

5.1 The nature of Finnmark between traditional use, international capital, and central political power

Svein Lund

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Introduction

Finnmark is the largest county in Norway. It is also the county which both absolutely and relatively has the most nature which so far is not destroyed. Nature is the base for fishing, reindeer herding, agriculture, and outfield harvesting. Nature is also the base for – and exposed to – leisure and recreation activities like hunting, sport fishing, hiking, and snow scooter driving. In nature there is also the foundation for profitable activities like mining, power plant building, etc.. This has made Norwegian and international capital put its eyes on the county. Government as well has its plans for the county. In the meeting between all those who are interested in using nature in Finnmark in different ways, the environment can be squeezed and become the great loser. Traditional uses of the land can also easily become a loser in the meeting with big money and state power. Today, nature of Finnmark is more threatened than ever.

In the Finnmark Act it's written in §2: *The act applies to real property and waterways with natural resources in Finnmark county. In the shoreline the act applies as far out in the water as the private proprietary right reaches* (to where the marbakke or the steep underwater slope close to the shore line starts, or at a depth of 2 metres). But the nature of Finnmark does not end there. The coastal inhabitants have always lived from the resources found in the fjords and the open sea, both the ones found more or less stationary on the sea bottom and the ones moving in greater areas. If the fjords are depleted of fish and the sea tangle forest disappears, an essential part of the nature of Finnmark would disappear.

The exhaustion of the resources in the fjords, decided and defended by the power in Oslo / Bergen / Sunnmøre, has led to traditional fishing being reduced to a tiny fraction of what it was,



and the traditional adaptation to fisherman farmers to scarce remnants. This is both a loss of resources and nature, and as such also an issue for us as a nature conservation movement.

Traditional use – what is it?

In Sami tradition, traditional use is called “árbevierru”, meaning a custom you have inherited. It means that this custom has been used by at least one generation before yours. Although, for instance, reindeer husbandry went through great changes as direct and indirect consequence of the introduction of the snow scooter in the 1960s, there is still an unbroken tradition of the knowledge which is needed for the herding within the families, and in the siida organization.

In referring to traditional use in Finnmark, I mean the ways in which the local population use the nature for grazing for animals, cultivating and harvesting fodder for those animals, for hunting and catching, fishing in the sea and the lakes, picking berries and other edible plants, wood chopping, and gathering materials for duodji/handicrafts etc.. What can be considered as tradition is a much-debated question. Recently a debater asserted that the spring duck hunt in Kautokeino cannot be considered a Sami tradition, since the Sami have not produced shotguns themselves. With such exorbitant demands one can define away all traditions, and consequently overrun them. The traditional use of the nature is practiced by members of a local population, who have felt closely connected to the terrain and landscape they use, and consider that they have the right to such a use, often an exclusive right or first claim, whether this right has been fixed by law or not.

In older days, there was no clear distinction between livelihood and use. People harvested from the nature, ate what they picked, fished, or caught, and traded or sold what they did not need themselves. To a great extent they lived from a combination of livelihoods, or subsidiary income, as it is called. To the extent they had paid employment, it was often temporary, seasonal, or part time. Now paid employment has become the main livelihood for most people, but simultaneously many have continued to harvest in the traditional manner. In order to speak about traditional use it is, therefore, not necessary that it is the main income or a registered income as a lot of traditions are connected to what we refer to as “matauk” (increasing the household's food supplies by harvesting from nature).



According to tradition, when one went to the outfields it was because one had something useful to do there, not for sport or recreation. Hiking just for the sake of hiking, different kinds of sports, and hunting and fishing for sport are not part of the tradition. Ways to use nature which have been introduced recently also do not belong to the tradition in Finnmark, whether it is fish farming, fishing for king crab, or gathering mushrooms and shells for eating.

Traditional use of the nature can roughly be divided into four branches, which traditionally have overlapped: reindeer husbandry, agriculture, saltwater fishing, and use of the outfields (hunting, freshwater fishing, gathering of berries and plants).

Reindeer husbandry - for whom?

Reindeer husbandry has been a greater or smaller part of the compound basis of existence for many, as either the main or subsidiary source of income. Though there is often greatest focus on those who have reindeer husbandry as the main source of income, I will say something about reindeer husbandry as a subsidiary source of income.

