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Tensions Within Nature Management in Inner Troms, Norway: Different Narratives on Power and Decision-Making

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Master of Science in International Environmental Studies

TENSIONS WITHIN NATURE MANAGEMENT IN INNER TROMS

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Declaration

I, Karina Eileen Finn, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature... *Karina Finn* ...

Date.....13.05.2019.....

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Writing my master's thesis within International Environmental Studies at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences is a privilege. It was a learning experience that was fun, challenging and thought-provoking; not unlike the education I have received. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity. However, I could not have done it alone.

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Abstract

This thesis sets out to investigate conflicts surrounding nature management in Inner Troms, focusing on different narratives expressed within three cases: 1) The merging of Mauken-Blåtind Training Area and Firing Range, where the state has decided that military activities and Sámi reindeer herding activities shall take place in the same area; 2) The expansion of Upper Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area and National Park, where a conflict emerged between state actors and local resource users; and 3) Predator politics in relation to sheep farming and reindeer herding in an area where they must live side by side. The aim of the research is to answer two research questions: 1) Who are the affected actors in each nature management conflict, what are their respective narratives, and what can these tell us about existing power dynamics?; and 2) How does power affect the decision-making process in each case, especially in terms of conflict management and the creation of winners and losers?

The thesis employs a political ecological framework as it attempts to answer these research questions. Here, especially existing power dynamics and potential alternative solutions become important. The power dynamics are further connected to relevant discourses, as well as the degree to which traditional knowledge is employed to make sure that the processes within the nature management conflicts are ethical. A quasi-inductive approach ties together already established knowledge with an open mind about the primary data collection. This is important because there exists a knowledge gap about current narratives within the chosen conflicts, at least through a political ecological perspective.

The results are based on semi-structured interviews with 24 individuals. These were identified through a snowball sampling approach and represents various actors involved within each conflict. The discussion of the results further centres around a narrative analysis, where it is illustrated that all interviewees have an understanding of their relative power. Although it oversimplifies the issue, it seems that state actors are typically influenced by roles, while non-state actors are typically influenced by emotive aspects. Hence, state actors largely attempt to do their jobs according to their given guidelines, while non-state actors largely feel that they must continuously fight for their rights to influence decisions. Hence, a shift within dominant discourses could arguably lead to better specifications by the state in terms of how to avoid reproducing top-down approaches that marginalizes local people.

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1. Introduction

Nature management is a contested issue at both global and local levels, yet necessary within all human-environment relationships as a basis for our survival. It involves human-made decisions on how to manage nature in terms of use, conservation and distribution (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017), increasingly with a focus on sustainability as the importance of global warming and climate change mitigation is increasing. However, because nature management unavoidably involves decision-makers, it also causes worldwide inequalities between people (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). Furthermore, when regulating what activities should or should not take place in an area, the processes and outcomes of this decision-making often lead to conflicts. This is especially the case when the management must cope with two or more, sometimes competing, interests in the same area. Because the decisions regarding what activities to allow are human-made, the decision-makers are often affected by their own interests and ideologies, as well as influences from local, national and global scales.

In terms of global scales, the latest report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) states that land-use change is the largest threat to both the environment and human welfare (Vissgren & Fjeld, 2019). On national scales, nature management is further important for developmental aspects related to livelihoods, food security and human rights. The management therefore needs to take both environmental challenges and development opportunities into account, which are often seen as conflicting approaches. On local scales, nature management is often directly linked to the activities and opportunities of the people. While the scales are interrelated, it is at the local level that the practice often leads to conflicts in a way where power relationships are revealed between decision-makers, decision-influencers and affected people. In this thesis, a conflict is broadly defined, ranging from quieter and seemingly static fundamental differences in interests and opinions, to more sudden and outspoken conflicts.

One field particularly concerned with critically examining such conflicts and their implications within human-environment settings is political ecology. The field focuses largely on power dynamics and acknowledges how social construction of for example definitions and concepts affect these. Furthermore, it analyzes dominant and alternative discourses and narratives, and ultimately their roles for nature management at the local level, as it is often here inequalities become apparent. Using political ecology as a toolbox is therefore useful for increasing our understanding of how various actors justify their points of view, as well as

their different levels of involvement in the decisions that impact their lives. These issues contribute to making nature management further contested, and they are important to consider for ensuring that environmental protection comes together with, instead of at the cost of, social justice. The ethical approach, especially in terms of ensuring people's rights and wellbeing, is an important part of political ecology (Blaikie, 2012).

Using political ecology as a framework, this thesis aims to investigate the effects of nature management on affected people in Inner Troms in Northern Norway, focusing on three conflicts as part of a multiple-case study research design. The first conflict concerns the merging of Mauken-Blåtind training area and firing range, where the Norwegian Armed Forces (NORAF) and Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district coexist in the same area. The second conflict concerns the expansion of Upper Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area and National Park (LCANP), where a conflict emerged between its proponents from the state and local opponents who were concerned about their future rights to use the resources. The third conflict concerns the politics surrounding the coexistence of predators, sheep and reindeer, especially in terms of which animals to prioritize when and where. Although the conflicts differ, they are chosen primarily based on the criteria that reflect their similarities, namely that they take place in Inner Troms, reflect issues related to nature management with multiple involved actors, and that they may have resulted in creating winners and losers.

Further in line with political ecology, this study explores and compares the three conflicts using a narrative analysis to identify the different experiences of different actors, with a focus on the concept of power. An actor might be directly involved, such stakeholders, who have vested interests in an area, or state authorities, who are often considered key actors (Svarstad, Petersen, Rothman, Siepel & Wätzold, 2008). An actor might also be indirectly involved, such as the media, interest organizations or environmental activists. These have power to influence decision-making even though they might not experience changes in their own daily lives based on the outcome. Who the actors are and how they present their narratives informs us further about related discourses and their effects (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017).

1.1. Objective and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to identify the relevant actors involved in the three conflicts, in what way and to which degree they are involved, and how they make sense of their involvement. This likely involves a power dynamic between the actors, which is important to explore to

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increase our understanding of the processes and outcomes of the conflicts. The thesis hence aims to gain deeper knowledge about who gets to decide and why, and consequently what this can tell us about who benefits and who loses. Furthermore, it explores the various argumentations, expressed as narratives, as well as their dynamic nature, as they for example are influenced by social constructivism. The narrative analysis further facilitates comparisons across the conflicts with a focus on other important aspects within political ecology, including discourses and different types of knowledge. Exploring the chosen conflicts and their implications further helps us assess the degree to which decision-makers manage to incorporate social justice into nature management strategies, and whether there is room for improvement.

Based on the objective, I chose two research questions:

1. Who are the affected actors in each nature management conflict, what are their respective narratives, and what can these tell us about existing power dynamics?
2. How does power affect the decision-making process in each case, especially in terms of conflict management and the creation of winners and losers?

The research questions are necessarily general, as they provide a basis for exploration and aim to give us a deeper understanding of the relationships both within and across the cases. While they are partly exploratory, or inductive, in this sense, the questions are also developed within the political ecological mindset. They therefore assume that power dynamics likely exist and that these dynamics affect processes and outcomes. Further in line with this mindset, I chose to do a narrative analysis based on semi-structured interviews with relevant actors to find answers to my research questions. As such, the focus is on the actors' narratives as they present them today. These narratives may contain historical aspects, yet they are labelled as current to encompass the variety of interviewees' perceptions, especially considering their different levels of involvement in both time and scale.

I am using a quasi-inductive approach to the research questions, meaning I combine already established knowledge about the conflicts and the general importance of power with an open mind to other possible explanations. The quasi-inductive approach hence bears some resemblance to the grounded theory method; however, it is a less strict version of it (Perry & Jensen, 2001). Among the similarities to grounded theory is the inductive aspects of the research, namely having an exploratory approach as I research the parts of the conflicts and related narratives that I felt were largely lacking from the available literature. Hence, the

research starts out by learning as much as possible yet cannot know every aspect that may be important to the various actors. For example, previously written sources can only suggest what may still be important today. Additionally, while the research is framed within political ecological thinking and especially the concept of power, having a partly inductive approach is important for also allowing the interviewees to tell me if they do not find this concept important for their situations. In other words, the research questions open for the possibility of identifying other valuable concepts and theories throughout and at the end of the data collection (Bryman, 2016). While this is part of a grounded theory method where data collection and analysis occur simultaneously, a fully grounded theory involves letting the collected data speak entirely for itself, without being influenced by other written sources (Bryman, 2016). Hence, my choice of framework and conflicts, where I believe power dynamics may be revealed, means I cannot label the research as grounded theory.

For addressing the objective and research questions, the thesis is structured the following way. In the first section, I explain my personal motivation for my thesis choice, followed by a description of the chosen area and the conflicts. In terms of the latter, I focus on the most relevant aspects of the knowledge already established. In the second section, I explain further what political ecology is and why it is a relevant framework, focusing on some core themes. The third section revolves around the method I have used for data collection and analysis, where I also explain why I chose a qualitative approach. Next, I go through the results, which represent the perspectives of the interviewed individuals belonging to various actor groups. Finally, I discuss the results in relation to the framework and how they answer the research questions.

2. Background

2.1. Motivation

Several factors motivated me to write about conflicts surrounding nature management in Inner Troms. First, the education I have received at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences has encouraged me to be aware of the human-environment issues going on in both developing and developed countries. Especially learning about the field political ecology was a determining factor for my thesis choice. The field spiked my interest in the areas where environmental issues meet people's interests, needs and identities. Here, conflicts may occur between different actors' interests, and the processes and outcomes of these conflicts necessarily involve a power dimension. Particularly harmful are human rights violations that often take

place in the Global South, including land dispossession, which is largely covered in political ecological literature (e.g. Boamah, 2014; Borras Jr, Hall, Scoones, White & Wolford, 2011).

There is, however, less written about political ecological research within the Global North, although there is increased focus on also this region (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017; Benjaminsen & Robbins, 2015; Robbins, 2012). In Norway, some researchers have investigated Sámi reindeer herders in Finnmark's struggle with dominant narratives, for example in terms of carrying capacities that are set too low by the state (Benjaminsen, Reinert, Sjaastad & Sara, 2015; Benjaminsen, Eira & Sara, 2016). These carrying capacities are based on scientific research, and they arguably have ties to neo-Malthusian ideas about human-made disturbances in nature. Alternative thinking and evidence are largely ignored within dominant narratives, while it is the reindeer herders who are often deemed ignorant (Benjaminsen et al., 2015; Johnsen, Benjaminsen & Eira, 2015) The authors emphasize how this decision has led to stigmatization and negative public perceptions, and they offer crucial insights and critique of top-down approaches that fail to recognize the importance of traditional knowledge.

Inspired by the increasing amount of research not just in Norway, but Northern Norway in particular, I started looking at both known and lesser known conflicts in this general region. I discovered an academic knowledge gap especially in Inner Troms, even though nature management, and hence power dynamics, also pose issues here. Particularly interesting was the variety of interests present in this area, including military activities, reindeer herding, sheep farming, hunting, hiking and tourism. The knowledge gap further increased in terms of conflicts discussed through the lens of political ecology, at least directly.

Having lived in the area myself meant I was also motivated by a personal connection, as well as a convenience factor. The convenience factor especially concerned knowing who and where to ask about both past and ongoing conflicts. This was helpful since I initially had trouble gaining all the necessary knowledge about the conflicts, particularly in terms of what keywords and names to include in the search for secondary data. In addition, having some contacts from the outset was beneficial for my snowball sampling approach, especially when some involved actors were unclear in the beginning. This unclarity is also part of the reason why it became a research question. Not least, the convenience factor concerned having a place to live and access to transportation, meaning I did not need funding for the data collection.

Combined, the factors made me want to look further into relevant narratives concerning nature management in Inner Troms.

2.2. History and Geography of Inner Troms

Inner Troms is the innermost part of Troms county and a specific section of the more general area known as Middle Troms, meaning it borders to Sweden in the East and has few parts that reaches the coast. Troms county is, however, currently undergoing a process of being merged with Finnmark county. The new county will be known as Troms and Finnmark starting from January 1st of 2020, although the County Governor has already adopted the new name. Three municipalities are part of the area Inner Troms, namely Målselv, Bardu and Balsfjord, although I mainly focus on the former two since Balsfjord has more coastal areas and appears to be less involved in the chosen conflicts. Inner Troms covers 7,527 km² and has as of 2018 a population of approximately 16,500 people (Statistics Norway [SSB], 2019).

While it is easy to refer to the general area as a community, its vastness means there are multiple smaller communities within it that a person might identify as part of. Referring to the population as locals is also over-simplified, as their interests largely differ. Even the more specified groups of people explored in this thesis still consist of individuals who differ from one another in multiple ways. At the same time, living in smaller towns surrounded by forests, lakes, rivers and mountains means many appreciate and enjoy spending time in nature. While the generalized terms are sometimes used in this thesis, it is important to acknowledge this heterogeneity.

The land in Troms is partly held by private landowners, while the state, through *Statskog*, owns 12,453 km² out of 25,877 km² (Statskog, n.d.). This is almost 50 percent of the whole county. The amount of state-owned land is a debated issue, and part of the reason some see Northern Norway in general as a colony, as it is largely controlled by a distant and centralized government (Fjellheim, 2016). The colonization aspect is also historical, as for example Ottar Brox (1966; 1984) related it to the power of top-down state politics that focused on increased centralization and capitalism in Northern Norway after World War II. Some further report that the state attempted to remove local people's sense of ownership over the land in the 1800's (Sveen, 2017). Strøksnes (2006) also emphasizes that Northern Norway still appears colonized by the government and that the area would benefit from a decentralization of the power. In relation to this, many want *fjelloven*, which exists further South, to also be relevant for Troms (Sveen, 2017). This law entails that more land functions

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as state commons, meaning there is less state control through Statskog and more local management of the land (Sveen, 2017; Fjelloven, 1975).

A lot of the land is protected by the state to conserve natural assets considered to be of national, or even international, value, such as biodiversity and landscapes. Statskog reports that this concerns 2,714 km², or 22 percent, of the land they own in Troms (Statskog, n.d.). In Inner Troms, there are for example two national parks. One is Upper Dividalen, which lies in Målselv, and the other is Rohkunborri, which lies in Bardu. Both are partly considered to protect wilderness (Midt-Troms Friluftsråd, n.d.). The working definition of areas characterized as wilderness is developed by the Norwegian Environment Agency and entails all the natural areas that are 5 km or more away from human interventions (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-a). These interventions are further specified as large, technical ones, including roads, train tracks, power lines and water works (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-a). Some areas also outside the national parks are in line with this definition. Others, ranging from 1 to 5 km away from human interventions, are characterized by the Agency as undisturbed zones (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-a; Skjeggedal, 2008).

The environment in Inner Troms is further characterized by mountains, valleys, forests, rivers and a multitude of lakes. In general, 60 percent of Troms county lies above the tree line, and Inner Troms therefore consists largely of alpine vegetation zones, in addition to mid- and Northern boreal zones (Bjørklund, Rekdal & Strand, 2012). Cultural landscapes are also prominent, which partly are a result of forestry and grazing animals. Still, with the decline of such activities, some on these cultural landscapes may be lost (Bjørklund, Rekdal & Strand, 2012). Further, the vegetation is rich, and it is common to find for example pine, birch, heather and lichen (Bjørklund, Rekdal & Strand, 2012). The conditions in Inner Troms facilitates forestry, as well as the use of outer pastures for sheep and reindeer. This is important for the animal owners, especially since many of these outer pastures, which includes forests and mountains, are further considered to be of very good quality (Bjørklund, Rekdal & Strand, 2012). With climate change, however, increased temperatures and rainfall might promote regrowth of many pasture areas, making them less accessible for the animals (Riseth & Johansen, 2018).

