

Project *brief*

Thünen Institute of Forest Ecosystems

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Situation of wild ungulates in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

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- While hunting bags are still very high in some areas of country, a decrease in hunting quotas has been observed in various areas.
- For the period of the hunting years from 2014/15 to 2018/19, seven red deer and seven fallow deer focus areas were identified.
- Roe deer and wild boar occur across the country. Their distribution in terms of hunting bags in the country is very heterogeneous. In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, mouflon is only present in a few areas and in relatively small numbers.

Background and aims

For decades, the hunting bags of wild ungulates red deer, fallow deer, mouflon, roe deer and wild boar have been increasing. A trend that can be observed both in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and throughout in Germany. The adaptation of wildlife stock to the habitat capacity and the reduction of game damage in agriculture and forestry are legally fixed tasks for society as a whole, ensure sustainable hunting and the acceptance of hunting activities.

The aim of study is to carry out the shooting plans and their execution in a more targeted manner for the hunting communities on site taking into account the main hunting focus areas that have been periodically identified by the Thünen Institute since the late 1990s.

Method

The statistical evaluation and cartographic representation of hunting quotas over several years gives an overview of areas in which wildlife species in low or higher densities or has been hunted.

Data is based, on the amount of harvested animals provided by hunting and forest authorities.

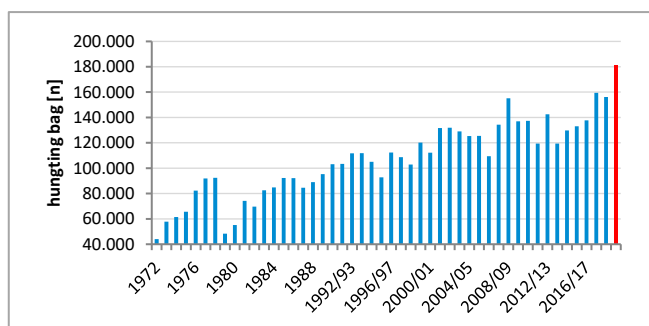
We have presented the results as follows:

- Hunting bag of red deer, fallow deer, mouflon, roe deer and wild boar in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania per square kilometre, in each case for the hunting districts of all forms of ownership within a local community.
- To compensate for fluctuations in hunting bag, we use the average of five hunting years 2014/15 to 2018/19.
- The hunting bag is given in [pieces = n = number of animals] or [pieces per square kilometre].

Results

In the last 50 years, the hunting bags have more than quadrupled. This is particularly evident in wild boars. Here the hunting quotas has increased by 6.6 times. The highest hunting bag to date was achieved in the hunting year 2019/20 with 181.439 harvested animals (Fig. 1). This is primarily due to the record hunting bag for wild boars this hunting year with almost 100.000 animals.

Fig. 1. Development of the hunting bag of ungulates in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (red = maximum in hunting year 2019/20)

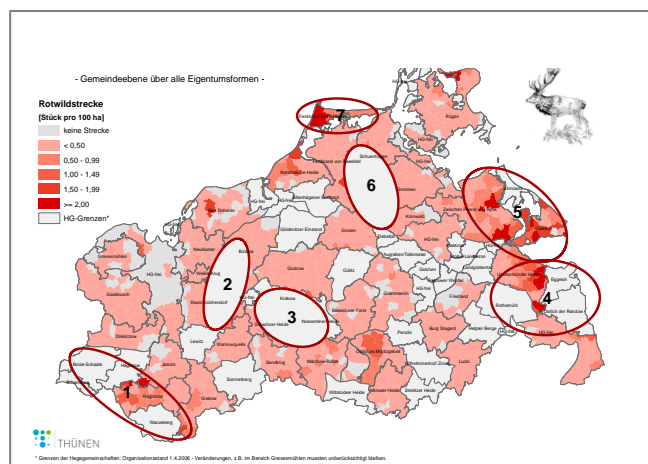


Source: Thünen Institute.