The old *verdde*-system (system of exchange of goods and mutual help) meant that a family or a *siida* living from reindeer husbandry had special contact with a family living on the coast and often one living in the inland area. These families owned a few reindeers in the herd, and took part in the work with, for instance, dividing, slaughtering, and moving the herd to pastures on islands. This arrangement was abolished by law in 1978, something which contributed strongly to destroying the solidarity between the nomadic Sami and the settled population, and led to growing contrasts between these groups. Little is left of the *verdde*-system today, and to the extent that it still exists, it is more informal as the settled population is not allowed to own reindeer. Today reindeer husbandry as a subsidiary source of income is mostly a phenomenon within the reindeer herding families, when someone in the family has reindeer husbandry as the main source of income, while others make a living from other jobs and just take part in the reindeer husbandry in the seasons when they have the possibility to do so.

Ever since reindeer husbandry on a larger scale developed in Finnmark, most likely in the 16th century, it has been organized in *siidas*. Every reindeer herd was assigned fixed grazing areas for different times of the year and fixed routes of transhumance between these. This system



has been continued and is now referred to as reindeer grazing regions, which are regulated from the Reindeer Husbandry Act and the Reindeer Husbandry Administration. But there have often been conflicts between the internal systems the reindeer herding the Sami themselves have created and the authorities the government established to regulate reindeer husbandry. This can be seen in the winter pastures in inner Finnmark, where the siidas traditionally had their respective areas, but these have not been fixed by law. Formally there are large cooperative pastures, something which has contributed to conflicts among the reindeer herding Sami and to overexertion of the pastures.

Reindeer husbandry is a complex system, and not easy for third parties to understand. It is not possible to measure reindeer pastures in square kilometers and do a calculation of percentage, as mining supporters in Kvalsund do when they assert that the mine will occupy only 3% of the reindeer pastures and it would be sufficient to give compensation for 3% of the reindeers, or as when a politician during the Alta-struggle happily concluded that the entire expansion of the watercourse would only affect the pasture for 21 reindeer. Different forms of pastures and landscapes need to be available at specific times of the year, and one must also be able to move the reindeer herd between them. If there is only one open passage between two pastures, what happens if this passage is closed? As one reindeer owner put it: If you have a house with two floors and remove the staircase between the floors, you haven't reduced your net living space by 5%, but by 50%.

The fisherman-farmer versus the agronomist

Traditional adaptation of livelihoods has been typical for Finnmark, when ways of living adapted to nature and to each other. For a long time it was not uncommon for people in the fjords to have a double pattern of moving: One moved between 2-4 dwelling places changing by the seasons, and one changed some of these dwelling places every 10-20 years when certain local resources had been exhausted and needed time to come back. The increase of population led to more permanent settling with time. But still the farming was mostly extensive low impact: one cut the grass, but neither ploughed nor sowed, and did not fertilize beyond what the animals themselves left behind. Also seaweed, sea tangle, gurry, branches and heather were used to fodder the livestock. This comprehensive adaptation made it possible to use so-called marginal areas and run the farms with small capital expenses.



This way of living was in conflict with the southern-Norwegian farming tradition and the ruling power's ideas about what was “modern”. That a great part of these fisherman farmers spoke a different language than the official one was seen as just another proof of how old fashioned and outdated they were. Through deliberate colonization strategies, great parts of Troms and Nordland were populated by farmers from the south, often smallholders or farmers' sons who were promised their own land in the north. The regulations of the Land Act of 1902 states:

“Proprietary rights must only be given to Norwegian citizens and under the particular considerations to promote the population of the district with what to the district, its cultivation and further utilization is a suitable population, which can speak, read and write the Norwegian language and make use of this in the daily life.”

The legislation, loan, and support systems, and the system of municipal and county agronomists and fishery directors were used to favour those who focused on either agriculture or fishing rather than those who made a living from a combination of the two. What in the end ended most of this old adaptation of livelihoods along the coast was a combination of ideological campaigns and the lengthy influence from harsh juridical and economic realities.

Small smack versus trawlers

As far back as we have historical sources, there have been conflicts concerning who has the right to fish in Finnmark. In the 16th and 17th century three main groups fished along the coast of Finnmark:

- Sami, who in large part fished in the fjords in combination with livestock breeding and livelihoods of the outfield,
- Settled Norwegians, who in large part lived in the outer fishing villages, and
- Seasonal fishermen from Troms and Nordland.

