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# Reindeer Husbandry in Finland

## Introduction

This chapter will focus on the reindeer husbandry in Finland. The reindeer areas in the north- and northeast cover 114.000 km<sup>2</sup> or 33% of Finland. It is important to bear in mind our understanding of reindeer husbandry, as discussed under 1.3 “Organisational Structure” on page 3. The fact that reindeer husbandry is conducted both by the Finnish and Saami population, and that the ways of practising reindeer husbandry vary greatly have been an extra challenge to the project.

The Finnish government has, in the same manner as Norway and Sweden, their own way of organising the reindeer husbandry and their special focus concerning official statistics. Much of the statistics differs from Norway and Sweden, but we find some overlap where it is possible to make a comparison.

The working process in Finland has been interesting and informative because the operating conditions in the industry is different from Norway and Sweden. In addition to this, the access to official statistics is more challenging because it does not exist official yearly published documents about the situation in reindeer husbandry in Finland. The statistics and information focus on the district level, and the information about family level is absent. This fact will also reflect the content of this chapter.

## Collection of Data

Due to a lack of competence in finnish language the collection of information in Finland has been challenging for the project. Most of the data available for this project is published in finnish, in the same way as

data about reindeer husbandry in Norway and Sweden is published in norwegian and swedish respectively. The Association of reindeer herding co-operatives has been a great support in the project and has helped prepare information in english.

## National Management of Reindeer Husbandry

### Organisation

#### *Reindeer Pasture Areas*

Reindeer husbandry is practised in the Province of Lapland and parts of the Province of Oulu. The Provinces of Lapland and Oulu are divided into three reindeer husbandry areas (from north to south); “Saami reindeer herding area”, “Special reindeer herding area” and “Reindeer herding area”. This is a governmental initiated classification from the 1960’s, but the reasons for this type of classification is not clear.

The explanations given differ, but they could be compressed down to the following version: In the northern part of Finland, in the area named “Saami reindeer herding area”, reindeer husbandry has priority. This means that special attention should be paid to secure this industry against other use or conflicting interests. The “Special reindeer herding area” has also a level of protection to secure the reindeer industry, and one example is that the Finnish government must consult the different districts in cases of i.e.. sale of land etc.

#### *Reindeer Co-operatives*

Reindeer husbandry is governed by the herding co-operative system. Each reindeer owner is member of a herding co-operative, and the members respective rights and responsibilities are determined on the basis of the number of reindeer owned. The 56 reindeer herding co-operatives have defined borders as well as different pastures and numbers of reindeer. All co-operatives are profit-seeking reindeer husbandry units. Each reindeer herding co-operative has its own administration, headed by the leader who is a reindeer owner appointed by the General Meeting of the herding co-operative.

The administrative board of the herding co-operative consists of the chief of district, the vice-chief and four members. The members of the board are elected

for a three year terming. At the settled meetings the co-operatives general meetings are prepared: fall meeting in September-October and spring meeting in April-May.

Besides the board, the co-operatives have foremen, counters, valuers, slaughter-house foremen and a necessary number of slaughterers.

#### *Association of Reindeer Herding Co-operatives*

All herding co-operatives are members of the Association of Reindeer Herding Co-operative - Paliskuntain Yhdisty - which is the central body. The membership is free of charge and the activity of the Association is founded from the State budget.

The General meeting, also named Reindeer Parliament, is the highest decision-making body of the Association. It consist of the chief of districts, and is assembled once a year. The main affair at the meeting is the Association’s annual reports, accounts, operating plan and financial plan for the next year. The board of the General meeting consists of the chair, vice-chair and 12 members, who are elected every third year. Two members of the board are named outside; The state representative is appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and a Saami representative is appointed by the Saami Delegation. In the meeting in the Association, each co-operative chief can vote in accordance with the number of reindeer in his co-operative.

The board of the Association assembles five times a year. In case of urgent matters the board can convene a meeting outside the yearly rhythm. Members of the board have one vote each.

The organisation and administration of the Finnish reindeer husbandry is presented in figure 1 and figure 2.

The total number of reindeer is regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, which sets a maximum number of reindeer that each herding co-operative can own in a decade. As regards the current decade, the maximum number of reindeer set by the Ministry is 203.700. The permitted number of reindeer owned by a herding co-operative member, i.e. a reindeer owner, is likewise restricted; in the southern part of the reindeer husbandry region, the maximum number is 300 reindeer while the corresponding number is 500 reindeer per each co-operative member in the northern reindeer husbandry area.

The reindeer husbandry area is limited to Russia in the east with a 750 km borderline, to Norway in the north also with a 750 km borderline, and to Sweden in

Figure 1: National Management of Reindeer Husbandry in Finland

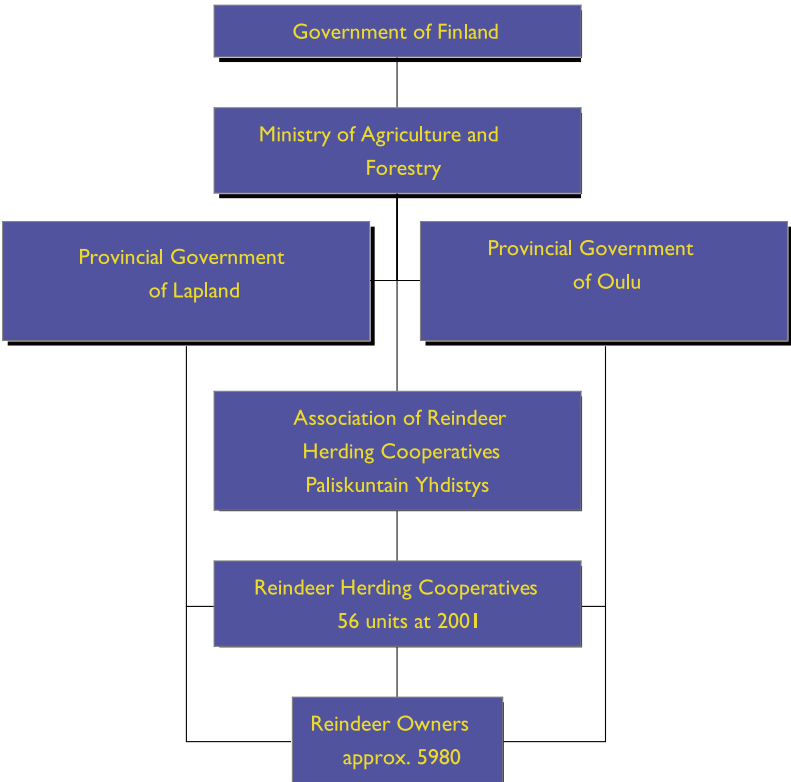
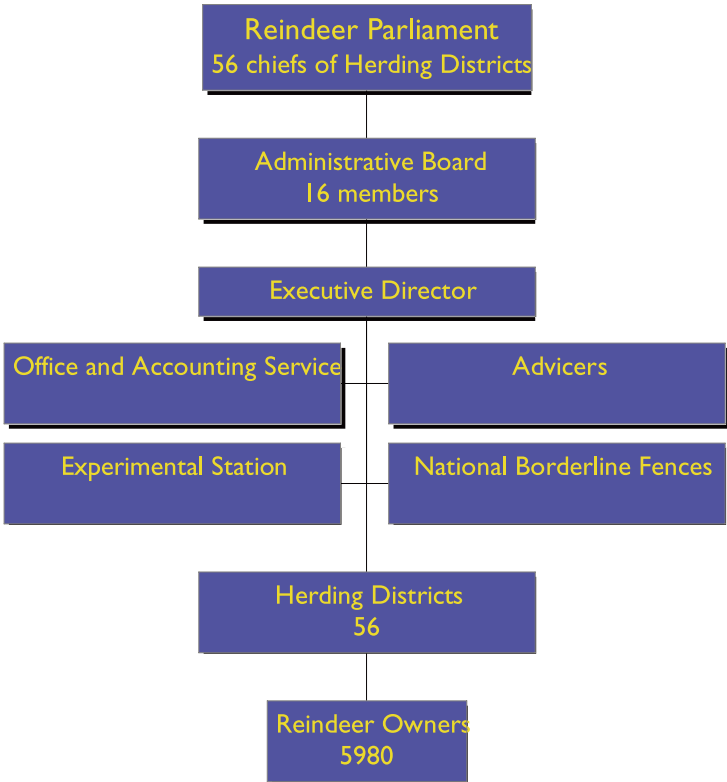


