poor lighting conditions and at greater distances."*⁴¹⁸

*"Whether on nocturnal expeditions, observations while hunting and game keeping, or for personal safety – with MINOX night vision devices, the night is literally turned into day!"*⁴¹⁹

The 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report had found no images of animals on Minox's website, but in November 2020 many product descriptions featured pictures of trophy and other 'game' animals, including elk, deer, boar and fox.

⁴¹⁵ www.minox.com/en/11033/, viewed 1 November 2020

⁴¹⁶ www.minox.com/en/hunting-sport-optics/riflescopes-hunting/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹⁷ www.minox.com/en/minox-rv-1/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹⁸ www.minox.com/en/x-hd-series/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴¹⁹ www.minox.com/en/hunting-sport-optics/night-vision-devices/, viewed on 9 November 2020



Many Minox product descriptions featured pictures of trophy and other 'game' animals

Other links to hunting

The Minox Optics Facebook page also contained many images of traditional 'game' animals, including a dead roebuck. It also featured a picture of a big cat that did not explicitly mention hunting but was taken by a professional hunter influencer. The Minox North American Hunting Facebook page (which had contained many images of dead 'game' and trophy animals when viewed in 2018), could no longer be found. Minox's Instagram channel and the Minox Hunting Facebook profile both featured several dead animals, including muntjac, roebuck and boar.

Blaser published the consumer hunting magazine PASSION.⁴²⁰

Minox continued to sponsor TV show Team HuntInMotion,⁴²¹ but it no longer sponsored Switchback Outdoors TV,⁴²² Boars of Africa,⁴²³ and Into the Wild Outdoors.⁴²⁴ It had sponsored the DNA Hunting Film Festival in 2017, the first hunting film festival in the UK.⁴²⁵

In 2018, the company had mentioned partnerships with the following organisations with links to sport hunting: Mule Deer Foundation, Wild Sheep Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Boone and Crockett Club, Safari Club International, and Sportsman's Alliance Alaska.⁴²⁶ When viewed in November 2020, the company's website no longer listed its partners.

Arms and Military Links

Minox belongs to the Blaser Group, which owns several firearm brands and supplies weapons to state agencies and the military.⁴²⁷ Its tactical sniper rifles have been used by the Australian military⁴²⁸ and reportedly by many police and special forces groups around the world.⁴²⁹

Sustainability

The only sustainability information found for Minox and the Blaser global group was a paragraph in Minox's Code of Conduct, which stated that resources should be used as frugally as possible and that sustainable and climate-friendly production was given a high priority in Minox's business dealings.⁴³⁰

No further information could be found that demonstrated that Minox or the Blaser Group were actively working to reduce their environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. They were therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴²⁰ www.blaser.de/en/services/passion-magazine/, viewed on 16 November 2020

⁴²¹ huntinmotion.com/sponsors/, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁴²² switchbackoutdoors.com/sponsors/, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁴²³ www.hunting.film/boars-of-africa/, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁴²⁴ www.intothewildtv.com/sponsors.html, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁴²⁵ huntmag.eu/the-dna-hunting-film-festival-a-first-for-the-uk/, viewed 24 October 2017 (no longer available)

⁴²⁶ [www.minox.com/index.php?id=7550&print=1&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=&tx_ttnews\[cat\]=&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=&tx_ttnews\[pointer\]=&L=2](http://www.minox.com/index.php?id=7550&print=1&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=&tx_ttnews[cat]=&tx_ttnews[backPid]=&tx_ttnews[pointer]=&L=2), viewed 24 October 2017 (no longer available)

⁴²⁷ www.blaser-group.com/en/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴²⁸ www.army.gov.au/our-work/equipment-uniforms/equipment/small-arms/blaser-tactical-2, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴²⁹ www.militaryfactory.com/smallarms/detail.asp?smallarms_id=1010, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴³⁰ www.minox.com/wp-content/uploads/Code-of-Conduct-08_2020.pdf, viewed on 9 November 2020 (with Google Translate)

Summary

At the end of 2019, Nikon USA let its dealers know that it was stopping production of its riflescopes. The company had removed references to trophy hunting from much of its website and social media profiles, and ended its sponsorship of all but one of its corporate partners with links to sports hunting. However, Nikon Sport Optics still sold riflescopes online and some of the website and social media changes seemed to be more a superficial polishing of the company's image than a genuine move away from marketing to hunters. Viva! called a boycott against the company for its links to hunting in 2013, and Nikon has been subject to numerous campaigns requesting them to end the link. According to an industry source, this underlay Nikon's decision to end production of riflescopes and distance itself from sports hunting.⁴³¹

Because the company continued to sell riflescopes, it was still considered to have a strong link to sports hunting.

Background

Founded in Japan in 1917, the Nikon Corporation has grown into a well-known global optics business with a turnover of ¥591 billion (£4.2 billion) in 2019-20.⁴³² The company is part of the Mitsubishi keiretsu, a group of businesses linked by cross-ownership.

Best known for its cameras and binoculars, Nikon has developed its product range over the years to offer a wider range of items, including photographic equipment, sport optics, photolithography steppers (machines used to create integrated circuit parts), surveying instruments, microscopes, measuring instruments, ophthalmic lenses (lenses used in reading glasses, for example), optical equipment and thin film coatings.

Its imaging products business, which includes the company's optics, accounted for 38.2% of its revenue in 2019-20. This was a significant drop from the 51.1% found in 2018. In 2019-20, 34% of revenue came from the USA, 19.5% from China, 14.9% from Japan, 14.8% from Europe, and 16.8% from the rest of the world.⁴³³

In 2013, Nikon's sale of hunting equipment and the company's promotion of trophy hunting, safaris and "dangerous game adventure[s] on the dark continent" resulted in numerous campaigns against the company.⁴³⁴ These accused Nikon of hypocrisy for promoting cameras to wildlife photographers while at the same time promoting hunting through the sale of hunting rifle accessories.

As we wrote in our last report, in 2013 Viva! called for a boycott of all Nikon products (cameras, binoculars and scopes) until the company dropped its support for hunting. Although the company continues to sell hunting accessories, it appears to have stopped using images of trophy animal kills on its website. Its specific hunting website www.nikonhunting.com no longer exists and does not redirect customers to www.nikonsportoptics.com anymore.

Shooting accessories

Nikon quietly announced that it was stopping its production of riflescopes at the end of 2019. Nikon USA told dealers that they could sell through their current inventories but should not expect them to be replenished.⁴³⁵ Nikon's 2020 sports optics catalogue only contained spotting scopes and no riflescopes.⁴³⁶ Riflescopes were, however, still available from the company's website, www.nikonsportoptics.com, including a new Prostaff range released in 2019.⁴³⁷

The decision to halt production sent waves through the sports optic world. An industry insider warned against reading "too much into this" and attributed the decision to internal politics rather than consumer preference: "They are trying to expand binocular sales in Europe and association with guns causes problems in some types of shops over there".⁴³⁸

⁴³¹ www.outdoorlife.com/story/gear/nikon-will-no-longer-make-riflescopes/, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴³² Nikon 2020 Annual Report

⁴³³ Nikon 2020 Annual Report

⁴³⁴ www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/the-wrong-kind-of-photo-shoot-nikon-in-the-line-of-fire-over-rifle-sights-for-big-game-hunting-8556123.html, viewed 28 November 2017

⁴³⁵ www.outdoorlife.com/story/gear/nikon-will-no-longer-make-riflescopes/, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴³⁶ imaging.nikon.com/lineup/sportoptics/dl/, viewed 5 November 2020

⁴³⁷ www.tactical-life.com/gear/optics/nikon-releases-prostaff-p3-riflescopes/, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴³⁸ www.outdoorlife.com/story/gear/nikon-will-no-longer-make-riflescopes/, viewed on 2 November 2020

The Nikon Sports Optics website listed products both by type and activity – customers could select riflescopes, outdoor adventures, fishing and marine, or golf. The hunting section found in 2018 seemed to have been rebranded as the riflescope section, since this section listed not only riflescopes but also binoculars, riflescope mounts, spotting scopes (listed as ‘fieldscopes’) and rangefinders. Similarly, the category “varmint-coyote”, still visible in the category menu at the bottom of relevant product pages, had been renamed “varmint/predator” in the product category titles. The website continued to offer an online and app-based ballistic calculator.

The text accompanying products on the website continued to refer to hunting. Products could be filtered by use, such as muzzleloader, varmint/predator and crossbow:

“Bright. Clear. Precise. Rugged. These are just a few of the attributes knowledgeable hunters commonly use to describe Nikon riflescopes.”⁴³⁹

“Nikon’s handgun riflescopes will satisfy all the needs of the most demanding handgun hunters, varminters and competitors.”⁴⁴⁰

“One of the most trusted riflescopes among deer hunters has now been reinvented with the all-new BUCKMASTERS II riflescope series.”⁴⁴¹

“Thanks to Nikon, predator hunters and varmint hunters now have a choice of riflescopes built specifically for their unique needs.”⁴⁴²

“A compact, lightweight roof prism binocular, the ACULON A30 10x25 TrueTimber® KANATI is perfect for the hunt where you need to pack light.”⁴⁴³

The product pages on the website did not feature pictures of animals, a distinct departure from the company’s marketing style found in 2018. The 2020/2021 catalogue did not mention hunting and only contained one picture of a highland mammal.

Other links to hunting

The company’s YouTube channel, Nikon Sport Optics US, no longer featured videos with advice on using Nikon products for hunting. Several videos had been made private rather than deleted. The company’s Instagram profile did not have any content but promoted the hashtag #nikonsportoptics in its description, which people used to post photos of their hunting gear and trophy animals such as mountain goats and mule deer.

Nikon was no longer listed as a sponsor for most of the organisations linked to sport shooting in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife Report. These included: ‘Buckmasters’ – “the longest-running hunting show in history”,⁴⁴⁴ ‘IMB Monster Bucks’⁴⁴⁵ – which organised whitetail trophy deer hunts, turkey hunts and predator hunts; and sports programmes ‘Driven TV’ (www.drivenhunter.com),⁴⁴⁶ ‘The Hunt’, and ‘Raised Hunting’.⁴⁴⁷

However, it continued to sponsor McCrea Outdoors, a company that organises trophy hunts for customers.⁴⁴⁸

Arms and military links

Nippon Kogaku K.K., Nikon’s predecessor, manufactured equipment for the Japanese military during World War II, like many other Japanese optics companies.⁴⁴⁹ After the war, the company, one of the largest in the industry, decided to concentrate on manufacturing cameras. No other links to the arms industry or military were found.

Nikon also stated that it verifies that exported goods will not be used for the development of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons if they are not controlled goods by law.⁴⁵⁰

⁴³⁹ www.nikonsportoptics.com/en/nikon-products/scopes/all-scopes/index.page, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴⁴⁰ www.nikonsportoptics.com/en/nikon-products/scopes/handgun/index.page, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴⁴¹ www.nikonsportoptics.com/en/nikon-products/riflescopes/buckmasters-ii-3-9x40-bdc.html, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴⁴² www.nikonsportoptics.com/en/nikon-products/scopes/varmint-coyote/index.page, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴⁴³ www.nikonusa.com/en/nikon-products/product/binoculars/aculon-a30-10x25-truetimber-kanati.html, viewed on 2 November 2020

⁴⁴⁴ buckmasters.com/Sponsors, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁴⁵ www.imbmonsterbucks.com/sponsors.php, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁴⁶ www.drivenhunter.com/partners/, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁴⁷ www.raisedhunting.com/raised-hunting-partners/, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁴⁸ mccreaoutdoors.com/sponsors-archery/, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁴⁹ imaging.nikon.com/history/chronicle/rhnc09s-e/, viewed on 5 November 2020

⁴⁵⁰ www.nikon.com/about/sustainability/csr-management/governance/enhancing-export/, viewed on 5 November 2020

Sustainability

Nikon had an extensive Sustainability section on its website, which includes a considerable section on environmental management and its 2020 Sustainability Report. The company formulated a series of medium-term goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to be met by 2031 (compared to the fiscal year ended March 31, 2014):

- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from production and purchased energy by 26%.**
- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from purchased goods and services, transportation and distribution of finished products, and use of sold products by 31%.**

These targets had been approved by the Science Based Targets initiative, which meant they were in line with international agreements on climate change. The report contained data on the company's greenhouse emissions in all three categories mentioned in the targets. It also discussed which actions Nikon was taking to achieve its decarbonisation goals.

In addition to decarbonisation targets, Nikon had quantified and detailed targets for resource preservation and reuse, and reduction and management of hazardous chemical substances. The report discussed in some detail Nikon's efforts with regard to biodiversity conservation, eco-friendly product development and packaging.

However, Nikon produced mainly electronics, which often contain plastics and fire retardants that have a significant negative environmental impact when released after disposal. Although Nikon's midterm goal was to have zero hazardous chemical substances in manufacturing processes and products, its policies went less far. Specifically, its policy for limiting the use of phthalates (a substance used in plastics that poses significant risks to human health) did not go beyond legal requirements and fire retardants were not mentioned at all. The sustainability report also disclosed that an internal audit had found that a product part containing levels of dibutyl phthalate that potentially exceeded legal standards, had been used in some of its cameras in the second half of 2019.

Nikon was considered to have reasonable environmental reporting and good carbon management and reporting.

Summary

At the time of writing this report, the Olympus Corporation was in the process of divesting from its consumer imaging business. Since the company still had full ownership of this part of its business at the time of writing, it was still considered to own the Olympus consumer optics brand. The company did not appear to have any links to hunting.

Background

In October 2020, Olympus Corporation responded to Ethical Consumer's questionnaire, stating it could not answer questions on its sports optics because it was divesting from its camera business. Olympus announced plans to sell its camera business in June 2020.⁴⁵¹ A further announcement in September 2020 explained that Olympus was in the process of setting up its imaging business as a separate corporate entity and had agreed to transfer 95% of its ownership to OJ Holdings, Ltd. on 1 January 2021. This company was said to be a special purpose company established by Japan Industrial Partners Inc,⁴⁵² a small company specialised in 'deconglomerating' Japan's industrial giants to make them more competitive in the international market.⁴⁵³ Since Olympus still had full ownership of its imaging business at the time of writing and it had not stated explicitly that its sports optics would be transferred to the new company, Olympus was still considered the owner of the Olympus optics brand for this report.

The Olympus Corporation was founded in October 1919 in Japan, with an initial focus on producing microscopes and thermometers. The business now has five key business segments: Endoscopic Solutions, Therapeutic Solutions, Scientific Solutions, Imaging, and Other. The company continues to be headquartered in Japan but has a global reach, with approximately 33% of sales occurring in North America, 24% of sales in Europe, 18% in Asia Pacific, and 18% of sales in Japan.⁴⁵⁴

Olympus Corporation had a turnover of over ¥797.4 billion (approximately £5.7 billion) in 2019-20, of which 5.5% came from the imaging business sector. Endoscopic Solutions accounted for the largest part of the business – around 53%.⁴⁵⁵ The company's product range includes digital cameras, binoculars, voice recorders, optical components, gastrointestinal endoscopes, surgical endoscopes, biological microscopes, industrial remote visual inspection equipment, industrial endoscopes and endotherapy, and surgical devices.

The Master Trust Bank of Japan was the only shareholder with a stake of more than 10% in the company, owning 12% of shares. When the previous report was published, Sony Corporation held 5% but at the time of writing this report, Sony was not one of the company's principal shareholders.⁴⁵⁶

Shooting accessories

Olympus's global website was searched in October 2020. Other than binoculars, which were not marketed at hunters, the company did not appear to sell or promote any hunting accessories.

