

BETWEEN TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION: ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL QUESTION IN THE HUNTING AUTHORITIES

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Keywords: wild game management, generations, trophy hunting, animal welfare, ethics

JEL Classification: K29, O13, Q18

1 INTRODUCTION

Hunting has been around ever since human appeared on earth. Although it was merely the sine qua non of survival in the first place, it soon became a habit, a sport or even a hobby to the upper-class. Nowadays it has become a significant part of the market and economy. At the same time, the massive growth of the human population has led to increasing urbanization, resulting in a decrease in the natural habitat, especially wild game. Undoubtedly, the population control has its agricultural and economic reasons, but animal welfare can draw a line that should not be crossed.

Hunting authorities – in the framework of legal changes – pay attention to a balanced approach to help and protect human interests while remaining humane with animals. This and the free-time-activity aspect of hunting raise the question whether animals are protected and are the regulations ethical or there is much more to do to reach that goal. As long as we witness trophy hunting, exploitation of wild animals and the overriding of natural law this issue will be in the center of public debates. In addition, the welfare of auxiliary animals – such as dogs used in hunting – should also be scoped.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

In the course of the research, we mainly relied on literature issues. As the topic is gaining increasing attention in the academic field – and as society may demand a quicker response and solution to an acceptable regulation, it is seen that the volume of research data has noticeably grown over the past few years. By contrast, the relationship of animal welfare and hunting was researched decades ago and the core message of the academic papers on the subject did not change significantly since then.

In addition, content analysis and case study methods were used, through which not only customs and traditions can be revised but the regulatory trends are shown as well.

Legal framework was also examined – regarding the case study and trophy hunting – since there are controversial questions that – according to some opinions – should be repealed and lead to legal reform, so the legal perspective is essential to be considered.

3 RESULTS

1. The results show that animal welfare is considered in a much greater extent than before. Sustainability and agricultural point of view has fallen back behind animal welfare. Studies show that buying food is now considered by how animals were treated during production.
2. It is also shown that habits based on traditions, such as trophy hunting is not just outdated, but has too many dangers regarding biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. It can only be an available option if the regulations are more clear and stricter. Hunting authorities shall take into account to create a more regulated management regarding trophy hunting. Traditional attitudes in hunting activities should always be supervised through the scope of animal welfare.
3. Religious questions should also be acknowledged as a part of the relationship between hunting and animals. Research suggests that religions (including halal and kosher dietary practices) interpret the role of animals in hunting differently. These differing perspectives lead to debates regarding the appropriate regulation of hunting activities.

4 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion it can be observed that animal welfare issues have emerged alongside the traditional aspects of hunting. Hunting itself consists of two major parts.

The first is related to consumption and food supply chain – recently it has become appreciated to be more considerate when buying food or drinks, and labels are less important than assuring the fact the products were made without any suffering of the animal.

Second is the free-time-activity part of hunting. As a hobby, it is deeply rooted in traditions and customs, however – a century ago – animal protection was not taken into consideration.

Religious aspects also show another perspective. It has gradually changed and it is suggested that hunting requires a stronger regulation and hunting authorities and management bodies should take a more active role in protecting animals and nature as well, thus contributing to a balanced legal framework that ensures animal welfare.

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