

INVENTORY OF GRAZING GROUNDS WITH ARBOREAL LICHEN WITHIN THE DISTRICT OF THE LAPIN PALISKUNTA - REINDEER HERDERS' ASSOCIATION IN 1999 – 2000

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SUMMARY

An inventory of the grazing grounds with arboreal lichen within the district of the Lapin paliskunta reindeer herders' Association was carried out during the early spring of 1999 and autumn of 2000. The quantity of arboreal lichen per test area was divided into four categories and index values based on the mean quantity were calculated. The biomass of arboreal lichen per hectare was also determined. Based on the results of the inventory, the grazing grounds with the most abundant arboreal lichen available to the Lapin paliskunta reindeer herders' Association are located in Peurakaira, around Nattastunturit and in Alapalkinen. The arboreal lichen index in Peurakaira was 1.64 and the average biomass 573 kg/ha. In Keskipalkinen the index was 1.38 and the biomass 380 kg/ha, while the corresponding values in Alapalkinen were 1.41 and 370 kg/ha. In Itäkaira the index was 0.65 and the average biomass only 86 kg/ha. The findings thus highlight the significance of the Peurakaira and Nattastunturi areas as wintertime grazing grounds with arboreal lichen. In logged areas with a density of more than 100 trees per hectare, the mean index was 0.45 and the average biomass of arboreal lichen 46 kg/ha, while the figures for logged areas with fewer than 100 trees per hectare were as low as 0.18 and 2.7 kg/ha. The findings thus indicate that arboreal lichen is extremely scarce in logged areas. Logging hence destroys the trees that serve as vital substrate for arboreal lichen. This means that logging will significantly contribute to the decline of grazing grounds with arboreal lichen and will cause a major disadvantage to reindeer herding.