⁴⁵¹ www.forbes.com/sites/marksparrow/2020/06/25/olympus-exits-the-camera-market-after-three-years-without-a-profit/, viewed on 13 October 2020

⁴⁵² www.olympus-global.com/news/2020/nr01839.html, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁴⁵³ asia.nikkei.com/Business/Business-deals/Japan-buyout-firm-sees-more-opportunities-after-Olympus-deal, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁴⁵⁴ www.olympus-global.com/company/profile/top.html, viewed 13 October 2020

⁴⁵⁵ www.olympus-global.com/company/profile/top.html, viewed 13 October 2020

⁴⁵⁶ www.olympus-global.com/ir/stock/information.html, viewed 13 October 2020

Arms and military links

Olympus produced optics for the security, defence and the law enforcement industry; including videoscopes to look inside sealed cargo containers, X-ray analysers to identify suspicious chemicals, and high-powered microscopes for forensic analysis.⁴⁵⁷ It also produces calibration test blocks for the US Air Force⁴⁵⁸ and military test blocks.⁴⁵⁹

Olympus Corporation of the Americas held a Military-Friendly Employer designation.⁴⁶⁰

Sustainability

Olympus published its 2019 CSR report on its website, www.olympus-global.com.⁴⁶¹ Both website and report discussed the company's corporate philosophy of "making people's lives healthier, safer, and more fulfilling", in addition to its environment and social policies and practices. In regard to its environmental policies, the company raised the "prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and protection of biodiversity" as areas where the company needed to reduce its impact, as in its 2015 and 2017 CSR reports.

Environmental performance data was provided, but only greenhouse gas emissions appeared to be independently audited. The online membership list of the pro-nuclear industry lobby group Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries, www.oci.ca, was in the process of being updated when viewed in October 2020.⁴⁶² Olympus was listed as a member in the organisation's 2019 Annual Report.

It aimed to address its environmental impacts by raising awareness of environmental issues amongst its staff; it had a well-developed environmental management system in place; aiming to reduce its environmental impact – providing some year-on-year monitoring of key environmental impacts and developing 'green' technological solutions. Olympus was also a signatory to the Global Compact 'Caring for Climate' initiative. It also conducted life cycle assessments at each stage of a product's life cycle to assess its impact on the environment at the product development stage and from procurement through to manufacture, distribution, use and final disposal.

One quantified, future environmental reduction target was found: to improve the company's energy consumption rate by 7.73% or more between 2012 and 2020. In its Code of Ethics, the company also stated that it aimed to improve its carbon footprint year after year with the aim of becoming climate-neutral in the long term. Other targets were either not dated or quantified.

To achieve its carbon-footprint targets, the company was making improvements in product production, increasing the percentage of renewable energy used and engaging in reducing logistics-related CO₂ emissions on its sites. However, according to the Olympus IMS website, the company was involved in the production of test and measurement equipment for many industries with a high climate change and environmental impact: aerospace, oil and gas, automotive, mining, and chemicals.

Because of its lack of quantified targets and involvement in industries that had a high impact on climate change, Olympus was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁵⁷ www.olympus-ims.com/en/solutions/security-defense/, viewed on 13 October 2020

⁴⁵⁸ www.olympus-ims.com/en/ultrasonic-transducers/testblocks/, viewed on 13 October 2020

⁴⁵⁹ www.olympus-ims.com/cs/store/test-blocks/military/, viewed on 13 October 2020 (webstore not available in the UK)

⁴⁶⁰ www.olympuscanada.com/cpg_section/cpg_HeadlinesDetails.asp?PressNo=3231, viewed on 13 October 2020

⁴⁶¹ www.olympus-global.com/csr/download/, viewed 13 October 2020

⁴⁶² www.oci.ca/membership-directory/, viewed 13 October 2020



'Digiscoping: helping you capture the detail'

Summary

Only one mention of hunting was found in the company's Technical Guide – linked to from the frontpage of the company's website. As the frontpage also featured a picture of a trophy animal – used to market the company's digiscoping range – and one of the binoculars on its outlet website, the company was considered to have weak links to hunting.

Background

Optical Hardware – a Yorkshire-based company – owns, manufactures, and distributes the Visionary brand of optics in addition to the Illusion and Ostara brands. Optical Hardware also distributes the Olivon brand of optics in the UK – the trademark of Olivon International.⁴⁶³

The family owning Optical Hardware also runs an outlet website, www.binocularoutlet.co.uk, which sells discounted optics of various brands.

The company's turnover was estimated at £148,000 in 2019 by corporate database D&B Hoovers.

Shooting accessories

Optical Hardware's product range includes binoculars, telescopes, spotting scopes, digiscopes, monoculars, tripods and other optical accessories which are suited to a wide range of activities. The company separated products by make and type but also by use, ranging from 'Theatre' to 'Sports & Racing' and 'General Observation'. No mention of hunting was found under any of these categories. However, images of a hunting cabin, a deer with large

antlers, and a flock of geese featured on the frontpage. The caption "Digiscoping: helping you capture the detail" was superimposed on the photo of the deer.

Only one mention of hunting was found on the company's website, www.opticalhardware.co.uk – in the website's Technical Guide: *"Walking, travel, skiing, ships, balloons, camping, mountaineering, hunting, hiking, fishing, landscape or nature viewing and studying architectural detail, the list is endless and so much more enjoyable with a good pair of binoculars."*⁴⁶⁴

Olivon produced riflescopes.⁴⁶⁵ However, although Optical Hardware distributed Olivon-branded products, it did not sell or distribute Olivon's riflescopes.

The binocular outlet website, www.binocularoutlet.co.uk, carried spotting scopes, binoculars, night vision equipment, opera glasses, optics for astronomy and accessories for these products. It marketed one Levenhuk spotting scope for hunting: *"Common uses of this spotting scope: birdwatching, hunting."*⁴⁶⁶

Arms and military links

No links with the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

No information could be found that demonstrated the company was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. The company was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁶³ www.opticalhardware.co.uk/, viewed 26 October 2020

⁴⁶⁴ www.opticalhardware.co.uk/technical-guide, viewed 26 October 2020

⁴⁶⁵ olivonmanufacturing.com, viewed 26 October 2020

⁴⁶⁶ www.binocularoutlet.co.uk/product/levenhuk-blaze-70-plus-20-60x70-spotting-scope/, viewed 26 October 2020

Summary

One product was marketed to hunters on the Optical Vision website, but the company no longer had any links to other companies promoting sports hunting. The 2016 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ report found that Optical Vision distributed Acuter optics, and that Acuter marketed its products to hunters on its own website, acuteroptics.com. The 2018 report found that this website no longer existed. This was still the case in 2020, so Optical Vision was still considered to only have weak links to hunting.

Background

Barr & Stroud Limited was founded in Glasgow in 1913, developing rangefinders for the British Navy. Their first pair of binoculars was produced in 1919 and came to be used “almost universally in the Royal Navy during World War II.”

The original optics business was purchased by the French Thales Group in 2000 and renamed Thales Optronics Ltd. a year later. The Barr & Stroud name was purchased by another company, Optical Distribution Services Ltd., who re-registered as Barr & Stroud Ltd. in 2008. Optical Vision Limited distributes Barr & Stroud branded optics in the UK. All products are made in China.

Optical Vision Limited distributes telescopes, microscopes and optics accessories, under the Barr & Stroud, Sky-watcher, Helios, Acuter, Zenith and Tal brands.⁴⁶⁷ The company is owned by Goldfyre Limited, which was registered at an accountant’s office in London.⁴⁶⁸

According to corporate information website D&B Hoovers, Optical Vision Limited had a turnover of £8 million in 2018, which was a considerable increase from the £3.3 million for 2016 found in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report. Goldfyre Limited also owns one other optics company, Meade’s Optical Instruments, and had a turnover of £8.1 million in 2018.

Shooting Accessories

No specific section of Barr & Stroud’s website, www.barrandstroud.com, or Optical Vision Limited’s website, www.opticalvision.co.uk, was dedicated to hunting accessories. Products were listed under product type and included binoculars, spotting scopes, spotting scope accessories, monoculars, astronomical telescopes, astronomical accessories, brass telescopes, photo-video tripods, and microscopes and meters.

One pair of binoculars was marketed as “Great for Birdwatching, Hunting and General Observing.”⁴⁶⁹ No images of ‘game’ animals could be found. Products were primarily targeted at birdwatchers and nature observers. Some Acuter spotting scopes were also said to be good for “Target Shooting and even Astronomy”.⁴⁷⁰

Although Optical Vision Ltd. still distributed Acuter Optics, Acuter no longer appeared to have links to sports hunting. The 2016 ‘Shooting Wildlife?’ report found that Acuter marketed its products to hunters on its own website, acuteroptics.com. At the time of writing, the website no longer existed, and no new Acuter Optics website was found.

Arms and military search

No links to the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

No information could be found that demonstrated the company was actively working to reduce its environmental and climate impacts in line with international agreements. The company was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁶⁷ www.opticalvision.co.uk/about_ovl.html, viewed 26 October 2020

⁴⁶⁸ Goldfyre entry at Companies House, viewed 27 October 2020

⁴⁶⁹ www.opticalvision.co.uk/binoculars-helios-roof_prism_binoculars/30220.html, viewed 26 October 2020

⁴⁷⁰ www.opticalvision.co.uk/all-spotting-scopes/acuter_grandvista_ds65a_16-48x65a_waterproof_dual_speed_spotting_scope.html, viewed on 26 October 2020

Summary

Opticron stated that it did not market any products to hunters and would “not sponsor or endorse individuals or organisations involved in trophy hunting or similar activities.”⁴⁷¹ Although references to hunting had been found in the product description of two of its Trailfinder binoculars, these had been removed in November 2020. Several products were marketed for wildlife management. Opticron was therefore considered to have no link to sports hunting

Background

Opticron is a small family-run optics business, founded in the UK in 1970. The company’s products are targeted at ‘wildlife enthusiasts’ and include spotting scopes, binoculars, monoculars, telescopes, digiscoping, tripods and mounts, rangefinders, magnifiers, and accessories such as waterproof cases.

The company returned a questionnaire in November 2020, stating that it had a turnover of under £8 million.

No further information was found about the company as no publicly available annual accounts were published.

Opticron was contacted in October 2015 asking for further information about the company. Garin Baska responded stating: “Opticron is a private partnership so you won’t find any financial information about us at Companies House. The company was founded in 1970 by my parents and specialises in the design and marketing of consumer optics (binoculars, monoculars, spotting scopes and accessories) to wildlife watchers the world over. The instruments are made under contract in Japan, Taiwan and China. We employ 20 people in the UK and USA.”

Shooting accessories

The company sold binoculars, rangefinders, accessories such as tripods and cases, eyepieces, and spotting scopes marketed as ‘travel scopes’ or ‘field scopes.’ Products were arranged by product type as well as activity. Wildlife Management, an activity linked under Fieldsports, listed spotting scopes, binoculars and rangefinders and featured a picture of a deer with large antlers.⁴⁷² Products could also be filtered by categories including ‘Target Shooting & Archery’, ‘Wildlife Holidays’ and ‘Wildlife Management’.

Under Fieldsports, Opticron stated: “An important part of wildlife conservation, particularly with invasive or introduced species, is the monitoring and management of population. Making important decisions about management relies on accurate identification and optics can be crucial for determining, for example, animal age or for rapid but accurate estimation of the number of birds in a flock.”

In December 2017, the company sent an email stating that it had removed all mention of hunting from its website, “partly as a result of the ongoing work we are doing with conservation organisations. It was also because we did get feedback after the publication of the first version of the report that customers had chosen Opticron products because the brand is not supportive of trophy and other sport hunting.” In November 2020, Opticron confirmed that it still did not promote its products for sports hunting and “did not directly support sports hunting”. It also did not sponsor any groups, organisations, media or events involved in the promotion of hunting.⁴⁷³

Still, during the first round of research for this report in October 2020, two of Opticron’s Trailfinder binoculars were marketed as “suited to all types of wildlife observation as well as more specialist pursuits such as hunting and field archery”.⁴⁷⁴ The same description was found for one pair of binoculars in the company’s Product Guide 20, released in February 2020.⁴⁷⁵

In November 2020, this description had been changed to “suited to all types of wildlife observation as well as more specialist pursuits such as field archery” on both the website and in an updated version of the product guide, released on 18 November 2020.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷¹ Opticron questionnaire, received September 2017

⁴⁷² www.opticron.co.uk/our-products/fieldsports/wildlife-management, viewed 27 October 2020

⁴⁷³ Opticron questionnaire, received November 2020

⁴⁷⁴ www.opticron.co.uk/our-products/binoculars/t4-trailfinder-wp-binoculars/t4-trailfinder-wp-10x42-black; www.opticron.co.uk/our-products/binoculars/t4-trailfinder-wp-binoculars/t4-trailfinder-wp-8x42-black viewed 27 October 2020

⁴⁷⁵ <https://www.opticron.co.uk/contentfiles/files/49.pdf>, viewed on 19 November 2020

⁴⁷⁶ <https://www.opticron.co.uk/contentfiles/files/86.pdf>, viewed on 19 November 2020

Other links to hunting

The company responded to an Ethical Consumer questionnaire in September 2017 stating: “Where appropriate we would support the management of wildlife populations for conservation purposes but not for commercial purposes such as driven bird shoots. Our support for conservation is illustrated by the fact that we work closely with Birdlife International partners around the world and in the UK we are the exclusive optics supplier to The Wildlife Trusts.”⁴⁷⁷

The company also emailed in December 2017 stating, “As you will be well aware, binoculars can be used for hunting regardless of whether or not a brand supports that activity. And there are some types of ‘hunting’ such as deer population management which are necessary, in that case due to the lack of top predators in the UK for example. Optics are an essential part of making sure any such cull is done properly.” It confirmed in November 2020 that it still did not promote its products for sports hunting and “did not directly support sports hunting”.

Arms and military links

In its response to an Ethical Consumer questionnaire, received in November 2020, Opticron stated that it did not sell directly to the arms industry or military but that as a wholesaler, it did not have control over the final destination and application of any of its products.

On the Opticron website, scopes, binoculars and rangefinders could be filtered for Military and Tactical use.⁴⁷⁸ Opticron products were also sold in the webshop of the National Small-bore Rifle Association.⁴⁷⁹

Sustainability

In its response to an Ethical Consumer questionnaire, the company sent the Opticron Ethical Trade Policy and Opticron Diversity and Sustainability Policy in November 2020. Both contained provisions on the environment.

In its Ethical Trade Policy, Opticron stated that it expected that “measures to minimise adverse impacts on human health and the environment shall be taken throughout the value chain”, including “minimising pollution, promoting an efficient and sustainable use of resources, including energy and water and minimising greenhouse gas emissions in production and transport”. The company and its suppliers were expected to not exploit or degrade the environment at the production site and to respect national and international environmental legislation and regulations.

In its Diversity and Sustainability Policy, Opticron stated that its cardboard packaging was made from recycled material and the products were supplied in the minimum amount of packaging required for safe transit. All waste generated at the company headquarters was sent for sorting for recycling to an ISO-accredited recycling and waste management company.

It also stated that Opticron ensured that non-toxic and non-polluting materials were used as far as possible in the manufacture of its products and that no heavy metals were used in the production of its products. Customers could request “independent social, environment and ethical trade compliance audits of factory premises and/or the supply process”.

Opticron stated that it did not accept animal abuse in the production of its products, and therefore did not use fur – either synthetic or from animals – in the production of its products. Leather products were to be made from “utility animals such as pigs, sheep and cattle where the animal originally was slaughtered for the purpose of meat production”.

Although Opticron demonstrated that it had a reasonable understanding of its environmental impacts, it did not have any targets and did not go into detail regarding its carbon emissions. It was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁷⁷ Opticron questionnaire, received September 2017

⁴⁷⁸ www.opticron.co.uk/our-products/fieldsscopes, viewed 27 October 2020

⁴⁷⁹ www.nsrashop.co.uk/search?type=product&q=opticron, viewed on 27 October 2020

Summary

Ricoh Imaging marketed its range of spotting scopes for hunting on its Japan-based website. It no longer marketed any products for hunting on its US website, and its UK website remained free from references to hunting. Ricoh was therefore considered to have a very weak link to sports hunting.

Background

Pentax's roots are in Tokyo, where the company started making lenses for eyeglasses in 1919. Its product range has slowly expanded with time to include photographic lenses, binoculars, spotting scopes and lenses that are primarily aimed at "travellers, wildlife adventurers, birders and stargazers".