Until the 19th century, the right of the local population to fish locally was mostly respected. But fishermen from outside exerted pressure to open fishing everywhere, and as they succeeded there began an endless line of clashes over the use of these areas and protests from the local population about ruined fish stocks, seabed vegetation, and the fishing tackle of local



fishermen. There have been conflicts between fishermen of the fjords and fishermen of the sea, between fishermen from Finnmark and North-travelers, and also between Norwegian and foreign fishing boats. Russians and Finns have been fishing, in particular in Varanger, from olden times. From the beginning of the 20th century, English trawlers have been fishing along the coast of Finnmark despite the protests from the local population.

If one would summarize this history briefly, one could say it has been very difficult for local fishermen to get support from the central authorities for necessary regulation to protect fish stocks, vegetation in the fjords, and the livelihood of the fishermen in the fjords. The northern fisheries have had little influence on the legislation and regulation of fishing by the Ministry of Fisheries and Directorate of Fisheries. Among the fishermen in Finnmark, only a few ship-owners on the outer coast have had significant political influence. The result is that the Sami fishermen in the fjords to a great extent have lost their livelihood. A decisive blow occurred when new quotas on coastal fishing were introduced and many small fishermen were denied a quota.

When the government in 2006 appointed the Coastal Fishing Committee, many trusted that this injustice would be corrected. The Committee did their job, but after pressure from the ship-owner-dominated Norwegian Fishing Group, the government rejected the entire report. The development has instead gone in the opposite direction, with Acts to reduce the fishing fleet and transferable quotas which have excluded a great part of the population of fishermen and prevented the continuation of local fishing traditions.

Livelihoods and use of the outfields

From as far back as we have archeological evidence, nature has been used for food, building materials and heating, clothes, and different essential utility articles. This is of course true everywhere, but we can say that Finnmark is the county in Norway where these traditions have been best preserved. There are rich natural resources here, the population has been small and earlier the settlement was rather scattered, and there has been no significant power preventing people from making use of local resources.



In relation to plans for establishing several protected areas, a recent survey in Guovdageaidnu on the extent to which people made use of the natural environment showed that a great part of the population actively uses nature for personal well-being and for access to local, good, and healthy food. Only a small part of the population sells enough of what they gather that it produces a registered and taxable income. But many exchange or sell informally and surely many contribute to their own households through gathering food, firewood etc. which they otherwise would have had to pay for. If one asks why people are out in nature, it is often this aspect of utility which is brought up.

Just as the state has wished for solely specialised farmers, fishermen, and reindeer owners who are dedicated to these livelihoods full-time, the state has also wished for livelihoods in the outfields to be carried out on a large scale, making a big economic profit. For instance, a rule has been introduced demanding that in order to get dispensation for driving in the outfields for trade purposes, one must have a registered taxable income of at least 50 000 NOK from this specific livelihood in the outfields, for instance fishing or picking berries. Those who do not fulfill this criteria are then reduced to tourists by the regulations, even though they harvest in areas which have been used by their families for generations.

International capital in Finnmark

International capital in Finnmark is not a new phenomenon. The rich resources of fish and marine animals attracted interest from further south since the 14th century when Hanseatic merchants based in Bergen bought fish from the north for exported into Europe. In the 16th century, the Dutch ran whaling stations, and more recently foreign trawlers have been a threat to fish stocks and inshore fishermen. The fishing industry has more or less operated under Norwegian ownership, the most important exception being the Swiss company Nestlé, which ran the Findus-factory in Hammerfest from 1962 to 2000, and which also owned trawlers connected to the factory. In negotiations with the EU and EEA, an important question has been whether the free right of establishment also should apply to the fishing industries.

Traditional livelihoods in the county have to a great extent been protected from foreign acquisition, both because the law sets restrictions and because they have not been very



profitable investments. But this does not mean that the areas used for the traditional livelihoods have been left alone – especially when it comes to mineral industries.

The first mine in Finnmark of considerable size was the copper mine in Kåfjord, opened in 1826 with English capital and leadership. Later, Swedish investment replaced the English. Sydvaranger mines were run with German and Swedish capital from 1906 to the Second World War, and after some decades of state management the mine is now owned by an Australian company. The nepheline mine at Stjernøya is now being run by Sibelco, which according to their own information is a “truly multinational business, today operating 228 production sites in 41 countries”. The quartzite quarry in eastern Tana was started by a Norwegian company, but has now been bought up by Chinese capital. Of the two mining companies with projects now competing for permission to start, one (Arctic Gold) is a Swedish company with significant elements of German capital, the other (Nussir) is formally Norwegian but with substantial elements of British, Canadian, and Belgian capital. Of the companies which have secured rights to lease in Finnmark, Canadian Dalradian Ressources is by far the biggest.