Figure 2: Administration of the Association of Reindeer Herding Co-operatives



the west with a 470 km borderline. Borderlines with Norway and Russia are equipped with fences prohibiting reindeer to wander off to the other countries. About 1200 km of these fences are maintained by Finland and are funded from the State budget.

## Reindeer Owners in Finland

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, both Finnish and Saami people are entitled to own reindeer and practise reindeer husbandry. This is in contrast to Norway and Sweden, where only Saami are allowed to practice reindeer husbandry. As a consequence of this everyone who wants to start with reindeer could do so, within some limitations. Firstly, the reindeer owner is required to live permanently in the community where the co-operative fully or partly is located, and secondly the reindeer owner must be accepted as a new member of the co-operative.

Another consequence of this policy is that the number of reindeer owners in Finland is much higher than in Norway and Sweden. Figure 3 shows the development of the total number of reindeer owners in Finland.

As the figure indicates it is a slightly decrease of 16% in the number of reindeer owners in Finland in the period 1995-2001. There are several reasons for this, but two conditions offers an explanation. The total number of animals and reindeer owners indicates that there are many owners with a limited number of reindeer. The figures also indicates that reindeer husbandry is practised as a supplementary income to the owners, and not as the main income. This presumption is not weakened when Nieminen and Kempainen (1998) in a paper states:

“Reindeer management differs markedly from one area to another. In the southern reindeer herding area animal numbers are relatively low and reindeer management tends to be an auxiliary occupation.”

This situation in connection with the financial subsidy system which require a minimum of 70 reindeer to be entitled to subsidy. This may have the effect that people terminate the reindeer husbandry. According to the interviews, this is a likely development in the southern part of the reindeer area. Figure 4 give a over-