Ricoh Imaging Company Ltd., part of the Ricoh Group and headquartered in Japan, bought the Pentax brand and camera business from the Hoya Corporation in 2011.

The Ricoh Group was founded in Japan by Kiyoshi Ichimura in 1936 and started out manufacturing sensitised paper and cameras. The company's product range now includes printers, scanners, thermal media, electronic components, digital cameras, binoculars, CCTV and Machine-Vision Lenses. It also provides IT and other corporate communication services. The Ricoh Group owned 229 companies worldwide and had a turnover of ¥2,008.5 billion (£13.31 billion) as of March 2020. In the 2020 financial year, 43.4% of sales came from Japan, 26.6% from the Americas, 21.7% from Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and 8.2% from other areas.⁴⁸⁰

Shooting accessories

The sports optics section of Ricoh Imaging's UK website, www.ricoh-imaging.co.uk, redirected to www.ricoh-imaging.eu, where the company sold binoculars, spotting scopes, eyepieces and accessories for these products. The same product ranges were sold on Ricoh Imaging's US website, www.us.ricoh-imaging.com. Neither website marketed to hunters and no images of trophy animals could be found.

However, Ricoh Imaging's Japanese website, www.ricoh-imaging.co.jp, marketed the same spotting scopes for hunting under its Binoculars & Telescope category:

*"Birders and hunters: we think you'll find exactly what you're looking for."*⁴⁸¹

The company's social media profiles were dedicated to nature photography and photography products.

Arms and military links

Ricoh USA Inc. had various contracts with the US Department of Defense⁴⁸² and provided information technology support for the US federal government, including military branches.⁴⁸³

Ricoh actively recruited army veterans. It had signed an armed forces covenant, "a government scheme that supports members of the Armed Forces by helping them into the workforce and easing their transition into civilian life" in the UK⁴⁸⁴ and Ireland.⁴⁸⁵ Ricoh USA recruited on military bases⁴⁸⁶ and some of its employee veterans featured on the TV series *Military Makeover: Operation Career*.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁰ www.ricoh.com/about/at-a-glance/, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁴⁸¹ www.ricoh-imaging.co.jp/english/products/binoculars/, viewed on 11 October 2020

⁴⁸² www.usaspending.gov/recipient/27207c83-30f0-cc1b-1a6c-27b7671b2106-P/latest, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁴⁸³ www.ricoh-usa.com/en/industries/federal-government, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁴⁸⁴ insights.ricoh.co.uk/empowering-people/armed-forces-covenant-get-back-into-the-workplace-2, viewed on 11 October 2020

⁴⁸⁵ www.ricoh.ie/about-us/careers/why-work-for-ricoh/index.html, viewed on 11 October 2020

⁴⁸⁶ graphics-pro.com/news/ricoh-usa-appears-on-military-makeover-operation-career/, viewed on 11 October 2020

⁴⁸⁷ www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/ricohs-commitment-to-veterans-success-highlighted-in-military-makeover-operation-career-airing-on-lifetime-tv-300924230.html, viewed on 11 October 2020

Sustainability

Ricoh's website had an extensive sustainability section with information on its environmental vision, strategy and action areas, as well as detailed environmental impact assessment and performance data spanning several years.

One of the areas of action was conserving biodiversity, which included a 'biodiversity' page and a biodiversity policy. The policy stated: "Given that we gain a lot of benefit from living things and pursue business activities that have an impact on biodiversity, we will reduce the impact of our activities on biodiversity and engage proactively in its protection."⁴⁸⁸ All biodiversity conservation projects were, however, about restoring or preserving forests.⁴⁸⁹

The company's other three action areas focused on creating a zero-carbon society, a circular economy, and pollution prevention. Ricoh had quantified goals for the first two of these action areas.⁴⁹⁰

In its 2019 Integrated Report, Ricoh reported its greenhouse gasses emissions from production and purchases energy, and emissions in its supply

chain. The company's goal was to have, by 2050, zero emissions across its entire value chain and reduce the ratio of new resource inputs to total resource inputs by 93%. It planned to achieve these decarbonisation goals through developing energy-efficient products, energy conservation and using in-house renewable energy certification for all its business sites. In the mid-term, by 2030, Ricoh planned to reduce emissions from production and purchased energy by 63% and emissions in its supply chain (procurement, product use and logistics) by 20%, compared to 2015. It also aimed to source at least 30% of its energy from renewable electricity. The first mid-term goal had been approved by the Science Based Target initiative, which meant it was in line with international agreements on climate change.

Ricoh produced mainly electronics, which often contain plastics and fire retardants that have a significant negative environmental impact when released after disposal. No policy to reduce or eliminate the use of these substances was found.

Ricoh was considered to have reasonable environmental reporting and good carbon management and reporting.

⁴⁸⁸ www.ricoh.com/sustainability/environment/practice/biodiversity/, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁴⁸⁹ www.ricoh.com/sustainability/environment/practice/search/, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁴⁹⁰ www.ricoh.com/sustainability/environment/strategy/target.html, viewed on 12 November 2020



Swarovski: A story about the Southern African Wildlife College and sustainable hunting, also contained photos of a leopard and an elephant. uk.swarovskioptik.com/10008.635465

Summary

Swarovski offers an app specially for driven hunts, and references both driven and ‘big game’ hunts on its website. Its TV show, Swarovski Optik Quests, aired in the US, featured water buffalo and axis deer hunts and sports hunting featured prominently in its (social) media content. many of its other social media content. Swarovski was therefore considered to have a strong link to sports hunting.

Background

Swarovski Optik was founded in 1949 in Austria and is part of the bigger Swarovski group, a family-owned company founded in 1895 by Daniel Swarovski.⁴⁹¹ The Swarovski group works across a range of different industries including jewellery and other luxury items like chandeliers, perfumes, optics, gemstones,

concrete sawing and drilling equipment (through the Tyrolit brand), entertainment, and road-safety products (through Swareflex). The Swarovski Group had a turnover of €3.5 billion (approximately £3.2 billion) in 2019. Of this, 4.6% was from sales through Swarovski Optik.⁴⁹²

Swarovski Optik produces long-range optics for hunting, nature observation, and birding as well as travel and leisure. It also published a print hunting magazine called Closer.⁴⁹³ Swarovski Optik products are sold in 85 countries worldwide.⁴⁹⁴

In its policy on hunting, Swarovski Optik stated it “supports hunting if it is carried out sustainably, responsibly, legally, and in harmony with nature [and] considers it to be its duty to take care of the environment, protect nature, and safeguard biodiversity”.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹¹ uk.swarovskioptik.com/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/WFS/SOP-GB-Site/en_US/-/GBP/SPAG_AboutSwarovskiOptik-ViewHistory, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴⁹² factsheet.swarovskigroup.com/EN/, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁴⁹³ uk.swarovskioptik.com/hunting/closer-c20040510/magazine-2020-p5445257#, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁴⁹⁴ www.swarovskigroup.com/S/aboutus/Facts.en.html, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁴⁹⁵ uk.swarovskioptik.com/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/WFS/SOP-GB-Site/en_US/-/GBP/SPAG_AboutSwarovskiOptik-ViewHuntingPosition, viewed on 9 November 2020

Shooting accessories

Swarovski Optik's UK website, uk.swarovskioptik.com arranged products by activity and then product type. The activities suggested were hunting, birding and outdoor. The products sold under hunting included riflescopes, spotting scopes, binoculars and accessories for them, as well as apparel.

Swarovski also offered apps to download for hunting. These included a ballistic program, a ds configurator (a digital riflescope), a lead distance app for driven hunts, an app for calculating subtension dimensions and an app for connecting mobile devices to an online European mammal identifier tool.

Hunting was often referred to in the text accompanying specific products, and different types of hunting were referenced, including driven hunts, mountain hunting and 'big game' hunts. For example:

*"The challenge posed by driven and big game hunting requires a powerful experts' rifle scope like the Z8i 1-8x24."*⁴⁹⁶

*"Designed by Swarovski Optic for driven hunts, the Z8i 0.75-6x20 L with 8x zoom means you never miss any of the action."*⁴⁹⁷

*"Whether you're involved in a driven hunt, stalking, or mountain hunting, the Z8i 1.7-13.3x42 P is a versatile rifle scope to have at hand."*⁴⁹⁸

*"All you need for hide hunting and more"*⁴⁹⁹

The 2015 hunting catalogue also stated, "ATX/STX spotting scopes are of course also beneficial from a hunting perspective. It is extremely important for every responsible hunter to be able to determine as accurately as possible the age and sex of a wild animal" (p.92).⁵⁰⁰

A video banner of a deer hunt (advertising a rifle with digital capabilities), filled the top of the hunting products section homepage. A picture linking to a venison recipe in the website's Magazine section, was captioned 'sustainable hunting #wild2table'.

Other stories covered the Tajikistan Mountain Ungulates Project⁵⁰¹ and Southern African Wildlife College,⁵⁰² which both teach professional hunting and gamekeeping skills "necessary ... to manage complex ecosystems, preserve wildlife, and strengthen local communities".⁵⁰³ The articles featured photos of a markhor with spiralling horns, a snow leopard and an African water buffalo, which are all threatened by hunting and human habitat fragmentation.⁵⁰⁴

The South African college planned to improve the "overall trophy quality of the buffalo population" by reducing hunting by local communities.⁵⁰⁵ And the project in Tajikistan trained Pamir communities to make their income from tourists hunting markhor and Marco Polo argali sheep instead of hunting for them themselves. The article presented this as a conservation effort to bring back the snow leopard's natural prey but did not make clear that markhor and argali sheep are both near threatened species.⁵⁰⁶



Swarovski: A story about the Southern African Wildlife College and sustainable hunting, also contained photos of a leopard and an elephant

⁴⁹⁶ uk.swarovskioptik.com/hunting/rifle-scope-z8-i-1-8x24-c20050801/Z8i-1-8x24-L-4A-I-p5265633, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁴⁹⁷ uk.swarovskioptik.com/hunting/rifle-scope-z8-i-0-75-6x20-c20050805/Z8i-0-75-6x20-L-4A-IF-p5458739, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁴⁹⁸ uk.swarovskioptik.com/hunting/z8-i-1p7-13p3x42-p-c20050802/Z8i-1p7-13p3x42-P-L-4A-I-p5265650, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁴⁹⁹ uk.swarovskioptik.com/hunting/z8-i-2p3-18x56-p-c20050804/Z8i-2p3-18x56-P-L-4A-I-p5265669, viewed on 11 September 2020

⁵⁰⁰ uk.swarovskioptik.com/binary/10008.562554, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰¹ uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.578026, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰² uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.563159, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰³ uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.563159, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰⁴ www.iucnredlist.org, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁵⁰⁵ uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.563159, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰⁶ www.iucnredlist.org, viewed on 15 November 2020

The Magazine section also featured traditional hunting articles, such as a hunt for New Zealand's "Big Three": red deer, chamois, and tahr,⁵⁰⁷ and tips for which equipment to use in a driven hunt.⁵⁰⁸ Articles contained professional photos of trophy animals such as deer, hog and ibex. The 'Tutorials and Tips' section of the website demonstrated how to use shooting products. Several of the videos on the Swarovski Optik Hunting YouTube channel, some of which were embedded in the magazine's 'Tutorials and Tips' section, featured trophy animals. A video marketing a spotting scope showed moose, elk, deer, water buffalo, tahr and ibex, all with large antlers.⁵⁰⁹

Other links to hunting

The Swarovski Optik Hunting Facebook page also contained many images of trophy animals such as ibex, bighorn sheep, boar and elk. It also reposted the images of a snow leopard and markhor from its website. An image of dead moose from 2013 also featured.

Boone and Crockett Club and Safari Club International no longer listed their corporate partners on their websites, and so it was not clear whether Swarovski continued to sponsor them (although Swarovski had a profile on Safari Club).⁵¹⁰ It was also unclear whether Swarovski still sponsored the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation.

Dean Capuano, the Swarovski Optik North America Director of Communication, continued to host the hunting show Swarovski Optik Quests.⁵¹¹ The Outdoor Channel,⁵¹² which aired the programme, described it thus: "SWAROVSKI OPTIK Quests tests the most high powered hunting equipment in extreme places around the planet, as host Dean Capuano travels the globe in search of trophies that are on every hunter's bucket list. Catch the action only on Outdoor Channel." The 2020 season featured an Argentinian water buffalo and axis deer hunt.⁵¹³

The Swarovski Optik Hunting YouTube channel had a series that featured 'hunter influencers' under the hashtag #closer2hunting.

Arms and military links

There was some evidence that Swarovski optics were used by militaries.⁵¹⁴

According to the company's 2016 Sustainability Report, sales to the public sector accounted for 1% of the company's turnover. All products sold to the public sector came from the company's existing production portfolio and so the company did not custom develop any products for public sector use.

The company only sold observation optics to the military sector.

Security forces and law enforcement agencies in many states were said to use precision optics produced by Swarovski Optik. Transactions were reported to be regularly checked for legal compliance, by the company itself and external actors.

Swarovski also participated in various hunting and arms fairs, including the (cancelled) 2020 National Rifle Association exhibition, which would have run alongside its annual meeting.⁵¹⁵



"We believe nature always gives us exactly what we need", Swarovski

⁵⁰⁷ uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.466313, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰⁸ uk.swarovskioptik.com/stories/10007.466305, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵⁰⁹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSiD_y-rH-Q, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵¹⁰ safariclub.org/swarovski-optik/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵¹¹ outdoorchannel.com/swarovski-optik-quests, viewed 9 November 2020

⁵¹² www.outdoorchannel.com/show/swarovski-optik-quests/about/1639, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵¹³ www.outdoorchannel.com/show/swarovski-optik-quests/1639, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵¹⁴ International Business Publications, Various Army Weapon Systems Handbooks: Australia (2011), Thailand (2009) and Malaysia (2013), viewed on 9 November 2020, books.google.co.uk/books?id=zDezDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA78&lpg=PA78&dq

⁵¹⁵ s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 9 November 2020

Sustainability

Swarovski Group's website, www.swarovskigroup.com, contained a section on Sustainability, which stated that the company was "committed to offering Conscious Luxury, a new way of doing business that puts compassion and sustainability at its heart. [The company] started in 2000 with the Swarovski Waterschools, created a team and a strategy for sustainability in 2012 and established the Swarovski Foundation in 2013 to honor the philanthropic spirit of Daniel Swarovski".⁵¹⁶

The group's 2019 Sustainability Report discussed topics like environmental management, including reducing emissions, managing water consumption and waste material, and recycling. However, little detail was given and no measurable targets were provided.⁵¹⁷ More detailed performance data was presented in a separate document, including information on its use of renewable energy, water withdrawal by source, water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions for production and purchased energy and waste generated.⁵¹⁸

Swarovski Optik's most recent sustainability report was from 2016. In the environment section, it discussed packaging, freshwater use, wastewater, air, waste, energy, raw materials and the importance of biodiversity. The report contained some performance data but no targets.

The 'About' section of Swarovski Optik's website also contained a brief environmental policy which said that its approach could be summed up as follows: "We produce in an environmentally friendly way. Our buildings and processes are optimized to save resources such as energy, water, and gas. As a manufacturing company, which relies on nature's resources, we focus on ensuring that the cycle is complete in terms of what we give and take."⁵¹⁹ The page also discussed the sponsorship of nature conservation projects.

In response to an Ethical Consumer questionnaire, Swarovski Optik stated, in October 2020, that its business strategy was "sustainable per se"; it "operated sustainably across the whole value-added chain and the related strategic processes". The company stated that the high quality of its products made them extremely durable, which reduced their environmental impact and promoted sustainable consumption. The company said it tried to do its

best to decrease its resource consumption despite its economic growth and had invested "heavily in measures that help to reduce our ecological footprint for years (e.g. energy saving measures, water management, climate-neutral packaging, and expansion of photovoltaic systems)".

Swarovski Optik's Hunting Brochure, downloaded from its website in November 2020, discussed 'Sustainability with Responsibility': "Anyone who is surrounded by such natural beauty, like we are at SWAROVSKI OPTIK, must realize that they also have some responsibility toward it" However, the section only talked about encouraging customers to 'commune' with nature, and about protecting the environment during the production of Swarovski products, and not about the impact of hunting on, for example, biodiversity.