Finnmark and the central political power

“Finnmark has therefore since ancient times been regarded as a colony.” This is what the Ministry of Finance said of Finnmark in a letter of 1848. Later it has not been regarded as acceptable to speak about Finnmark as a colony, but the comparison makes sense for both the time before and after this letter was written. The Vikings did not only make Viking-raids towards the east and the west, but also to the north. The “Finn-raids” meant seeking out the Sami, trading with them, and robbing them or demanding taxes from them. Northern Fennoscandia was a victim of ravaging and tax demands from at least three states contemporaneously: Norway (later Denmark-Norway), Sweden (including Finland), and Novgorod/Russia.

Gradually larger and larger parts of what is now Finnmark became an established part of the (Danish-) Norwegian state, but it is not possible to single out one specific year as the date the county was incorporated. Still, the county kept a unique position since almost all the land was considered state property. How did the county become state property? The above mentioned letter of 1848 gives this explanation: “The original Finnmark has in fact been considered as



belonging to the king or the state since olden times, because it originally was populated only by a nomadic people, the Lapps (Sami) with no permanent dwellings.” This quote demonstrates how one thought: use does not give right to land if one does not have a permanent dwelling and cultivate the land. This is actually the only known explanation of what later was called Statens umatrikulerte grunn (state owned land not written into cadastre).

When the land was defined as belonging to the state, the state could use the land, and sell the land to whomever it wished, and that was most often not the ones using the land. The state could also decide who had permission to hunt, fish, and pick berries. And since those who used the land locally did not have the documents for it, the state was free to construct roads, power plants, military camps, etc. without having to expropriate. While the outfields in southern Norway were in a patchwork of private properties, where only a few chosen people could hunt and fish, Finnmark was open to everyone. As communication and transportation improved, the county became an Eldorado for anglers and grouse hunters from the south. The plain was open to everyone. Who cared that some people without formal legal rights lived here and had been using the resources to subsist for generations?

Did the Finnmark Act change anything?

But Finnmark has values under the earth. The Mining Act makes a division between the minerals of the state and the minerals of the landowner. But in Finnmark this division did not make any difference, since the state was the landowner. After 25 years of clarifications and many years of quarrels, in 2005 the Storting passed an act to transfer the land of the state in Finnmark to an agency elected by the Sami Parliament and the county council.

The expectations for the act were great, as well as the fear that the act could lead to racial discrimination, privatization, and exclusion of the general public. But after having observed the practices of the Finnmark Estate Agency (FeFo) and the Finnmark Commission, we have to say that neither expectations nor fears have been fulfilled. The administration of Finnmark seems to have continued as before, just under a different name. Of the changes that have taken place, several have been counter to what was expected.



It is claimed that with the Finnmark Act, the population finally became the master of its own house. But did it? While the Sami rights committee proposed that the public administrative agency should be called the Finnmark Land Administration, the Storting rejected this and passed the name Finnmark Estate – a name which in itself was a provocation to everyone who doubted that the agency really held the proprietary rights to 95% of Finnmark. But they did get the proprietary rights, although there is the reservation that those who wish to claim proprietary rights to some of Finnmark can report these to the Finnmark Commission. The decisions made by the Commission do not indicate that this percentage will be particularly reduced.

Several questions remain: what this proprietary right includes, what FeFo has the right to do with its property and what they have the right to deny others to do? These are comprehensive juridical questions. As mentioned before, the property of FeFo finishes at the marbakke (the beginning of the steep underwater slope, which is normally a few metres out in the sea). Therefore, FeFo has no authority when it comes to fishery regulation, threats against life in the sea, or oil and gas extraction.

In the Finnmark Act, §19 states “Land owned by the Finnmark Estate, can be made into national parks following the rules in The Nature Diversity Act”. Resolutions concerning national parks or other protected areas are made by the Storting or the Ministry of the Environment. When a protected area has been established, the centrally-determined rules concerning the use of the area are put into force. In practice, this means that when an area is protected, the government takes back administration of this area from FeFo.