Figure 3: Development of Total Number of Reindeer Owners in Finland, 1995 - 2001

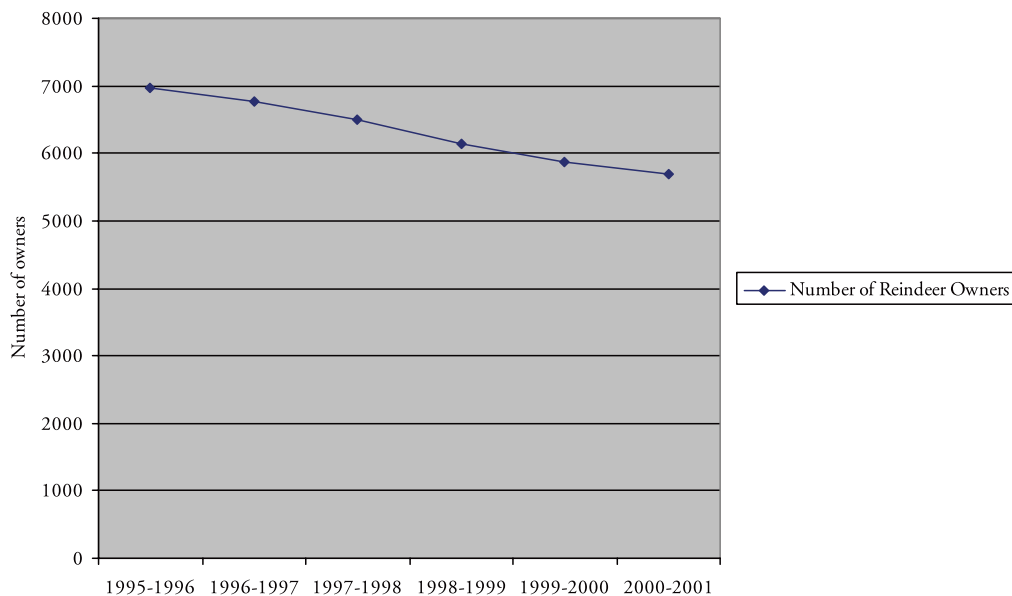


Figure 4: Number of Reindeer Owners Divided in Herd Size, 2000

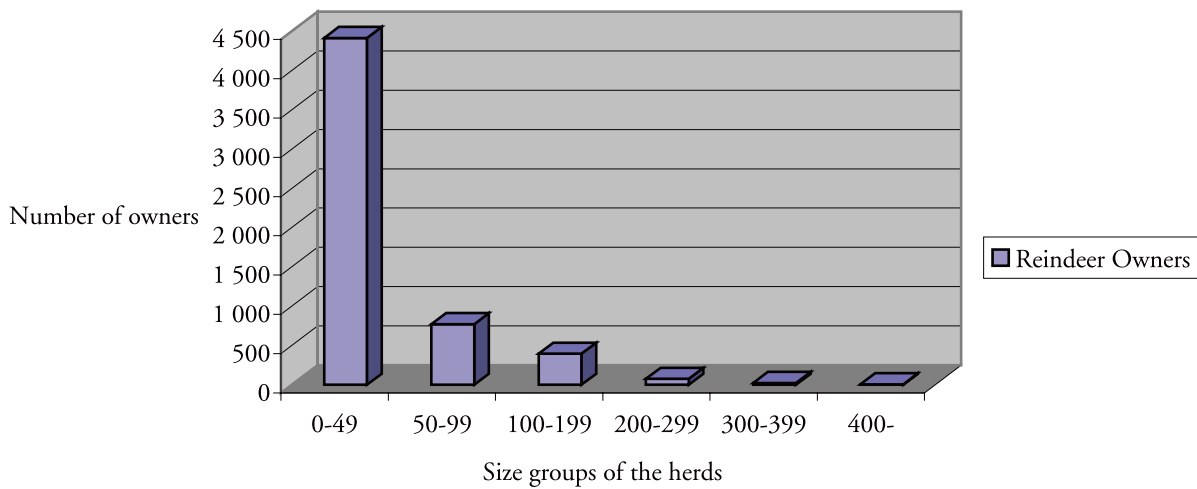
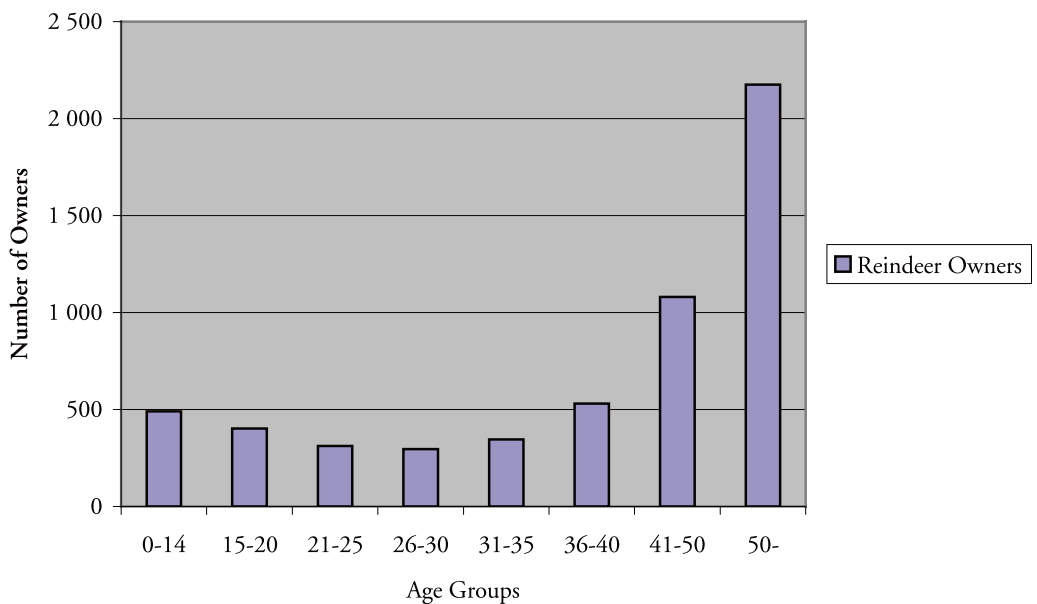


Figure 5: Number of Reindeer Owners Divided in Age Groups, 2000



view of the number of reindeer owners divided into herd size. The figures indicate the general situation in Finland, and not within the different districts. The figure actually shows that the largest group - 4.411 persons, or 77,6% of all reindeer owners - have a herd size between 1 and 49 reindeer. The next group of 772 persons, or 13.6% of all the reindeer owners, have a herd size between 50 and 99 reindeer. Only 6 persons, or 0,1% of all reindeer owners, have more than 400 reindeer in their herd.

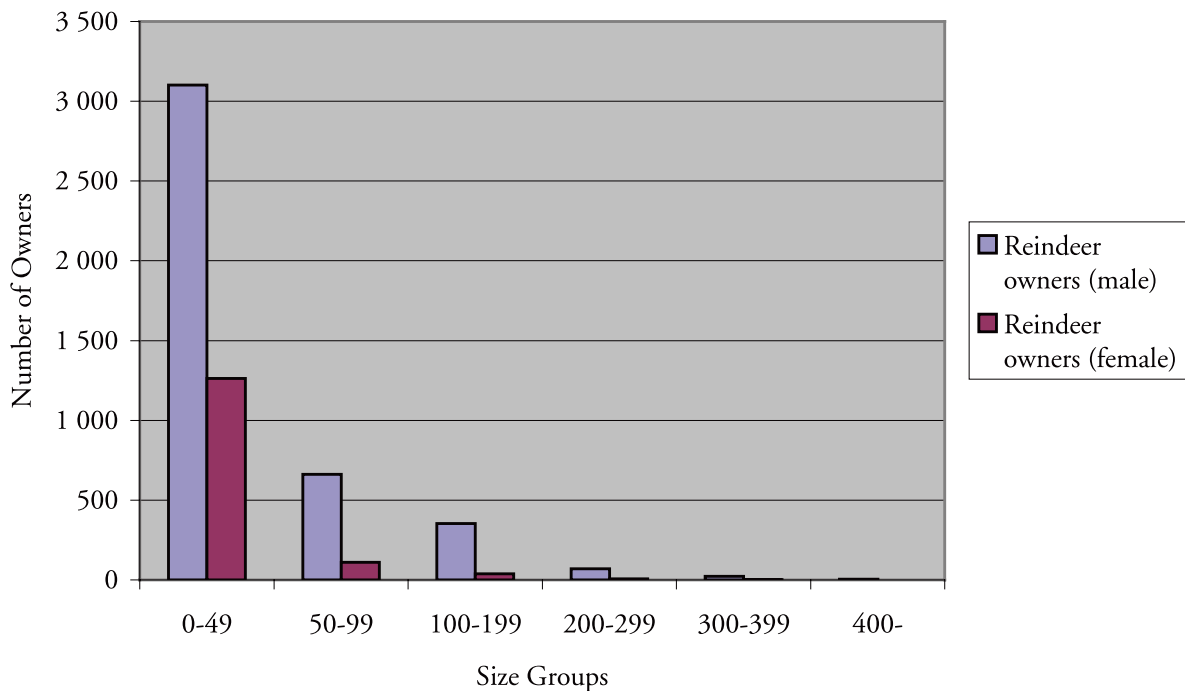
Figure 5 shows the reindeer owners divided into age groups, and gives a picture of the composition of the age of the owners. Age group 0-14 is surprisingly high with 8,7% of the total number of owners. This is more than for the age group 26-30 with 5,3% - the lowest

numbers of owners. People over 50 years constitute 39% of the owners.

According to our information around 75% of the owners are male and 25% are female. Compared with Sweden in Figure 6 the male element in Sweden is lower, with 62%. The female element in Sweden is around 35%.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of male and female reindeer owners in different size groups. The trend in Finland is quite clear were most of the reindeer owners have a herd size between 1 and 49 reindeer. 74% of the male reindeer owners, and 89% of the female owners belong to this group. Only 0.1% of both male and female owners have herds larger than 400 reindeer (5 male owners, and 1 female owner).

Figure 6: Distribution of Male and Female Reindeer Owners in Different Size Groups, 2000



Reindeer ownership is very dispersed. Of the about 7000 reindeer owners, two-thirds own fewer than 25 counted reindeer, and 3000 not even ten; only 500 own 100 or more reindeer. Two in three reindeer are owned by people with at least 50 animals. The number of reindeer owners is highest in Sodankylä, over 900; there are fewer than 700 in Inari and around 500 in Rovaniemi rural district. In Utsjoki, Enontekiö and Savukoski, reindeer owners account for just over 10 per cent of the population. The average age of reindeer owners is 42 years; weighed by number of animals owned the figures is 45. Reindeer management still attracts young people, almost 1300 reindeer owners being under 25. Age is seldom an excuse for retiring from the profession, as shown by the 850 reindeer owners over 65 years of age. Only a fifth of owners are women, which is a fairly high proportion.

