

The Norwegian Coastal Goat - the Queen of the Alpine Coastal Heaths in Norway

A group of Norwegian Coastal Goats (Ryegeddyr) standing on a rocky outcrop. The goats have long, shaggy coats, some white and some grey, and prominent, curved horns. They are looking towards the right. The background shows a vast, open landscape under a bright sky, likely a coastal heath or tundra.

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Linda Stubsjøen & Nina Sæther*

Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre

Photo: Brit Hareid

Coastal heathlands =

Winter grazing

+

Heath burning



Today
“greatly
endangered”

(EC Habitat
Directive
92/43/EEC)

19th century

*The atlantic
coastal
heathlands -
from
Portugal to
Norway*



Norse sheep grazing coastal heathlands





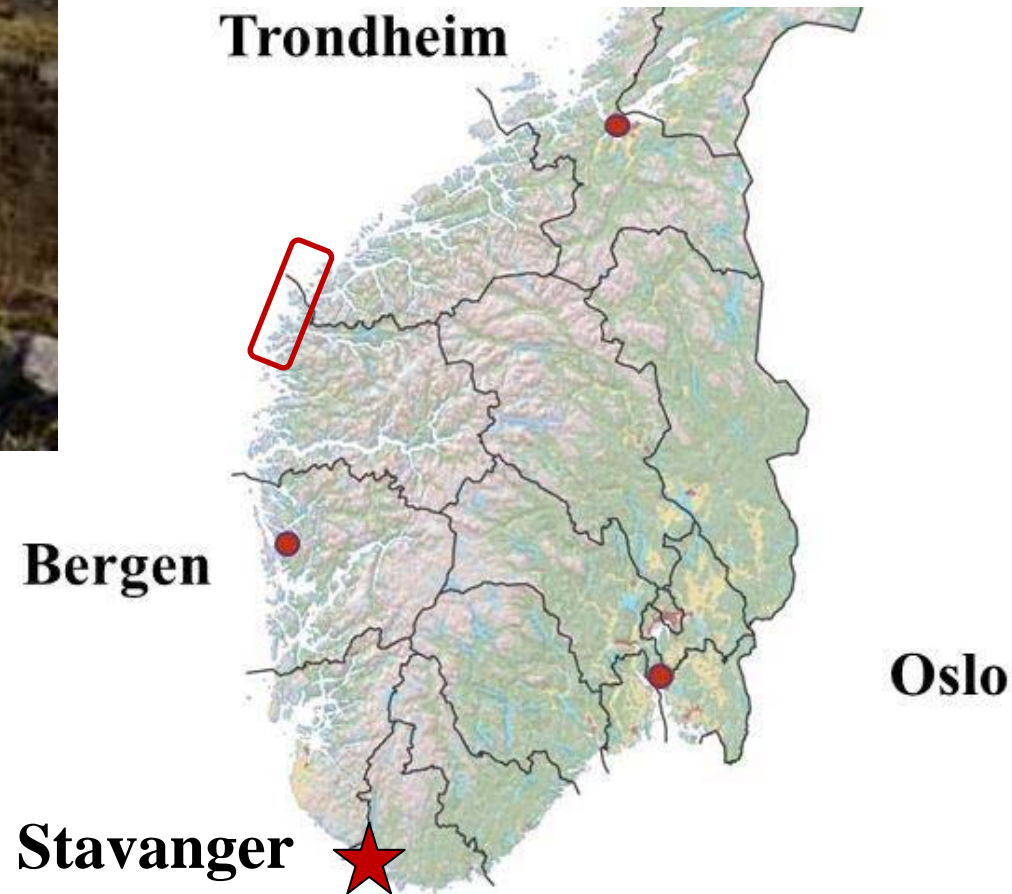
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The home of the Coastal Goat



Alpine coastal landscape
N-W of Norway





Coastal heathlands classified in Norway as *Cultural landscapes of special historical and biological value*

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- > Special landscape management programme
 - > Three Norwegian Administrative Agencies are in charge

Traditional farming with coastal goats, the flocks:



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- > come home to the farm for Christmas.
- > kidd indoors Jan/Feb
 - > Kids are not let outside the first fortnight
 - > Goats stay inside during night to nurse the kids
 - > Bucks castrated at young age
- > leave the farm by early spring, grazing outlying land (coastal heathlands)
- > come home for short visits during autumn – slaughter animals are selected
- > main product: four year old castrates

Population data 1995-2010

Farm animals

Year	Goats	Flocks
1995	150	15-20
2010	300	15-20

+ 3-4 feral flocks
(= appr 150 goats)

Ai-bucks:

Year	Number of bucks	Semen quality
1998	2	Ok
2002	3	Ok
2007	2 (feral)	☹

Challenges in population management, the farmed goats

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- Small breeding population
 - Fencing (when grazing infield)
 - Restrictions on crossing regional borders
 - Home slaughtering prohibited
 - Production, marketing and sale of products
 - Difficult to recruit new farmers... 😞

Challenges in population management, the feral flocks

- Feral since the 1950s
- Small & closed populations – inbreeding 😞
- Norwegian Food Safety Authority:
 - “Farm animals must have legal owners!”
 - “This is unacceptable livestock husbandry!”
 - “The flocks must be culled!”

Opportunities 😊

- The coastal goats are essential grazers of some of the coastal heath lands in Norway.
- The three earlier mentioned Norwegian Administrative Agencies and regional authorities have shown interest in the conservation of the coastal goat.
- **Conservation of the coastal goat is in the common interest of authorities concerned with genetic resources and cultural landscape management**

Way forward – cross sectorial approach

- A network of representatives from local, regional and national authorities, societies and associations will be established.
- Initiated by the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre



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Thank you!