The Mining Act establishes that most of the minerals in Finnmark are minerals of the State, independent of the proprietary owner of the surface land. The rights to these minerals was, therefore, not included in the proprietary rights passed on to FeFo. Permission for searching for minerals is still being given by the Directorate of Mining in Trondheim, and the ultimate permission for extraction is given by the Ministry of Environment under instructions from the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Development of water power on the land of FeFo can happen upon obtaining a license from the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate. The proprietary owner can object, but



does not possess the rights to anything but financial compensation where economic loss can be proven.

The administration of hunting and freshwater fishing is to a great extent executed according to central laws, such as the Nature Diversity Act. The Finnmark Act also sets strict restrictions on the extent to which FeFo can control this administration.

Several EEA regulations against discrimination of EEA-citizens can also put limitations on what FeFo can decide about priorities to or exclusive rights to the natural resources for the local population, the inhabitants in the municipalities, counties or Norway. The conclusion, when it comes to important matters which can influence nature in Finnmark, the population in Finnmark has not become the master of its own house.

FeFo in practice

Although FeFo does not have an absolute right to self-determination, it has certain latitude and can provide an opinion on many important matters where others have the final word. To what extent have these options been used, and in what direction has this use pointed? This is also a very complex question, and I will not attempt to give any fixed conclusion, but I want to show a few examples, which in my opinion do not bode well:

- While Statskog (the Norwegian state-owned land and forest enterprise) always distributed small areas for collecting firewood to people living in the countryside in Finnmark, FeFo introduced a fee for these. Not great sums, but the principle was more important. The people felt that these areas were their right, not something they could most graciously be given the consent to use. From FeFo's side, this became a demonstration of power: We have the property right now and common people only have the rights we consent them.
- Until the Finnmark Act was introduced, there was a law establishing that foreigners could only go freshwater fishing up to 5 km from public roads. One of the first things FeFo did was to remove this law, making it possible for foreign anglers to drive on public bare ground trails and snow scooter trails far into the mountains to go fishing. Already



there have been complaints that Finnish anglers are emptying the lakes. FeFo claims that the EEA agreement required them to change the legislation, but they have still not attempted to insist on their demands and possibly take their case to court.

- In a number of cases the FeFo-management decided to give permission for bigger environment interventions, such as mining and development of waterpower, and contemporaneously in principle rejected any establishment of new protected areas.

In conclusion, the interaction of proposals from the Sami rights committee and the Finnmark Act has intensified many old conflicts in Finnmark. It has led to many quarrels and caused bad blood, both in the newspapers, within most of the political parties and organisations in the county, and among the common people. Compared to this the practical results of the Act, thus far, have been minimal. One could ask whether it all has been worthwhile.

Nature in Finnmark, before and now

Against this backdrop, the time has come to have a look at how nature in Finnmark has changed, or been changed through time. Such research has never been carried out, so this will only analyze few elements. As I know the changes of the past 30-40 years best, I will put emphasis on those years. I hope someone will follow up and make more thorough, scientific, and precise research. Most of the environmental changes in Finnmark result from human influence, and include both direct and indirect influences.

I consider indirect the changes that are caused by climate changes. We do not have the complete picture of these changes, and it is difficult to determine to what extent some of these are caused by climate changes or other factors. But at any rate, notable indirect changes can be mentioned, including:

- The plain is overgrowing, the tree line is moving higher, and the plain is becoming more grass and less lichen,
- Warmer water in the sea, fish stocks transfer, new stocks arriving from the south (king crab, mackerel etc.), and
- New animal species arriving or spreading (elk, roe deer).



Among the changes which are more directly connected to human interventions are:

- New roads,
- More tracks in the outfields, both regulated and unregulated,
- Snow scooter wear and tear and disturbance of wildlife,
- Decline of cultivated land, the strong reduction of sheep grazing in many areas, reduced goat stocks, abandoned fields being used for reindeer grazing, intensifying agriculture, and the end of haying in the outfields,
- Increased destruction of vegetation from reindeer husbandry due to a high number of reindeer, fences, and use of motor vehicles,
- The reduction of fish stocks in many fjords,
- Aquaculture industry impacts such as pollution of the sea and seafloor, genetic pollution of wild salmon through mixing with escaped farmed salmon,
- Large fluctuations in fish stocks due to overfishing affecting herring, capelin, codfish, halibut, redfish, and others.
- Disappearance of the sea tangle forest along a great part of the coast, increase in stocks of sea urchin,
- Shifts in forestry creating more strain in some places,
- Tourism, cottage areas, grouse hunters, sport fishing in freshwater and the sea,
- Military sites (German from the war and Norwegian later) has impacted the environment and excluded reindeer husbandry / livelihoods in the outfields, pollution from artillery ranges,
- Development of water power at Pasvik, Porsa, Porsanger, Repvåg, Alta, Kvænangen affects reindeer husbandry,
- Mines and the search for minerals/shale around Sydvaranger, Repparfjord, Austertana, Biedjovággi, Stjernøya, Alta, Loppa, and Laksefjorden, and
- Actions of preservation have reduced the strain in some areas, such as natural parks and reserves, but have led to an increased strain in popular hiking areas.