This paper was presented in 1998 - 4 years ago - and it shows a significant change in the composition of reindeer owners. First of all there is a 13% decrease in number of reindeer owners in this period, from 7000 to 5682. Only 499 persons own 100 or more reindeer - exactly the same as 4 years ago. In 1998, two of three reindeer were owned by people with at least 50 animals (66%) - in 2001 three of four reindeer

are owned by people with at least 50 animals (74%). The number of reindeer owners has gone down since 1998, and Sodankylä has a decrease from over 900 to 717 owners, and Inari has dropped from fewer than 700 down to 634 owners. There is still a lot of young people inside the industry - 1300 in 1998 and 1200 in 2001 - but they only count for 21% of the owners. Almost 40% of the owners, or 2175 persons, are over age 50. This mean that age is still not an excuse for retiring from the profession. And when it comes to the proportion of female owners, we can see a positive increase from 20% to 25% in 4 years.

## Economy in Finnish Reindeer Husbandry

### Introduction

This part of the chapter will give a short introduction to the economy in reindeer husbandry in Finland. As stated for the other countries, this is not ment to be a complete review of the economy, because these are complex matters which involves several parts of the society. The project has not had the time nor the information needed for more than a presentation of the main trends in the industry.



Reindeer Roundup in Karigasniemi, Finland

Photo © Johnny-Leo L. Jernsletten

The main trend of the industry appears in a presentation from the Association of Reindeer Herders Co-operatives when they write:

One third of the amount of slaughtered reindeer, the slaughtered kilo amount, and the income from slaughtering comes from the Saami region. The regional economic volume of reindeer husbandry amounts to 200 million Finnish markka (35 million Euros) annually when further processing, trade and traffic are included in the calculation.

Reindeer husbandry has significant importance in maintaining the marginal regions inhabited. It is one of the cornerstones of Saami culture and it has a vital importance for the tourism in Northern Finland.

According to the Association, the reindeer industry is important and especially important for the northern part of Finland.

### Size of the Herds

Figure 7 gives an overview of the development of the herd size in Finland in the period 1993-2001. The official number of reindeer in 2001 is 185.000, a 13% decrease from 1993. The decrease comes after several years in the beginning of the 1990's with large herds, and with a larger impact on the pastures than the reindeer owners wanted.

If we look closer into the material on the number of reindeer in different areas of Finland, the communities of Inare and Sodankylä has decreased the herds with 19%. This is also the two largest reindeer communities in Finland. The development of the number

Figure 7: The Development of Total Number of Reindeer in Finland, 1993 - 2000

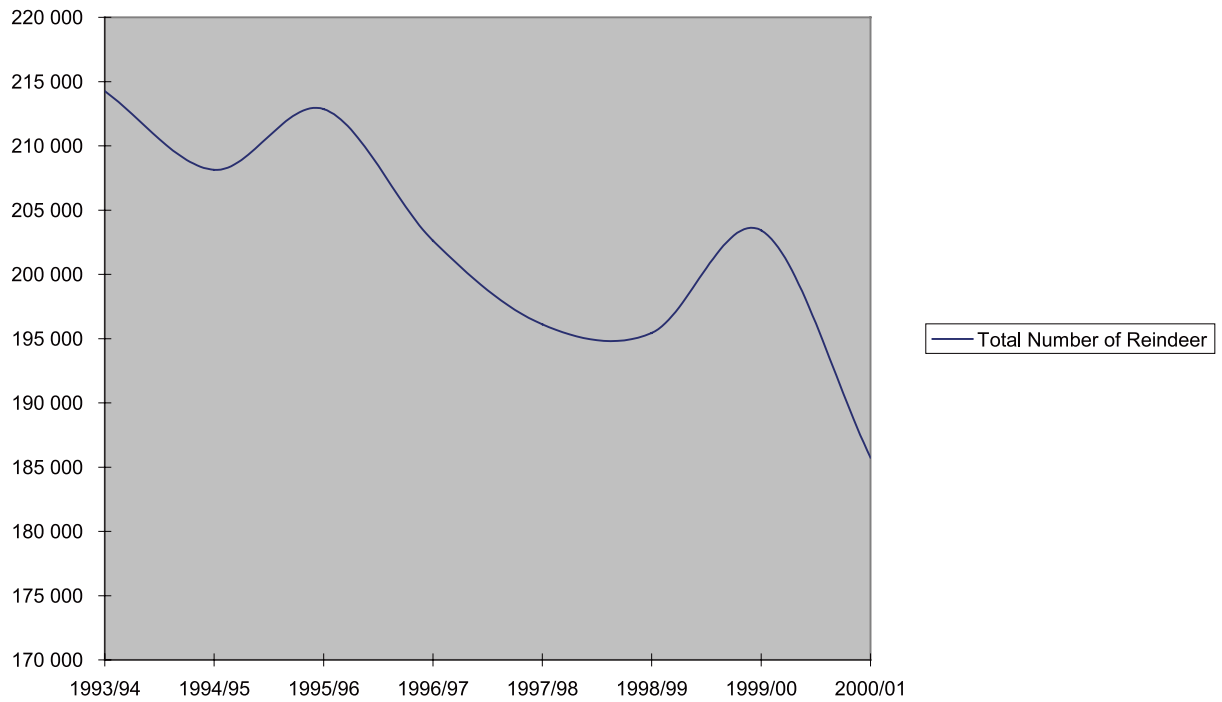
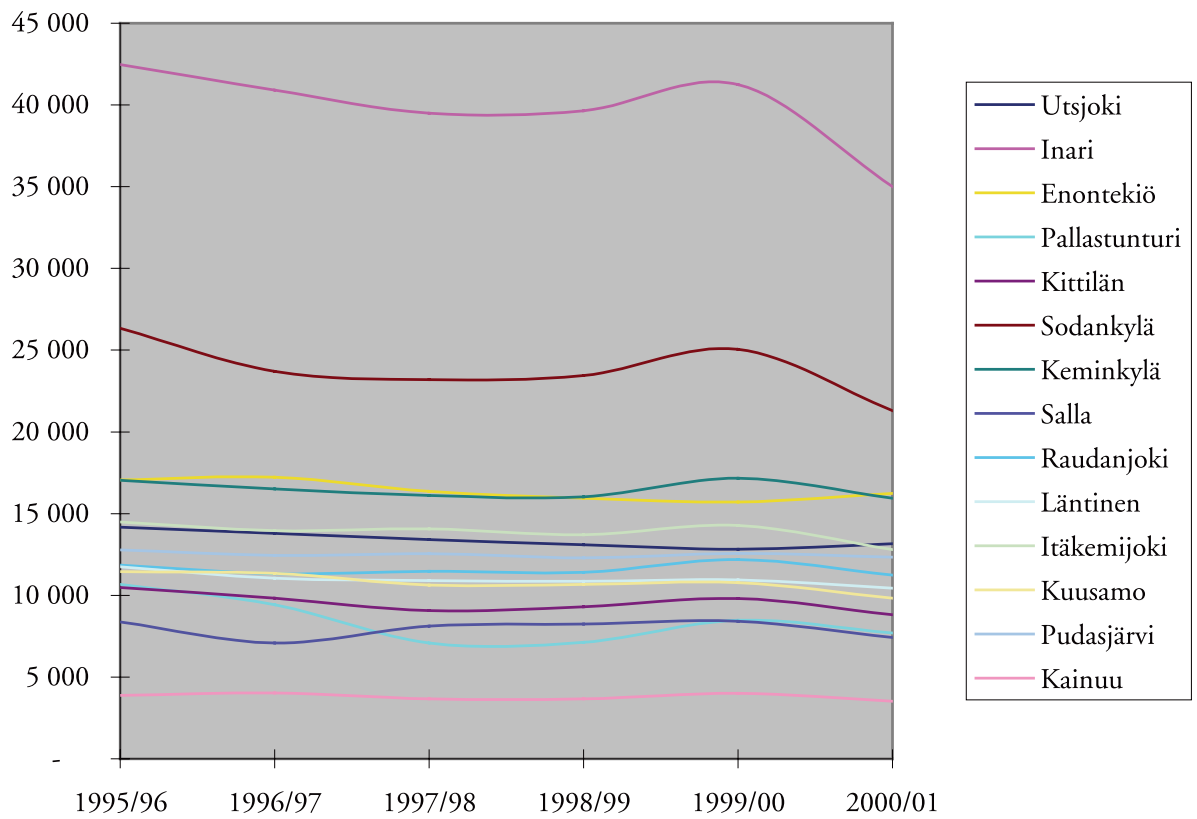