According to its hunting policy, Swarovski only supported hunting if it was "carried out responsibly, sustainably, legally, and in harmony with nature". This included the rejection of unnecessary animal suffering and illegal hunting practices. The company saw the 'harvesting' of meat through hunting as an "ethically correct, sustainable, local, and high quality food source that is superior to many other means of meat production" because it "encourages the mindful consumption of this precious resource". The company acknowledged that "there are differing, sometimes very emotional, opinions on the subject of hunting, a number of areas of conflict, and outspoken opponents to hunting" and stated that it respected these different opinions on hunting.

Swarovski subsidiary Tyrolit provided grinding, cutting and sawing tools for the automotive, aviation and construction industries,⁵²⁰ which all have a high climate change impact. Tyrolit also manufactured components for a wide variety of other precision industries. Some of these – like the paper, food, electric appliance, construction, textile and leather, and metalware industries⁵²¹ – had a considerable negative environmental impact, either through the use of toxins in its production processes or their reliance on natural resources. No policies with regard to toxins were found.

Since Swarovski did not have environmental or carbon performance targets and did not show how it was planning to ameliorate its carbon emissions impact, it was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁵¹⁶ www.swarovskigroup.com/S/aboutus/Sustainability.en.html, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁵¹⁷ www.swarovskigroup.com/S/aboutus/FINAL_2019_Swarovski_Sustainability_Report.pdf, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁵¹⁸ www.swarovskigroup.com/S/aboutus/Swarovski_2019_GRI_Index.pdf, viewed on 12 November 22

⁵¹⁹ uk.swarovskioptik.com/is-bin/INTERSHOP.enfinity/WFS/SOP-GB-Site/en_US/-/GBP/SPAG_AboutSwarovskiOptik-ViewSustainability, viewed 12 November 2020

⁵²⁰ www.tyrolit.group/industries/, viewed on 9 November 2020

⁵²¹ www.tyrolit.group/precision-industry/, viewed on 9 November 2020

Summary

Celestron listed hunting as a possible use for several products, but generally did not market its products specifically to hunters. The website featured ‘Team Celestron’, a group of professionals who use the company’s products. Nearly all of these were conservationists or astronomers, with no hunters listed. Celestron was therefore considered to have weak links to sports hunting.

Background

Celestron’s roots are in the Astro-Optical Division of Valor Electronics, a company founded by Tom Johnson in the 1950s. Celestron is now owned by Taiwan-based Synta Technology, and sells its products globally through its online platforms, via international distributors and, in the US and Canada, through major retailers and speciality stores.

Celestron’s turnover was £45 million, according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers when viewed in September 2020. No annual reports were found for the company.

Shooting accessories

Celestron sold binoculars, monoculars and spotting scopes, which were separated by product type rather than activity on the company’s website, celestron.com. One spotting scope and several binoculars and thermatorches were marketed for hunting in the text accompanying the product:

“...a good choice for bird watching, nature or wildlife observation, hunting, and enjoying scenic views.”⁵²²

“TrailSeeker binoculars provide high-level outdoor performance, making them perfect for the avid birder or hunter.”⁵²³

“The red LEDs are ideal for adventures that call for preserving night vision, like astronomy or night hunting.”⁵²⁴

“Whether you’re stargazing under clear desert skies or perched in a forested hunting blind on a gray and rain soaked afternoon, the ThermoTorch 5 will provide heat, light and power to keep you going.”⁵²⁵

“Mossy Oak Gamekeepers represent a culture who share the same underlying belief that being outdoors is just as much about hunting as it is loving the land, its wildlife, and giving back more than you take.”⁵²⁶

“... designed for hunters, boaters, law enforcement, and military personnel.”⁵²⁷

“... designed to meet the needs of every outdoor enthusiast, from birders and hunters to sports fans to travelers.”⁵²⁸

“... essential for field use offered at a budget-friendly price designed to meet the needs of every outdoor enthusiast, from birders and hunters to sports fans and travelers.”⁵²⁹

⁵²² www.celestron.com/products/upclose-20-60x60mm-45-degree-spotting-scope, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²³ www.celestron.com/products/trailseeker-10x32-binoculars-green-1, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁵²⁴ www.celestron.com/products/celestron-elements-firecel-mega-6?_pos=26&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²⁵ www.celestron.com/products/celestron-elements-thermotorch-5?_pos=27&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²⁶ www.celestron.com/products/gamekeeper-10x42-roof-prism-binoculars?_pos=29&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²⁷ www.celestron.com/products/cavalry-10x50-binoculars?_pos=56&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²⁸ www.celestron.com/products/outland-x-8x25-binoculars?_pos=63&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵²⁹ www.celestron.com/products/outland-x-10x50-binoculars?_pos=68&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

Celestron also sold Sports Optics, a guide written by Celestron former owner Alan Hale “for prospective buyers looking for binoculars, riflescopes, or spotting scopes for use in hunting, bird watching, astronomy, nature viewing, and other hobbies.”⁵³⁰

No images of ‘game’ animals were featured on the website. Celestron’s social media accounts focused on astronomy and birdwatching.

Other hunting links

Celestron’s chairman emeritus and founder, Adam Hale, is an amateur astronomer as well as an avid bird watcher and hunter. The company’s current CEO has no links to hunting.⁵³¹

The website featured ‘Team Celestron’, a group of professionals who use the company’s products. Nearly all of these were conservationists or astronomers. No hunters were listed.⁵³²

Arms and military search

Celestron’s Cavalry binoculars series was marketed to law enforcement and military personnel, as well as hunters and boaters.⁵³³ No further links to the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

No information could be found that demonstrated the company was actively working to reduce its environmental⁵³⁴ and climate impacts in line with international agreements. Celestron was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁵³⁰ www.celestron.com/products/sport-optics-by-alan-hale?_pos=20&_sid=2d18887b0&_ss=r, viewed on 6 September 2020

⁵³¹ www.celestron.com/pages/executive-bios, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁵³² www.celestron.com/blogs/team-celestron?view=grid, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁵³³ www.celestron.com/products/cavalry-10x50-binoculars?_pos=3&_sid=86260a019&_ss=r, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁵³⁴ www.facebook.com/celestron/photos/3548957331783661; www.facebook.com/celestron/photos/2533262486686489, viewed on 7 November 2020

Summary

The Vanguard UK website referred to hunting less than in 2018, but the company's catalogue and other websites clearly marketed to sports hunters. Some Vanguard product descriptions referred to a particular type of hunt or prey, including 'dangerous game'. Vanguard staff were said to have killed two of the dead bears pictured on the company's Facebook page. Vanguard was considered to have strong links to sports hunting.

Background

Vanguard World is a China-based company founded in 1986 with design and manufacturing headquarters in Myanmar, and distribution, sales, marketing and administrative branches in the US, Luxembourg, Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan and Guangzhou (China). It describes itself as being "a woman-owned family business".⁵³⁵ Its range of photographic equipment, accessories and optic products are distributed globally.

Vanguard World UK Ltd. is registered in Dorset, but its majority shareholder is Export Dragon Limited, registered in the British Virgin Islands.⁵³⁶ Corporate information database D&B Hoovers estimated this company's turnover at £890,000 in 2018.

No information regarding Vanguard World's global turnover was found.

Shooting accessories

On Vanguard World's UK website, www.vanguardworld.co.uk, products were listed by 'Photo/Video', 'Nature' and 'Shooting', which previously was 'Hunting'. Under Shooting, Vanguard sold riflescopes, spotting scopes, binoculars, outdoor packs, support systems (tripods and mounts), cases, and other accessories. Rifle scope products could no longer be narrowed down by "Type/Activity". A product search for 'hunting', however, brought up collections named hunting⁵³⁷ and hunting accessories.⁵³⁸ Products had been created by "a product development team that includes avid sportsmen".⁵³⁹



"Hard work paid off for Christian Bond of The Outsiders TV! Congratulations on a great Bull and harvest #VanguardPro #vanguardoutdoors #WhatGetsYouOutdoors"

Most product descriptions no longer mentioned hunting. Two, however, referenced a particular type of hunting (wild boar, dangerous 'game' and varmint hunting):

"With best-in-class image quality, comfortable ergonomics, and robust construction, there's no hunt too demanding for these field tested riflescopes."⁵⁴⁰

"The Endeavor RSIV 1424G Rifle Scope delivers allow magnification, with a wide field of view that allows for fast target acquisition. Perfect wild boar and dangerous game (sic)."⁵⁴¹

"The Endeavor RSIV 52050 DSV Rifle Scope is a class-leading rifle scope with a Dispatch™ Varmint reticle, which is the ultimate close-to-long-distance reticle..."⁵⁴²

⁵³⁵ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/pages/about-us, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵³⁶ Vanguard World UK Ltd entry at Companies House, viewed on 19 November 2020

⁵³⁷ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/hunting, viewed on 10 November 2020

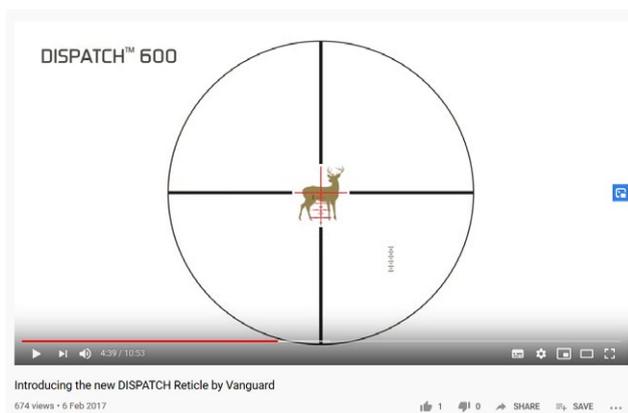
⁵³⁸ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/hunting-accessories, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵³⁹ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/hunting?page=5&limit=15, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴⁰ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/riflescopes, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴¹ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/riflescopes/products/endeavor-rs-iv-1-4x24-g, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴² www.vanguardworld.co.uk/products/endeavor-rs-iv-5-20x50-dsv, viewed on 10 November 2020



“Introducing the new DISPATCH Reticle by Vanguard” on the Vanguard Outdoors YouTube channel

One riflescope product page contained a video on its dispatch ballistic reticle that featured a drawing of a deer, elk and bighorn sheep for the thumbnail, and silhouettes of a deer and fox in a view finder.⁵⁴³

More references to hunting in relation to specific products were found in Vanguard’s 2020 Hunting & Outdoors Product Catalogue, including big game hunting:

“The all-round reticle perfect for hunting in thick brush, for fast target acquisition or for big game where precision is also needed.”

“Appealing to the success driven weekend birder, traveler, or the hunter who is price conscious yet driven by performance and value.”

“The VEO HD spotting scope boasts excellent optical viewing for both nature enthusiasts and hunters.”

“Constructed of rugged aluminum, the Porta-Aim gun rest provides stable shooting support in an easily portable device for the fast-action hunter.”

The difference between the catalogue and UK website might be explained by the catalogue targeting Vanguard World’s global customers. Its US and France-based websites, for example, still used the categories Photo/Video, Nature and Hunting and the US website linked to a blog dedicated to hunting tips under Vanguard Life.

Similarly, the UK website linked to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube profiles named ‘Vanguard Photo UK’, while the company’s US Facebook page, Vanguard Outdoors, shared hunting memes and featured images of hunters with dead trophy animals such as deer, elk, wildebeest, bear and a black impala shot by a Vanguard professional archer in Africa.⁵⁴⁴

Other links to hunting

Several posts on the Vanguard Outdoors Facebook page referred to staff hunters. One image was of a staff member with a dead deer, captioned: “Tommy D – Vanguard Regional Sales Manager – gettin’ it done in Saline, MI!”⁵⁴⁵ Two of the images of dead bear also referred to Vanguard staff:

“Looking forward to our upcoming bear hunt with Agassiz Outfitters! Here’s a pic from the last time Bob Kaleta (Vanguard Product Marketing Mgr. – Sporting Optics) made the trip with the crew.”⁵⁴⁶

The company also had an ambassador programme, Vanguard Pro, that gave “a lot of perks ... individual attention, follow-through, support” to social media personalities. People could apply to join by tagging their work with #vanguardworld, whether they had “200,000 Instagram followers or 200”. The company prided itself on the exposure it provided through social media channels, trade shows or as a guest on the #onyourguard Facebook Live podcast.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴³ www.vanguardworld.co.uk/collections/riflescopes/products/endeavor-rs-iv-4-16x44-ds6, viewed on 7 September 2020

⁵⁴⁴ www.facebook.com/vanguardoutdoors/photos/a.464028559121/10157552215369122, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴⁵ www.facebook.com/vanguardoutdoors/photos/a.464028559121.280785.163704249121/10155815695109122/?type=3&theater, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴⁶ www.facebook.com/vanguardoutdoors/photos/a.464028559121.280785.163704249121/10155159568974122/?type=3&theater, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁴⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=pwOlnOgZNHE, viewed on 10 November 2020



"Congrats to Vanguard #ArcheryPro , Scott Smith, on his successful Africa Hunt! These are just two of the many memories that were made!"

Posts with Vanguard Pro hunters included:

*"Hard work paid off for Christian Bond of The Outsiders TV! Congratulations on a great Bull and harvest #VanguardPro #vanguardoutdoors #WhatGetsYouOutdoors."*⁵⁴⁸

*"#VanguardPro Richard P. Smith I met with good success on the first day of my hunt this year (25th). Shot an adult male weighing 345 pounds."*⁵⁴⁹

The company was no longer listed as sponsor of Forever Wild Outdoors.⁵⁵⁰

Arms and military search

No links to the arms industry, military or gun rights movement were found.

Sustainability

The 'About US' section of Vanguard's UK and US websites no longer contained a discussion of the company's sustainability policies. Vanguard was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management and reporting.

⁵⁴⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/vanguardoutdoors/posts/hard-work-paid-off-for-christian-bond-of-the-outsiders-tv-congratulations-on-a-g/10157630062019122/> viewed on 30 November 2020

⁵⁴⁹ www.facebook.com/vanguardoutdoors/photos/a.10153941808129122.1073741834.163704249121/10154553964259122/?type=3&theater, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁵⁵⁰ foreverwildoutdoors.com/show-sponsors/, viewed on 10 November 2020

Summary

Viking has two websites – one for its own-brand products, and another for the distribution of other brands. Hunting was mentioned only on the latter of these websites, with regards to one range of non-Viking products. As a result, the company was considered to have weak links to sports hunting.

Background

Viking Optical Limited started trading in 1986 and has since become a “leading independent optical equipment importer in the UK”. No information on its turnover was found other than that it was less than £10.2 million.⁵⁵¹

The company continues to partner with the RSPB, BirdLife International, the British Birdwatching Fair and the Hawk and Owl Trust. The company also sponsors the Urban Peregrine Project in Norwich and Bath, which uses live and still web cameras to record peregrines in urban nesting sites.⁵⁵²

The company states that it “has supplied the RSPB with its own-brand optics under an exclusive trading agreement for the past 20 years and, more recently, supplied other Birdlife partners.”

The RSPB has faced criticism from animal rights groups for supporting managed shooting, particularly of pheasants.⁵⁵³ However, the RSPB responded to criticism by stating, “we are neutral on the ethics of shooting ... and have been for over a hundred years”. The organisation stated that it condemned bad practice and illegal hunting but was open to working with hunters in order to protect nature.⁵⁵⁴ In 2020, the RSPB demanded “new regulations and better enforcement of existing laws to control the shooting of game birds in the UK” such as grouse and pheasants after a review of its policy found that “self-regulation by the shooting community had failed to address the environmental impacts of the game bird industry”.⁵⁵⁵

Shooting accessories

Viking’s main website for its own-brand products, www.vikingoptical.co.uk, sold binoculars, spotting scopes, monoculars, tripods, and accessories for this equipment. Products were arranged by type, not use, and no reference to hunting was made. The website contained no images of animals other than birds to market bird watching optics.