The area's geography is also characterized by the presence of Sámi people. This presence dates back to before other people settled in the area and it has left behind much cultural heritage (Midt-Troms Museum, n.d.). Because of this, Sjögren and Kirchhefer (2012)

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emphasize that while the area for a long time has been characterized as undisturbed, newer research shows that Sámi presence, as well as traditional land use, has considerably affected the vegetation and landscapes (p. 338). Their historic presence meant that when others began settling in Inner Troms, these new settlers gained much of their knowledge about the area from the Sámi people (Midt-Troms Museum, n.d.). However, this settlement, or colonization, also led to conflicts. It was for example in the state's interest to colonize the area with more permanent settlers who could work within agriculture, and hence they prioritized these over the already present Sámi reindeer herders because of their relative contribution to the national economy (Midt-Troms Museum, n.d.). This further entailed that the state supported the new settlers in cases where they conflicted with the Sámi; conflicts which were sometimes violent (Midt-Troms Museum, n.d.). Hence, their customary, or informal, rights were limited (Melkevik, 2002).

Both Norwegian and Swedish reindeer herders also have a strong presence in Inner Troms today. Exactly where they are and when depend on the seasonal movement of the reindeer, which may fluctuate somewhat from year to year. The Swedish herders primarily use pastures in Inner Troms during the summer (Riseth, 2014). Crossing the borders to use pastures has historical roots and is necessary for the industry (Ravna, 2010). However, this movement has not been without tension, and especially some Swedish reindeer herders in Inner Troms have experienced trouble with both the state (Verdens Gang, 2007) and Norwegian cabin owners (Bergersen, 2018). Generally, cabin building and the increased human activities it entails is a large threat for the industry. Another challenge is that it often occurs near the tree line where reindeer may be disturbed during calving (Riseth & Johansen, 2018).

In anticipation of a new convention between Norway and Sweden concerning border-crossing reindeer herding, the movement is partly based on *Lappekodisillen*. This is an agreement between Norway and Sweden from 1751 (Ravna, 2010). *Lappekodisillen* considers the Sámi reindeer herders' historical use and the ecological aspects that make the movement necessary, as for example reindeer require large areas and do not acknowledge constructed borders between countries (Midt-Troms Museum, n.d.). Reindeer herders' way of life is further protected through global measures, including the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention (Ween, 2012). Both emphasize indigenous people's right to participate in decisions that affect them (Allard, 2018).

Hence, reindeer husbandry in general is a human right. Aimed at ensuring the future of the industry, the Norwegian law for example states that it should be practiced in an ecologically and economically sustainable way (Reindeer Husbandry Act, 2007, § 1). Yet, how the state defines what a sustainable reindeer husbandry is presents challenges. For example, the Norwegian government emphasizes that all pasture areas have carrying capacities (Government, 2017), while, as mentioned, Benjaminsen et al. (2015) criticize where and how these carrying capacities are set, focusing on Finnmark county. They specifically link it to the way these contribute to a dominant narrative that claims reindeer herders keep too many animals for their own benefit and consequently degrade pastoral lands and biodiversity. The dominant narrative further states that the herders oppose advice that is given based on scientific research (Johnsen, Benjaminsen & Eira, 2015). This is only one of many areas where Sámi people often find themselves having to actively defend their rights, as their own narrative and traditional knowledge is largely overlooked (Johnsen, Benjaminsen & Eira, 2015). This further contributes to why the industry and Sámi people in general are experiencing stigmatization and negative comments.

Inner Troms is also characterized by other interests, including farming, forestry and the military training. Livestock farming has for example a cultural importance and economic value for many people in the area. Sheep farming is most prominent, but some also have goats, pigs and cows. The number of livestock farms is, however, declining. For example, in Målselv, there were 57 percent less farms in 2017 than in 2000, and in Bardu, there were 39 percent less (Johnsen, 2017). Military activities, however, have a continuous strong presence. Many locals therefore see NORAF as a cornerstone for Inner Troms (Haavet, 2009), especially because of their positive influence on the population number, job creation and the local economy.

2.3. Multiple-Case Study Research Design

This thesis uses a multiple-case study research design as it investigates three case studies in Inner Troms where a conflict either has occurred or still occurs between different actors. This design is useful for qualitative studies to make comparisons, either based on primarily the cases' differences or similarities (Bryman, 2016). For this thesis, I chose to focus on their similarity in terms of the aforementioned criteria of involving a nature management conflict, being set in Inner Troms and having outcomes that may affect the various actors differently. Furthermore, each conflict involves both state actors and local actors, including Sámi reindeer

herders, albeit to varying degrees. Basing the comparison on the similarity of the cases means that it is likely not their differences, but rather certain important factors within them that ultimately matter most for the outcomes (Bryman, 2016: 68). At the same time, it is important to recognize the different contexts in which the various experiences and interests emerge. The following parts of this section will explain the three cases in terms of already established knowledge about them and how they relate to other national or global processes.

2.3.1. The Merging of Mauken-Blåtind Training Area and Firing Range

Mauken-Blåtind is a mountainous area that is located partly in Målselv and partly in Balsfjord, and its use has been a topic of debate for decades. The conflict primarily concerns the Norwegian defense sector and Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district. The former is interested in the area to offer military training to NORAF, while the latter is interested in it because of its value as winter pasture for their reindeer. Despite the seemingly incompatible interests of the two actors, they currently coexist in the area through an agreement between them.

The largest actor is the defense sector. In this thesis, the defense sector refers only to NORAF and the Norwegian Defence Estates Agency (NDEA). The former is the primary user of the training area and firing range (TAFR) on the daily basis and is the agency for example in charge of the Army. The latter is involved with providing NORAF with properties and buildings and was as such most involved during the negotiation process. While NORAF and NDEA work closely together, they are separated as equal agencies under the Ministry of Defense. They can thus be considered state actors. At the state level, the defense sector is tasked with both ensuring and increasing national security. In comparison, Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district is a relatively small actor, who depend on the area for its winter pastures and seasonally move their reindeer. As food producers, the herders primarily make an income from the reindeer meat, but they also make other products based on traditional knowledge.

In 1997, the Norwegian Parliament decided that the merge would take place, which would require the construction of a connection road which NORAF could use for movement and training. Approximately another decade would pass before an agreement was officially reached in 2006 between the defense sector and the reindeer herding district, as well as relevant private landowners and *Statskog* (Haavet, 2009). The project was finalized in 2011 (The Norwegian Defence Estates Agency, 2011). According to Haavet (2009), who wrote a

master's thesis on the negotiation process, the conflict concerning how the area should be managed and for whom started with a national need for more TAFRs in the '70s, while overlapping use of the area by the defense sector and reindeer herding district traces back to the '50s. Yet, as mentioned, reindeer herders have been present in Inner Troms much longer.

The road towards an agreement was turbulent. In 2001, several people from Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district protested the project, for example through putting up lavvus at a construction site (Norsk Riksringkasting, 2001). Among their arguments was that the reindeer's movement would be altered because NORAF's activities would make them stressed (Norsk Riksringkasting, 2001), as well as damage the winter pasture (Haavet, 2009). Throughout the long negotiation process, the defense sector also threatened with expropriation multiple times, although it ultimately was resisted by politicians (Haavet, 2009).

While the municipality distanced themselves from the negotiation for a while, they became increasingly involved in the dialogue when they feared that NORAF's presence in the area would decrease (Haavet, 2009). At the same time, *Målselv Fjellandsby* was under construction, which is an alpine skiing facility with extensive cabin construction. This process was a way for the municipality to focus more on tourism in case the defense sector would reduce its foothold in Inner Troms (Haavet, 2009). Yet, since *Målselv Fjellandsby* affected the reindeer herding district as well, who had rights in the area, the municipality needed to also make a deal with them (Haavet, 2009). As Andersen, Tømmervik, Danielsen and Nellemann (2007) states, the construction of *Målselv Fjellandsby* and the defense sector's connection road would combined have a notably negative effect on the Sámi reindeer herding. This increased the pressure on the reindeer herders but also increased the value of the municipality in the negotiation process.

As mentioned, the different actors reached an agreement in 2006. At this point, the reindeer herding district managed to influence where the connection road would lie, as the municipality's aid in the negotiation took further into account their interests and traditional knowledge (Haavet, 2009). Additionally, they accepted the compensation. Haavet (2009) thus concludes that the outcome was largely positive, both for the defense sector, who could finalize their project, and for the district, which got to participate and was compensated. Still, the added pressure from other human activities is ultimately damaging for the district's practice. In the project's aftermath, the reindeer herders have for example expressed that they feel unsafe in the area (Aslaksen & Sara, 2015).

2.3.2 The Expansion of Upper Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area and National Park

Upper Dividalen National Park was first established in 1971, then expanded in 2006, at the same time as Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area was established. The decision concerned state-owned land (see Appendix 1.). Today, the park itself stretches 770 km², while the adjoining conservation area stretches 19 km² (Regulation on the protection of Upper Dividalen National Park, 2006, § 1; Regulation on the protection of Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area, 2006, § 1). In general, national parks aim to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, both for its intrinsic value and for its value for humans. The value for humans includes, not least, a place to reconnect with nature seemingly unaltered by human activities.

Conserving such areas is not only deemed nationally important, but also globally. This is because of threats related to climate change and land-use change, including rapid biodiversity loss, rapid global warming and habitat fragmentation (Convention of Biological Diversity [CBD], n.d.). As part of the CBD's strategic plan for biodiversity, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are established, which states that 17% of all land should be conserved by 2020 (CBD, n.d.). Additionally, The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) stated that every country should conserve 15% of its land area, which Norway has achieved (Risvoll, Fedreheim, Sandberg & BurnSilver, 2014: 2). One conservation method largely advocated by for example ecologists is the creation of large reserves with a buffer zone to best separate nature from human activities (Bowman, Hacker & Cain, 2018). IPBES also highlights that human activities that alter habitats threaten both natural systems and endangered species at the global level, and that this threat is larger than climate change (IPBES, 2019; Vissgren & Fjeld, 2019). Moreover, IPBES highlights the value of traditional knowledge when combatting these threats.

The expansion of Upper Dividalen National Park, first proposed in 2000, was motivated by these threats towards the environment, as well as a wish to conserve additional natural resources, including forests and red list species, considered to be of national importance (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008). Both predators and natural resources are thus protected in the park. It is further a summer pasture for reindeer and a popular hiking destination, which invites both locals and tourists alike. In all national parks in Norway, visitors are supposed to experience an undisturbed nature where biodiversity and cultural heritage is protected from human activities that may harm this (Nature Diversity Act, 2009, § 35). Today, the park is often defined as a wilderness area (Midt-Troms Friluftsråd, n.d.).

Some locals, both as individuals and through the interest group *Ungdomslaget Håpet (UL Håpet)*, started expressing concerns and questions when the expansion was proposed by the County Governor's department for environmental affairs. Especially the affected forest area in the valley caused their opposition (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008: 95). Their concerns mainly revolved around their opportunity to affect decisions, their right to use the resources in Dividalen, and the general arguments used in favor of the protection (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008). They particularly identified issues with the research and reasoning behind the decision. For example, the description of the area, which after all was used as an argument for its protection, was troubling. This description downplayed the historic forest use, claiming that it had undergone some selection cutting but otherwise mostly consisted of old trees and primary forest (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008). The opponents, however, argued that the forestry had been more extensive and that it likely contributed to the biodiversity (Nilsen, 2004).

The locals took initiative to have a dialogue with multiple state actors involved in the decision-making. Here, a divide in the various state actors' perspectives became apparent. Those working with agriculture and forestry, both in Statskog and under the County Governor, agreed with the local concerns, whereas the County Governor's department for environmental affairs and the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management (today the Norwegian Environment Agency) were the main proponents for the expansion (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008). Statskog concluded that both use and conservation should take place, while the proponents argued that combining these in a national park would contradict its purpose (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008: 96). The latter argument, in addition to the existence of a forest road in the area they considered to include in the expanded park, led them to change part of the relevant area's status to a landscape conservation area instead (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008).

Swedish reindeer herders are also users of Upper Dividalen National Park, as it provides summer pasture for their reindeer. In terms of the herders' own perspective on the expansion, less is written specifically on this. The state proponents, however, wrote that the park would have no consequences for their activities if they used the area in a sustainable way (Ministry of Climate and Environment, n.d.). Furthermore, Risvoll et al. (2014) emphasize that parks help protect the pastures from other human activities. A prerequisite is still that relevant guidelines concerning national parks or other protected areas are defined in collaboration with the Sámi people to protect their interests. Earlier, in other national parks in Norway, reindeer herders have for example expressed various concerns about their ability to continue using the resources as before. According to Riseth and Johansen (2018), the interests

of the reindeer industry still have a lower priority than recreational activities when it comes to conservation management, and depending on the location, pressure from such recreational activities may disturb the reindeer (p. 10). They therefore recommend that municipalities in Troms support the reindeer herders by acknowledging their needs within protected areas, as well as increasing their position.

While it was primarily more distant state actors who decided to expand the park, the management has changed. Hence, it is less centralized today with the implementation of National Park Boards, which consists of local politicians and Sámi representatives (Risvoll et al., 2014: 1). Through this initiative, different actors can more easily share and discuss their knowledge, experiences and interests with each other. The initiative might further be a positive step in relation to perspectives on Northern Norway as a colony. The National Park Board for Upper Dividalen LCANP for example consists of two Sámi representatives; one from the Sámi Parliament and one connected to the Swedish reindeer herders who use the park (Upper Dividalen National Park Board, 2014). The other representatives are politicians from the county and the municipality (Upper Dividalen National Park Board, 2014). While the forest users who opposed the expansions are not represented directly, the elected politicians still aim to represent the multitude of interests that exist in the area (Risvoll et al., 2014). At the same time, their political beliefs may affect their prioritization of these interests.

2.3.3. Predators vs. Sheep and Reindeer

Politics concerning predators is a highly contested issue. In Norway, especially in the Southeastern part, wolf debates have been especially prominent (Radøy & Alnes, 2019). Further North, however, few wolves are observed. In Inner Troms, the main predators are instead bears, lynx, wolverines and eagles. These are supposed to have a permanent place in the area alongside both a reindeer herding industry and a sheep industry. Hence, the area is divided into two zones, A and B, where predators have the primary right to roam within the borders of zone A and livestock have the primary right to roam within the borders of zone B.

The Norwegian government has decided that both predators and livestock have a place in Norway, and that a balanced management of them therefore must take place (Krange et al., 2016). This is to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem functions, as well as to support food production. The balanced management of both predators and livestock involves a cooperation between state actors such as the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the County Governor and regional Predator Management Committees

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(Krange et al., 2016: 3). For applications to take out predators, either because of current losses or as a preventative measure, the Norwegian Environment Agency has power to give approval between February 16th and May 31st, while the County Governor is the authority in charge between June 1st and February 15th (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-b). *Statens Naturoppsyn* (SNO) works under the Norwegian Environment Agency as a field actor and is tasked with registering predators and providing information to people. If a predator, or signs of a predator, is spotted, SNO is often contacted. They also document livestock losses to predators and may assist in taking out these predators. Additionally, the Predator Management Committees help set quotas for each predator at the regional level, based on both national regulations in terms of population goals and on local interests in terms of for example sheep farmers and reindeer herders. Inner Troms is part of region 8, which covers Troms and Finnmark. The committee in charge of this region has members that are elected by both the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Sámi Parliament, and receive advice from the County Governor (County Governor, n.d.).