Conclusion

The nature in Finnmark has always been used by the people who live here. It is not an untouched nature, it is not wilderness, and we should quit using expressions like this in environmental management or tourist advertising. But the county has had, and still has, a



relatively large area that has not been struck by industrial intervention. This area is in great decline and threatened strongly in many places. At the same time, virtually the entire county is threatened by the reduction of the quality of nature due to smaller interventions such as the constructions of cottages, the increase in motorised traffic in outfields, and changes in grazing. The nature in the fjords and on the coast outside Finnmark is important and is threatened by petroleum and gas activities, discharges from mines, and overfishing.

A lot of the nature in the county has already been destroyed, and a lot of the destruction which is taking place on a daily basis is very difficult to put a stop to overnight. Some destruction is irreversible. Yet, we must still have roads in Finnmark, we need bridges and harbours, residential areas, and factories. Most of the currently operating power plants should probably be allowed to continue to run, although I have to admit that my big dream is to demolish the dam in Čávčču and start a great project to restore the nature to make the Alta River and valley as it once was. A closer project, which my local group of the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature has introduced, is to restore and re-vegetate Biedjovággi, to return the mining area to nature and reindeer husbandry.

If we wish to take care of the nature in Finnmark for future generations, both of population in Finnmark and tourists, we should call a “time-out” for further expansion projects now. Furthermore we should return rights to the traditional livelihoods and uses, and ensure that this use will be hindered neither by actions of expansion nor by actions of preservation.

Simultaneously we must not forget that the traditional livelihoods also leave traces. A book about Sami history is called “On soft leather shoes in the history.” But Polaris and Yamaha do not wear soft leather shoes, although the person seated on top of the snow scooter wears a lasso around his neck and chants a joik while driving. We should set an aim of strongly reducing the use of motorised vehicles within the reindeer husbandry and the livelihoods of the outfields, both out of consideration for nature and the people who live by these livelihoods themselves.

There are many ways of using nature, both traditional and non-traditional. Traditions which exist in some places are unknown elsewhere. Lastly, I will argue for the non-traditional uses of the nature, for collaborations between science and the local population to also utilize the



nature resources in less traditional ways. We already find a few examples in Finnmark, we have firms producing herbal teas, spices, syrup, and pesto from natural products. We have production of cordial and wine from crowberries. This is still on a very small scale, and is only making use of a negligible amount of the resources. If you would like to buy candied Norwegian angelica, cordial of meadowsweet, or other delicacies you might be lucky to get hold of it in Sweden.

Finnmark has a long tradition of use of certain medicinal plants, but this has largely disappeared today. Simultaneously, our nature is full of other medicinal plants which do not have traditions in the county, but which for instance have been used in Russia, Finland, and other countries. There are also our enormous resources of mushrooms, which rot if not eaten by reindeer or cows. There is a great potential in both traditional and non-traditional uses of nature. A great part of these resources can be harvested for sale and produce income. Just as important is the use of natural products in households. This makes life and health better in two ways, both by harvest and use. I would also like to argue for the mixing of private and commercial use, and the exchange of natural products both with neighbours and acquaintances who live in areas with different natural resources.

But if we are to make use of, and further develop, both traditional and non-traditional ways of using nature, we need to confront the idea that only full-time, year-round work is good enough. The environment in Finnmark provides a foundation for seasonal work and combined livelihoods. I think we need to return to this approach, and back to the mentality where there is no clear division between work and leisure time, between occupation and ways of living. This, of course, means facing the challenge that this approach fits neither with international economic interests nor with the national power in the south. But people in the north have struggled against these forces for centuries, so we should be prepared to continue to fight for yet some time to come.

Svein Lund

Association for Protection of Nature in Inner Finnmark, Norway