Viking Optical Ltd. also owned a second website, through which it distributed other brands, www.vikingopticalcentres.co.uk. Products were again listed by type, and brand, rather than activity. However, product descriptions for the Habicht range of Swarovski binoculars did reference hunting:

“The sturdy light-alloy housing makes these binoculars particularly suitable for hunting in the mountains.”⁵⁵⁶

The website also sold products by Celestron, Kowa, Leica and Zeiss, which all had links to sports hunting.

No images of animals or other links to sport shooting were found.

Arms and military links

No links to the arms industry or military were found.

Sustainability

No information on the environmental or supply chain policy or practices of Viking Optical was found. It was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management reporting.

⁵⁵¹ Viking Optical Limited entry, Companies House, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁵⁵² www.vikingoptical.co.uk/conservation/, viewed 4 November 2020

⁵⁵³ Row erupts as RSPB claims pheasant shooting is actually ‘good for some wildlife’, The Telegraph, March 2015, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/countryside/11502903/Row-erupts-as-RSPB-claims-pheasant-shooting-is-actually-good-for-some-wildlife.html, viewed 2 January 2018

⁵⁵⁴ The RSPB and Shooting: separating fact from fiction, 15 March 2015, ww2.rspb.org.uk/community/ourwork/b/martinharper/archive/2015/03/15/debunking-some-myths-about-the-rspb-and-shooting.aspx, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁵⁵⁵ www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/oct/11/rspb-calls-for-new-laws-on-game-bird-shooting, viewed on 15 November 2020

⁵⁵⁶ www.vikingopticalcentres.co.uk/product/swarovski-habicht-10x40-green/, viewed on 8 September 2020



The Visionking website banner

Summary

Visionking's website is largely technical, and only mentions hunting on the FAQ page. However, as the company sells riflescopes, it is considered to have a strong connection to hunting.

Background

The Visionking brand is owned by the Chinese company Visionking Optical Technology Co. Ltd. (Shenzhen). The company was established in 1999 as a manufacturer of budget optics and is headquartered in Guangdong Province. Visionking's product range includes sports optics, astronomical telescopes, and other optical accessories, which are sold throughout Europe, North America and South-East Asia.

Very little public information is available for Visionking Optical Technology. No annual accounts, annual report, environmental or supply chain reporting, nor social media accounts were found.

Shooting accessories

Visionking Optical's products, sold on its website www.visionking.com, include riflescopes, spotting scopes, binoculars, monoculars, night vision equipment and rangefinders. These are arranged by type, rather than activity. Product pages contain technical specifications, but no descriptions. The text

on the website only referred to hunting in the FAQ section with explanations such as:

*"... offers sufficient magnification for all but the most extreme hunting scenarios ... Select these riflescopes for hunting big game at medium range These riflescopes are best for target shooting, when the target is motionless and for varmints and other small game ... This makes them ideal for birding, hunting, surveillance etc ... Property owners can observe nocturnal criminal activity. Hunters and nature lovers can observe animals without startling them ..."*⁵⁵⁷

However, the riflescope pages all feature an image of a deer seen through a riflescope viewfinder, accompanied by a picture of a hunter.⁵⁵⁸ The company's logo features a human figure with a rifle.

No other connections to sport shooting were found.

Arms and military links

No links to the arms industry or military were found.

Sustainability

No information on the sustainability policy or practices of Visionking was found. It was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management reporting.

⁵⁵⁷ www.visionking.com.cn/en/tec_show.asp?c_id=16, viewed 14 October 2020

⁵⁵⁸ www.visionking.com.cn/en/products_show.asp?p_id=341&c_pid=1, viewed 14 October 2020

Summary

Vista Outdoor Inc., owner of Bushnell, linked hunting to conservation in its first Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) report, published in 2020. As part of its 'conservation' work, the company sponsored multiple organisations that promoted hunters' interests.

The Bushnell website no longer had a dedicated section for hunting or tactical products. Its products were now categorised by type and could be filtered for hunting as an area of use. The website continued to reference trophy hunting, and contained several images of 'game' animals, although these were now mostly confined to the company's buyers' guide and were not used throughout the website. There were no images of animals in the Bushnell hunt catalogue, but its Facebook page still featured pictures of dead trophy animals, such as deer, elk and bear.

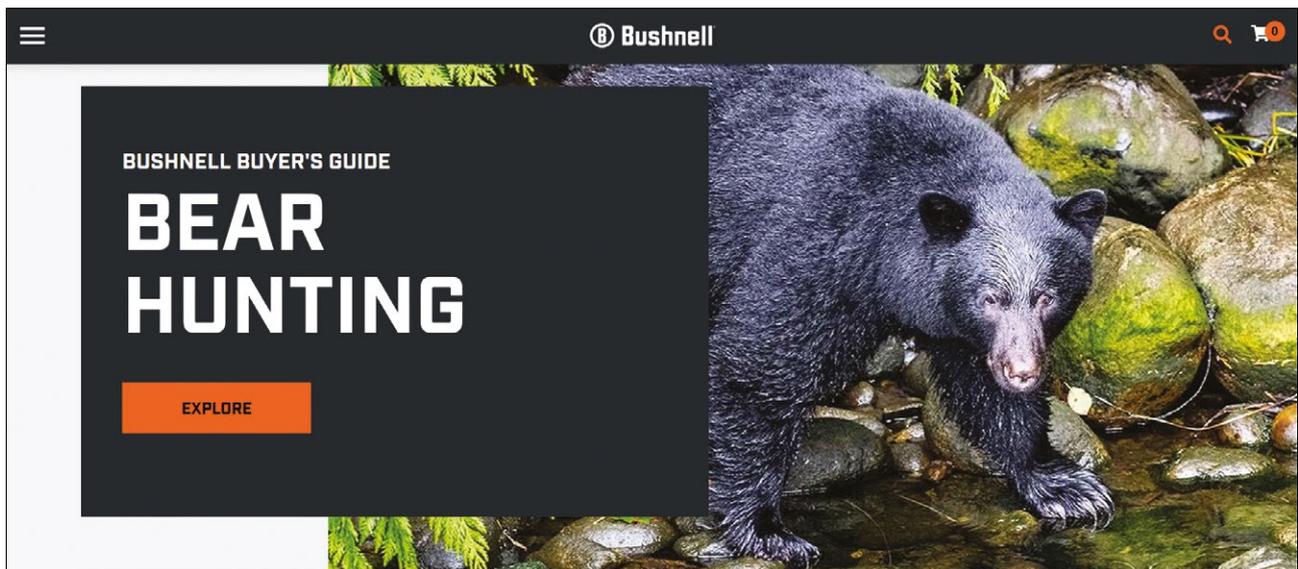
Vista Outdoor was considered to have strong links to sports hunting.

Background

Bushnell is owned by Vista Outdoor Inc., a company founded in 2015 that specialises in the design, manufacture and marketing of consumer goods for the sports shooting and the outdoor recreation industry. The company's customer base ranges from wildlife watchers and walkers to sports hunters and military personnel. It sells sporting ammunition and shooting sport optics, as well as outdoor products such as hydration systems, golf rangefinders, cycling accessories and outdoor cooking solutions.⁵⁵⁹

The company's turnover was \$1.75 billion (£1.3 billion) in 2020, according to its 2020 Annual Report. In the 2020 financial year, 32% of sales came directly from outdoor products and 68% from shooting sports products, in which products of the Bushnell brand were included.

Vista Outdoor Inc.'s brands include Bushnell, Butler Creek, CamelBak, Hoppe's, Millett Sights, Simmons, Tasco, Primos Hunting, Federal Premium Ammunition and Night Optics. In 2018, Vista Outdoor started to implement a strategic plan to go back to its core brands of ammunition, hunting and shooting accessories, hydration bottles and packs, and outdoor cooking products. Since then, it has sold its Bollé, Cébé, Serengeti eyewear brands,⁵⁶⁰ and firearms brands Savage Arms⁵⁶¹ and Stevens.



Bushnell Buyer's guides for bear, elk, moose, coyote, deer, turkey, duck, small game and hog hunting recommended 'good', 'better' and 'best' products and had a photo of the animal as a thumbnail

⁵⁵⁹ istaoutdoor.com/corporate-overview/, viewed on 12 November 2020.

⁵⁶⁰ vistaoutdoor.com/2018/09/vista-outdoor-announces-the-sale-of-bolle-cebe-and-serengeti-brands/, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶¹ www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/vista-outdoor-announces-sale-of-savage-brand-300880517.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

Shooting accessories

The Bushnell website lists its product by type: binoculars, riflescopes, range finders, red dots, spotting scopes, trail cameras and night vision technology. After selecting a product type, products could be filtered by use, one of which was hunting.

The names of several product ranges reference hunting: Trophy and Trophy XLT riflescopes and Trophy Cam HD Aggressor. The products are accompanied by descriptive text, as well as technical information, which repeatedly references hunting, including trophy hunting and archery, but did not reference specific prey:

*“...its Fast-Focus eyepiece and side parallax adjustment make dialing in your next trophy as easy as deciding which end of a backstrap to eat first.”*⁵⁶²

*“...the perfect scope for the close to mid-range hunter.”*⁵⁶³

*“Ideal for bow hunters ...”*⁵⁶⁴

*“A timeless configuration that will perform for hunters and target shooters.”*⁵⁶⁵

*“The Engage EDX features enhance low light performance, giving you an edge when hunting in low light situations.”*⁵⁶⁶

*“Bushnell spotting scopes give you the advantage from the world’s high point of brightness, clarity and edge-to-edge detail – whether you’re birding at sea level or hunting above timberline.”*⁵⁶⁷

Customers could write reviews that were published underneath product descriptions. Some of these referenced specific types of hunting, such as driven hunt and waterfowl hunt. The Bushnell website also sold Primos hunting calls for trophy animals such as deer and moose.

Buyer’s guides for bear, elk, moose, coyote, deer, turkey, duck, small game and hog hunting recommended ‘good’, ‘better’ and ‘best’ products and had a photo of the animal as a thumbnail. One picture of a deer in a viewfinder was found on a rangefinder product page marketed for archery.⁵⁶⁸ There were no images of animals in the Bushnell hunt catalogue.

Other links to hunting

Bushnell’s social media profiles, however, still featured multiple photos of dead trophy animals, including deer with large antlers.^{569 570} Some of these had been reposted from customers or ‘hunting influencers’. Several photos of dead black bear were also found. An image of a stuffed bear from 2017 was captioned: “Have a piece of your own at home? Share them below!” Another image from 2016 read “what’s your fall hunt of choice?” and captioned: “Turkey, whitetail, grizzly, or a bobcat?”

Press releases on the Vista Outdoor Inc. website, when viewed in November 2020, talked about staff involvement in corporate hunting trips. This included Anne Beihoffer, Federal project manager, participating in a Vista Outdoor’s pheasant hunt.⁵⁷¹

Bushnell’s website had a section for company ambassadors, called Team Bushnell. Among these were eight hunting professionals, including Michael Waddell, host of TV programmes ‘Bone Collector’ and ‘Realtree Road Trip’, and Will and Jimmy Primos, co-hosts of ‘Primos Truth about Hunting’ on the Outdoor Channel. None of these professionals were depicted with large trophy animals. The company’s YouTube channel also featured a series of interviews, broadcasted live, with professional hunters and hunting personalities.

⁵⁶² www.bushnell.com/riflescopes/shop-all-riflescopes/trophy-3-9x40-riflescope-doa600/BU-753960B.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶³ www.bushnell.com/bushnell/prime-1-4x24-illuminated-riflescope/BU-RP1424BS9.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁴ www.bushnell.com/rangefinders/prime/prime-1300-laser-rangefinder/BU-LP1300SBL.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁵ www.bushnell.com/binoculars/hunting/engage-edx-10x42-binoculars/BU-BEN1042.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁶ www.bushnell.com/binoculars/hunting/engage-edx-12x50-binoculars/BU-BEN1250.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁷ www.bushnell.com/spotting-scopes/nitro/15-45x65-nitro-spotting-scope/BU-SN154565G.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁸ www.bushnell.com/rangefinders/prime/prime-1300-laser-rangefinder/BU-LP1300SBL.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁶⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/bushnell/photos/pcb.10158789350417943/10158789350362943/> viewed on 30 November 2020

⁵⁷⁰ www.facebook.com/bushnell/photos/a.114208157942/10158760747692943, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁷¹ vistaoutdoor.com/2018/10/making-connections-on-a-pheasant-hunt/, viewed on 8 November 2020

Interim chairman and CEO of Vista Outdoor Ltd., Mike Callahan was replaced by Chris Metz as CEO in 2017. Like his predecessor, Chris Metz was found to have strong links to sports hunting. He was an avid hunter and served on the board of the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and the corporate advisory council for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, both of which were involved in protecting hunters' rights.⁵⁷²

Robert J. Keller, former Vista Outdoor Shooting Sports President, who joined the Board of Governors for The National Shooting Sports Foundation in September 2016,⁵⁷³ no longer worked for Vista Outdoor.⁵⁷⁴

One of the images of a dead black bear on Bushnell's Facebook page was accompanied by the caption: *"First bear ever harvested with an Engage rifle scope! Help us congratulate our Product Manager Greg on this accomplishment."*⁵⁷⁵

Vista Outdoor no longer named hunting and shooting sport partners. Instead it listed the following conservation partners: African Community & Conservation Foundation, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, Big City Mountaineers, Boone and Crockett, California Waterfowl, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, Kids and Clays, Mule Deer Foundation, 4H National Shooting Sports, National Deer Alliance, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Foundation, Outdoor Foundation, Outdoor Industry Association, Pass It on Outdoors, People for Bikes, Pheasants Forever, Protect Out Winters, Quail Forever, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partners, The Conservation Alliance, Trail Blazers, Tread Lightly and Youth Shooting Sports Alliances.⁵⁷⁶ Several of these were listed as Vista Outdoor hunting and shooting sport partners in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report.