Another actor is the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, which is mainly concerned with the well-being of animals, such as sheep and reindeer, both in general and when conflicts with predators occur. During a conflict, they collaborate with the other state actors, as well as affected animal owners, to find solutions that minimize the animals' suffering. This responsibility is given to them in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act (Animal Welfare Act, 2009, § 30). The Act further states that it is the animal keepers themselves that are tasked with ensuring the animals' welfare, through for example good nutrition and protection from danger (Animal Welfare Act, 2009, § 24). If many animals are taken by predators, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority may recognize this as a failure to protect them. In such cases, they can implement a ban on letting for example sheep graze on the mountains.

As mentioned, livestock farming, including sheep farming, has declined in Inner Troms. Some relate this to the many priority areas for predators, as it makes it harder for farmers to let the sheep graze on outer pastures without experiencing losses caused by predator attacks. Hence, they express that it should be easier to take out predators than it is today, in terms of getting permissions; otherwise, people may either want to or be forced to quit (Andresen, 2012). One example of conflicts between sheep and predators in Inner Troms is the case last summer in Bardu municipality, where a bear attacked sheep for weeks (Løvland, 2018). While the relevant state actors agreed that it should be taken out, it was too difficult for the hunters to do so. The situation was serious enough for the Norwegian Food

Safety Authority to consider implementing the aforementioned ban; however, they ultimately did not, and after a while the bear attacks halted.

The reindeer industry is also experiencing losses to predators in the area. According to Riseth and Johansen (2018), between 2017 and 2018 it was reported that 88 percent of reindeer losses in Troms were caused by protected predators (p. 9). In Inner Troms, the losses have increased partly because of the priority zones for predators (Riseth & Johansen, 2018). Based on this, they state that particularly the relevant municipalities should increase their support to the herders, through acknowledging their needs and helping them affect decision-makers within other authorities, for example to reduce the number of predators (p. 11). The Norwegian Nature Diversity Act further emphasizes that authorities, including municipalities, should incorporate traditional knowledge in decisions regarding biodiversity (The Nature Diversity Act, 2009, § 8).

There are, however, forces working against such measures being taken. For example, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Norway recently made it to the national news with their wish of abolishing the Predator Management Committees throughout the country, on the basis that they work too closely in line with the interests of both reindeer herders and sheep farmers (Larsen & Asvall, 2019). Hence, politics concerning predators is part of an especially heated debate.

3. Political Ecology

This thesis uses political ecology as a framework, which is a relevant tool for analyzing nature management cases because of its focus on human-nature relationships and their implications. It especially focuses on aspects of these relationships where conflicts occur, and the related power dynamics between the various actors. It is therefore an interdisciplinary field that combines social and natural sciences. Furthermore, it critically investigates the political aspects surrounding ecology and nature management, and in doing so, both environmental and social justice becomes important. Because of the ethical concerns, political ecologists especially criticize cases of nature management where local people's voices or rights are ignored in favor of other interests, to not only understand why but to also suggest alternative solutions. Robbins (2012) hence refers to political ecology as "the hatchet and the seed" (p. 98). The hatchet refers to the deconstruction of dominant and harmful ideas or strategies, while the seed refers to alternative evidence and approaches to an issue. The criticism is particularly important when local people depend on access to land and resources for their

survival, well-being or identities, yet experience that this access is restricted by structures implemented by other, more powerful actors. Furthermore, political ecology is concerned with connecting issues at various scales, from the local to the global, to gain a more holistic understanding.

In the rest of this section I will further explain aspects of political ecology that not only are important for the field itself but also for this thesis. These aspects are power, discourses, narratives, social construction and knowledge production. While explained separately, they are also interrelated in terms of how they both affect and are affected by each other. Lastly, I will cover important criticism of political ecology and offer reasons for why I find it useful despite this.

3.1. Power

Power is a core aspect within political ecology. As it for example contributes to the creation of winners and losers in conflicts, it is important to investigate it and its multiple forms. One form often associated with power is where one party has power over another and can influence their actions against their own will (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). In the worst cases, this form of power is expressed through violence. As mentioned, political ecologists often investigate cases where people's voices and rights are ignored, and their access to land and resources is restricted. In Uganda, some have for example experienced violent evictions from land that foreign actors wanted to use for carbon offsetting purposes (Cavanagh & Benjaminsen, 2014). Others have experienced that their informal rights to land they have used for generations is acquired by foreign investors to produce food or biofuel (Boamah, 2014). This is often referred to as land grabbing, a negatively charged term that is especially used where the power dynamic is imbalanced and illegitimate processes are used to acquire land. Such cases exemplify how nature management may create winners and losers.

Consequently, political ecologists are also interested in the losing side of the power relationship. These are the people whose rights may be stripped away or who are actively ignored, which limits their power to act in ways that promote their own needs or interests. However, these people, depending on their situation, are not necessarily powerless. Many measures can be taken by them that are sometimes called a resistance from below (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018), like voicing their opinions over the internet, reaching out to journalists, boycotting, demonstrating or standing their ground in other ways every day. However, having a platform to speak one's mind is not necessarily enough to be effectively

heard. Furthermore, in many cases, it is not always clear who the powerful and the powerless are. Political ecologists therefore also investigate the more indirect forms of power, like for example in terms of a general agreement on a concept's definition that leads to further injustices. Yet, differentiating between either direct or indirect power, or whether one has it or not, provides only a generalized understanding of the concept.

Svarstad, Benjaminsen and Overå (2018) provide a deeper understanding of power's role in political ecology by linking it to three perspectives, namely the actor-oriented perspective, the neo-Marxist perspective and the Foucauldian perspective. The actor-oriented perspective entails that power belongs to an actor and is expressed through actions that affect another (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018: 352). Hence, the view of power as for example coercion, as well as the local resistance, fits into this perspective. Yet, the authors explain that this power exists within structures, such as institutions. Institutions are here defined as rules, norms and conventions (Vatn, 2015), and may either hinder or promote for example coercive expressions of power. Similarly, they may hinder or promote people's power to resist.

In the neo-Marxist perspective, actors' power to act is also important. Yet, it is even further seen as dependent on social and capitalist structures (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018). Here, accumulation of money and land is for example important in terms of where power lies. This accumulation by some might further lead to exclusion of others, which is exemplified in land grabbing cases (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018). Furthermore, the neo-Marxist perspective reviews the effects that different scales, from local to global, have on one another.

The final perspective is the Foucauldian, which is largely concerned with especially the state's power. This perspective includes discursive power, governmentality and biopower, and is based on the thinking by Michel Foucault (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018). According to the authors, discursive power entails the production of discourses by some powerful actors to influence people's actions through the way they think. Hence, the actors' motives and wants are strengthened. Governmentality is more concerned with the state's influence on its people, specifically in terms of making them act according to the state's wishes by adopting rationalities (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018). One technique within governmentality is disciplining, where the people adopt the state's rules, norms and institutions; another is influencing how they see truth, for example through religion; the third

is neoliberal rationality, involving an economic incentive for people to achieve the wanted results; while the fourth is sovereign power, which entails the state's power over for example its laws (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018: 357). Not least, the Foucauldian perspective involves biopower, which revolves around the quality of populations, how they may improve and how they should behave (Cavanagh, 2018: 405). Hence, it further revolves around state strategies and regulations in terms of for example improving a population's health (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018: 358).

Svarstad, Benjaminsen and Overå (2018) argue that these three perspectives on power are, and should be, interrelated in political ecological research. This is because they compliment each other in how they explain the role of decision-makers and those affected in nature management issues, by connecting various scales and influences. This thesis also combines these perspectives of power to a certain degree to better understand the relevant nature management conflicts. It specifically focuses on actor-oriented and discursive power, while acknowledging the structures and scales that affect these.

3.2. Discourses

Power is often exemplified in discourses. A discourse may be defined as “a construction of the environment” (Robbins, 2012: 134), and consists of people's shared ways of both understanding and tackling the issues (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). According to Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2017), there are four overarching discourse types related to human-environmental issues, namely preservationist, win-win, traditionalist and prometean. These do not necessarily explain every way of thinking and acting within human-environment issues, as they may be affected by both time and scale (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 89). Not least, actors might use elements from several discourse types, or even explain their motivations in line with one while acting in line with another (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). Nonetheless, they are still useful as a guide towards understanding common mindsets actors have (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). Not least, they offer a more organized understanding of where other, more specific discourses might belong, including environmental discourses like deforestation and climate change (Adger, Benjaminsen, Brown & Svarstad, 2001).

The preservationist discourse type is especially linked to nature conservation. Here, the goal is to protect ecosystems and biodiversity without disturbance from other interests, and external rather than local actors are both the decision-makers and managers of the area

(Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 88-89). Hence, local needs and wishes are valued less than the nature itself and the general benefits that its preservation offers all humans (Svarstad et al., 2008). Within this discourse type, decision-makers may employ fortress conservation strategies which largely excludes people, especially those whose activities are considered degrading by the more powerful actors.

The win-win discourse type is also concerned with protecting nature, although its aim is that local people are benefited as well through a collaboration with other actors, for instance from the state, private companies or interest organizations (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 87). Hence, the inclusion of local people helps achieve the larger goal of protecting nature (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). These win-win scenarios, sometimes even presented as triple or quadruple wins, are often popular ways of framing projects. Promises of wide benefits might for example make it easier to convince others, such as locals and donors, that the project should be implemented. That does not mean it is necessarily used to knowingly deceive others; however, the win-win discourse type often oversimplifies complicated problems. Furthermore, the promises might contain positive notions of participation, yet lack specific strategies in terms of how to involve other stakeholders. This relates for example to whether local people get to participate in the decision-making, or if they are simply allowed to share their views. Such concerns are part of the reason why win-win scenarios are often critically investigated within political ecology, as there might be a difference between some actors' initial promise of win-win outcomes and how it plays out in practice (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). The win-win discourse type may concern not only conservation, but all forms of nature management.

Both the preservationist and win-win discourse types are challenged by the traditionalist. Sometimes viewed as radical, this type prioritizes local people's rights, interests and needs (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). It further emphasizes that these local people often use the resources sustainably and should therefore manage the natural areas without interference from external actors, partly because of the power imbalance such collaborations entail (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 88). This sustainable use by local people is for example rooted in a care for their own environment. The traditionalist discourse type is not least more critical towards the influence and power of other actors, for example from the state.

The final discourse type is the promethean. This emphasizes human gains from utilizing the environment, and hence is less concerned about environmental issues such as

climate change (Svarstad et al., 2008; Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). The lack of concern is further based on either the belief that we can come up with solutions to the problems ourselves, or the belief that the problems are not human-made (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). This discourse type is not used by most people, yet it is an important part of the different ways to understand and manage the environment.

Within powerful discourses, a discourse coalition often occurs, where multiple actors agree (Skjeggedal, 2008). This creates the dominant discourses that are especially powerful in decision-making. While power itself is not necessarily negative, powerful discourses may create biases in research, perceptions and decision-making. Skjeggedal (2008) argues that a discourse coalition is occurring within Norwegian nature management, particularly between the Norwegian Environment Agency and the various County Governors' departments for environmental affairs. He also partly links municipalities to this coalition, although he emphasizes that there is more variation between these, and that rural municipalities with many protected areas oppose the coalition more than urban municipalities with few (p. 71). Not least, he claims that also national learning and research institutes often belong to the coalition. Hence, the coalition within Norwegian nature management is powerful.

3.3. Narratives

Narratives are closely related to discourses. When actors are involved with one another, narratives are the different stories portrayed by each of them about their experiences of this relationship and their contexts (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 73). The stories can be explanations of occurrences (Robbins, 2012), and are influenced by beliefs (Forsyth, 2008). Abbott (2010) also emphasizes how narratives revolve around our understanding and sequencing of time (p. 3). They mainly differ from discourses in the way that they are the constructed stories about something specific that has happened or is happening, and not the broader, constructed understandings of issues (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2008: 51). Yet, like discourses, the stories about what happens may also become dominant. One example of this is the narrative that reindeer herders keep too many animals to maximize their own incomes while simultaneously degrading the environment. Another example is win-win narratives that are closely related to the win-win discourse type (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017).

A third example of a narrative that has been especially popular, yet also largely criticized, concerns the tragedy of the commons (Walker, 2006; Forsyth, 2008). Put shortly, the tragedy of the commons is an environmental narrative claiming that when everyone has

access to a resource, they will all want to maximize their own gains and hence use the resource until it is depleted (Hardin, 1968). Thus, they ultimately hurt both themselves and each other, in addition to the environment. The story is both easy to follow and powerful (Walker, 2006: 384). There are, however, problems with it. Especially Ostrom (1999) has especially criticized its view on people as selfish, non-caring about their environment and incapable of cooperating with one another. Another problem is that the narrative has indeed been used by some actors to gain more control over an area and the activities within it (Adger, Benjaminsen, Brown & Svarstad, 2001), which is especially harmful when it leads to the unethical exclusion of some people.

3.4. Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is also an important topic within political ecology. The concept largely revolves around defining reality, especially whose definitions are most powerful and how they affect nature management (Skjeggedal, 2008). Hence, both narratives and discourses are social constructs (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017: 95). The constructivism is, however, controversial (Robbins, 2012). For example, Robbins (2012) explains that even a forest might seem like an objective concept, but its definition is constructed by people (p. 123). He further states that it is therefore political, particularly in terms of also defining what positive and negative influences on the forest are. Acknowledging the role of social constructivism means political ecologists acknowledge also historical perspectives (Robbins, 2012).

Many socially constructed definitions exist when it comes to nature management, which may be powerful in terms of how they are used to explain reality. There are for example discussions surrounding the Norwegian Environment Agency's definition of natural areas free from human intervention, especially concerning calling them undisturbed zones (1-5 km away) or wilderness areas (over 5 km away) (Skjeggedal, 2008). Both terms are much-debated within political ecology. Defining parts of nature as undisturbed is problematic because it often undervalues both historical and current use of it, and because of the measures potentially taken to maintain this status (Robbins, 2012). Defining parts of nature as wilderness areas is also problematic, for example because it creates a romanticized idea of nature that largely is used to invite human consumption of it through recreational activities, at the same time as it furthers an image of humans and nature as separated (Robbins, 2012).

In terms of the Norwegian Environment Agency's reasoning behind what is characterized as human intervention, namely large and technical ones, Skjeggedal (2008)

further emphasizes that this is too vague. In his argument, he refers to the Agency's definition of these as interventions that are either difficult to reverse or completely irreversible (p. 66). He asks for example where on the timeline nature is considered to be in its original state, or if not a forest road might relatively quickly regrow if left undisturbed in a productive area (p. 66). Not least, he criticizes the lack of specification regarding how to measure what precisely a large technical intervention is. His questions are relevant not necessarily for encouraging further specification from the Agency but rather to highlight that the definitions are indeed constructed, unclear and yet has power to affect narratives.

In addition to the vagueness itself, such definitions are troubling when they lead to the exclusion of people, not only from the area itself but from the decision-making as well. This is especially the case because the definition remains somewhat open to interpretation and can be used to promote certain mindsets or decisions that are based on questionable grounds. Hence, while the Agency calls their production of knowledge about areas away from interventions objective, how they choose to define intervention is not (Skjeggedal, 2008). This is both because of their fundamental power to do so and their influence on other decision-makers. While this specific example of social construction relates to debates around nature conservation, questions of who gets to define reality is also relevant where an area is subjected to two or more competing interests.

