

18 Sámi Approaches to Mountain Birch Utilization in Northern Sápmi (Finland and Norway)

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Methodological Documentation

Question catalogue for surveys on human--birch relations in the mountain birch ecosystem in northern Fennoscandia

The catalogue was developed by Ludger Müller-Wille in cooperation with local residents and researchers as well as HIBECO members during the summer of 2000. The surveys were conducted between October 2000 and May 2002. The questions were translated into Finnish, Norwegian and northern Sámi. Interviews were not recorded by audio-tape; answers were written down by the interviewers and typed later for analysis. The interviews were funded by HIBECO-Workpackage 1 (led by Dietbert Thannheiser, Hamburg University, Germany). All data are confidential and will not be used in connection with a person's name.

Survey regions: Máze and Olmmaivággi (Manndalen) on the Norwegian side and Ohcejohka (Utsjoki), Gáregasnjarga (Karisgasniemi), Anár/Aanaar (Inari), Guttur (Kuttura), Vuohčču, Če'vetjäu'rr/eavetjávri (Sevettijärvi) on the Finnish side in Sápmi.

(The following text is the original document in English distributed to all interviewers.)

Survey Questions (6 October 2000)

Answers to the following questions can be either factual or in a narrative form; thus they are either quantitative or qualitative in nature. It is understood that not every question will be asked of all interviewees; this depends entirely on the situation and the interviewer's assessment of the local conditions. Responses are recorded in the language used in the interview.

It is essential that the number given to each question is always maintained because each number represents a field in the database. Survey reports are filed in the original with Ludger Müller-Wille and a copy is made for safekeeping. The reports are the property of Workpackage 1 of HIBECO.

The interview/interviewer

1. Interview code (regional code and number in chronological sequence):
2. Interview date:
3. Time period:
4. Interview location:
5. Interviewer's name:
6. Language used in interview:
[Sámi (Northern, Aanaar, Skolt), Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish, English]

The interviewee (in residence, cabin owner, official or entrepreneur)

10. Name:

Supplementary material for Chapter 18

11. Sex:
12. Age in years:
13. Address (residence, location):
14. Number of people in household:
15. Occupation(s), sources of income listed by importance:
16. In Finland: is the household (homestead) a 'porotila' (reindeer homestead) or 'luontaiselinkeinotila' (subsistence homestead) under Finnish law?
17. Authority's or enterprise's name:
18. Cabin owner (solely cabin in region):
19. Cultural--linguistic identification (optional):

Questions Related to Knowledge and Uses of Birch

General knowledge of birch forests and their environmental conditions

20. What type of birch species grow in your area and which are used (local vernacular for birch terms)?
21. Where are these locations (mark on maps)?
22. What is the size of birch forest areas used (in ha)?
23. What is the current physical condition of birch in your area?
24. What are the preferred qualities of birch in general?
25. What changes in and damages to the trees have you observed during the last few decades in your close environs and regionally (e.g. relations between snow/birch, reindeer/birch and others)? What are the causes of these conditions?
26. What are in your opinion the 'ideal' conditions for birch forests to allow continued use by people?
27. Are the birch forests accessible and in what ways (highways, forest roads, off-road access, etc.)?
28. What are in your opinion the major issues concerning the use of birch by people in relation to the birch's environmental conditions and regrowth?
29. What are the future expectations, developments and benefits you would like to derive from birch forests in your area?
30. What is in your opinion the impact and damage by animals using birch?
31. Which grazing animals [e.g. reindeer, moose (elk), sheep, goat, cattle and other wildlife] use birch and through what activities (i.e. grazing, browsing)? What is their impact on birch?
32. In your opinion is there a need to manage animal use of birch, why and in what way?
33. Have you observed birch used and damaged by insects and what are their impact on these trees?

Policies, management practices and their applications

40. What do you understand by the 'immemorial rights to wood', what is its basis and how would you see it continue into the future?
41. Could you define your management approach to birch use?
42. What are the differences between state and private lands with respect to management schemes?
43. Who sets policies in your region?
44. What, in your estimation, are currently the political, economic and socio-cultural forces at work in birch use or in resources generally?

Supplementary material for Chapter 18

45. What are your harvest practices in your birch forests?
46. In your opinion what is practical and sensible management for sustaining birch and its use in your area?
47. Is there a type of management 'best' suited for birch use?
48. What do you consider the major competitors (actors) (e.g. people, institutions, projects or laws) to the birch and what impact do these competitors have on birch spatially?

Legal, political and economic frameworks of birch use

50. Do you own areas with birch growth that can be harvested?
51. Is some of your private property designated as 'wood lots' based on the government's land allocation scheme ('iso-jako' or 'storskifte')?
52. Where are these lots located (indicate on map) and what is their size in hectares?
53. Have you harvested (cut) these lots, for how long and what amounts of wood have been taken, and do you continue to use these lots?
54. Are these lots used on a regular basis annually?
55. In what season predominantly?
56. Do you do the felling or do you give concessions?
57. Is wood being shared among family, kin and/or neighbours?
58. Do you sell wood, in what volume, and what is the monetary value per year (if possible in gross and net value)? Specify labour and other costs.
59. What are your projected needs for wood (for any purpose) annually for the next 5 to 10 years?
60. What is the economic value of your wood and other 'birch items' during 1 year, and what portion of your income does this represent? Specify, if possible, gross and net income from birch solely.
61. What is your annual birch wood production (in m³)?
62. What are the current market forces in birch production? Who are the principal buyers and do they give the same or similar prices?
63. How are prices determined and what costs are included?
64. What capital investments are required to obtain wood?
65. What portion of your time is devoted to birch use?
66. What is the current employment in your birch wood production (persons/year)?
67. Wood suppliers: what is your market network locally, regionally, or across national borders?
68. Wood suppliers: what are your annual production (in cubic meter) and sales in monetary terms?