Bushnell and another Vista Outdoor's brand, Federal Premium, now sponsored Shoot Like a Girl,⁵⁷⁷ and Federal Premium continued to sponsor Grateful Nation,⁵⁷⁸ "an outdoor adventure series that gives disabled veterans a chance to go on the hunt of their dreams".⁵⁷⁹ It also continued to sponsor the TV show 'Buckmasters' (specialising in deer hunting).⁵⁸⁰ Bushnell also sponsored hunting shows including 'Bone Collector' (a 'big-game' hunting show)⁵⁸¹ and 'Primos' Truth About Hunting' (a "100% Fun and 100% Fair Chase" US hunting show).⁵⁸²

Arms and military links

Vista Outdoor was established as a sporting ammunition company and was originally a division of Alliant Techsystems Inc (ATK) – a US company that produced missiles, rocket boosters, satellite parts and small-calibre ammunition. In 2015, ATK set up Vista Outdoor as an independent company and merged its satellite and military groups with Orbital Sciences Corporation to form Orbital ATK.⁵⁸³

Vista brought with it Blackhawk, a company acquired by ATK in 2010, that currently sells holsters, protective gear and other gun and military related accessories. It also inherited Savage Arms, one of the world's biggest manufacturers of hunting rifles and shotguns, which ATK had bought in 2013.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁷² vistaoutdoor.com/chris-metz-chief-executive-officer/, viewed 8 November 2020

⁵⁷³ vistaoutdoor.com/2016/09/vista-outdoor-shooting-sports-president-joins-nssf-board-governors/, viewed 24 November 2017

⁵⁷⁴ www.wsj.com/market-data/quotes/ACCO/company-people/executive-profile/308710, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁷⁵ www.facebook.com/bushnell/photos/a.114208157942.97877.79250067942/10155306204827943/?type=3&theater, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁷⁶ vistaoutdoor.com/social-responsibility/conservation/, viewed on 8 November 2020; Vista Outdoor, 2020 ESG report, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁵⁷⁷ shootlikeagirl.com/partners/, viewed 8 November 2020

⁵⁷⁸ www.outdoorchannel.com/show/gratefulnation/about/1538, viewed 8 November 2020

⁵⁷⁹ vistaoutdoor.com/2017/03/grateful-nation-receives-high-praise-viewer-outdoor-channel/, viewed 8 November 2020

⁵⁸⁰ buckmasters.com/Sponsors, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁸¹ www.bonecollector.com/partners-and-sponsors/, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁸² www.primos.com/, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁸³ www.startribune.com/alliant-techsystems-to-name-sporting-spinoff-vista-outdoor/286884441/, viewed on 8 November 2020

⁵⁸⁴ vistaoutdoor.com/history/, viewed 2 January 2017 (no longer available)

After the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in 2018, in which 17 people were killed and 17 more injured, student survivors organised to demand legislative action to prevent similar shootings and condemned lawmakers who accepted political contributions from the National Rifle Association (NRA).⁵⁸⁵ Outdoor recreation retailer REI and its Canadian counterpart Mountain Equipment Co-op stopped carrying Vista Outdoor brands because of the company's close ties to the NRA.⁵⁸⁶ REI supported a boycott call of the company because Vista did not "engage in the national conversation about common-sense gun safety" and REI did not want to help Vista "profit directly from the sale of guns".⁵⁸⁷

In May 2018, Vista announced a strategic transformation plan that included divesting from its firearms brand Savage Arms. According to its CEO, Chris Metz, the plan had been on the cards long before the boycott and was part of a strategic decision to focus on the company's core business of ammunition and outdoor goods. Possibly, the Parkland shooting and the boycott accelerated the decision.⁵⁸⁸ In August 2019, Vista Outdoor announced that it had sold Savage Arms and its other firearms brand, Stevens, to an investment group headed by the division's president and CEO.⁵⁸⁹ Since then, REI has started to stock Vista Outdoor brands again.⁵⁹⁰

Vista Outdoor's divestment from its firearms brands, however, was by no means a withdrawal from the gun rights movement or the arms industry. Vista Outdoor was registered for a booth at the (cancelled) 2020

NRA exhibition, which would have run alongside its annual meeting.⁵⁹¹ And, in October 2020, the company acquired parts of ammunition manufacturer Remington, which had filed for bankruptcy "as it faced financial troubles partly because some retailers placed restrictions on gun sales after school shootings in the United States".⁵⁹² The following month, the company reported a revenue jump of 29%, as its shooting sports sales, the bulk of which was ammunition, grew by 26% to \$380 million.⁵⁹³

Vista Outdoor's other ammunition brands include Federal Premium Ammunition, Blazer Ammunition and Estate Cartridge. Several of its non-ammunition brands also marketed their products for tactical use. Blackhawk, for example, manufactured products for law enforcement (from plain clothed investigators to uniformed officers), tactical teams and military personnel.⁵⁹⁴ And Bushnell had a separate tactical catalogue.⁵⁹⁵

Federal Premium and Remington were industry allies of the US NRA in November 2020.⁵⁹⁶ Federal Premium Ammunition had also sponsored programs on NRA TV⁵⁹⁷ and Bushnell has sponsored NRA events such as the organisation's World Shooting Championship.⁵⁹⁸

Blackhawk had three social media influencers as brand ambassadors, two of whom are former Navy Seals and one a retired SWAT team member.⁵⁹⁹ Bushnell and several other Vista Outdoor brands also had a Military VIP programme that offered discounts to active military, veterans, retirees, National Guardsmen and reservists.⁶⁰⁰

585 www.nytimes.com/2018/02/16/us/columbine-mass-shootings.html, viewed on 12 November 2020

586 www.gq.com/story/rei-joins-nra-boycott, viewed on 8 November 2020

587 www.snewsnet.com/news/breaking-down-vista-outdoor-boycott, viewed on 8 November 2020

588 www.snewsnet.com/news/breaking-down-vista-outdoor-boycott, viewed on 8 November 2020

589 www.fool.com/investing/2019/08/07/vista-outdoor-completes-sale-of-gun-business-is-it.aspx, viewed on 8 November 2020

590 www.snewsnet.com/news/breaking-down-vista-outdoor-boycott, viewed on 8 November 2020

591 s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/eBooth.aspx?IndexInList=0&FromPage=Exhibitors.aspx&ParentBoothID=&ListByBooth=true&BoothID=172054, viewed on 8 November 2020

592 uk.reuters.com/article/us-vista-outdoor-remington-outdoor-idINKBN26J1QU, viewed on 9 November 2020

593 www.fool.com/investing/2020/11/05/vista-outdoor-ammo-sales-shoot-higher-on-booming-f/, viewed on 8 November 2020

594 blackhawk.com/government-sales/, viewed on 8 November 2020

595 www.bushnell.com/bu-product-catalog.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

596 nraindustryally.nra.org/become-an-ally/amazing-brands/, viewed on 12 November 2020

597 www.gq.com/story/rei-joins-nra-boycott, viewed on 8 November 2020

598 wsc.nra.org/sponsors/, viewed on 8 November 2020

599 blackhawk.com/ambassadors/, viewed on 8 November 2020

600 www.bushnell.com/bu-military-vip-program.html, viewed on 8 November 2020

Sustainability

Vista Outdoor published its first Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) report in 2020, which provided information on environmental sustainability; workplace safety, diversity and inclusion; supplier, ethics and risk management; environmental, health and safety compliance; and other topics related to corporate citizenship and responsibility.

The environment section of the report stated that "environmental stewardship and conservation of natural resources are core values of Vista Outdoor". Vista saw it as its duty to "be a catalyst for setting policies and practices that protect and nurture wildlife and wild places".

The report featured environmental activities of six of its brands but did not provide environmental targets or performance data for the whole group. As part of its Vista 2030 Vision, it was developing organisation-wide environmental standards and tracking systems to measure and improve operational performance in core environmental categories such as greenhouse gas emissions, recycling, energy management and packaging.

The report was more informative about the company's public policy activities in the 'conservation' area. Over the past five years, Vista Outdoor had paid nearly \$400 million into the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration programme, created by the firearms and ammunition industry in 1937 to set up "a 'user-pays' system where hunters and enthusiasts lead the way in funding habitat and wildlife conservation". It had "actively defend[ed]" the programme when "overzealous lawmakers" tried to use or reallocate its trust fund. It also lobbied for permanent renewal of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Vista Outdoor was "a leading member" of a bipartisan coalition that drafted and introduced the Restore our Parks Act.

Special attention was given to climate change in the company's ESG report, which was described as "a major topic amongst world leaders, businesses, and within the outdoor recreation community". Vista Outdoor saw itself as a member of each of these communities and an active participant in the debate. The report contained the full testimony Vista Outdoor gave in 2019 before the Congressional

Subcommittee on Parks, Public Lands, and National Forest, which was examining the impacts of climate change on public lands recreation. Vista Outdoor shared its position that "the climate is changing and that humans are having an impact"; that "credible solutions must be wholistic (sic) and involve action from individuals, industry, and bipartisan leaders in government" and that "Congressional support for the hunting community and recognition of our contributions to healthy ecosystems must be part of climate change consensus". Vista Outdoor saw itself as uniquely well-positioned to "help bridge the political gap and build consensus around potential solutions to the threat posed by climate change".

The report also explained that Vista Outdoor participated in the US political process to "ensure that the corporation's interests in the sporting industries, contracting, and outdoor recreation industries, and those of a large employer, were appropriately represented". It did so through the Vista Outdoor PAC, an independent, nonpartisan, voluntary fund that supported candidates for the US Senate and House of Representatives.

No mention was made of the company's Conservation Counts campaign, found in the 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report. The webpage for this had stated as part of the "core tenets" of Vista Outdoor's conservation philosophy that "hunting and the shooting sports are critical components of conservation in North America". Vista at the time had also rejected "the labels that some outdoor recreationists are 'consumptive users' and some are 'non-consumptive'. We all have impacts. We strive for our impacts to be more positive than negative."⁶⁰¹

Neither the website nor the ESG report addressed the environmental impact of hunting itself.

As Vista Outdoor had no group-wide targets for reducing its environmental and climate impact, it was considered to have poor environmental and carbon management reporting.

⁶⁰¹ vistaoutdoor.com/social-responsibility/conservation/, viewed 24 November 2017 (text no longer available)

Vortex Optics DBA Sheltered Wings Inc.

Summary

Vortex Optics asks customers to post photos of their kills, but these no longer featured on the company's website. Images and text across the company's website, social media channels and Hunting Catalogue also refer to trophy hunting. Vortex no longer stated that it supported organisations as part of efforts to protect wildlife conservation, the second amendment and hunters' rights, but its social media made clear it still supported these issues. Vortex Optics was considered to have strong links to sports hunting.

Background

Vortex Optics is the trading name of the USA-based company, Sheltered Wings Inc. Vortex Optics was established in 2002 and is described as an "American owned, veteran owned, family owned and operated business" on the Vortex Optics website. The company's roots are in a small outdoor retail store, set up in 1986 in Wisconsin, by Margie and Dan Hamilton, who remain the company's owners. Vortex Optics sells a range of products to wildlife watchers, hunters and military personnel.

Sheltered Wings Inc. had an estimated annual turnover of £69 million, according to the corporate database D&B Hoovers, when viewed in November 2020. No further information could be found about the company.

According to its website, Vortex Optics is distributed in the UK through Newpro UK and Country Sports Wholesale. However, in July 2020, Vortex Optics' director of international operations, Martin Baumber, registered a company named Vortex Optics International Ltd in the UK, of which he owns 50%, together with a co-director also based in the UK. No corporate relationship was found with Sheltered Wings, which still owns the Vortex trademark in the UK and the EU. Sheltered Wings is therefore still considered the owner of the Vortex brand.



The company continued to post pictures of antler trophies and dead trophy animals, including deer, and black and brown bear

Shooting accessories

Vortex Optics' products include riflescopes, spotting scopes, binoculars, monoculars, rangefinders, red dots, rifle scope and red dot mounts. These are arranged by product type rather than activity on its website, www.vortexoptics.com.

Product pages frequently featured text promoting hunting:

*"The Razor HD 5-20x50 riflescopes meet the demands of extreme hunting situations."*⁶⁰²

*"Hunting - Shooting - Long - Range. If you like using all these words in the same sentence, then you're going to love using them all in one rifle scope."*⁶⁰³

*"... the Razor HD 4000 delivers cutting-edge optical and ranging performance - giving hunters and shooters distance data needed to execute even the most demanding shots."*⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰² vortexoptics.com/riflescopes/razor-hd.html, viewed on 31 October 2020

⁶⁰³ www.vortexoptics.com/category/viper_hs_lr_riflescopes, viewed on 31 October 2020

⁶⁰⁴ vortexoptics.com/more-products/rangefinders/razor-hd.html, viewed on 1 November 2020

The catalogue contained product text and testimonials that referred to hunting. Its cover page featured a hunter carrying a bighorn on his backpack and the brochure also showed photos of the severed head of a mountain goat, hunters examining and carrying large deer antlers and dead turkeys.⁶⁰⁵ Product descriptions on the website referred to particular types of hunter, including youth, big game and trophy hunters:

“Easily the best way to make your trophy selection without putting a mile on your boots.”⁶⁰⁶

“It takes serious patience and superior optics to locate trophy animals at extreme distances.”⁶⁰⁷

“Pushing the performance envelope, the Kaibab HD offers the power and optical features you need to dissect the landscapes in search of big game.”⁶⁰⁸

“With a wide range of interpupillary distance, they can easily be adjusted to fit anyone in the family, making them ideal for serious, hard-core youth hunters.”

“Ideal for gun hunters, target shooters and bowhunters, is sure to be a hit - and ensure hits.”⁶⁰⁹

At the time of writing, two of the banners on Vortex’s homepage referenced hunting,⁶¹⁰ with one specifically referencing trophy hunting, linking to a blogpost on elk hunting that featured an image of a hunter carrying elk antlers.⁶¹¹ The catalogue contained professional images of hunters carrying bighorn sheep’s horns, large antlers and a mountain goat’s head.⁶¹²

The website contained a lifestyle section called ‘Vortex Nation’ that published a podcast, videos and a blog for people that had “appreciation for freedom, the

outdoors, time spent with friends and family, telling stories, sharing recipes, defending our public lands and protecting our God-given right to bear arms. If that sounds like you – Welcome to Vortex Nation.”⁶¹³ Hunting was one of the main topics in all media on the Vortex Nation platform. A series of videos with Vortex Trailblazers featured hunting professionals demonstrating their skills and sharing experiences.⁶¹⁴ The podcast was made by “lovers of hunting, shooting, public lands, the second amendment and good food”.⁶¹⁵ The blog gave tips on hunting, including of trophy animals such as bears.⁶¹⁶

The company still asked customers to send images of killed ‘game’ and shooting events to its social media profiles tagged with #VortexNation!,⁶¹⁷ but customer images were no longer reposted at the bottom of product pages. Images included a short video of the killing of a bear⁶¹⁸ and animal trophies such as a recently skinned mule deer skull.⁶¹⁹

Other links to hunting

Although most of Vortex’ social media content was now professionally produced, hunting was still the main focus. Most photos featured lifestyle shots of hunters or product images, but the company continued to post pictures of antler trophies and dead trophy animals, including deer,⁶²⁰ and black⁶²¹ and brown⁶²² bear. Vortex was also running a customer competition with the prize of a deer camp hunt.⁶²³ Vortex Optics South Africa’s Facebook page contained a picture of Donald Trump Jr. (known for participating in trophy hunts) visiting the Vortex booth at the Huntex industry fair to inspect a new reticle.⁶²⁴ The South African division also sponsored the anti-poaching unit Black Mambas.⁶²⁵

⁶⁰⁵ indd.adobe.com/view/ed1e20c4-597f-49c6-a455-009292b07523, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁶⁰⁶ vortexoptics.com/vpr-65a.html, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶⁰⁷ vortexoptics.com/vortex-kaibab-hd-18x56-binocular.html, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶⁰⁸ vortexoptics.com/binoculars.html, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶⁰⁹ vortexoptics.com/more-products/rangefinders.html, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶¹⁰ www.vortexoptics.com/, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶¹¹ vortexoptics.com/blog/pro-tip-with-remi-warren---the-splash-call-for-elk-hunting.html, viewed on 1 November 2020

⁶¹² Vortex Optics 2020 Catalogue, viewed 1 November 2020

⁶¹³ vortexoptics.com/vortex-nation, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶¹⁴ vortexoptics.com/vortex-nation-videos, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶¹⁵ soundcloud.com/vortexnationpodcast/ep-151-identical-draw, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶¹⁶ vortexoptics.com/blog/predator-calling-for-bear.html, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶¹⁷ www.vortexoptics.com/category/vortex_nation, viewed 16 November 2017

⁶¹⁸ twitter.com/i/status/1244678081471627273, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶¹⁹ www.instagram.com/p/CHQepGBjPVt/, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶²⁰ www.facebook.com/vortexoptics/photos/a.406208390757/10158769516900758, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶²¹ www.facebook.com/vortexoptics/photos/10158324890550758, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶²² www.facebook.com/vortexoptics/photos/10157268192125758, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶²³ www.facebook.com/vortexoptics/photos/a.406208390757/10158762754515758, viewed on 6 November 2020

⁶²⁴ www.facebook.com/1685827574974251/posts/the-razor-gii-featured-on-donald-trump-jr-new-cadex-defence-375ct-come-stop-by-a/2361818430708492/, viewed on 31 October 2020

⁶²⁵ www.facebook.com/vortexrsa/videos/294818618191711, viewed on 31 October 2020

The 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report found the following statement on Vortex Optics' website: "Wildlife conservation, protecting the second amendment, hunter's rights, and supporting our military and law enforcement personnel – these are things we believe in. That's why we proudly support the following organizations: Association of the United States Army, Honored American Veterans Afield, Mule Deer Foundation, National Rifle Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Wild Sheep Foundation." Several of these were found to be directly linked to 'game' control and the promotion of sports hunting through education, outreach or lobbying: Honored American Veterans Afield, Mule Deer Foundation, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari

Club International and Wild Sheep Foundation".

This statement has since been removed from the website. Not all of these organisations currently name supporters on their websites and so it was not possible to establish whether Vortex still supported them.