In terms of social construction in general, Robbins (2012) views it as a spectrum. This spectrum ranges from hard constructivists on one side and soft constructivists on the other (Robbins, 2012: 127). He explains that hard constructivists are often viewed as radical since they argue that our understanding of nature is entirely based on the ideas and institutions we share with each other. As such, there is not one true and accepted reality; rather, reality is an individualistic or collective interpretation (Robbins, 2012; Svarstad et al., 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These interpretations can further lead to conflict, where the most accepted also are the most powerful in the decision-making (Robbins, 2012). Soft constructivists, on the other hand, acknowledge that reality "exist independently of human thought" (Svarstad et al., 2008: 118). At the same time, they argue that our understanding of this reality is limited and affected by our own conceptualizations of it (Robbins, 2012). Most political ecologists use either the soft constructivist approach or a middle ground, since it allows them to acknowledge that ecological occurrences exist and affect nature, while also allowing them to investigate the socially constructed and powerful explanations of these occurrences (Robbins, 2012: 128).

3.5. Knowledge Production

Having a critical approach towards human-environment issues is an important part of political ecology, for example as a tool to assess the who and why in knowledge production (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). Not least, it is important because of the close relationship between knowledge and power (Robbins, 2012). For this thesis, knowledge production is divided into scientific and traditional knowledge, which are important to consider as they affect both people's experiences and participation in decision-making.

Scientific knowledge often aims to be neutral and is therefore largely connected to quantitative research within natural science. As it is typically considered trustworthy, it easily affects decision-makers, whether they are state authorities, politicians or others, who for example lack the time or skills to do their own research. As mentioned, political ecologists critically assess this type of knowledge production, specifically when it is ordered by one actor and for what purpose, as it may lead to a bias which gives the actor more power in relation to others (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2017). Not least, it is important to consider whether alternative evidence exists, and consequently whose voices are left out. Hence, for example Svarstad et al. (2008) argue that this type of knowledge often is influenced by discourse and therefore neither neutral nor broad in its understanding of an issue.

For researchers and decision-makers to increase their understanding, they would benefit from also considering traditional knowledge. Often also termed local, indigenous or experience-based knowledge, it largely involves personal observations, experiences and understandings accumulated over many years or even generations. As such, the knowledge may be held by indigenous people or other people in a local community. One issue when it comes to its effect on research or projects is the sometimes lack of documentation. The knowledge is hence often gathered through interviews or other qualitative methods, which is why it is more common to include in social studies or interdisciplinary fields. Through collaboration and will it can also increasingly become part of natural research. For example, Riseth et al. (2011) emphasize how Sámi traditional knowledge about nature might both compliment and offer alternative explanations to scientific data, especially in terms of occurrences and challenges in their pasture areas.

While a distinction between these two knowledge types can be made, that is not to say one necessarily is preferable over the other. Scientific knowledge is for example often informative and can as such be a tool for decision-makers to find solutions that also benefit

actors with other interests. Furthermore, in terms of traditional knowledge, people can make mistakes in relation to for example their memory. Because of their respective strengths and weaknesses, it is preferable that they are both acknowledged in decision-making, both to learn about the multiple understandings of an issue and to ensure that potentially marginalized actors are included. Separating the two, similar to separating social and natural sciences, entails that part of the story is lacking.

Research that is only based on scientific data or relies on it too much might therefore lead to conflict instead of functioning as a tool for conflict resolution. One example of this is the study by Tveraa et al. (2012), which reindeer herders argue downplays the importance of predator losses. Hence, they disagree with the study's conclusion that says hunger caused by overstocking is the main issue, and they feel that it leads to more negative perceptions of the industry (Solvang, 2013). Another debated research is that on a windmill park in Finnmark's effect on reindeer, which concluded that the effect was surprisingly little (Colman, Eftestøl, Tsegaye, Flydal & Mysterud, 2012). However, the reindeer owners were not convinced by the conclusion and felt like their traditional knowledge was largely left out, for example about recognizing stress signs in the animals (Christensen, 2012).

3.6. Criticism

Political ecology is hence a useful and critical tool for discussing nature management conflicts, yet it is also a receiver of criticism. One example is that it is often considered negative, as it largely presents alternative evidence or problem areas that decision-makers and other researchers might not want to hear (Robbins, 2012). Decision-makers, like powerful corporations or state authorities, may therefore reject the criticism or alternative solutions offered by political ecologists to defend or legitimize their own arguments and actions. Another critique of the field is in terms of who it appeals to, as much of the research might be primarily appreciated by others within the same research community (Blaikie, 2012). This does not, however, make it any less useful, especially considering that the field is still growing and that its critique of processes and actors still shines a light on important issues.

Furthermore, political ecology is a broad field. Not only can political ecologists differ from each other, for example in terms of employing hard or soft constructivism, but it is also possible for a researcher to have a political ecological approach without labelling, or even recognizing, it as such (Robbins, 2012). Putting the specific label on the research is, however, not as important as doing the actual research. The field's broadness further means it is not

always clear where research within it stops and research within another field begins. This importantly poses the question of where this transition is, especially considering that political ecologists may differ in the ways they incorporate natural and social sciences (Walker, 2005). Yet, this openness might also invite more researchers from other fields to employ some of political ecology's core ideas.

Another criticism especially prominent is that the field focuses too little on the ecology and too much on the politics. Walker (2005) argues that the field often does take well into account the ecological dimension, yet its broadness entails that researchers do so to varying degrees. Both dimensions are important to consider in research. For example, doing solely ecological research of an area still produce results that inform decision-makers, such as national and local authorities, as well as decision-influencers, such as the greater community and environmental organizations. The research therefore not only affects environments, but also local people through the policies it indirectly helps create. The issue worsens when there are uncertainties or disagreements surrounding the ecological research itself, like with the forest users opposing the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP. Hence, while ecology itself aims to be objective, the decisions based on it make it political. Similarly, having a one-dimensional view favoring politics would not only mean that the research lacks a holistic understanding of human-environmental processes, but also make it harder to produce alternative evidence that could affect decision-makers.

Some also criticize political ecology for using ambiguities in other areas. This is specifically in terms of the sometimes lack of specifications of what exactly is entailed when discussing concepts and theories, including power (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018). This critique may, however, have been meaningful in the sense that specifications of concepts and theories have increased. As such, a strength within political ecology is its openness for improvements.

4. Method

This is a qualitative study, which means it aims to get a deeper understanding of the general meaning of the nature management issues, particularly in terms of how they are perceived by different actors and the relationship between them. This differs from quantitative studies, where the aim to a larger degree is to generalize and quantify the findings (Bryman, 2016). This approach is not only deemed less useful for answering my research questions but would also be impossible given the timeframe, as not every individual of the relevant population is

known. Because of this, I also could not carry out random sampling, which is important for quantitative studies. Instead, a purposive non-probability sampling method is chosen to find individuals related to the different contexts. Examining these contexts in which an actor acts based on interests or beliefs is part of a qualitative approach (Bryman, 2016), and it allows us to better understand the actors' reasoning.

In the introduction, I explained how the research partly relies on a quasi-inductive approach. The inductive part involves the simultaneous data collection and analysis, which opens for the possibility that important theories and concepts may take form along the way. The choice of political ecology as a framework, however, suggests a more deductive approach, as I also relate the thesis to concepts and theories that have been important for earlier and similar research. The main difference between an inductive and a deductive approach is that the former develops theory from the data collection, while the latter bases its data collection on theory (Bryman, 2012: 23). It is, however, common that both are partly present in research to varying degrees (Bryman, 2012).

For this research, choosing the conflicts, the research questions and the analysis depended on understanding the knowledge gaps and within what field it would be beneficial to fill these gaps. Further, I was guided by a personal interest in people's understanding of power dimensions and their effect on decision-making at local levels, especially related to the different types of knowledge. At the same time, it was important for me to remain open to other possible explanations and not ask the interviewees leading questions. Nevertheless, all interviewees had an understanding of an existing power relationship, as well as knowledge production, in the various conflicts. Hence, the results of the narrative analysis fit into a discussion characterized by political ecological thinking. It is in this aspect that I understand my research as having a quasi-inductive approach, as the research did not fit perfectly into neither the inductive nor the deductive box. Some may consider the mixing of these approaches a weakness; however, I deem it valuable for the analysis because it allowed me to both have an informed starting point and an open mind. After all, Robbins (2012) explains that in political ecological research, having "an open mind, though necessary, is [not] *sufficient* for rigorous exploration of the world" (p. 152).

4.1. Data Collection

The analysis depended on collecting primary data, which I did through semi-structured interviews (SSIs). Using primary data was necessary because of the knowledge gap in

existing literature, especially in terms of up-to-date knowledge about different actors' opinions and experiences. Secondary data, including academic journals, books and newspaper articles, is also crucial for the initial understanding of the conflicts' processes, as well as how other influences, including regional, national and global ones, affect them. Still, I had to compliment it using SSIs.

For each interview, I therefore used an interview guide with some prepared questions or talking points (see Appendix 2.). These questions were general in nature, to allow the interviewees to elaborate and explain as much as possible. Opening for this possibility was especially useful as there could be important aspects of the cases that I did not anticipate based on the secondary literature alone. Having a semi-structured approach thus means I could keep the interviews on track in terms of finding answers to the research questions, while also avoiding restricting the interviewees' responses too much. This was especially useful for learning about what was important factors for their narratives. Not least, even though the research questions as mentioned assume there is a power dynamic between the actors, the interview questions' open-endedness also gave the interviewees an opportunity to potentially provide arguments against this perspective. SSIs were further helpful as part of the quasi-inductive approach, as they allow flexibility to ask improvised questions based on what information the interviewees give. This helped me improve the interview guide from one interview to the next.

For the interviews themselves, I used multiple methods. These included face-to-face interviews, which was the main method, as well as interviews over telephone and Skype. All interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewee, and I also wrote down additional notes to myself about especially interesting answers. For the face-to-face interviews, I further wrote down the things that might not get picked up in a recording, such as humor or emotional displays. The possibility to do this is part of the reason why face-to-face interviews are preferable. Interviews over telephone and Skype is, however, useful in terms of reduced travel costs and more flexibility concerning when the interview can be held. Their weaknesses include that the researcher may miss out on for example sarcasm or mishear a word if the reception is bad.

After the interviews, I had to transcribe them. I chose to do this myself instead of using software for multiple reasons. One reason is that most of the interviewees had dialects and mentioned names of lesser known places, which meant it was beneficial to be from the

area when transcribing, so that potential misunderstandings would be reduced. Another reason was that I found it beneficial to listen to the interview a second time, as it increased my understanding of what the interviewees said and allowed me to write down for example specific behavior related to statements, such as laughter or long pauses. Yet, some words mentioned in interviews were still unclear on the recordings. In those cases, I made sure to emphasize this in the transcripts so that I would not risk using misinterpreted material.

While SSIs were useful, they also involve some challenges. As mentioned, the interviews revealed that all interviewees had an understanding about relevant power dynamics and knowledge production. While I attempted to not ask leading questions, I still brought up the concepts to learn about their importance and as such, I cannot know with certainty whether the interviewees themselves would have brought up the concepts without my asking. Furthermore, many of the interviewees had to address issues they had struggled with, which could trigger emotions. While important for understanding the conflicts and the actors' narratives, going into emotionally difficult areas is troubling because the researcher cannot know the degree to which the interviewees will be affected. In such cases, it is important to listen to the interviewees and let them be in control over what they feel comfortable saying without putting any pressure on them.

Initially, my goal was to interview at least 30 relevant individuals, and while approximately 50 were contacted, 24 ultimately agreed to be interviewed within the thesis' timeframe. Some of these were directly affected by the conflicts and could provide information about their own first-hand experiences, while others were directly or indirectly involved as either decision-makers or decision-influencers. The number of interviewees belonging to different actor groups is summarized in table 1 (see Appendix 3.). In the relatively small area, many interviewees have multiple roles, which is why the total number exceeds 24 individuals.

In addition to the multiple roles that some people have, others' roles are more fluid. By this, I particularly mean responsibilities, such as jobs, given to different people at different times. This is often the case within state actors, where the memory concerning a conflict's process consequently might be shorter than the memory of those involved at a more static level, perhaps over generations, like for many Sámi reindeer herders, sheep farmers and other local users of nature and its resources. One example of this fluidity in roles is the County Governor's office, where the interviewees employed today not necessarily were involved

during earlier parts of the conflicts. Hence, when some actors explain their relationship with the County Governor over ten years ago, the relevant office may consist of mostly new people today. Hence, most current County Governor employees cannot necessarily answer on behalf of earlier employees, yet they can still explain the general motivation behind their arguments. The issue concerning memory was also a challenge for getting interviews with other actors where current employees felt they had too little knowledge about past conflicts.

For the actors whose narratives could not be identified through interviews, I depended on secondary data and broader discussions to attempt to fill the gap. This concerns some whole actors, like the National Park Board, research institutes and interest organizations, as well as individuals who were involved in the conflicts at earlier times. The lack of their perspectives presents a weakness in the study. This is the main reason why I focus on current narratives, and why I further emphasize that these belong to the interviewed individuals and might not represent the entire actor groups, even though they are still valuable.

4.2. Sampling

As mentioned, I have used purposive non-probability sampling to locate interviewees. The non-probability purposive sampling involves that interviewees were chosen based on their relevance, either initially because they are mentioned in existing written material or later because other interviewees recommended them to me. As mentioned, some of these interviewees provided insights that were relevant for more than one case. For example, the two districts of Sámi reindeer herders in the first two cases, namely Mauken-Tromsdalen and Dividalen, were also relevant actors in the case regarding predators.

Specifically, I chose a non-discriminatory snowball sampling approach, which further is a part of convenience sampling. This choice was largely based on the availability of existing literature, as I realized not every relevant individual could be located within this material. Hence, snowball sampling would allow me to initially contact a few known individuals and ask them for other names. It was thus convenient for the research, not least because many people in Inner Troms as mentioned have multiple roles and consequently relatively broad networks. The snowball approach was thus further useful for finding answers to part of the first research question, namely who the actors are.

Yet, the snowball sampling approach also contains challenges. For example, the sample is not randomly selected, and while the interviewees' networks were considered a strength in terms of getting me in contact with relevant people, it also meant many referred

me to other people that they knew. Hence, snowball sampling is not representative and may contain bias (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, while every interviewee of this study is indeed relevant for it, I cannot exclude the possibility that there are points of view that were not covered. At the same time, snowball sampling is especially beneficial when looking into relationships (Bryman, 2016).

4.3. Data Analysis

The data collection and analysis have occurred largely simultaneously in this thesis, although the analysis also continued beyond the collection of primary data. The analytical methods used are thematic analysis, document analysis and narrative analysis. The narrative analysis is most important for understanding the results of the data collection; however, a thematic analysis was useful for creating codes to organize the data. These codes were based on emerging themes and sub-themes. Some themes were broader as they directly related to the research questions. As such, these main themes mattered for all conflicts across the respective actors, and included narratives, processes, power, decision-making, conflict management and outcomes. The sub-themes represented the more individual perceptions within the main themes, and included emotions, roles, knowledge, rights, discourses, and winners and losers.

Part of the data collection consisted of documents, which also had to be analyzed, not least because these also informs us about narratives and discourses. The documents included official documents from the state and organizations, the mass media and one open letter handed to me by an interviewee. In these documents it is especially important to consider potential bias and their quality, specifically in terms of authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Bryman, 2016). The analyzed letter was written by a forest user as part of the opposition's argumentation against, and questions about, the park expansion. The proponents of the expansion are hence the receivers of these letters. In terms of authenticity, this revolves around who the real authors are (Bryman, 2016), which in this case is clear since the author's name is written. In terms of credibility, this revolves around whether what is written is true, both in terms of facts and the author's feelings (Bryman, 2016: 548). The letter largely asks critical questions about the state's procedure and offer alternative evidence to the arguments used by the proponents. As some of this alternative evidence is based on experience and traditional knowledge, it is not certain whether this is part of Bryman's (2016) characterization of credibility in terms of factual accuracy, since he does not offer further explanation. However, in relation to the narrative analysis, the letter

does reflect the stories and feelings of the opposing side, and as such, I find the letter credible. Hence, it is also both representative and clear in its meaning.

