

Big victory for bowhunting in sight

The Association of Danish Bowhunters is excited by the prospect of bowhunting of fallow-, sika- and red deer game. Based on a scientific report The Wildlife Administration Council (*Vildtforvaltningsrådet*) has proposed for the Minister of the Environment, Magnus Heunicke, that bowhunting large deer hunting should be legalized.

The Association of Danish Bowhunters (FADB) has closely followed the trial period of bowhunting the large deer species and worked intensely with the “Technical report from DCE – The National Center for Environment and Energy no. 257 2022, Aarhus Universitet EFFECTIVENESS OF BOWHUNTING – FOLLOW-UP STUDIES” which was published shortly before Christmas. The report is the basis for the Wildlife Administration Council’s consideration of and recommendation for permanent legalization of bowhunting of large deer game.

Prior to the proposal from the Wildlife Administration Council, the board of FADB thoroughly read the report and prepared a letter of inquiry to the council based thereof in which the quite clear conclusions about the effectiveness of bowhunting are highlighted, but also the report’s criticisms were countered. This i.a. by FADB, through its good international connection, became aware that there was a similar Finnish study upcoming, that could support the Danish conclusions. Thus, on the same day as publishing of the Finnish results, the FADB sent out an announcement, enabling the Finish data to be included in the inquiry to the Wildlife Administration Council. The Finish study clearly shows, that bowhunting is as affective as rifle hunting.

The president of the FADB Kirsten Andersen states:

“It is a big step for bowhunting that the Wildlife Administration Council has made a positive recommendation to the Minister of Environment. I will compare it to when bowhunters were allowed the hunt of roe deer. I have been very excited for the latest report, which came after the trial period and it was, beyond all expectations, a great victory for bowhunting.”

FADB’s board has worked many years with this case parallel with other stakeholders and with joint efforts, the future of bowhunting looks very positive. I am very happy with this. It also makes demands on us as an association and the past year we have been working on creating offers for further education and training of the individual bowhunter; it will be exciting to set in motion.”

The fact that bowhunting of large deer species will probably be legalized, FADB cannot take all the credit. We sincerely thank the Danish bowhunters and the blood trailing dog handlers for contributing with the data for the research that is the basis for the Wildlife Administration Council’s recommendation. Furthermore, thanks to the members of the Wildlife Administration Council who has professionally and seriously dealt with the subject without prejudice, including a special thank you to the bowhunting’s closest friends, The Danish Forest Association and the Danish Hunters Association.

Facts about bowhunting:

Bowhunting is a silent form of hunting. Drawing and releasing an arrow is almost silent. It is a type of hunting, that required a lot of training and education, great patience and love for the nature. As a bow hunter, you must get in very close vicinity of the game animal. It must be calm, feel safe and unaware of the archer's presence, because you cannot shoot at an animal, that has discovered the hunter or otherwise acts startled. Therefore, the bowhunter strives to move about undetected. Furthermore, bowhunting is a sustainable form of hunting, which due to its nature, has a relatively low amount of removal of the game population. This means that when you go bowhunting, you sit alone for many hours, and most times will return with the fantastic nature experience as the only yield.

In Denmark hunting with bow and arrow has its origins 8,000-10,000 years ago, when the Stone Age man went hunting with his primitive bow, not just for roe deer, but also the aurochs that could weigh up to 1 ton, i.e., 4 times as much as the largest red deer. In recent times, bowhunting arrived in Denmark after World War I in the 20s and 30s, where people from the higher social strata with sufficient land-holdings and good game populations adopted the hunting form, but in 1967 bowhunting was banned. Since 1982 it has been possible under various dispensations and trial schemes to go bowhunting in Denmark, and in 2004 bowhunting on small game and roe deer was legalized.

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