Vortex continued to sponsor the Rocky Elk Foundation,⁶²⁶ Safari Club International,⁶²⁷ and Wild Sheep Foundation.⁶²⁸ Vortex Optics is also still a partner of Sportsmen's Alliance⁶²⁹ – an organisation that protects and advances the US "outdoor heritage of hunting, fishing, trapping and shooting in all 50 state legislatures, in the courts, in Congress and at the ballot box". It fights against animal rights and anti-hunting campaigns and opposes any gun control legislation.⁶³⁰



"We teamed up with our friends @TheHuntingPublic and @onxhunt to give away a deer camp experience like no other! Enter to win a hunt you'll never forget."

⁶²⁶ www.rmef.org/elk-network/this-is-elk-country-presented-by-vortex-optics/, viewed 7 November 2020

⁶²⁷ safariclub.org/monthlysweepstakes/, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁶²⁸ bid.wildsheepfoundation.org/item.aspx?i=35417730&mobile=0, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁶²⁹ www.sportsmensalliance.org/membership/business-memberships/business-partners/, viewed on 7 November 2020

⁶³⁰ www.sportsmensalliance.org/about-sportsmens-alliance/, viewed on 7 November 2020

Vortex Optics was no longer listed as a sponsor for Allout Guiding & Outfitting LLC.⁶³¹

An interview with Dan and Margie Hamilton, the company's founders (dated 2007), was found for the 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report but was no longer accessible from Europe. It discussed the family-run structure of the business and stated: "So we had a strong push toward the bird-watching market, and we didn't have anything for the hunting market. A couple of my boys are really interested in hunting, and there's some other (employees) who are hunters. So, we took that Vortex brand, which really was just a few binoculars, and we decided to develop products that hunters would like".⁶³²

Director of Vortex Edge & Range Operations, Adrian Alan, has a family lifestyle Instagram profile on "family, fishing, hunting, chainsaws" under the name Vortexlawdog.⁶³³

Martin Baumber, director of international operations and co-owner of Vortex Optics International also hunts in Africa.⁶³⁴

An image from 2014 of a dead bear on the Vortex Optics Facebook page was captioned, "What's your guess on the skull size on this massive Kodiak Brown Bear? Our very own Paul from the sales floor was the back-up gun on his friends' bear tag. Nice work!"⁶³⁵

Vortex Optics sponsors brand ambassadors who help make social media content to market its products. Hunters were welcomed to apply to join its roster by submitting a portfolio.⁶³⁶ In exchange for free products and possibly payment, ambassadors posted content endorsing Vortex products on their social media platforms. Posts included pictures of dead trophy animals such as kudu⁶³⁷ and impala⁶³⁸ that were sometimes reposted on a Vortex social media platform.⁶³⁹

Arms and military links

Vortex Optics supports several gun rights organisations. For example, it was registered as an attendant of the (cancelled) 2020 National Rifle Association's (NRA) exhibition, which ran alongside the organisation's annual meeting.⁶⁴⁰ It is an official sponsor of the National Rifle League (NRL) in the US⁶⁴¹ and South Africa⁶⁴² and organises the NRL-US Vortex Rampage Competition.⁶⁴³ It provides the National Rifle Association of the UK with scopes for its hire firearms and training sessions, and sponsors the organisation's Civilian Service Rifle events.⁶⁴⁴

The 2020 Vortex Optics catalogue marketed riflescopes for tactical use:

"Military, law enforcement, and competition shooters alike will love the clarity..."

"Tactical and competitive shooters looking for the optimal combination of features and optical clarity..."

The catalogue also featured images of men in military gear taking aim with machine guns at an unseen target in desolate urban landscapes.

Customers also used #vortexnation accompanied by hashtags such as #bluelivesmatter and #2ndamendment to post pictures of guns⁶⁴⁵ and armed men.⁶⁴⁶

Sustainability

No information on the sustainability policy or practices of Vortex Optics could be found. It was therefore considered to have poor environmental and carbon management reporting.

631 alloutoutfitters.net/about-us/, viewed 7 November 2020

632 host.madison.com/business/keeping-the-outdoors-in-their-sights/article_05c23d7a-74d9-5eed-abca-5c6db6de5a2d.html, viewed 16 November 2017

633 www.instagram.com/vortexlawdog/, viewed on 6 November 2020

634 podtail.com/en/podcast/going-ballistic-with-ryan-cleckner/59-martin-from-vortex-optics-in-africa/, viewed on 31 October 2020

635 www.facebook.com/vortexoptics/photos/a.406208390757/10152434280395758, viewed on 7 November 2020

636 twitter.com/VortexOptics/status/1130549280937267201, viewed on 7 November 2020

637 www.instagram.com/p/B0XlzY5nt_2/, viewed on 7 November 2020

638 www.instagram.com/p/BuSo3mcngOk/, viewed on 7 November 2020

639 www.facebook.com/vortexrsa/photos/a.2313373978886271/2313374158886253, viewed on 7 November 2020

640 s15.a2zinc.net/clients/NRA/nraam2020/Public/exhibitors.aspx, viewed on 7 November 2020

641 nationalrifleleague.org/sponsors/, viewed on 1 November 2020

642 www.nrlsa.co.za/, viewed on 1 November 2020

643 nationalrifleleague.org/nrl-announces-2019-vortex-rampage-in-iowa/, viewed on 1 November 2020

644 www.facebook.com/NRAUK/posts/martin-baumber-international-operations-manager-vortex-optics-vortex-optics-uk-t/2189748607707668/, viewed 31 October 2020

645 www.instagram.com/p/CEDpoPPjIl/?igshid=1bnavbt1ck6w6, viewed on 6 November 2020

646 www.instagram.com/p/CHQIVHXpjjh/, viewed on 6 November 2020



"Anyone out chasing Bears this Spring? Boar or a Sow?" Customers were encouraged to share their photos on the Zeiss Hunting US Facebook page

Summary

Zeiss no longer participated in production of the consumer hunting magazine *PASSION*. References to trophy hunting were no longer found on the company's website and there were fewer references to hunting on social media profiles. Zeiss, however, still marketed products for driven hunts and asked if customers were planning to hunt for bears in Spring on its Facebook page. The company also sponsored social media influencers who were trophy hunters.

The Zeiss UK website no longer promoted the company's hunting courses, but the website for the global brand still mentioned them (although no courses were scheduled). The 2018 *Shooting Wildlife?* report had found that Zeiss sponsored several organisations that promoted both conservation and hunting. Although the company continued to sponsor conservation activities of professional associations, it no longer named which ones. Although the company said it did not agree with killing animals "for fun", Zeiss was considered to have strong links to sports hunting because it produced riflescopes and promoted trophy hunting.

Background

The Zeiss Group is headquartered in Germany and is managed by holding company Carl Zeiss AG, which is ultimately owned by the Carl Zeiss Stiftung (Carl Zeiss Foundation). The group offers a range of Zeiss branded optics and optical electronic products which are manufactured and sold in more than 40 countries.

The company started as a small workshop in Jena, Germany, in 1846 and was set up by Carl Zeiss. The workshop serviced and manufactured scientific equipment, and produced glasses, weighing scales, drawing instruments and telescopes. Encouraging scientific development continues to be a key aim of the foundation.

The company started to rapidly expand its product portfolio from the late 1880s onwards, producing a range of binoculars, medical optics and scientific equipment. World War I forced the company to focus on optic equipment for military use. Similarly, in World War II, Zeiss products were used by the German armed forces. The splitting of Germany created further problems by essentially creating two

competing companies that operated in West and East Germany – both under the name of Carl Zeiss. It was not until after the fall of the Berlin Wall that the two separate companies reunited, in 1991.⁶⁴⁷

The Zeiss Group now comprises four key business groups: semiconductor manufacturing technology, industrial quality and research, medical technology, and consumer visual care and optics. The group had a turnover of approximately €6.4 billion (£5.6 billion) in 2018-19. Of this, vision care and consumer optics accounted for €1.2 million euro, which meant that “the speciality markets for hunting optics and nature observation grew slightly”.⁶⁴⁸ Carl Zeiss Stiftung also owns Schott AG, a company that manufactures speciality glass, glass-ceramics and solar panels, as well as car, air and spacecraft components.⁶⁴⁹

According to its blog, Zeiss “sees hunting as part of human culture, active protection of nature and species, and in this way as part of our today’s society. ZEISS understands hunting in a legal, sustainable, ethical and conservational way. We desist from hunting on endangered species, from killing animals for fun, without reasons or hunting for trophies only. We clearly oppose the inappropriate use of firearms. Our products help hunters to carry out their service to nature as responsibly as possible”.⁶⁵⁰

Shooting accessories

On the Zeiss website consumer products were arranged by the following activities: photography, cinematography, industrial lenses, hunting and nature observation.⁶⁵¹ Under hunting, Zeiss sold riflescopes, binoculars, spotting scopes, thermal-imaging equipment and scope and binocular accessories. Some of these products had special features for night vision, or inbuilt laser equipment. Products were marked with icons to indicate which type of hunting they were recommended for: driven hunt, stalking, high seat/night, medium range/alpine hunting and long range. The text accompanying many of the products promoted hunting, including driven hunts:

*“An unusually wide field of view maximises the overview for shooters on driven hunts and when stalking.”*⁶⁵²

*“The ultimate all-rounder in the HT line for all hunting applications: whether you are shooting in motion or sitting, this riflescope is suitable for any hunting situation.”*⁶⁵³

*“From the Sahara to the Arctic: from the heat of the hut to the bitter cold of the outdoors, or hours in the blazing sun - ZEISS hunting optics operate reliably in extreme climatic conditions”*⁶⁵⁴

Two images of animals were found on the company’s website: an elk and a boar seen through night vision equipment.

Zeiss’ Hunting App, advertised online, included a ballistic calculator, field notes and weather forecast functions, and allowed users to share their thermal images and video on social media. The app’s product description said: “Easily mark kill, shot and sighting position and other incidents on the hunting ground on the Hunting Ground map using GPS.”⁶⁵⁵

Other links to hunting

The company’s Facebook page, Zeiss Hunting, featured fewer trophy animals than found in the last report but still contained multiple images of elk and roebuck, and customers were encouraged to share their own pictures.⁶⁵⁶ In 2020, the page introduced a series called Ambassador Monday with profiles of Zeiss ambassadors, many of whom had trophy hunting profiles on Instagram. The US Facebook page, Zeiss Hunting US, had not posted images of dead animals in the past two years but still featured mounted antler trophies⁶⁵⁷ and asked customers if they were “chasing bears this Spring”.⁶⁵⁸ The Zeiss Hunting blog gave tips on various types of hunts,⁶⁵⁹ including falconry,⁶⁶⁰ moose stalking,⁶⁶¹ and hunting tahr in New Zealand.⁶⁶²

⁶⁴⁷ www.zeiss.com/corporate/int/about-zeiss/history.html, viewed on 10 November 2020

⁶⁴⁸ www.zeiss.com/annualreport-download, p. 29 and p. 33

⁶⁴⁹ www.schott.com, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁰ blogs.zeiss.com/sports-optics/hunting/en/about-us/, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵¹ www.zeiss.co.uk/consumer-products/home.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵² www.zeiss.com/consumer-products/int/hunting/riflescopes/victory-v8/victory-v8-1-1-8x30.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵³ www.zeiss.com/consumer-products/int/hunting/riflescopes/victory-ht/victory-ht-2-5-10x50.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁴ www.zeiss.com/consumer-products/int/hunting/riflescopes/conquest-v4/conquest-v4-1-4x24.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁵ itunes.apple.com/us/app/zeiss-hunting/id1160163704?mt=8, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁶ www.facebook.com/ZEISSHunting/photos/3320103448027002, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁷ www.facebook.com/ZEISSHuntingUS/photos/1582825408432329, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁸ www.facebook.com/ZEISSHuntingUS/posts/2884114241636766, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁵⁹ blogs.zeiss.com/sports-optics/hunting/en/hunting-method/, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁶⁰ blogs.zeiss.com/sports-optics/hunting/en/falconry/, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁶¹ blogs.zeiss.com/sports-optics/hunting/en/moose-hunt-baying-dog/, viewed on 3 November 2020

⁶⁶² blogs.zeiss.com/sports-optics/hunting/en/hunting-tahr-new-zealand/, viewed on 3 November 2020

Zeiss was no longer one of the editors of consumer hunting magazine PASSION.⁶⁶³

The Zeiss UK website no longer mentioned the company's training academy but the global Zeiss website still advertised seminars and training courses in which "seasoned specialists offer you hands-on training that demonstrates the right way to use your top-quality ZEISS optics for nature observation and in hunting". No courses were on offer at the time of writing.⁶⁶⁴

Zeiss' pro-staff programme was no longer found on the UK or global site. However, all named pro-staff members found to work with Zeiss in the previous report continued to be connected to Zeiss as a "Pro Stalker"⁶⁶⁵ or Zeiss Ambassador.^{666 667}

Zeiss sponsored the 2020 Ladies MacNab Challenge, an exclusive sports hunting competition that took place at the Tulchan Glenisla estate in the Scottish Highlands.⁶⁶⁸ Zeiss also remained a sponsor of Safari Club International⁶⁶⁹ and So-Cal, which provided guided hunts, including black bear hunts.⁶⁷⁰ Zeiss was no longer listed as a partner of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.⁶⁷¹

Arms and military links

Historically, Zeiss had strong links to the arms industry. Carl Zeiss began producing optronic instruments for military and civilian applications in the 1890s and established a military division shortly thereafter when the company started to supply prism binoculars to the Prussian Army. During both World Wars, Carl Zeiss produced almost exclusively military optics and the company continued to supply thermal imagers, periscopes and other optics for military use afterwards. A merger of Zeiss' military division with Eltron, a subsidiary of DASA (the German Aerospace Stock Company), became Zeiss Eltro Optronic GmbH. This company was sold to Cassidian, a division of the EADS Group, in 2012.⁶⁷²

Although Zeiss does not appear to have a specific military division anymore, it continues to supply equipment to a company like Jamco Aerospace, which "manufactures complex and precision-manufactured components and riveted sub-assemblies for military and commercial companies".⁶⁷³ Between 2008 and 2015, Carl Zeiss companies had applied to the UK government for 17 export licences for equipment designed for military use to Abu Dhabi, Germany, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Oman and South Korea.⁶⁷⁴



"How cute are these fawns?... Have you already gone out for fawn rescue in your hunting area? Tell us!"
Customers were encouraged to share their own pictures on the Zeiss Hunting Facebook page

663 www.passion-magazin.de/en/about-us/, viewed on 3 November 2020

664 www.zeiss.com/corporate/int/zeiss-academy.html#sportsoptics, viewed on 3 November 2020

665 www.instagram.com/roebucklee/?hl=en, viewed on 3 November 2020

666 www.facebook.com/ZEISSHunting/posts/2742828369087849, viewed on 3 November 2020

667 www.sportsmanguncentre.co.uk/blog/news-and-reviews/, viewed on 3 November 2020

668 www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRyP_4QmCXU, viewed on 3 November 2020

669 member.scifirstforhunters.org/static/Corporate-Sponsor/, viewed 3 November 2020

670 socialguidedhunts.com/our-sponsors/, viewed 3 November 2017

671 www.rmef.org/partners/, viewed 3 November 2020

672 www.zeiss.com/corporate/int/about-zeiss/history/technological-milestones/defense-systems.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

673 www.zeiss.com/metrology/_successstories/manufacturing-of-complex-aerospace-parts.html, viewed on 3 November 2020

674 caat.org.uk/resources/company-export-licence-application-data-from-2008-2015/, viewed on 9 November 2020



Zeiss Hunting, US

Sustainability

A section named 'Responsibility' was found on Zeiss' website, which discussed the company's social and environmental responsibilities to varying degrees of detail. The section on the environment discussed efficient use of natural resources (water, materials and waste), climate protection and the management of hazardous substances. Key performance figures for several of these topics were presented on the website and in the company's 2018-2019 Sustainability Report.

The company had several targets for the financial year 2019-2020, including a 50% reduction of carbon emissions for production and purchased energy and a 50% reduction in relative energy consumption, in comparison with 2009-2010. Zeiss claimed to adhere to the goals set by the Paris Agreement on climate change to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius. It stated it had taken measures to achieve this goal but did not discuss these in the report or on its website. Schott AG, also a subsidiary of the Carl Zeiss Foundation, produced components for the car, aeroplane and spacecraft industries, which all have a high climate change impact.