Official documents from state and organizations are also analyzed in terms of the narratives portrayed and their quality. These documents offer for example various statistics, reports, laws and regulations, and are typically authentic and clear, which further suggests they have meaning (Bryman, 2016: 552). However, in terms of credibility, the documents may be biased to promote their own interests, and as such the writing cannot necessarily be considered facts or truth, especially considering that political ecologists often suggest alternatives to this truth. The representativeness is also somewhat questionable with documents deriving from one powerful actor, such as the government or a non-governmental organization (NGO), although it may be considered more representative when the writing is in line with dominant discourses or narratives.

Newspaper articles are useful as they make it easier to follow the conflicts' development, including sometimes the actors' various narratives over time, especially when academic literature is scarce. The general trustworthiness of newspapers is, however, debated, for example in terms of whether the newspapers themselves, the interview objects or the contributors have their own agendas. Additionally, it is not always clear whose voices may be left out in the mass media. In terms of the authenticity of newspapers, it is sometimes clear who the real authors are, while other times a name is lacking, which makes it hard to establish whether they are qualified to write about the subject (Bryman, 2016). The credibility is also questionable. An article may offer a well-researched and critical analysis that shines a light on important facts and issues. Yet, as newspapers choose what to write about, an article may also be biased or contain errors. This is an increasingly debated issue, especially because of Donald Trump's introduction of the term *fake news*. Bryman (2016) further emphasize that newspaper articles often are representative and meaningful, yet that they require an increased understanding of the contexts in which they are written.

As mentioned, thematic and document analysis further aids in the narrative analysis. Narrative analyses are often used within political ecological approaches and explores conflicts not just in light of the sequence of events, but in light of how various actors understand their position in these events (Bryman, 2016). These understandings are further expressed as stories that often contain some form of motive. In this thesis, the narrative analysis is especially based on the interviews, although it is also informed by written material. The aim is not to

state whether the narratives represents facts or truths, but rather to understand how they explain situations, what they aim to achieve and what power they may have. Further, they may inform us about who becomes winners and losers within each conflict.

4.4. Ethics

Ethical considerations are crucial for research, and additional considerations must be made when collecting primary data from interviews with people. These considerations mainly concern getting informed and written consent from interviewees, doing no harm and protecting their data (Bryman, 2016). Before I could begin interviewing the relevant actors, I needed to get approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (see Appendix 4.). This approval was primarily based on how I would approach the interviewees and treat their data, as NSD considered it to be in line with the privacy laws. For example, when I first established contact with potential interviewees, I provided them with information about the research and the consent form (see Appendix 5.). The given information also explained their role in the research and their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time up until its completion. To protect their data, I further established codes for each interviewee so that their names were separated from their answers. Many also gave me consent to disclose their names in the thesis but I ultimately found that this was unnecessary, since it was most relevant to link statements to the various actor groups.

Some of the interviewees brought up concerns in terms of how they would be portrayed in the thesis. They related this concern especially to past experiences with journalists and researchers, where they felt that their statements were either taken out of context or rearranged in a way that altered the meaning of what they said. This concern is important to acknowledge, as it is the researchers' responsibility to repeat their statements in an ethical way. It requires attention to detail in the analysis, as well as general carefulness, and is as such also challenging. For example, repeating interviews in their entirety would not only consume much space in the thesis but also make it stray off topic in terms of discussed aspects that are not related to the research questions. At the same time, then, choosing what parts of the interviews to exclude is challenging, not least because many shared interesting stories and perspectives that were beyond the study's scope. This is one of the main downsides of using SSIs. To cope with these concerns and the challenges related to them, it is further important to be transparent.

As part of the written information given to the interviewees, I therefore also inform them that I will provide them with a transcript of the interviews. The main goal of this transcript is so that they can see where and how their statements are used, and that potential quotes are correctly translated. Furthermore, the interviewees were informed that they could contact me anytime if they had any concerns, questions or follow-up information. As a researcher, I cannot guarantee that there are no mistakes in the thesis in terms of for example misinterpretations, or relevant perspectives and theories lacking from the general analysis. It is thus important to acknowledge that the following analysis is interpretative and exploratory. Its aim is not to state with certainty all the elements of what has happened. Doing so would be impossible without a larger study, and even then, both the conflicts and narratives are dynamic and may change over time. Rather, to the best of my efforts, the analysis aims to shine a light on the conflicts that importantly do take place yet deserve to be investigated further.

5. Results

This section explains the different actors' narratives in each conflict, based primarily on the interviews. Some secondary sources are also used, like newspaper articles and a letter explored as part of the document analysis. It is useful to repeat that although the interviewees have shared relevant and important perspectives, these do not necessarily represent the voice of every individual within the actor group. Furthermore, each narrative is presented the way it was told by the respective interviewees. Throughout this section, I specify which actor presents what narrative. I have, however, also conducted interviews with a more diffuse group, namely local people not necessarily directly affected by the conflicts but who live in Inner Troms, pay attention to the news and have networks that allow them to be aware of the conflicts. Their understandings of these are mentioned throughout the results where it is relevant, yet they do not have their own subsections.

Furthermore, the results cover more of the narratives presented by some actors than by others, which is a result of their statements' relevance, as well as the different interview lengths. For example, longer interviews generally entails deeper reflections, while shorter interviews generally were more straight to the point. The SSIs contributed to creating these differences in length and depth, as the interviewees were free to elaborate as much, or as little, as they liked.

5.1. The Merging of Mauken-Blåtind Training Area and Firing Range

The results in this section are collected from two interviewees from the defense sector, one interviewee connected to Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district, one interviewee working in Statskog, two interviewees from the County Governor, and two interviewees from the local community. NORAF and NDEA, both belonging to the defense sector, collaborate in the merging of Mauken-Blåtind training area and firing range, and their perspectives are therefore grouped together even if their responsibilities differ.

5.1.1. Mauken-Tromsdalen Reindeer Herding District

While the conflict between the district and the defense sector has lasted for generations, one common understanding within the district about the conflict's beginning was that the defense sector suddenly entered the area and basically said that "we are going to be here from now [...] and you will just have to live with it." They thus experienced the conflict as a David versus Goliath situation, where they saw the powerful defense sector as having an advantage in terms of human capital and wide support from the state, while the reindeer herders had to rely on lawyers to help them organize their resistance. Based on this, the interviewee emphasizes that "it is really a given who wins."

The interviewee further recognizes that Norway needs to have a military defense but criticizes how achieving this involves a sacrifice of some people, often Sámi people involved in the reindeer industry. The industry is especially vulnerable because their rights are often not prioritized. The interviewed locals also emphasize that the conflict in Mauken-Blåtind is a "classic example of the conflict between the reindeer industry and land use." The interviewed reindeer herder stated that:

There is a whole system of international legal protection that was not tried since an agreement was reached. In the aftermath, you might ask if that was particularly wise. ... I do not think the agreement they made was good. Yet, you depend on the lawyers' advice when you do not possess the legal competence yourself.

The interviewee explained further that part of the reason the agreement was not ideal is the single compensatory payment they received. This payment did for example not consider market fluctuations, and they would therefore have a better safety net if they received annual payments instead. Additionally, the agreement largely excludes their traditional knowledge about reindeer herding, specifically in terms of annual fluctuations. The interviewee stated that "[c]oexisting with the defense sector ... is nearly impossible, since two actors are set to

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live in a daily conflict.” The district further feels like the defense sector’s presence is noticeable every day, and that it is challenging to coexist in a situation that they cannot escape from, as it is based on state politics.

In terms of the dialogue between the two actors, the agreement entails that this is a mutual and important responsibility. However, the interviewee explained that it is challenging for them to for example meet regularly or send frequent text messages about their activities because of the multiple responsibilities they have. This has been frustrating for the defense sector. However, in contrast to them, the reindeer herders are not paid to participate in meetings, meaning they must sacrifice time they could spend working. Additionally, the interviewee feels like their opinions and wishes are largely ignored despite the dialogue. This is especially in terms of military activities and practices that take place at the same time as the herders need to move their animals, which is once in the spring and once in the fall. The defense sector might offer to move their activity 200 meters further away, however the interviewee stated that “whoever has the slightest knowledge about reindeer husbandry knows that when you are moving the animals, and someone is training for combat right next to them, 200 meters means nothing.” Hence, the district feels that when this is the defense sector’s way of adjusting to the herders’ activities and needs, their relationship becomes difficult. Other problem areas include snowmobile courses near grazing reindeer, or remains from their activities that the reindeer might get entangled in.

To better tackle these challenges, the interviewee would for example like to have information about the military activities more in advance. Moreover, the district would benefit if the defense sector tried to learn more about their traditional knowledge and needs. This could increase their understanding of how their activities affect the herders, for example in relation to the herders’ costs if they cannot move the reindeer the same way as before. As the interviewee explained:

It is not just the fact that the movement path is closed, but [also that] reindeer behave in a different way and [that] the reindeer owners might face bigger risks if they move the reindeer to other places. ... It has a human cost, an economic cost and an operational cost that the defense sector has not used many calories gaining knowledge about.

Because the conflict is felt on an everyday basis, it also takes an emotional toll to participate in meetings and dialogue. Moreover, they feel like the coexistence runs its course

in a way where the defense sector ultimately gets to decide, while the reindeer herders have little say. Additionally, the reindeer herders often feel unsafe in the area. The interviewee stated that when asked why reindeer herders are not secured, people from the defense sector have replied that they “roam in the area at their own risk.” Some herders have also expressed in the news that not always being sure where NORAF is training makes them nervous when trying to do their jobs, and in some cases, they felt the need to flee from an area (Aslaksen & Sara, 2015). Furthermore, this risk has led to the death of some of the animals.

In terms of general perceptions of the Sámi reindeer herders in the area, the interviewee informs me that they often feel undervalued by the municipality, which seems to prioritize the interests of the defense sector. The district and herders further experience a challenge related to the multiple tasks and responsibilities they have, which are important yet time-consuming and unpaid. This is especially an issue when they do not have capacity to answer for example applications for area interventions, including cabin building. The applicant may then interpret this as approval from the Sámi people. However, the interviewee explained that lack of capacity does not mean they have no objections.

At the same time, even if they do object, the municipality may still make decisions despite their wishes, for example to secure other jobs. Their power to do so is in line with the Planning and Building Act, yet the interviewee emphasizes that the Act also states that Sámi people’s way of life must be respected. The lack of effort to fully include the reindeer herders presents another challenge, as it makes it harder for them to win in the many cases that affect them. In relation to this, the interviewee claims the general population has too little knowledge about the reindeer industry, and that it often is difficult for reindeer owners to advocate their rights because it might make them negatively perceived in the media. Hence, they need recognition of these rights, especially by powerful state actors.

Despite the challenges for the industry, the interviewee also emphasizes its strengths and uniqueness. Part of the strengths is that they have no problems with recruiting people, since “it is an industry that contains values not economically measurable.” As the interviewee further explained, “You work in an industry with enormous amounts of nature-based knowledge [and] traditional knowledge, where you have a unity and ... support between reindeer owners, which I believe contributes to maintaining the industry.” Therefore, despite pressures from other actors and activities that may cause stress, “it is a great place to work,

which is not just a job but an entire life.” In relation to these valuable aspects of the industry, the interviewee further confronts some of the relevant misunderstandings of it, saying that:

Every year, [the reindeer industry] contributes millions of kroners [to Troms]. This is rarely acknowledged. What would the snowmobile dealers be without good customers from the reindeer industry? We have a daily operation where we pay taxes, but we also have living costs that benefits the local community. The municipalities should learn to see the reindeer industry as it is, and not as people who only say no to everything and then spends some time on the mountain.

Knowledge about the reindeer industry is thus important for their rights and interests to be fully respected by the municipality. Yet, it is also true for society in general, including many in Inner Troms. According to information the interviewee has gotten from others during the part of the negotiation process that involved Målselv Fjellandsby, one non-Sámi person involved brought the reindeer herders a bottle of alcohol. Reminding them of a scene in the movie *Kautokeinoopprøret*, it was considered immensely offensive. Whether intentional or not, such actions may be built on, and further build, miscommunication and conflict. It did therefore not aid in the conflict resolution, which instead largely revolved around the municipality’s involvement and a general feeling that they could not win.

5.1.2. The Defense Sector

Both interviewees from the defense sector recognize that the coexistence with Mauke-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district is characterized by a seemingly static conflict of interest, meaning they continuously must coordinate activities. In terms of the conflict’s beginning, one of the interviewees explained that its starting point may have been with *Fostervollutvalget*, which decided military training areas should be expanded. The interviewee further explained that “there have been conflicts as long as we have been in the same area. ... It is basically two interests that are not very compatible,” and acknowledges that their activities may disturb the reindeer. In relation to the conflict’s process, I am told that:

When something new is happening, those affected will understandably assume the worst. ... [T]hey try to fight it and the conflict escalates. I think that in many areas, things did not become as bad as one thought, while maybe in other areas they become worse.

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The interviewee further explained that the conflict largely was a result of the fact that there in practice is not room for both actors in the area, and as such, both would benefit from a situation where they could operate alone. However, the reality of the situation instead made it important to minimize the harm done to the present reindeer industry, for example through providing them with a compensation for their losses and establishing cooperation strategies. In terms of the defense sector's future in the area if the TAFRs in Mauken and Blåtind were not merged, one interviewee explained that their presence in the county would likely remain; however, their presence near Mauken-Blåtind specifically was less certain. This influenced some actors' will to make the merge happen, such as the municipality. This will is confirmed by a local interviewee with experience as a municipality employee. Yet, the negotiation process was likely also influenced by the chemistry between individuals representing the various actors, especially since it lasted so long that not all the same people were involved from start to finish. Furthermore, one interviewee acknowledges that the negotiation's length and the expropriation threats were likely exhausting for the reindeer herders.

In relation to who all the relevant actors are, the defense sector also explained conflicts with landowners. Many of these are private landowners who I did not manage to identify, and who therefore have not gotten the chance to share their own narratives through interviews. Still, we can learn something about these from other interviewed actors. For example, one interviewee mention that the agreements give the defense sector great leeway. However, conflicts arise in terms of things that may have been said yet not documented. Here, landowners as well as the herders may have one understanding of how the area will be affected based on conversations, yet when referring to the conversations, the statements cannot be verified. For landowners, then, one issue is that they may anticipate a certain effect on the terrain, but experience that the effect is worse.

Positive effects that the merging of Mauken-Blåtind TAFR have had on some people are also highlighted. One of these is job creation, not just within the defense sector itself but also for contractors in the county. Their presence also means that they contribute to the local economy. Because of this, the defense sector experiences that some locals are positive towards the noise coming from the TAFR. Additionally, some people living in the surrounding local communities may experience less military activity on the roads or near their houses. This was one of the goals of the project and entails that the civil society might be happier with the current situation than the reindeer herding district. Not least, some locals emphasize through the interviews that they appreciate the defense sector's road construction.