Types of Birch Uses

Firewood production and consumption

Heating system and importance of heating source [rank: 1 (very high) to 5 (very low); blank: does not exist]; give consumption levels for each source per year in volume (cubic meters, liters, kilowatt hours) and monetary expenses. Under (fire)wood, if possible, distinguish between birch, pine, spruce, juniper and others.

70. In residence, institution or enterprise
wood
heating oil

Supplementary material for Chapter 18

- propane gas
- electricity
- 71. In sauna (residential either in-house or separate)
 - wood
 - electricity
- 72. In cabin
 - wood
 - heating oil
 - propane gas
 - electricity
- 73. In sauna or at cabin:
 - wood
 - electricity
- 74. In work space or workshop (if separate building including buildings connected with reindeer herding, fishing, hunting, etc.):
 - wood
 - heating oil
 - propane gas
 - electricity
- 75. What is your wood consumption during professional (i.e. herding) and recreational outings during the year?
- 76. What wood do you use during these outings?
- 77. Do you go regularly on outings, how often and to what locations during the year?
- 78. Is firewood a factor in these outings and how do you obtain it?

Recent and current acquisition of birch firewood

- 80. Which locations (private or public land) do you use?
- 81. From whom do you obtain birch wood (through permit system, family, kin, neighbours)?
- 82. Do you buy firewood, from whom, volume and price per year?
- 83. When during the year?
- 84. What amounts do you obtain yourself?
- 85. Do you fell trees yourself on private or state land?
- 86. If not, who does the cutting?
- 90. What types of birch trees (age, size, conditions) do you obtain and/or prefer?
- 91. What is the 'ideal' age and size to cut a birch tree for firewood?
- 92. What conditions influence your decision to take what tree?
- 93. What are the preferred qualities in birch as firewood?
- 100. What equipment do you own and use or is needed to obtain firewood?
- 101. What varying means of transportation do you use in firewood acquisition during the seasons?
- 102. What types of storage do you prefer for trunks and for split firewood (draw diagrams)?
- 103. How many cubic meters of wood do you store at a time and for what length of heating period?

Supplementary material for Chapter 18

104. What is the drying period for birch?
105. How long does dried birch wood last and maintain its high heating qualities?
106. What is the average length of birch trunks cut and logs split?
107. Do you use any other woods for heating or other purposes such as smoking?
108. In case you smoke items (e.g. fish, meat), what wood do you prefer and use in what amounts (e.g. birch, juniper, alder, etc.)?
109. What do you smoke, how, when, where and for what purposes?

Birch use as wood for construction and handicraft

110. Do you use birch wood in construction and/or handicraft?
111. Where do you obtain such wood (indicate location) and what type of trees do you look for (age, length, diameter)?
112. What are the amounts of birch you have used for construction and/or handicraft?
113. Is this use for private and/or commercial purposes?
114. How do you process this wood [i.e. sawing (thickness of planks), drying, storing, any other treatment, etc.]?
115. What are the applications you use this wood for [e.g. buildings, furniture, boats, sleds, tools, turf hut, salmon weirs (tripods), or any other items]?
116. In case you buy construction wood (birch or other), from whom and where do you obtain it?
117. What is the current price by board meter or volume for birch?
118. In your opinion what are the demands and the market for birch construction wood?
119. Supplier: where do you obtain and sell birch wood, at what volume and price?

Uses for art, decoration, healing, rituals, traditions and spirituality

120. Do you use birch for the above purposes and in what amounts?
121. What is, if any, the commercial value of these applications?
122. How, when, where and from whom do you obtain these items and for what price if any?
123. What is the market for such items in the community, through art galleries, souvenir shops, and others?
124. If you are an artist what influences you to choose what part of the tree and for what artistic expression or item?
125. As an artist what items do you design and produce from birch wood, and how do you market it?

What were historic and what are current applications (see listed above) when using the following birch items in what amounts and for what reasons (explain in narrative)?

130. Wood
131. Branches (for sauna, tools, decoration, other applications)
'viihta' -- what are the qualities you expect in these branches; where, when, how many do you obtain and prepare annually? How many branches per whisk ('viihta')? What are the applications in your sauna use?

Supplementary material for Chapter 18

- 132. Leaves, oil
- 133. Sap, syrup
- 135. Bark
- 136. Roots
- 137. Ash
- 138. Trees as decoration (e.g. yard or home birch)
- 139. Any other application and purpose using items of birch?

Perceptions of birch forests

In your view could you comment in general or specific terms on

- 140. the basic, natural value of birch;
- 141. its economic and socio-cultural value;
- 142. the sustainability of the birch forest;
- 143. any spiritual and mythological connotations;
- 144. the aesthetic and symbolic dimension connected with birch

Any further reflections on birch uses

- 150. Looking at birch uses today, what are in your opinion management alternatives to maintain the sustainability of birch forests and growth in your area but also beyond? List some alternatives you feel might be successful.

Addendum

- 160. Any further aspect of birch use that has not been covered by the above questions.