Figure 8: Number of Reindeer in Finland Divided in Reindeer Areas, 1993 - 2000





of reindeer in the different areas between 1993 and 2001 is shown in Figure 8.

The total number of reindeer in Finland has decreased 13% between 1993 and 2000, and it is natural that the total meat production has decreased in the same period. Figure 9 shows the development in the total meat production in Finland between 1990 and 2000. According to the figures from Finland it is a 45% decrease in the meat production in this period.

It is difficult to explain why the decrease is as much as 45%, and we do not have all the information necessary for an explanation. But there are several reasons that can partly explain this trend. The first, and most obvious reason is the decrease number of reindeer. The reason for a decreasing number of animals could be that the owners see or realise that the use of the pastures is too extensive and want to adjust the number of reindeer. Another reason could be one or several severe winters with bad pastures and no access to pastures resulting in heavy loss of reindeer. A third explanation could be an increase in the numbers of predators and consequently the loss of reindeer. A fourth explanation is the decrease of reindeer owners and people ending their reindeer management. All these reasons joined together will give a decreasing number of reindeer in Finland and at the same time give less meat on the market.

## Distribution of Income in the Family

The Finnish statistics are not able to provide detailed information about the distribution of income on the family level. According to the Association of Reindeer Herders Co-operatives, the collected statistics are focused towards the level of the district (Paliskunat)

and not towards the level of family. On the other hand, it has been possible, through different documents and publications, to give a description of some of the trends in Finland.

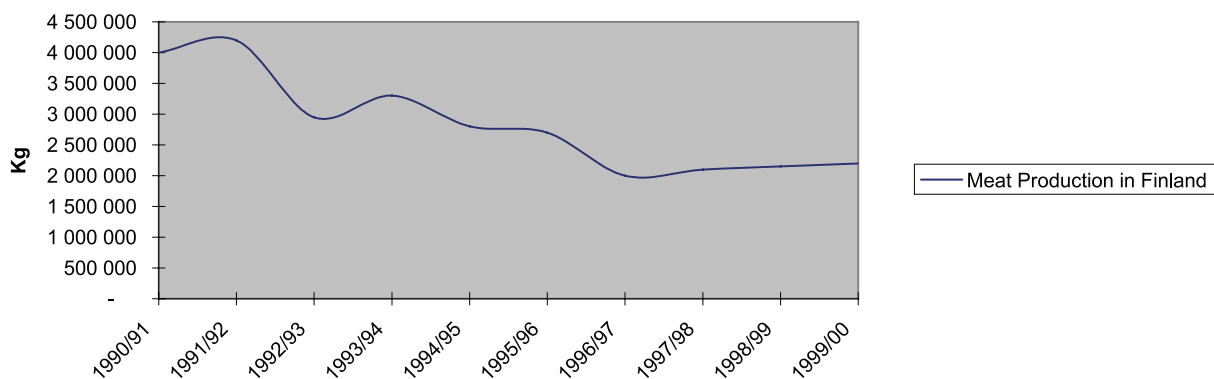
In the presentation of reindeer husbandry in Finland from the Association of Reindeer Herders Co-operatives it is stated that 1.540 families are involved in the industry. From a total number of 1.540 families, 690 families, or 45% have reindeer husbandry as their main income, and 850 families have reindeer husbandry as their additional income. The Association does not define “main” and “additional” income.

In a paper from 1998, Nieminen & Kempainen gives a glimpse of the situation in Finland back in 1994. They write:

In 1994, reindeer management provided a good half of the gross earnings of herders with more than 50 reindeer; agriculture and forestry accounted for 20%, salaried income for 12% and pensions for about 10%. Reindeer management provided at least four-fifths of the income of around 440 people. Relatively speaking, its significance for income was greatest for young owners, that is, under 35-year-olds, even though the number of animals they own is still rather low. This finding reflects the poor employment situation of young people in remote districts.

We do not have information to compare the data from 1994 with the situation today, and we are not able to see the development in the economic importance of the industry to an average family. But what we can see from the paper back in 1994, is that the situation with young people owing a rather low number of animals,

Figure 9: Total Meat Production in Finland, 1990 - 2000



is still the main picture today. Both this information, and the statistics confirm the problem with recruitments in to the industry.

### Income Connected to Reindeer Husbandry

According to the Association of Reindeer Herding Co-operatives no statistic are available on the family level. All statistics is on the Paliskunat/District level, and we will be unable the compare the information between the different countries.

#### Basic Financial Support

Despite this, we will try to give a short overview of some of the more general incomes connected to the industry. Figure 10 shows the development in the number of reindeer required by the Finnish government to receive the yearly financial subsidy. This subsidy is part of the Northern aid, and come directly from the Finnish national budget, and from the EU northern aid fundings. In 2001 the number was 60 reindeer, in 2002 it was 70 reindeer and this will probably increase to 80 reindeer in 2003. Every reindeer owner that fulfils this request will get a basic financial subsidy of 120 FIM pr. reindeer. Reindeer owners with fewer reindeer will not receive this support. According to figure 4 which shows number of owners divided in herd size, almost 80% of the owners in Finland do not fulfil the request on 70 reindeer, and will, therefore, not receive the basic subsidy in 2002.

