



SPECIAL SESSION



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“From one towards many - Ecology and Management of multispecies ungulate communities in Europe”

Name and affiliation of organiser(s), email address for contact:

Navinder J Singh – navinder.singh@slu.se,

Joris Cromsigt – joris.cromsigt@slu.se,

Department of Wildlife, Fish and Environmental Studies,
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Umeå, SE 90183.

Phone: N.Singh - +46706760103; J Cromsigt- +46706760097

Abstract

During the last three decades populations and distribution of ungulate species have increased and changed rapidly across Europe. Species such as roe deer, red deer, fallow deer, wild boar and moose have expanded their ranges and increased in numbers. In many areas, where only one species existed in the past, it now shares the niche with several others and higher numbers. Climate change and supplementary feeding are facilitating this expansion along with other modifications such as hunting practices, creation of game fields, and forestry practices that increase food availability for ungulates. These multi-species ungulate communities may generate novel interactions among species, such as competition for food, and affect ecosystems as well as population dynamics of each ungulate species. Moreover, these interactions could be further modified by the novel landscape that the ungulates face

through effects of active game management and other land use practices. Currently, we lack a comprehensive understanding and empirical data on the functioning of these new diverse ungulate communities and the role of different management actions, because past studies have mainly focused on one or two species at a time. Such understanding is essential to find a balance among competing ecosystem services such as game meat and recreation from hunting vs. fiber from forests and food from crops. As a result, important questions arise that require immediate attention: A) How do species in these diverse communities interact over food and how do human actions modify these interactions? B) How do these interactions influence individual and population performance of different species as well as their environmental impacts? C) How do we implement answers to these questions in the sustainable management of these novel and diverse ungulate communities and their habitat?

Aim:

To bring together researchers at the forefront of community ecology of European ungulates, to share the progress in knowledge for better management of European multispecies ungulate communities and the ecosystems they live in.

Possible Outcomes:

Formation of a European wide network of researchers and practitioners that can share novel research outcomes on the ecology and management of multispecies ungulate systems. One important aspect is to learn from each other's experiences across Europe in terms of how we monitor the populations of these diverse ungulate species and their impact on the landscape. Currently, many different monitoring methods exist, often tailored towards one species, but how well do they work for other species? And can we come with one system of monitoring all species, their numbers and impact?

Who should attend this special session / workshop?

Researchers, Managers, Agencies and Authorities, Stakeholders such as hunters, foresters, conservationists.

How many participants?

8 +... Speakers

30-40 delegates

Organisation

Invited talks with possibility to submit an abstract

Each talk will be 15 mins+3-5 mins for questions.

Length of time

Half day session, beginning in the morning.