Yet, not all goals were achieved, as also the defense sector needed to compromise. For example, the connection road and the corridor for maneuvering is today narrower than they had hoped, which restricts their activities. Not least, the TAFR is highly regulated, for example in terms of environmental concerns and laws such as the Planning and Building Act. One of the interviewees explain that “[e]arlier when establishing a firing range, the Norwegian Armed Forces got control of the area. ... But in more modern times, also [they] need to follow civil structures and rules.” This involves an impact assessment that considers for example cultural heritage and biodiversity. Furthermore, the defense sector will receive an emission permit soon, which concerns various forms of pollution. Hence, the area might become further regulated.

When it comes to the actors’ coexistence today, the defense sector explained that all conflicts are supposed to be handled at the lowest level possible, meaning through direct dialogue between their employees and the reindeer herders. This entails that they help each other by for example moving their activities. However, one interviewee mentions that “[i]t can often be problematic that the agreements says conflicts should be solved at the lowest level possible, without saying anything about who has the right of way.” At the same time, they claim that they do manage to solve most conflicts at this level. The dialogue further consists of formal meetings a few times a year, where they might discuss challenges or try to coordinate activities. In response to my question about the power dynamic between them, one interviewee stated that based on the agreement both actors must relate to, they end up as equals in the field. The other explained that:

I know that the reindeer herders experience it as David versus Goliath. We obviously have a completely different apparatus than they have. At the same time, the signed agreement and the orders ... from a higher authority have given us a mission saying we shall coexist and cooperate. We have created ... a multiple-use plan and guidelines for the cooperation, which says something about how we are going to achieve [the mission].

It is, however, by no means an easy task. The interviewee further explained that their activities have caused episodes where reindeer was harmed but that this is rare. This leads to additional workloads where the defense sector might assist the reindeer herders with resources. They also spend a few weeks a year clearing the area of items left behind from training activities to make the area safer and less polluted. To further reduce conflict levels,

both interviewees emphasize that they find frequent contact crucial. NORAF for example sends a text message once a week about upcoming activities, but claim they receive little or no information in return. The interviewees further state that more frequent information would help them know where the herders and reindeer are, or plan to be, so that they can adjust their own activities accordingly. The earlier they learn about this, the more flexibility they may have. At the same time, they recognize that various factors might make this difficult for the reindeer herding district.

In terms of whether the defense sector is satisfied with the agreement and the situation in general today, the interviewees bring up multiple issues. Firstly, they would prefer having more flexibility and fewer restrictions. This is not just in relation to the reindeer herding district, but also landowners and the regulations within the TAFR. Furthermore, one interviewee explained that they have made compromises that meant both the general area and the connection road is too small today in relation to the initial need. At the same time, the challenges they face might provide them with better training for international operations, given that in a real war setting, they would also have restrictions. This was also one of the arguments in favor of the merge, according to one interviewee. Conclusively, then, the interviewees explain the current situation somewhat differently. One stated that both have made sacrifices yet manage to live together. The other stated that the compromises made from both sides means that they both ultimately feel like they lose, and that the situation likely will become more challenging as military activities in the TAFR increases.

5.1.3. State Actors

The defense sector is a state actor; however, it is considered separately from the others because it is the most influential of them in this conflict. The other state actors include Statskog and the County Governor, who were also interviewed even though their roles and effect in the conflict are smaller. As mentioned, Statskog owns almost 50 percent of the land in Troms, and is consequently also one of the landowners in Mauken-Blåtind. Hence, they have their own agreement with the defense sector, where the defense sector pays them for the right to use the land as a TAFR. There is further a good relationship between the defense sector and Statskog's Mountain Service, which consists of people who for example overlooks nature and activities on their properties.

The interviewee from Statskog explained that the defense sector's activities within the TAFR is largely unproblematic, as the employees usually have good knowledge about the

restrictions they have. Aside from for example damaging natural areas like a swamp, which is a rare occurrence, there are few conflicts between Statskog and the defense sector. As the reindeer herding industry is another large stakeholder on Statskog's property, they have occasionally also contributed in the dialogue between them and the defense sector. In terms of conflict between recreational users of nature and the defense sector, the interviewee explained that the latter is so integrated into the community that the former has a high tolerance level.

The County Governor is especially relevant because they are in the process of creating and providing the defense sector with an emission permit. This permit includes air, ground and water pollution, as well as for example noise pollution. In terms of the latter, this is largely subjective, according to the interviewees. Some might experience it as negative, while others, as mentioned, might interpret it as something positive because it confirms that a cornerstone for the area is still alive. Feedback given from various landowners and other locals about pollution will affect the upcoming emission permit. Furthermore, the County Governor may also assist in the dialogue between the defense sector and Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district if needed, yet the involvement is so far not significant.

5.2. The Expansion of Upper Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area and National Park

The expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP was a state decision that primarily affected areas used by Swedish reindeer herders, as well as people in the local community, some of whom had experience in forestry and agriculture. The data collection shows that it was the latter group who became the main opponents, and who fought for years. The data is collected from one interviewee who herd reindeer in the national park, three interviewees who were part of the opposition, two interviewees from the County Governor's department for environmental affairs and one interviewee from Statskog.

5.2.1. Local Resistance

As mentioned, the local resistance against the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP consisted of multiple concerned people in the local community, including resource users with experience in forestry and agriculture. As mentioned in the background, these largely organized as UL Håpet. As part of the basis for questioning the expansion, two of the interviewees link the problem with this type of conservation to the fact that they wish to secure the future of the local community, where people can live off of the natural resources in a sustainable way. As such, they also deem the locals fit to protect the biodiversity and maintain the cultural landscapes. Not least, they argued that already much productive forest in

the area was protected. However, the conflict itself was mostly characterized by other aspects. One interviewee brings up the argumentation in favor of the expansion, specifically what was stated as facts, explaining that:

[The] proposed conservation area consisted of a forest that had been used since the 1880s ... [a]nd had been cut through in the valley bottom two times, partly with clear-cutting. [But] they write that the forest in the valley bottom consists of old trees that had undergone some selection cutting. It is not true.

The opponents argue that there are only a few old trees in line with what the proponents stated in what is now a landscape conservation area. They further argue that these proponents ignored the area's historical use, both in terms of forestry and agriculture, and kept referring to the whole forest as old and largely undisturbed. Hence, one interviewee feels like they were hiding the counter evidence and looks back at the whole conflict as a difficult experience. The opponents also questioned if not the red listed species found in the area could be there precisely because of the activity, and not despite it. Furthermore, if the species were in the area despite the use, then they felt it would indicate that the activity in the forest for generations was not a threat. One interviewee further expressed that when part of the expansion was transformed into a landscape conservation area instead of a national park, they were told this opened up the possibility for still taking out some trees (Regulation on the Protection of Dividalen Landscape Conservation Area, 2006, § 3). However, in practice they were never given permission to do so.

The interviewees also criticize what they consider unethical, or at best ill-informed, methods for defining the area and promoting their proposal. This criticism is especially related to the fact that researchers went into the area and “[took] a picture of maybe 20-30 m² with two old trees, which they presented as the state of the whole area.” The opponents experienced it as a form of manipulation, part of an agenda to remove all arguments that could be used against the expansion. In relation to this, one interviewee further brought up the power of definitions that the state authorities had. What made it worse, then, was that no other powerful actor examined the proponents' research and process after the expansion was a fact.

In an open letter to what today is known as the Ministry of Climate and Environment after the establishment, one opponent again posed some unanswered questions. One of these questions revolves around why they were not willing to discuss the vast amounts of forest in other parts of the county that is hard to get to, and thus protects itself. Additionally, the

opponent brings up the proponents' statement that the rare species they wanted to protect was found right outside the already established national park. The opponent argues that this was a given, considering that it was the only place they looked for the species. Furthermore, the opponent claims that all their counter arguments systematically were excluded from hearing documents and refers to past correspondence with the Department where they admit that the decision-making was undemocratic. The letter ends with a call for someone to investigate the process.

This type of concern is not restricted to this specific protection area and debate. The interviewees also express concerns related to conservation processes at other sites in Inner Troms that have occurred at later times, where they still question why not more inaccessible forests are considered for conservation. In relation to this breadth of ongoing processes, one interviewee explained how they experience that environmental organizations, supported by a trend within the general urban population and scientific research, has power to influence some decision-makers, including the Norwegian Environment Agency, more quickly than for example the local people. However, while it is indeed interesting for the general conservation debate in the area, these later processes are beyond the scope of this study.

5.2.2. Reindeer Herders

The interviewed reindeer herder informs me that it is positive for them to use the national park, and because they already were present before the expansion, this did not affect them much. The positive aspects relate particularly to the few interruptions and exploitations from other activities in the park, for example in terms of less snowmobiling and cabin building. Additionally, the National Park Board has further reduced the conflict level, especially because one of the herders' own people is part of it. The Board further involves a better understanding for their industry, at the same time as the herders get a better understanding for how the Board works, for example in terms of their decisions. Yet, the interviewee stated they still wish they had more decision-making power and explained that there are many rules concerning all national parks in the country that they feel are difficult to affect. This is particularly in relation to their biggest challenge within the park, namely the protection of predators it entails. The interviewee stated that the positive aspects of herding reindeer within the national park would increase alongside an increased inclusion of their interests and traditional knowledge in decision-making.

One of the Norwegian reindeer herders also explained some implications national parks and other protection areas might have for the reindeer industry in general. The interviewee was largely positive towards it as an approach to less area interventions on reindeer pastures. A prerequisite, however, is that they get to participate in the decision-making, especially since they are present in an area to perform a job, which they want to perform well. In terms of how to ensure that their job is performed well, the interviewee highlights that:

It must be defined based on a reindeer herding perspective, and not a nature conservation perspective, which can be a bit extreme at times. One should combine the two types of knowledge to find a good solution. However, I often experience that everyone knows so much better than me how a good reindeer industry should be run, where they try to put limitations on it. If I get to participate in defining how to run a good reindeer industry, I think one would get far. We are also interested in taking care of nature and limiting ... human activities in vulnerable areas.

5.2.3. State Actors

The state actors interviewed in relation to the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP was the County Governor's department for environmental affairs, as the main proponents, and Statskog, as the landowner. One interviewee from the County Governor explained that "[t]he mission was given by the state to accomplish national goals about [the] Norwegian nature." Additionally, they had discovered more species worth conserving that were not already present in the park, meaning the expansion would lead to the protection of a more representative selection of Norwegian nature. The interviewee further stated that this was the County Governor's motivation, although they recognized the resistance from UL Håpet and listened to their views. "We decided the natural values were more important than the local resistance. [It was] our evaluation that the area's use value was not as high as its conservation value, especially in terms of biodiversity." With the increasing threats of climate change, the County Governor also wants to conserve natural areas to become more robust. The interviewee said this robustness will increase if they manage to conserve larger and preferably connected areas. Expanding already established conservation sites helps them reach this goal.

In relation to how they evaluate the alternative views, the interviewee further explained that one requirement for the County Governor's conservation processes is a large degree of participation. This includes hearing sessions, other meetings and inspections of the

area. However, getting to share your opinions in the process does not necessarily mean you get to affect the outcome, as it is still up to the County Governor to decide which inputs to value. The interviewee further understands the resistance as consisting of people who were fundamentally against the expansion, on the basis that they were not comfortable with its change in status, despite the limited effects it would have on their opportunities.

When it comes to Sámi use of the area, one interviewee said “I ... consider conservation, in line with the Nature Diversity Act, as a conservation of ... Sámi activities, considering that the area is protected against any disturbance of plants and wildlife.” At the same time, the interviewee explained that there are some restrictions, for example in terms of motor vehicles. Hence, different herders may have different views on the park’s implications for their livelihoods.

Another interviewee highlights that today, the County Governor is even more open than previously. This means that the process has become more important, and hence they might end up with other boundaries on a conservation area than the Norwegian Environment Agency wanted. In terms of the motivation for this, the interviewee stated, “if we reach the other end of the process and manage to create a conservation area, it is something that is widely supported.” The interviewee further explained that it will depend on the conflict level. While they might change the boundaries of the conservation area in some cases, they must choose between use and conservation in others.

When it comes to Statskog, they are the primary owners of the land, and for example have a Mountain Service in charge of overlooking nature and its resources, and making sure people follow the laws. The interviewee was not involved in the process, but links it to other connected processes, including a recent request by the Ministry of Climate and Environment to the County Governor concerning supplementary conservation proposals in Troms. Further conflicts may erupt based on this between local communities and their opportunities for future resource use. While Statskog is owned by the Norwegian government, who decides when it comes to conservation, they must relate to both the state and to local communities. As such, they allow themselves to have opinions about conservation and may partake in discussions with for example the County Governor.

5.3. Predators vs. Sheep and Reindeer

At the national level, predator management is an especially heated debate, which also affect politics at the local level. To explore these effects, this section is based on data collected from

two Norwegian reindeer herders, one Swedish reindeer herder, two sheep farmers from Målselv, two sheep farmers from Bardu, two employees from the County Governor's department of environmental affairs, two employees from SNO and one employee from the Norwegian Food Safety Authority.

5.3.1. Reindeer Herders

Three reindeer herders have shared their perspectives on conflicts concerning predators. Two of these also contributed to the two other conflicts, which exemplifies that many actors have multiple roles. The interviewees share some similar points of view, including that the state actors behind the management of predators sometimes fail to listen to, or believe, their experiences and observations. Additionally, they express that owning and herding reindeer alongside predators is challenging, even though predators are a part of nature. Yet, living side by side is necessary since the state has decided that both predators and grazing animals have a place in the area. There are, however, also differences between the interviewees. The Norwegian herders for example use local pastures in different areas and at different times than the Swedish, meaning their experiences also differ somewhat.

Linking predator issues to other challenges that reindeer herders face, one interviewee explained that “also in relation to predators, there is a lack of traditional knowledge about the industry ... [and] [a]gain one forgets, or is unwilling, to ask the herders.” In terms of traditional knowledge about predators, the interviewee further stated they have “basic knowledge from being on the mountain and witnessing what happens in nature. ... You are basically there 24/7.” Moreover, the interviewee brings up the importance of the Sámi language and how it contains highly specialized terminology to explain for example different types of snow, weather and reindeer. With just one word, they can be understood by others possessing the same knowledge. Yet, the herders feel like the decision-makers often fail to acknowledge this. The interviewee relates this to another challenge, namely that “[p]redators is a hot and sensitive issue that many do not want to touch because they may become politically dead.” The media has a lot of power here. Another interviewee relates this to claims that they only want compensation, saying that it is only a patch on the wound as they are set back multiple years when they lose reindeer. The sensitive nature of the predator debate makes the issue further characterized by an urban versus rural debate, and the reindeer herder questions why people in the cities get to make decisions when they lack the relationship with nature that the primary sector has.

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This relationship with nature involves, however, observations that are not formally documented. As such, they are often not believed by those in charge of managing the predators in the area. Hence, the herders again question what type of knowledge should be considered important and to what degree. One interviewee explained that they may meet resistance from employees among state actors who bases their arguments on for example their own education. At the same time, the interviewee stated that for example the Predator Management Committee recently implemented a temporary ban on a research project concerning eagles, on the basis that too little traditional knowledge was collected. Moreover, the herders also see improvements in some modern research as their knowledge is increasingly recognized. Yet, other academic research remains too dependent only on scientific knowledge. This type of research is particularly challenging not only when it ignores reindeer herders' traditional knowledge but also when the herders are only used as informants. In relation to this perspective, one interviewee also brings up the study by Tveraa et al. (2012) which states that overstocking and undernourishment is a bigger cause of death among reindeer than predators. The interviewee explains that "the reindeer herders have not recognized themselves in their conclusions, based on the information they have shared." The interviewee further explained that this research has gone on to inform decision-making. In terms of the general situation, one interviewee also explained that a primary issue relates to the fact that:

[P]redators are such a large and limiting factor in terms of herding reindeer, with such large consequences, but [we] are not included in affecting the knowledge basis that the decisions mainly take into consideration. ... [Additionally,] when the predators' living conditions become more important than our living conditions, something is wrong.