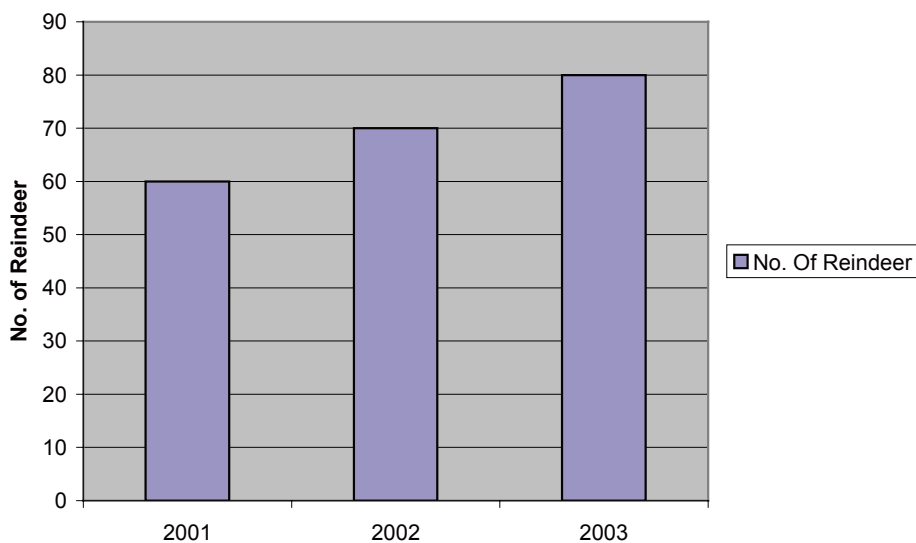
The situation is interesting if we look at the female reindeer owners and their opportunity to fulfil the request for 70 reindeer. Figure 6 shows that 89% of the female reindeer owners own 1-49 reindeer, and will not fulfil the request on 70 reindeer. Only 3% of the female owners own more than 100 reindeer, and will be entitled to subsidy. In addition there is the group of owners with 50-99 reindeer (8%) who may have the right to this basic subsidy (own more than 70 reindeer).

#### Meat Production

It should not be a surprise that meat production constitutes an important part of the income for the reindeer owners. As shown in Figure 9 the total meat production in Finland was at a peak in 1991/92, with 4.200 tons of meat, but has dropped to 2.200 tons in 2000. M. Nieminen & J. Kemppainen describe some of the reasons in 1998:

“The 1970s and ‘80s were years of rapid expansion for reindeer management. Within 15 years favourable weather conditions, anti parasite medication, supplementary feed, modern technology, calf slaughter and other factors all contributed to a vast increase in reindeer, and hence reindeer meat production, so much so that by the early ‘90s the total number of reindeer was approaching 430.000, and reindeer meat production exceeded 4 million kg. Due to excess numbers of reindeer, stocks had to be culled. At the

Figur 10: Number of Reindeer Required to Recieve Basic Financial Subsidy



same time problems arose with the processing of reindeer meat. As a result, demand slumped and prices plummeted. [...] Income from slaughtered animals amounted to FIM 58 million.”

The reindeer owners interviewed during the field trip to Finland confirmed that income from meat production is an important part of the income. Most of the slaughtered reindeer was sent to the nearest slaughtering house, and in the northern part of Finland, this could be in Norway. The price pr. kg of meat was in average 1,5 to 2 FIM more in Norway than in Finland. In average 70% of the reindeer meat is sold to slaughtering houses for production. Only 10% is registered as private sale. The rest, 20% was for private use.

#### *Compensation for loss of Reindeer*

The problem with predators is growing in Finland, but there exists a system for compensation for loss of reindeer. This system contributes to reduce the economic losses for the owners. Different compensation systems exist dependent on what causes the loss of animals.

Reindeer killed in traffic reach 3.000 each year. This means that it is almost 10 accidents every day. According to the law in Finland:

“... the reindeer are allowed to move freely around in the reindeer husbandry area and the owner of a vehicle is not entitled to compensation for the damage to his vehicle from the reindeer owner. According to Finnish law, the reindeer owner is always entitled to compensation for the loss of a reindeer from the motor insurance. This compensation is owned by the Finnish Motor Insurers Centre.”

The compensation system operates with different level of compensation depending on which animal is killed. Loss of calves, bulls or female reindeer give all different compensations to the owner.

#### *Salary/Pension*

The project has no official statistic available for incomes from salary or pension. But according to some of the reindeer owners, it is normal to have several incomes in one family. The situation when it comes to salary or pension is comparable in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Participation in the industry is often in combination with other incomes, for example small scale farming or different kinds of service industry. This view is supported by the description quoted



Preparation of Reindeer Fur for Sale

Photo © Johnny-Leo L. Jemsletten

earlier in the chapter where Niemien and Kemppainen estimated salary income to 12% and pension to about 10% of the total income to the owners.

*Handicraft/Duodji and by-products*

Due to lack of official statistic, it is difficult to get a overview over the importance of the income from handy craft and other incidental earnings. The income comes from fisheries, berry, forestry, small scale agriculture, different kind of handy craft, and reindeer fur. The price of the reindeer fur was FIM 40 a copple of years ago, but after the foot-and-mouth disease in Europe, the price increased to FIM 75. The market expectation is that the price will decrease in the future.

Figure 11 shows the distribution of the totale incomes in the finnish reindeer industry between 1994 and 2000.

**Costs Connected to Reindeer Husbandry**

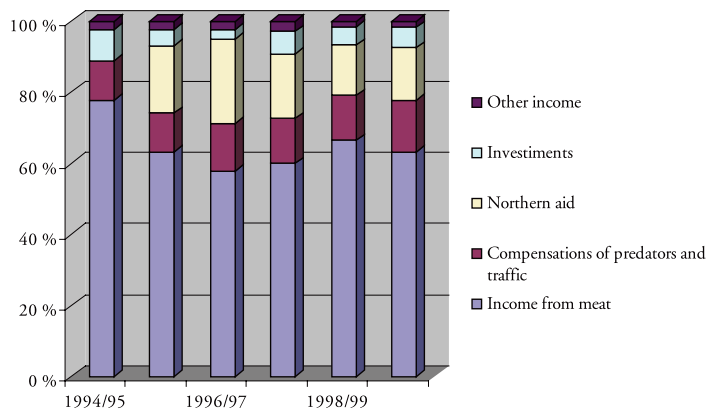
We have looked upon different sources of income in the reindeer industry in Finland, and we will now change the focus towards the cost connected to the industry. The information obtained about the cost is the total cost from the different districts in Finland. Cost connected with the family level is not available in Finland.

The figure 12 shows the distribution of costs in the finnish reindeer industry.

The classification of cost is different from Norway and Sweden, but in any case it is possible to a surtain extent to compare the cost between the countries.

