

LOCAL CARNIVORE



The research project: “Grazing resources, large carnivores and local communities”, explores the handling of Norway’s twofold objective of preserving sustainable large carnivore populations and animal husbandry in rural areas based on grazing resources.

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The project had a successful start-up conference, August 29th-30th, with partners from various organizations, environmental and agricultural county governors and national and international research institutions. Experiences from Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, France and Norway were presented, providing valuable input for the case studies and surveys in the project.

INTERVIEWS – CASE STUDIES

During the autumn of 2017, researchers at RURALIS/Centre for Rural Research conducted fieldwork in the county of Hedmark, which included interviewing farmers from both in- and outside the designated wolf zone. Marit S Haugen, researcher at RURALIS, is leading this work. Several of the informants farm in areas now hosting all four Norwegian large carnivore species - bear, lynx, wolverine and wolf - in addition to eagles. We are now working on the analysis of these data.

Fieldwork involving interviewing reindeer herders in Salten, Nordland county has also started. This is

a particularly narrow part of the Norwegian mainland, with the Swedish border to the east and the ocean to the west, and large parts of the area are now designated carnivore zones.

Consequently, the traditional reindeer herding and sheep and livestock farming based on grazing resources are under heavy pressure from carnivores, as well as climate change and land fragmentation. These factors reinforcing each other.

The project will carry out participatory mapping in cooperation with participants from reindeer herders in Nordland, Norway, and Sweden in March, 2018. Based on this, we will develop a mapping tool that combines experience-based knowledge and modern mapping tools. Our aim is to visualize the loss of livestock and access to important habitats and to evaluate the reindeer herding’s adaptive capacity. Camilla Risvoll, at Nordland Research Institute, is in charge of this study, in cooperation with Camilla Sandström at Umeå University.

SOME PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

There are substantial differences in farmers' livestock losses to carnivores in Hedmark. Some farmers have discontinued their sheep operation due to high losses and the psychological strain, while others had to give up outfield grazing, keeping their livestock grazing on inbye, fenced-in land. The experiences from grazing on inbye land are negative overall, with implications such as an increased need for medication and vaccines against parasites, reduced growth rate, reduced quality, a higher workload and need to purchase more feed due to arable land now being used for pastures.

The farms' potential for and ability to divert production and income from sheep farming varies considerably. Farms with limited arable land, but large outfield resources, perceive alternatives to outfield grazing as inadequate.

GPS eases monitoring of the livestock and gives earlier notifications of possible risks. Nevertheless, this technology does not stop carnivore attacks. Technical problems are still frequent, and it is too expensive to equip every animal with a GPS-chip.

Gathering of the livestock in the autumn used to be a good way to let children partake in the farms' activities, especially in respect to future succession. Due to the many injured and killed animals, many now keep the children at home.

Many farmers experience psychological strain linked to carnivore attacks and especially finding injured, but not yet dead animals. Several report how this affects their sleep, well-being and quality of life. Various types of sabotage from carnivore activists, were frequently reported.

GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS

Geir Harald Strand, Norwegian Inst. of Bioeconomy Research, is in charge of analyzing the effects of carnivores on the grazing-based animal husbandry outside and inside border areas of the designated carnivore management zones.

Breeding areas for wolverine, lynx, bear, wolf – approx. 55% of the Norwegian land area

Yngleområder

Prioriterte yngleområder samlet
Jerv, Gaupe, Bjørn, Ulv

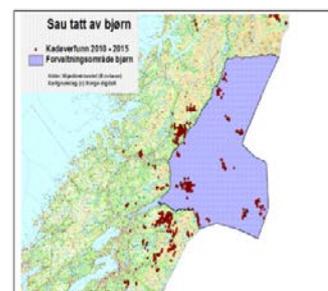
Yngleområdene utgjør antagelig ca 55 % av landarealet

NIBIO



Sheep taken by bear – inside – outside near management zone

G.H. Strand et al. 2016, NIBIO



WEBPAGE

<https://local.carnivore.no> <https://lokalrovdyr.no>

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CONTACT

Katrina Rønningen and Marit S. Haugen,
Institute for Rural and Regional Research - RURALIS
University centre Dragvoll, 7491 Trondheim, Norway
<https://lokalrovdyr.no>