Human-bear coexistence in human dominated and politically fragmented landscapes.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Ljubljana, Slovenia 16 - 21 September 2018
Conference Venue: The Grand Hotel Union

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Coordinator:
Aleksandra Majić Skrbinšek, University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty, Biology Department, Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Tomaž Skrbinšek, University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty, Biology Department, Ljubljana, Slovenia
COMPARISON OF BROWN BEAR HUNTING PRACTICES IN SWEDEN AND CROATIA

Ira Topličanec1, Sigbjørn Stokke2, Mateja Stipić3, Slaven Reljić3, Magda Sindićić3, Đuro Huber3, John Linnell2

1Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb, Croatia
2The Norwegian Institute for Nature Research
3Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb, Croatia

Abstract

Sweden and Croatia have a long tradition of brown bear (Ursus arctos) hunting. While in Croatia commercial hunting is performed exclusively at feeding sites from elevated hides with use of bait, in Sweden different methods are allowed, like still hunting, hunting with dogs, stalking and baiting (since 2013). We analysed 869 questionnaires (233 from Croatia and 635 from Sweden) filled by hunters after bear hunt, consisting of 31 questions about hunting conditions and weapons used. In both countries 60% of hunted bears were adult, but higher percentage of males were hunted in Croatia (74%) than in Sweden (55%). Average body mass of hunted bears in Croatia vs Sweden was 155 vs 94 kg, respectively. The heaviest bear in Croatia had 351 kg and in Sweden 305 kg. In Sweden the most frequently used hunting methods were baying dogs (45%), drive (25%) and stalking (15%), while bait was not used by any of respondents. In Croatia bears were predominantly hunted in the evening (18 - 21 h), while in Sweden during the morning (9 - 12 h). In both countries hunters mostly used 30-60 Springfield calibre, bullet mass of 11.6 and 11.7 g and most of the bears were shot in right or left shoulder. In Croatia significantly higher percentage of fired shots hit the bear (94%) than in Sweden (76%, p<0.0001). Out of all hunting methods used in both countries, the highest percentage of bears that were not found after being shot was during drive hunt (7.6%) and the lowest while hunting with baying dogs (4.1%). However, for those cases where the bears were not found after shooting, none of the differences between all methods in both countries was significant.