The general picture concerning cost is almost the same as for Norway and Sweden. The main cost are connected to transport or mechanical equipment. The

Figur 11: Distribution of Income in the Finnish Reindeer Industry, 1994-2000



Figur 12: Distribution of Cost in the Finnish Reindeer Industry, 1994-2000



figure shows that “Herding action” and “Cross-country traffic” together constitute approximately 70-80% of the total cost. If we add “Equipment and other utilities” this will constitute over 80-90% of the cost.

## External Conditions

### Introduction

This part of the chapter will focus on the external conditions that affect reindeer husbandry in Finland. It has been difficult to find relevant information about loss of pastures, small game hunting, and the access to different markets. Information about predators has been collected and prepared by the Association of Finnish reindeer herders.

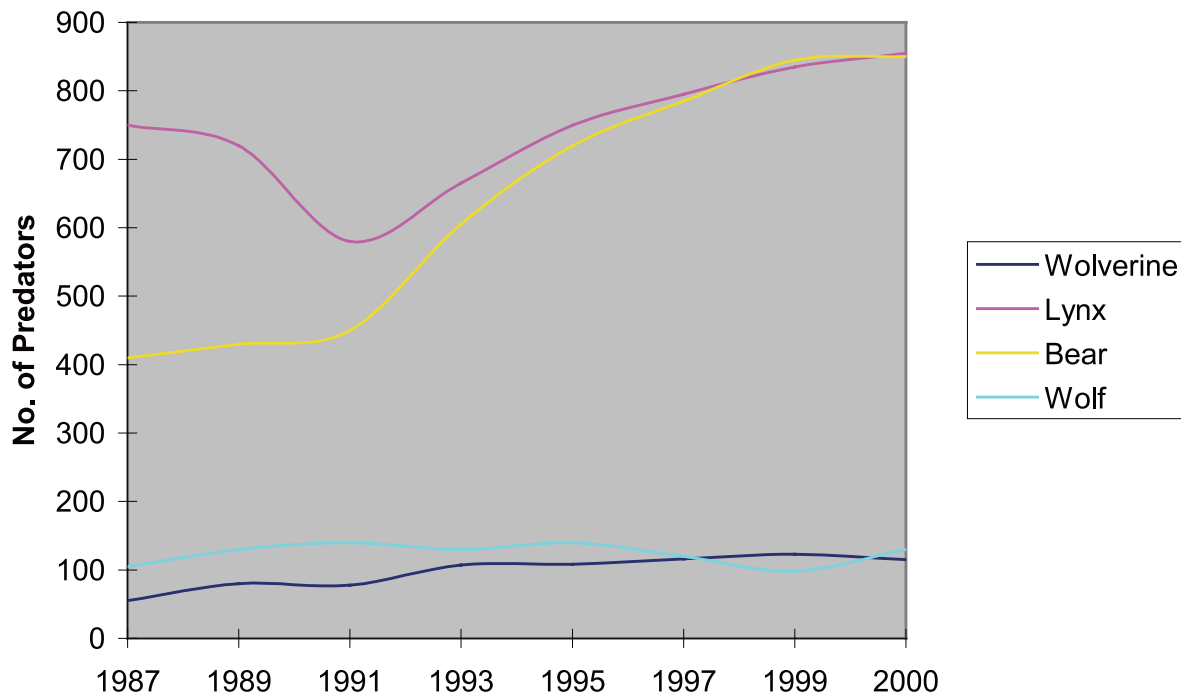
### Predators

Predators and the debate connected to predators is an important topic for the industry in Finland. The dis-

cussion and the arguments for and against predators is a repetition from what we have seen in Russia, Alaska, Norway and Sweden. Predators is a topic in most of the discussions among reindeer owners in Finland, and people have a strong engagement connected to predators. Maybe we could describe it as a hate-love relationship, because people think the predators are a natural part of the environment - they belong to this area - but when they start to harm the reindeer, it is necessary to take out those individuals.

Figure 13 shows the development of the different predators in Finland between 1987 and 2000. The figure shows an increase in the number of wolf and wolverine in this period. For wolf: from 105 to 130 individuals and for wolverine: from 55 to 115. This is an increase of 23% of wolf and 109% for wolverine. The figure for bear and lynx also show an increase in the same period. From the beginning of 1999 it is an increase in the population of bear from 450 to 850 individuals, or 89%, and the population of lynx rises from 580 to 855 individuals, or a increase of 40%. According to these numbers, Finland has experienced an average increase in predators of 65% during this period.

Figur 13: Development in Number of Predators in Finland, 1987 - 2000



Figur 14: Number of Reindeer Killed by Predators, 1987 - 2000

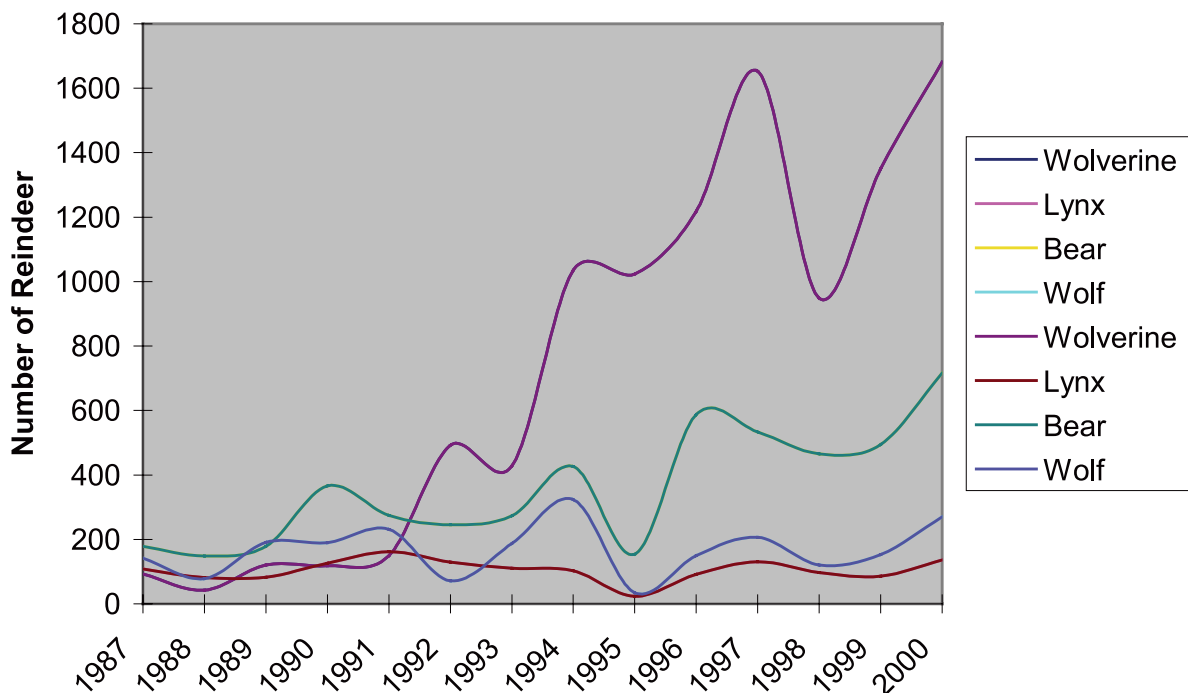


Figure 14 shows the number of reindeer killed by predators in the period 1987-2000. The main trend from this figure is an increase in loss of reindeer which corresponds to the increase in the numbers of predators.