When asked about their power to influence decisions, then, one stated that "of course, you are heard when you participate in decision arenas, but it is still others who make the decisions from their point of view." Additionally, they experience that they might have more influence on smaller issues than larger ones, and that this influence usually requires that they are many. Still, one interviewee also explained that in cases where it is stated in the law that their position should be acknowledged, they may be able to halt a project.

As mentioned, the Swedish reindeer herders in Upper Dividalen LCANP claim their largest challenge is predators. These include wolverines, bears and eagles. The herders assist in registering the number of these predators, as they also do in Sweden, which offers a way

for them to influence decision-making. However, even when a population goal for the predators in the area is met, they can still face difficulties getting permission to take them out, although they consider it necessary for their operation. This is because it is not only an A-zone where predators have priority, but also a national park, and as such, they experience that there are no exceptions during the reindeer's calving season either. If no changes are made in this regard, or it becomes even stricter, the interviewee stated they will likely gain even less decision-making power.

5.3.2. Sheep Farmers

Four sheep farmers from both Målselv and Bardu municipality are interviewed in total, and while they generally agree, there are some differences between their perspectives. The main difference is their feelings towards the aid they get from the predator management system, particularly the County Governor. Here, both farmers from Målselv feel like the system moves too slowly. Especially one of them also feels that the workload connected to the applications is overwhelming when they experience losses to predators or could spend their time doing other income-generating activities. Hence, this interviewee wants the process to be quicker and more automated. The sheep farmers from Bardu, however, feel that the process goes quickly and that it is easy to contact, and get information from, the County Governor. These farmers further feel like the County Governor, as well as the municipality, are generally forthcoming and helpful. One of the farmers in Målselv, however, who live closer to an A-zone, disagrees. The farmer expressed that they received information about a proposal concerning a bear's right to roam in a nearby area, but never that the proposal was halted, meaning they were unsure about their own rights.

Aside from this, the farmers from the two municipalities generally express similar opinions. For example, all emphasize that both predators and sheep have a place in nature. However, it must be at a level where the losses do not represent a threat to their livelihoods. By this, they primarily mean that when a single predator kills many animals, especially when it is unnecessary relative to how much they eat, it must be taken out as quickly as possible. If, however, it is known that a bear lives nearby but it does not cause these kinds of damages, there is no conflict. One interviewee explained that if it becomes too challenging to keep sheep in the same area as predators, both jobs and cultural landscapes might be lost.

Another commonality is that all interviewees experience challenges in relation to not being believed by the state actors. One of them explained that not being listened to is

discouraging and hence they might not want to call SNO because doing so ultimately feels useless. The feeling of not being believed is especially when they lack clear evidence, which is hard to get if a small lamb is taken or an animal has been decomposing for too long. At the same time, it is their responsibility to find the carcasses and have them documented, which is time-consuming and often unpaid work. Not being believed, or listened to, makes them feel powerless. One interviewee explained that in case of mass deaths, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority can only place demands on the animal owners, for example in terms of the aforementioned ban, but no demands are placed on the general predator management in terms of re-evaluating the predator populations.

The challenges they face are related to many emotive aspects. For example, because sheep farming is not just a job but a way of life where they get to feel connected to nature, one of the interviewees said “[t]his is where my heart is.” Another interviewee claims that they “are always at the bottom of the decision-making,” and explained further that the knowledge they possess is rarely appreciated. This knowledge is for example about normal and abnormal behavior amongst the sheep and predators, meaning they easily recognize signs of a predator that will be especially problematic for them. These signs may include that for example a bear causes mass deaths for pleasure instead of eating or is less afraid of humans. This knowledge is also found in Sámi reindeer herders and is based on years or generations of experience. However, as one interviewee emphasizes, they find it difficult to affect policies because they feel like they are too few in relation to NGOs and many urban people, who are not directly affected by predators and therefore have a different outlook on the problem.

In terms of solutions when they are experiencing losses, the interviewees generally feel like it is most important to take out the single attacking predator quickly. This is not just to stop the attacks, but also to increase their chances of locating the predator since Inner Troms is a vast area. Some of them also feel that while getting the permit to take out the predator might go quickly, getting assistance from the state authorities, such as SNO, takes too long. Others feel like both processes move too slowly. For example, last summer in Bardu when farmers faced problems with a bear attacking the sheep, the hunting team spent so much time searching that the bear ultimately got away. Being dependent on decisions made by the County Governor and other state authorities further makes one interviewee express a need for more local management, while others express a need for less strict rules when a decision to take out a predator is made. Additionally, while they respect the differentiated management through A zones and B zones, some interviewees explain that if no predators are taken out,

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like for example nature conservation organizations want, the populations with A zones might cause some individuals to migrate towards the B zones. This would cause further conflicts between sheep and predators and makes the farmers question whether it is worth continuing. Considering today's predator management in Inner Troms based on developments in the political arena, several interviewees express that as sheep farmers, they feel increasingly unwanted.

5.3.3. State Actors

Various state actors are involved with the management of predators in Inner Troms, and I have conducted interviews with the County Governor, SNO and the Norwegian Food Safety Authority. The County Governor processes many of the applications from farmers concerning predators, and otherwise assist the Predator Management Committee with advice. As mentioned, the management differentiates between A zones and B zones, which presents some challenges. One interviewee stated that "in Troms, there are reindeer on pastures throughout the whole year. ... [Therefore], [t]he differentiated management cannot be fully achieved." For sheep, however, it has been easier.

In terms of dialogue and information sharing, one interviewee said all documents and meeting logs is uploaded on their website. They also provide links to public data bases where updated knowledge about the local predators is continuously shared. In addition, the County Governor has conducted regional information meetings annually, and invite people, including sheep farmers and reindeer herders, to a meeting if they request it. The interviewee stated that the opportunities to both share and receive information are great, and that "[n]ow, we experience that ... the municipalities and their populations have a lot more knowledge about the management of predators. We see a change from even 6-7 years ago." Not least, there are other strategies for helping animal owners more today than earlier, such as assisting them with radio bells or herding.

When asked if, and how, they take traditional knowledge into account, I am told by one interviewee from the County Governor that farmers and herders for example can call them in acute cases of predator attacks, and the County Governor will ask them what actions they feel is necessary. The interviewee further said that "[t]here is a traditional knowledge [especially] within reindeer husbandry that is not sufficiently taken into account in the management of predators. We could benefit from using their knowledge more."

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When it comes to SNO's role, one interviewee explained that they are supposed to be an objective actor in the field. In addition to documenting predator attacks and registering the number of predators, SNO also assists in taking them out if needed. In terms of the latter point, they have received both praise and criticism related to how quickly they have been able to act. One challenge they face is that not all people affected by predator attacks are completely aware of their role and might want SNO's employees to do things that are not part of their jobs. Their job primarily revolves around collecting and producing data, based on for example DNA, animal tracks, breeding grounds and observations, that contributes to the general knowledge about predators.

In terms of challenges related to incorporating traditional knowledge, one interviewee from SNO further explained that "there is always someone who has opinions and statements that might be based on what other people have said or experienced." When these people for example cannot provide more information or evidence, SNO's objective approach means they can only treat it as stories. Furthermore, they are often accused of not divulging the real number of predators. However, one interviewee stated that it is important for them to only provide data they can stand for, even though it may increase the conflict level. On the other side of this, there are also people who tell SNO that they will not share observations with them, in the hopes that it will contribute to the predators' protection. One interviewee explained that it is indeed a sensitive issue for many. In relation to their understanding of most affected people's approach to the issue, I am told that:

[F]or many, there are strong emotions connected to [the issue], especially when they experience large losses. I have not experienced that anyone thinks predators should be eradicated. But most [sheep farmers and reindeer herders] say it must be at a level they can live with.

There are also areas where traditional knowledge is increasingly incorporated. For example, some reindeer herders experience losses during the calving season to eagles in the area. While they reported the losses, most people in the community are not in the mountains to witness it themselves during that time. This has caused more herders to share their daily lives on social media so that the information becomes available to the public, according to one SNO interviewee.

One interviewee also explained that to increase the quality of the data and maintain an objective approach, there are multiple people in the SNO system that double check what is

reported by the employees in the field. These people have strict guidelines, as the numbers they ultimately report informs both conservationists and those who experience losses to predators. Hence, they base their work on scientific knowledge. This is not least because it is challenging to both register the number of predators and verifying that they have killed another animal. This can be caused by for example bad weather during the winter or high vegetation during the summer, as well as the fact that predators move across large areas. As one interviewee said, “the [sheep farmer or reindeer herder] needs their losses [to predators] to be made probable so that they can get the compensation from the state that they have claims to.” When it is hard to state the cause of death, SNO shares what they have seen with the predator management, and then it is up to the managers to interpret the findings.

SNO recognizes that there is a power dynamic here. In relation to the point of view of animal owners, one interviewee told me “I do not think [they] feel like they have much power to affect decisions. ... [T]hey experience a certain powerlessness [a]nd that the state and urban people increasingly decide what will happen in rural areas.” One way to reduce the conflict level, then, is having a good dialogue. For example, they may cooperate with Swedish reindeer herders in the field when registering predators. Furthermore, when investigating a dead animal reported by farmers and herders, they explain to these what they can and cannot see. Another method to reduce the conflict level is through a newly established app called Skandobs where people can share images and observations of predators. One interviewee relates this to an increasing trend of including more contributions.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority may also get involved when livestock and predators conflict. Their role is to ensure the animals’ well-being, and through collaboration with other actors they attempt to find solutions. According to the interviewee, if the predator that causes harm is not caught, there are various measures for them to consider. One is implementing a ban on letting the animals graze on outer pastures where they are more likely to be attacked.

In terms of what action to take, the interviewee emphasizes that they are also responsible for collecting all the necessary knowledge and ensuring they have a good dialogue with the other actors before a decision is made. For example, during the summer of 2018 in Bardu municipality when a bear attacked many sheep without getting caught, the proposal to implement a ban was reconsidered after feedback from the farmers. The interviewee said they experienced this feedback as factual rather than emotional, which meant the Norwegian Food

Safety Authority managed to take them more seriously. Part of the constructive feedback from the farmers was that gathering the sheep would be difficult as many lambs, whose movement differs from adult sheep, probably would get lost in the process. Hence, it was not certain that the ban would limit animal suffering.

The interviewee further explained that all conflicts between predators and livestock will have a negative aspect. For example, herding the animals and hunting the predator might keep it away even if it is not caught. However, one could end up moving the problem to other areas instead. Additionally, if the predator is caught it can still be a challenge in terms of animal rights activists and biodiversity concerns, for example if the population goal is not met.

6. The Narratives' Implications

As mentioned, the aim of the study is not to map everything that has happened within each conflict but rather to explore the various actors' current narratives of the conflicts. These narratives might, however, be partly based on past occurrences. Hence, it is also important to acknowledge contexts. The three conflicts take place within different structures yet share some common ground. Some actors are for example involved in more than one case either through multiple roles or because of the impact of their activity. Additionally, some actors play an important and constant role in a conflict, while others become more involved in case of specific occurrences. Because of the prominence of Norwegian and Swedish Sámi reindeer herding in Inner Troms, which requires large areas, this activity matters within all three conflicts. Also state actors have a role in making or influencing decisions in each conflict to varying degrees, especially the County Governor. The following discussion attempts to investigate the various contexts and relationships through approaching the two research questions separately.

6.1. Actors, Narratives and Power Dynamics

Starting with the merge of Mauken-Blåtind TAFR, the main conflict is between the defense sector and Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district. Yet, the conflict involves also landowners, both private and Statskog. Here, the conflict level is mainly influenced by how they anticipated that their properties would be affected versus how they were affected in practice. Haavet (2009) states that it was easier for the defense sector to make agreements with the landowners than the reindeer herders; yet, as military activities likely will increase in

the future, the conflict level might increase as well. The municipality was also partly involved in negotiating an agreement. They feared that the defense sector would reduce its presence in Inner Troms and the effects it might have on the local population and economy. They attempted to cope with this possibility by building Målselv Fjellandsby, which would allow them to focus more on tourism. To do this, however, they also needed to consult Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district since they have rights to use the area and would be negatively affected by area loss and additional human activities (Haavet, 2009). As such, the municipality gained from helping both sides of the conflict.

The merge also affects other locals. Many of these appreciate the defense sector's presence yet may feel relieved that the TAFR reduces the pressure on the areas where they primarily live and travel. At the same time, the local interviewees sympathize with the reindeer herders. The conflict level might, however, increase between the defense sector and local community in cases where their activities are interpreted as noise pollution, although both the defense sector and the County Governor claim there are few reports of this. In terms of the conflict level between the local community and the reindeer herders, one interviewee emphasized that this is largely connected to the amount of knowledge local people have about the reindeer husbandry's needs and contributions to the community. Increased knowledge might be a way to empower them.

As for the defense sector and reindeer herders, they emphasize many of the same challenges, such as trouble coordinating activities and a need for more undisturbed area, although they approach these challenges differently. The defense sector's initial framing of the project, for example in the multiple-use plan, has some commonalities with the win-win discourse type, specifically in terms of explaining how their needs can be met while also securing natural resources, cultural heritage, and Sámi and recreational interests (The Norwegian Defence Estates Agency, 2014). However, some of those directly involved recognize that this is not the situation in practice. For example, the increasing need for training activities may be negative for the landowners. At the same time, increased regulations within the TAFR encourages them to also use areas close to other locals, which may be negative for them. Not least, the coexistence with the district remains challenging, as both actors would still benefit from operating alone in the area.

After a long and conflictual negotiation process, Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district agreed to coexist with the defense sector. While the chemistry between individuals

might have been a contributing factor, another significant aspect was likely that the herders felt tired. This is especially in relation to the process' length, where they not only fought the defense sector but also the Norwegian government. The process was further characterized by multiple expropriation threats, and although the reindeer herders employed a lawyer to assist them, they still had to deal with a significant pressure not just on their jobs but on their lives and future livelihoods. In contrast to the defense sector, they also stood in the fight every day, spending much of their work time to do so. Furthermore, despite also the municipality's influence on the eventual agreement, this also meant the district experienced pressure from the development of Måselv Fjellandsby in addition to the military activities.

The current coexistence is difficult also for the district, who feel like they would have better protected rights and power over their reindeer herding without the pressure from for example military activities. Additionally, the reindeer owner interviewed expressed the importance of recognizing their needs and traditional knowledge in general decision-making. Their point of view therefore seems to be in line with the traditionalist discourse type, described in section 3.2., in the sense that they not only are largely negative towards the coexistence but also have highly specified knowledge about the environment and their animals, which would further make them fit to manage the area sustainably.

Furthermore, owning and herding reindeer is an important part of Sámi culture and tradition, and hence it is also important for many people's identities. Animal products from the reindeer, including meat, skin and bones provide an income for herders and their families. This depends, however, on having access to large areas for the pasturing animals. Both historically and today, other human activities occupying the pastoral lands threatens having this need fulfilled, which both can make the reindeer stressed and cause them to change their movement pattern (e.g. Christensen, 2012). Additionally, Riseth and Johansen (2018) state that many municipalities still struggle to accommodate local reindeer herders' interests and needs, despite their rights and the increasing number of guidelines for acknowledging these.