A paragraph on nature conservation, part of the company's social engagement work, stated:

*"For ZEISS, protecting plants and animal species is particularly important: Binoculars and spotting scopes from ZEISS allow people to get closer to nature and have an excellent reputation among nature lovers around the globe. ZEISS works with professional associations to support many conservation activities and educational programs for children and adults as well as research programs for the protection of endangered animals."*⁶⁷⁵

The 2018 Shooting Wildlife? report had found that Zeiss sponsored several organisations that promoted both hunting and conservation, but no information on these sponsorships could be found in November 2020. The sustainability report mentioned that Zeiss supported numerous nature conservation activities, educational programs for children and adults, and research programs to protect endangered animal species in collaboration with professional associations. But it did not name organisations other than BirdLife International. Zeiss sponsored this organisation's scientific work on the Red List of Birds. It also donated spotting scopes and binoculars to a camp that tracked snow leopards in the Indian Himalayas, so that "tourists can observe these wonderful animals in their natural habitat". Finally, Zeiss' website mentioned a partnership with Rockjumper Birding Tours, which "offers professionally guided expeditions for nature lovers and bird watchers all over the world".⁶⁷⁶

Zeiss was considered to have reasonable environmental reporting and poor carbon management reporting.

⁶⁷⁵ www.zeiss.com/corporate/int/about-zeiss/responsibility/social-engagement.html, viewed on 12 November 2020

⁶⁷⁶ www.zeiss.com/consumer-products/int/nature-observation/content/cooperations.html, viewed on 12 November 2020

APPENDIX 1

Organisations referenced in company profiles that are connected to hunting

4H National Shooting Sports: an American organisation whose programs aim to facilitate “the development of youth as individuals and as responsible and productive citizens ... Youth learn marksmanship, the safe and responsible use of firearms, the principles of hunting and archery, and much more”.⁶⁷⁷ The 4H stands for the personal development of head, heart, hands, and health.

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers: an organisation that “seeks to ensure North America’s outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting, through education and work on behalf of wild public lands and waters” It had three key programs that included an armed forces initiative that aimed to ensure that veterans and active duty military personnel continue to take active roles as public land owners. It also had a ‘Hunting for Sustainability’ program that aimed to encourage conservation-minded hunters.⁶⁷⁸

Backwoods Life: a hunting TV show. Images displayed on its website featured images of dead trophy deer.⁶⁷⁹

Bighorn Outdoors: an American website and online TV show, which helps hunters “set up their own public land hunts” through providing public land hunting information and tips on self-guided hunts. It aims to offer “an affordable & challenging way for fellow sportsmen and sportswomen to go on that hunt of a lifetime year after year”.⁶⁸⁰ The website’s photo gallery included albums titled African Trophies, Florida Trophies, Bear Pics 2006, and Western Big Game. Several images showed children with dead ‘game’.⁶⁸¹

Bone Collector: a TV show on the Outdoor Channel, that depicts ‘big game’ hunts.⁶⁸²

Boone and Crockett Club: an organisation that aims to “promote the conservation and management of wildlife, especially big game, and its habitat, to preserve and encourage hunting and to maintain the highest ethical standards of fair chase and sportsmanship in North America”. It is said to be the oldest conservation organisation in North America, having been founded in 1887 by Theodore Roosevelt and George Bird Grinnell.⁶⁸³

Buckmasters: the largest deer hunting association in America, which was said to encourage hunting ethics, sportsmanship and safety through two TV shows and three print magazines. The hunting programme, aired on the Outdoor Channel, was said to be “the longest-running hunting show in history”.⁶⁸⁴

California Waterfowl: an American organisation that aims to “grow California’s waterfowl populations, wetlands and hunter-conservationist communities”. It believes that ‘hunter recruitment, retention and reactivation are crucial to the future of wetlands because hunters are the most motivated and passionate force for wetland conservation’.⁶⁸⁵

Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation: a nonprofit organisation that works “with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping.”⁶⁸⁶

Delta Waterfowl: “a leading conservation group [working to] produce ducks through intensive management programs and conservation of breeding duck habitat ... protect[ing] the continuing tradition of waterfowl hunting in North America.” Defending hunting rights is a core part of its work.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁷⁷ 4-hshootingsports.org/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁷⁸ www.backcountryhunters.org/programs, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁷⁹ www.backwoodslife.com/about-us/ viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸⁰ www.bighornoutdoors.com/about.htm, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸¹ www.bighornoutdoors.com/photo/gallery/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸² www.outdoorchannel.com/show/bone-collector/1407www.bonecollector.com/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸³ www.boone-crockett.org/snapshot-boone-and-crockett-club, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸⁴ www.outdoorchannel.com/show/buckmasters/1415, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸⁵ www.calwaterfowl.org/about/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸⁶ congressionalsportsmen.org, viewed 20 November 2020

⁶⁸⁷ deltawaterfowl.org/defending-the-hunt, viewed 20 November 2020

Ducks Unlimited: a not-for-profit organisation, founded by waterfowl hunters more than 80 years ago, that “conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America’s waterfowl”. The website contained a section on hunting that offered hunting tips.⁶⁸⁸

Grateful Nation: “an outdoor adventure series that gives disabled veterans a chance to go on the hunt of their dreams”.⁶⁸⁹

Hitmen: an American TV show that depicts TV personalities across the United States on their various hunts.⁶⁹⁰ The photo gallery included images of dead trophy deer and black bears.

Honoured American Veterans Afield: a non-profit partnership that aims “to help the healing and re-integration of disabled veterans and injured active military back into normal American life through participation in outdoor events.”⁶⁹¹

HuntInMotion: two hunters who produce articles, DVDs and seminars about their hunting trips around the world. The website’s gallery features numerous images of dead ‘trophy’ animals, such as antelope and deer with large antlers.⁶⁹²

Kids and Clays Foundation: an American organisation that “supports Ronald McDonald House Charities through shooting sports to improve the lives of critically-ill children and their families”.⁶⁹³

Ladies MacNab Challenge: a challenge to shoot a deer, two grouse and fish for a salmon in one day. The 2020 Ladies MacNab Challenge took place at “Tulchan Glenisla” estate in Scotland.⁶⁹⁴

Magic Safari Lodges: produces guides to hunting lodges around the world. The 2020 guide contained multiple images of trophy animals, including buffalo, mountain goats, dead male lions, leopard and elephant.⁶⁹⁵

McCrea Outdoors: a company that organises hunting trips, including for trophy hunting.⁶⁹⁶

Mule Deer Foundation: an American conservation organisation for mule deer, black-tailed deer and their habitat. One of the organisation’s aims was “To support regulated hunting as a viable component of mule deer and black-tailed deer conservation.”⁶⁹⁷

National Deer Association: an American organisation that aims to “serve deer, hunters and the industry more effectively at a time when the need is greatest [and] ensure the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting for the next generation”.⁶⁹⁸ Its parent organisation, QDMA, “teaches deer hunters how to improve local deer populations, habitat and hunting experiences”.⁶⁹⁹

National Rifle Association: a not-for-profit organisation that advocates for gun rights. It spends about \$350 million per year,⁷⁰⁰ including around \$3 million per year lobbying to influence gun policy.⁷⁰¹ It describes itself as “America’s longest-standing civil rights organization”, but has repeatedly been accused of receiving the majority of its funding from the gun industry itself. The NRA funds various hunting programmes, and its hunting website, explore.nra.org/interests/hunting stated, “When it comes to hunting and skills training, America’s hunters have known for years where to go: the National Rifle Association.”

National Shooting Sports Foundation: ‘the firearm industry trade association’, which aims to “promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports”. The organisation specialised in influencing gun policy and its membership was made up of thousands of manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, sportsmen’s organizations and publishers across America”.⁷⁰²

688 www.ducks.org/hunting/waterfowl-hunting-tips, viewed 20 November 2020

689 vistaoutdoor.com/2017/03/grateful-nation-receives-high-praise-viewer-outdoor-channel/, viewed 20 November 2020

690 www.hitmentv.com/about.html, viewed 20 November 2020

691 www.honoredveterans.org/about-hava, viewed 20 November 2020

692 huntinmotion.com/galerie, viewed 20 November 2020

693 kidsandclays.com/home/about/, viewed 20 November 2020

694 ladiesmacnabchallenge.co.uk/about-us/ viewed 20 November 2020

695 www.magicsafarilodges.com/downloads/MagicSafariLodges2020.pdf viewed 20 November 2020

696 mccreaoutdoors.com, viewed 20 November 2020

697 muledeer.org/about-us/mdf-goals/, viewed 20 November 2020

698 www.deerassociation.com/about/, viewed on 20 November 2020

699 www.deerassociation.com/about/mission-and-history/, viewed on 20 November 2020

700 www.charitiesnys.com/RegistrySearch/show_details.jsp?id=%7BBB042BA5-FBEE-4E3E-AD95-BCFC0C313A45%7D, viewed 20 November 2020

701 www.opensecrets.org/orgs/national-rifle-assn/summary?id=d000000082, viewed on 20 November 2020

702 www.nssf.org, viewed 20 November 2020

National Wild Turkey Federation: an American organisation “dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage”.⁷⁰³ It had a ten-year initiative called ‘Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt.’⁷⁰⁴ and stated that a key aim was preserving the conservation funding generated by hunters.

Pass It on Outdoors: An American not-for-profit that matches “adults with a passion for the outdoors with children that want to learn about the outdoors ...” Its activities included passing on hunting skills, with the website featuring a number of images of dead animals – including turkeys and deer.

Outdoor Foundation: research and grant-making foundation of the Outdoor Industry Association, which represents the interests of the outdoor industry, including the hunting industry.⁷⁰⁵

Outdoor Industry Association: American industry organisation that “strives to support the growth and success of the outdoor industry by convening members to collaborate to solve the challenges of an ever-changing marketplace”.⁷⁰⁶ Hunting is one of the industry areas represented.⁷⁰⁷

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever: different branches of an American not-for-profit that aims to conserve “pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education, and land-management policies and programs.” The website contained a section on hunting that offered advice on where to hunt and how to get started.”⁷⁰⁸

Primos TRUTH about Hunting: a TV show on the Outdoor channels that depicts hunters as they “chase turkey, elk, deer, waterfowl, and predators from hunting camps in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas to points all over North America.”⁷⁰⁹

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation: an American organisation that aims to “ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat and our hunting heritage”. Its programmes focus on land protection, habitat stewardship, and advocacy on issues relating to elk conservation and hunting.⁷¹⁰

Safari Club International (SCI): describes itself as “the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide.” Its team of lobbyists, litigators, policy makers, and social media experts work alongside its sister organisation, the Safari Club International Foundation, to administer the largest hunter-led Political Action Committee (SCI-PAC). ‘Since 2000, SCI has spent \$140 million on protecting the freedom to hunt through policy advocacy, litigation, and education for federal and state legislators to ensure hunting is protected for future generations’.⁷¹¹ Its work includes lobbying for the relaxation of laws around the import of trophy animals to the USA.⁷¹²

Shoot Like a Girl: an American organisation that aims “to grow the number of women who participate in shooting sports by empowering them with confidence.”⁷¹³ Hunting is one of the activities the organisation supports with the website previously stating (in October 2017) “A natural progression in shooting sports is hunting, and Shoot Like a Girl encourages women to realize hunting is a choice they can make to provide true organic food for their families. Protecting the environment, managing wildlife and preserving our hunting heritage is important, and women make a difference in these efforts.”

So-Cal guided hunts: a company for guided hunts in Southern California. Types offered include predator, hog, deer and black bear hunts.⁷¹⁴

Sportsmen’s Alliance: an American organisation that protects and advances the US “outdoor heritage of hunting, fishing, trapping and shooting in all 50 state legislatures, in the courts, in Congress and at the ballot box”.⁷¹⁵ It fights against animal rights and anti-hunting campaigns and opposes any gun control legislation.

⁷⁰³ www.nwtf.org/about/know-us/todays-mission, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁴ www.nwtf.org/about/save-the-habitat-hunt, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁵ outdoorindustry.org/advocacy/2020-policy-platform/, viewed on 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁶ outdoorindustry.org/advocacy/2020-policy-platform/, viewed on 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁷ outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/OIA_RecEconomy_FINAL_Single.pdf, viewed on 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁸ pheasantsforever.org/Hunt/pheasant-hunting.aspx, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷⁰⁹ www.outdoorchannel.com/show/primos-truth-about-hunting/1615, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁰ www.rmef.org/how-we-conserve/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹¹ safariclub.org/sci-named-one-of-the-top-five-conservation-organizations-for-hunters/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹² safariclub.org, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹³ shootlikeagirl.com/about.html, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁴ socalguidedhunts.com/book-a-hunt/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁵ www.sportsmensalliance.org/about-sportsmens-alliance, viewed 20 November 2020

Swarovski Optik Quests: a hunting programme aired on The Outdoor Channel. It “tests the most high powered hunting equipment in extreme places around the planet, as host Dean Capuano travels the globe in search of trophies that are on every hunter’s bucket list”.⁷¹⁶ The 2020 season featured an Argentinian water buffalo and axis deer hunt.

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation: a not-for-profit organisation that aims to preserve “Tennessee’s hunting and fishing heritage”. Its programs include schemes that facilitate shooting and hunter education for Tennessee youths, special needs children, and physically disabled men, women and children.⁷¹⁷

The Czech-Moravian Hunting Union: one of the biggest organisation’s specialising in hunting in The Czech Republic. It is made up of nearly 80,000 members.⁷¹⁸

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership: a non-profit corporation that works to “guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish”. Its key focus areas were the protection of habitats and clean water, sportsmen’s access, and the outdoor recreation economy, through advocacy and conservation programmes.⁷¹⁹

Tread Lightly: an American organisation that aims to “balance the needs of the people who enjoy outdoor recreation with our need to maintain healthy ecosystems and thriving populations of fish and wildlife”. Its website had a section on hunting and shooting.⁷²⁰

Whitetails Unlimited: an American “non-profit conservation organization that has remained true to its mission and has made great strides in the field of conservation.” Programmes included hunter safety/ education,⁷²¹ and the organisation described itself as a staunch supporter of “the second amendment, hunter rights, and promoting the sport of regulated hunting.”⁷²²

Wild Sheep Foundation: an American organisation that aims to enhance “wild sheep populations, promote scientific wildlife management, educate the public and youth on sustainable use and the conservation benefits of hunting while promoting the interests of the hunter”. It believes that “ethical, scientifically-regulated hunting is a necessary part of conservation for sheep as well as other wildlife” and it seeks to protect America’s hunting heritage.⁷²³

Wild TV: “Canada’s number one hunting, fishing, and outdoor lifestyle television channel...Featuring Canada’s greatest and biggest animals, the toughest terrains, impossible shots, and the most challenging adventures.” Scheduled episodes featured deer hunts, ‘bear whispering’ and a ‘predator quest’.⁷²⁴

Youth Shooting Sports Alliance: an organisation that provides equipment for youth shooting and hunting programmes across the USA. The organisation focuses on “introducing safe and responsible shooting sports to the youth and ensuring that hunting and shooting traditions and opportunities remain intact”.⁷²⁵

⁷¹⁶ www.outdoorchannel.com/show/swarovski-optik-quests/videos/1639/369786, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁷ www.twrf.net, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁸ www.cic-wildlife.org/2013/01/30/czech-republic/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷¹⁹ www.trcp.org/mission/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²⁰ www.treadlightly.org/learn/recreation-tips/hunting/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²¹ www.whitetailsunlimited.com/about-us/mission/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²² www.whitetailsunlimited.com/conservation/hunting-tradition/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²³ www.wildsheepfoundation.org/mission-and-programs/advocacy, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²⁴ wildtv.ca/schedule/, viewed 20 November 2020

⁷²⁵ www.youthshootingsa.com/about-us/, viewed 20 November 2020

Shooting Wildlife III

WHO MAKES YOUR BINOCULARS, SPOTTING SCOPES AND OPTICS?

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