The number of reindeer killed by wolf changes from 142 to 270 in 2000, and increase of 90%, For bear the number changes from 179 to 716, an increase of 300%, Lynx changes from 108 to 136, an increase of 26%, and finally for wolverine from 93 to 1682, an increase of 1.708%.

With numbers and figures like those just shown the debate about predators among reindeer owners is quite understandable. If these figures give a correct picture of the development in loss of reindeer, there is reasons to be concerned. An average increase of 531% loss of reindeer between 1987 and 2000 is dramatic for the industry. This is also a point made by the Association of Reindeer Herding Cooperatives:

“The State of Finland pays compensation for animals killed by predators, but the money does not compensate for the reindeer itself, which is part of the herders production machinery. Besides, predators causes much unnecessary work and disturb normal herding. Some of the reindeer killed are never recovered.”

In the quotation the Association of Reindeer Herding Co-operatives touches upon one important aspect also mentioned in the interviews in Finland. The reindeer owners get an economical compensation for the loss of the animal, but the compensation itself does not replace the productive female reindeer which was an important part of the “production machinery”. Loss of animals in traffic or to predators is more or less accidental and all the effort put into developing a structure in the herd is in vain. But there is more to this; some of the female reindeer are very valuable for the owner - having a very good reproduction rate, nice colour, good shape and producing strong calves. In addition to this the individual behaviour of the animals could be valuable in managing the herd. All these characteristics can not be compensated for economically.

### Conflicts with Forestry and Loss of Pastures

More than 75% of all the reindeer in Finland graze on pasture areas in the forest. This is a situation unlike what is found in Russia, Alaska, Norway and Sweden, and it calls upon special attention. Reindeer husbandry and forestry has seemed to be a bad mixture creating many conflicts.

The forest industry has had great impact on reindeer husbandry in Finland. The forest industry's



Photo © Johnny-Leo L. Jemsletten

cutting of trees by big machines produces huge falling areas. Before replanting a falling area the forest floor has been ploughed to turn it around to secure an increased growth. This procedure will completely destroy the pasture for the reindeer and it will take many years before this area could be used as reindeer pasture.

Forest areas, and especially old forest areas, more than 120 years old, are important for the reindeer, especially in late winter time - late march, or during april, when the reindeer is in bad condition after a long winter. Old forests provide two important components for the reindeer, a) easily accessible pasture under a light snow cover, and b) lichen on the old trees. These two components could be the critical factors for survival or not. Even when the snow cover is hard on such places, the lichen on the old trees could save the animals. In extreme severe winters the reindeer owners had to cut down some of the trees so the reindeer could get access to the lichen.

On the other hand, reindeer grazing could also be a problem for the forest industry. After a replanting process is finished the area is vulnerable for grazing. Some type of replanted wood will attract reindeer to the area and grazing could cause damage to the

growth, and in the next instance cause economic loss to the forest industry.

It is a growing understanding of this complex problem from the forest industry and research is going on to develop new methods to be able to save the pasture areas.

### Small Game Hunting

For the discussion connected to "Small Game Hunting", please refer to chapter 5.

### Market and Value Added Production

For the discussion connected to "Market and Value Added Production", please refer to chapter 5.

### Legal Status in Reindeer Husbandry

The current reindeer herding act was enacted in 1990, and only a few minor changes has been done according to the Reindeer Herders Association in Finland.

The reindeer industry is not an exclusive privilege for the Saami population as in Norway and Sweden. Both Saami and Finnish people are occupied inside



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the industry. After Finland joined the EU, all citizens of the European economic area are allowed to possess reindeer. It is a requirement that the shareholder lives permanently in the community where his co-operative is located fully or partly. In addition to this, other agents like the tourist industry can own reindeer. Some of these animals do not belong to any co-operative systems and they do not graze on the area of any co-operative. Reindeer herding is allowed to be practiced within the reindeer herding area with limitations defined in the reindeer herding act, in spite of the ownership or administrative rights of the land owner. This means that the reindeer owner does not need to possess or administer the land.

The impression from the reindeer owners is, like in Norway and Sweden, that the local governments do not have the necessary knowledge about the industry. The industry is not very visible to outsiders, and it does not bring extensive tax incomes to the communities. On the other hand the industry is area intensive, and depends on the goodwill of the local government to avoid conflicts of interest with other industries. The day-to-day work within the industry depends on close networks and co-operation with administrative personnel within the government to succeed. The stability of these contacts is hard to keep through political

elections, where positions are replaced.

The progress regarding a ratification of the ILO Convention no. 169 is disturbing. Several national committees have delivered reports on the Saami rights in Finland without results. Finland has been criticised by the European Human Right Commission not to have the necessary progress in this work.

## Summary

The general situation in Finland is similar to Norway and Sweden. The main challenges are loss of pastures; loss of reindeer to predators; development of value-adding production; the question of the indigenous people's rights covered by the ILO Convention no. 169.

The situation regarding loss of pastures due to infrastructure development, is the same in Finland as in Norway and Sweden. A special concern is the extensive forest industry, which has a special impact due to the fact that 75% of the reindeer are grazing on pasture in the forest. The challenges are connected to the loss of important pastures for the reindeer, especially during late winter time. March and April are a critical period for the female reindeer. The bodyweight is low



and the calving season is approach. Inaccess to pasture can be fatal for a large number of animals in a herd, and normally the pasture inside the forest is accessible. But large fall area (open area) creates a hard snow cover and make the access to pasture difficult. In addition to this, all old forest (more than 120 years old) is gone, so the important lichen on the old trees is not available. In addition to this, the large machinery used during the snowless season is destroying the forest floor, and make the pasture useless for many years. Research in Finland on alternative logging methods is done, and progress is made.

Predators is a fast growing problem for the finnish reindeer industry. The number of reindeer killed by predators shows a dramatic increase during the last year. The reasons behind these figures is probably a combination between a drastic increase in number of predators, and a better registration system. The situation is in any case dramatic for the industry,

and a joint initiative with the Finnish management system and the reindeer herding organisation must be arranged.

The market for reindeer meat is, like Norway and Sweden, favorable. The same critical factors, as decribed in Norway and Sweden, are in operation in Finland. It is a need to intensify the work towards value-adding production, and remove the industry from the status as only a primary producers. This is where the increase income to the industry will be in the future.

Finland has not ratified the ILO Convention no. 169, and the Finnish government has been criticised of the European Human Right Commision not to investigat the question about the Saami rights in Finland. Several national reports has been accomplished, but without any results. It is important to bring this work forward, and to reach a clarification on these questions.

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