The share of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in the total hunting bag in Germany is also remarkable. Approximately every fifth German fallow deer was shot in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in the last years. For wild boar and red deer, the proportion was around 10%, for roe deer under 5% and for mouflon only around 3 to 4%. The proportion of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania of the German surface accounts approx. 6.5%.

In Fig. 2 the average hunting bags of red deer in the hunting districts of all types of ownership of the municipalities as well as the designated seven focus areas are shown.

Fig. 2. Red deer focus areas

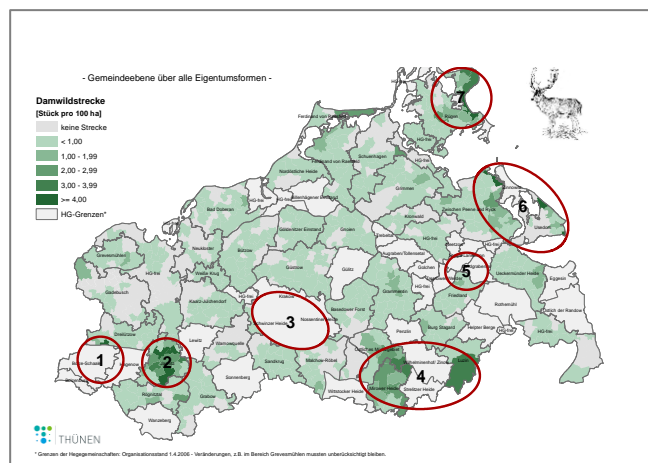


Source: Thünen Institute.

The designation as a focus area was based on exceeding of a wildlife species-specific threshold value, which does justice to the different demands on the habitat. This was determined for red deer with more than 0.5 hunted animals per square kilometre.

For fallow deer, we were also able to determine seven focus areas in the country (Fig. 3). The threshold value for designating a focus area was 1.0 hunted fallow deer per square kilometre.

Fig. 3. Fallow deer focus areas

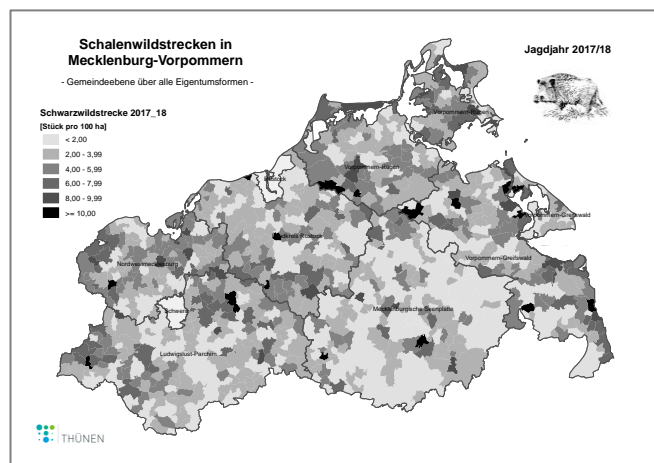


Source: Thünen Institute.

Local reduction of wildlife species densities can be seen as a success in the implementation of the hunting policy goals over the past five to ten years.

As a result of the outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in Germany in September 2020, the local evaluation of wild boar hunting bags is particularly important. To this end, we analyzed data from the hunting year 2017/18 (Fig. 4). Wild boar occurs across the country. The amounts of harvested animals can be seen in a very heterogeneously distribution. The comparatively high hunting bags along the immediate border with neighboring Poland, are positive factors. In the current situation, preventing ASF-virus introduction from spreading further in Germany has top priority. In addition to intensive cadaver sampling, the reduction of wild boar populations in the country has central importance.

Fig. 4. Hunting bag of wild boar in hunting year 2017/18



Source: Thünen Institute.

We recommend that hunting communities analyze the data from this study on an ongoing basis. The sex ratio in the hunting bags and the age class distribution of animals, should also be taken into account. The results of the project are intended to help the wildlife managers on site in their work

Further Information

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Client

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