In the case of the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP, the proponents consisted primarily of the County Governor's department for environmental affairs, while the opponents consisted of local resource users with knowledge about forestry, agriculture and the area's history. Swedish reindeer herders also use the park as summer pasture, yet they reported that the expansion had little effect on them. Instead, their main challenge is related to predators. Another relevant actor is the National Park Board, although I was unsuccessful in

getting an interview with them. The Board was implemented after the expansion to provide a more decentralized management in line with both local interests and the national Nature Diversity Act. As mentioned, they consist of both politicians and Sámi representatives. Because also the relevant reindeer herding district in the park is part of the Board, it has positively influenced their participation, although they still must adjust to the national laws.

Part of the argumentation used by the proponents is still that the LCANP protects red listed species, old trees, and the future recreational use of the area. While these are important considerations when deciding to conserve parts of the environment, one problem highlighted by the expansion's opponents is the dominant focus on these things. Hence, alternative evidence was ultimately ignored. The opponents further state that critical questions were left unanswered and the process was ultimately undemocratic. They believe the forestry activities and outtake of some trees for personal consumption was not a threat towards the forest's biodiversity, but rather could be a positive influence on it precisely because of the species found within it. Hence, the proponents' narrative seems to be part of the preservationist discourse type, while the opponents' narrative belongs within the traditionalist. The interviewees' concerns are also reflected in other conservation processes in Norway, where some have asked if not the local resource use is sufficient protection of an area, since these people have no interest in harming it (Vuolab, 2010; Nystad, 2010). In this case, some further expressed a feeling of hopelessness related to arguing against the government (Thrane & Måsø, 2010).

The County Governor was tasked with fulfilling the project, and those interviewed expressed that the conservation was given higher value than the local resistance, yet that the opposition got to express their opinions. The open letter sent by one opponent when the park was officially expanded shows they received replies from the Ministry of Climate and Environment at the time expressing regrets that they did not get a democratic process. This suggests that an unethical conservation process occurred, where power was expressed through discourses, not disclosing alternative evidence and failure to answer concerned locals' critical questions. Even after admitting to the faulty process, it is still not re-evaluated. The goal of such a re-evaluation would not necessarily be to reverse the expansion, but rather to be transparent about all the evidence and have a more adaptive approach to the local people's uses, with an increased level of participation.

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For the conflict concerning predators versus animal owners, the main actors include reindeer herders, sheep farmers, the County Governor's department for environmental affairs, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and SNO; the latter being a field actor on behalf of the Norwegian Environment Agency. Both the reindeer herders and sheep farmers experience that they have traditional knowledge that is not listened to, for example because of observations that cannot necessarily be documented. Furthermore, all express that they respect and agree with the state's decision to maintain both their livelihoods and predators. However, to ensure the future of their livelihoods, they also express a need to take out the attacking predators quickly. For the state actors, however, assisting with this largely requires that losses to predators can be documented. When this is challenging, the conflict levels increase. The state actors, including SNO, depends especially on having an objective approach when producing data or making decisions. In addition to the general preference for this type of knowledge within the state, it is also partly because the data is made for everybody, including both the animal owners and animal rights activists.

Because several interviewees across the cases problematize how they may be portrayed in the media, the media is arguably also a political actor relevant across the three conflicts. This includes especially the free press, which is important for our democracy (Patterson, 1997). They are actors not necessarily because of a direct involvement in the cases, but because of whose perspectives, interests and values they write about and how. Hence, for example newspaper articles affect public opinions, which in turn might affect politics (Patterson, 1997). This also goes the other way; public opinions may affect which news stories are produced. In both aspects, the public opinion plays an important part in democracies as they influence national politics, which in turn affects people at the local level (Naqvi, 2015).

The media might therefore contribute positively in terms of dialogue and decision-influencing when a conflict occurs. Journalists may do so by highlighting potential power imbalances and write about the interests and arguments of different stakeholders involved. As such, for example an interview might be part of a resistance from below, meaning that it offers a platform for those with least decision-making power to share their experiences. The media might, however, also contribute negatively to the dialogue. This is especially the case when journalists stick with dominant narratives and fail to adequately cover alternative knowledge about an issue. Hence, they may contribute further to negative perceptions of

people, like for example Sámi reindeer herders in relation to carrying capacities in Finnmark (Benjaminsen et al., 2015).

In a similar vein, also interest organizations such as NGOs can be relevant actors. These may for example focus on environmental issues or animal's rights, and they often have a broad influence on society. As mentioned in the background, WWF Norway recently stated that they want to abolish the Predator Management Committees as they collaborate too much with reindeer herders and sheep farmers, and hence work against the predators. This statement received immediate coverage in the national news. Due to the size of the NGOs, it may be easier for them to reach the media or communicate their arguments over for example online platforms than it is for the relatively few local sheep farmers, reindeer herders or forest users. Hence, also interviewees related to the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP and sheep farming emphasize the power of NGOs and claim that they have more power to affect state authorities' decisions than local people have. One issue is that many NGOs' ideas are based on dominant discourses, often preservationist and sometimes win-win, that argues based on facts without fully recognizing the local differences and impacts.

Although it is generalizing to make a distinction between state actors and non-state actors, as there are differences also within these categories, state actors seem largely concerned with roles while non-state actors seem largely concerned with emotions. The emotional aspect includes Sámi reindeer herders who experience area loss to other activities, where decision-makers fail to take their needs into account. It further includes both reindeer herders and sheep farmers who lose their animals to predators. In addition to the pain for the animals who suffer, they fear that they might lose their way of life because of losses to predators, especially when they are not listened to. Not least, they often feel stigmatized by society, the media, state actors and scientific research. Not being listened to also took an emotional toll on the local people who opposed the expansion of Upper Dividalen LCANP, who attempted to provide criticism based on facts to be taken more seriously by decision-makers.

The emotional toll is a significant indicator of their lack of power to influence the decision-making that affects them. As mentioned, for the people negatively affected, it is not just challenging for their jobs but for their lives and future opportunities. Hence, when fighting for years, often in their spare time and with few achievements, many become tired. This means they might be more willing to agree to a solution that is less than optimal, or they

might give up. Another problem is that while challenges unavoidably become emotional for some, it is sometimes difficult for state actors to relate to this based on their own guidelines. For example, the interviewee from the Norwegian Food Safety Authority emphasized that the fact-based and levelled approach by the sheep farmers in Bardu to the potential ban was positive in relation to being heard. This suggests that an emotional approach would be more likely to hurt their cause. At the same time, this example involved listening to the farmers' traditional knowledge. Yet, it highlights an issue of state actors viewing emotive factors as a weakness instead of as an indicator of a need for better dialogue or more local participation. It arguably further highlights an injustice in relation to the multiple NGOs whose ideologies also are largely based on emotive factors.

Thus, the state actors are instead more concerned with roles. This is understood in the sense that the employees are restricted by guidelines, laws and regulations. These guidelines often include a focus on scientific data. For example, in terms of predator management, SNO aims to be objective so they can produce reliable data about for example predator numbers. That is not to say that individuals within larger state actors are not sympathetic; indeed, many are. However, they are restricted by rules and guidelines, as well as the dominant discourses that affect these and remain largely concerned with scientific knowledge. This illustrates how many state actors still lack a clear description of how to for example ensure the inclusion of traditional knowledge in practice, even though the concept is increasingly acknowledged.

6.2. Power in Decision-Making, Conflict Management and the Creation of Winners and Losers

The different narratives explored in this thesis inform us about some of the related discourse types. According to Skjeggedal (2008), nature management can be considered a battle for discursive hegemony (p. 63). He links this statement to the social construction of reality that discourses entail, specifically in terms of whose reality counts. At the same time, Svarstad, Benjaminsen and Overå (2018) emphasize that having only one discursive hegemony is less common within nature management today (p. 356). As the state actors bring up the importance of roles and guidelines, it is perhaps within dominant narratives and discourses that a change should be made to better incorporate alternative evidence and traditional knowledge into decision-making. From this, some aspects of nature management should also be better specified to for example ensure that the processes are ethical and democratic. In addition, the management strategy should actively aim to learn about and incorporate people's

various knowledges and concerns at the local level, and hence employ a more adaptive management. Having a degree of adaptability is useful since a common set of guidelines equal for all state authorities and nature management issues might cause difficulties in relation to how to work together with different nature types, people and interests.

The interviewed forest users importantly ask why no authority is implemented to follow up on both the research that informs decision-makers, as well as the decision-making itself. Similarly, Johnsen (2018) criticizes the media for not investigating the state's definitions of what sustainable reindeer herding is. Following up on decisions and their reasons would especially help avoid cases where some voices are excluded, such as in the example of Tveraa et al. (2012) where the relevant Sámi reindeer herders did not recognize their views in the conclusion. Not least, it could help avoid cases such as the park expansion where research lacks a broad and historical approach, and consequently use certain favorable aspects to promote their interests. Not questioning the research and decision-making, especially where people feel it involves social injustice, reinforces the top-down approaches by the state.

Yet, both narratives and discourses are dynamic. IPBES' (2019) focus on the importance of traditional knowledge might suggest a positive step in terms of affecting the knowledge type's position within dominant discourses in nature management. However, its global approach means it remains somewhat unspecific and it is still up to decision-makers at various levels to implement approaches to combine knowledges. Hence, their interpretation affects the degree to which traditional knowledge is not only collected but actively used. Based on the interviews with both sides of the conflicts, it seems like this is already an issue, as guidelines concerning participation and collection of traditional knowledge exist, yet still largely depends on the goodwill of the most powerful actor, especially the state authorities. Hovik and Sandström (2008) observes a similar trend in general within Norwegian nature management, where questions remain concerning who the local managers should be, and with what means they can act.

Arguably, then, when it comes to conflict management, this is mainly the responsibility of the most powerful actor since they have the strongest influence on who may participate. In terms of the first case, the agreement to coexist was supposed to help manage the general conflict, yet the defense sector experience that it is difficult to state who has the right of way when more specific conflicts occur. At the same time, the interviewed reindeer

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herder feels like the defense sector continuously wins. To better manage today's conflict level, the defense sector therefore wants more frequent updates from the reindeer herders. However, the reindeer herders feel like it is challenging to do so because of all their responsibilities and wants to be met with increased understanding of their needs. Other attempts at conflict management by the defense sector includes cleaning up the area and offering information about their own activities. During the negotiation process, they further attempted to reduce the conflict level by offering compromises in terms of the connection road and general area use. Yet, both actors recognize that the coexistence involves a permanent conflict of interests.

When it comes to the park expansion, the state actors' main strategies for conflict management before the implementation seems to have been the hearings. They also participated in meetings when the pressure from multiple actors was high (Arnesen & Riseth, 2008). Despite this, the local opponents felt completely overlooked at the end of the process. Through letters to the state actors, contact with local newspapers and other strategies, they employed a form of resistance from below (Svarstad, Benjaminsen & Overå, 2018), yet felt like the state actors, particularly the County Governor's department for environmental affairs, would not listen. Arnesen and Riseth (2008) states that the initiative taken by local people and landowners to have a dialogue had the potential to ensure better collaboration and hence reduce the conflict level (p. 97). They further conclude that instead, a top-down approach was ultimately selected by the state (p. 97). As such, the conflict management becomes more of a conflict avoidance, and their power to do this exemplifies why it should be the most powerful actors' responsibility to provide good strategies for conflict reduction. Still, the later implementation of National Park Boards is a positive approach in terms of managing potential conflicts with the Swedish reindeer herders. Additionally, because they have yet to develop a management plan for Upper Dividalen LCANP, there might still be potential for reducing the conflict level also with the locals (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-c; Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-d).

In terms of conflict management when it comes to predators versus livestock, increased inclusion of traditional knowledge and sharing of general information seems to be important factors. When it comes to traditional knowledge, sheep farmers and reindeer herders have a sense of what behavior is normal or abnormal in both their own animals and in predators. This knowledge is used to recommend when a predator should be taken out, and how quickly, to reduce losses and thus the general conflict level. Since part of their

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recommendations involve having less strict laws and regulations for predators that managers already have decided should be taken out, it is a state decision. However, SNO states it is important to remain cautious to ensure they catch the right animal, and powerful NGOs are pushing for the rules to become even stricter.

In terms of sharing of general information, one example is how one sheep farmer learned about a new proposal from the state actors, concerning their rights versus a bear's rights in a certain area, but not that the proposal was cast aside. This increases the feeling of not being considered important. At the same time, both the County Governor and SNO states that information is continuously updated on their websites. Another aspect of information sharing as a tool for conflict management is ensuring more opportunities for various people to share their observations and be taken seriously. At the same time, if these observations are not documented it might lead to more, and not less, conflict. This is because while all interviewees working for state authorities have some appreciation for traditional knowledge, it is challenging to incorporate in terms of other guidelines and rules they must follow. In relation to this, Risvoll, Fedreheim and Galafassi (2016) emphasize that the dialogue is currently hindered by a fragmented management, both between different state actors, and between state actors and animal owners (p. 1).

The data collection shows that the power dynamics in the decision-making indeed contribute to the creation of winners and losers. However, it is not always straight forward. For example, the top-down approach used in the park expansion, largely framed within a preservationist discourse, meant the opponents lost. However, the Swedish reindeer herders have since been increasingly invited to participate in affecting decisions, even though they have little power to affect the predator management. The predator management is another area where wins and losses might fluctuate. Still, the animal owners largely end up as losers, not just from a fragmented dialogue where they often are not believed, but also because they often are stigmatized in research, media and the general society.

When it comes to Mauken-Tromsdalen reindeer herding district, the added pressure from various activities means they have lost more than they have won, despite the compensatory payment. This is partly because of uncertainties that were not accounted for in the agreement, including annual fluctuations. Additionally, impact assessments at the time of both the construction of the connection road and the development of Målselv Fjellandsby showed that the impact on reindeer numbers and area loss would likely be categorized as

serious negative (Danielsen & Tømmervik, 2006; Andersen et al., 2007). Yet, one interviewee from the defense sector expressed that also they feel like losers, because of their compromises. The narratives by both the district and the defense sector illustrates that Haavet's (2009) conclusions about the outcomes being largely favorable have changed. Furthermore, one thing all non-state actors who end up on the losing side have in common is an emotional toll and a feeling of powerlessness.

At the same time, there seems to be an increasing trend to highlight the importance of traditional knowledge, as well as collaboration across actors, in various rules and guidelines, both globally and nationally. While it may be a positive step away from dominant discourses that have excluded people and undervalued their rights, it might also mean that it is becoming harder to identify weaknesses from the outset in official state documents. Hence, it remains crucial to reveal potential weaknesses through analyzing actors' discourses in relation to their practice, as emphasized by Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2017).

7. Conclusion

This thesis has shown that nature management, through use, conservation and distribution, is crucial but also largely conflictual. Current narratives from cases in Inner Troms suggest that power dimensions do exist between the actors, where state actors typically are most powerful while non-state actors express feeling more powerless. The results suggest further that for changes to be made in the power structures, there needs to be a change in the dominant discourses on nature management. On both the global and national scale, there is increasing focus on traditional knowledge and social justice in nature management issues; yet, they remain largely recommendations, meaning decision-makers may interpret them differently. By shining a light on the different narratives that exist, this thesis encourages state actors to increase their recognition of the importance of traditional knowledge and ethical processes.

This research has not described the whole backstory of every conflict, nor has it done any ecological assessments. Within the broad field that is political ecology, then, also this thesis deserves criticism. The ecological perspectives are instead considered in terms of how they are presented by, and informs, the different actors, especially linking it to power. Potential future research would benefit from further combining social and natural studies to get a deeper understanding. Additionally, a broader study should be conducted to collect further data from more individuals within each actor. Not least, it should collect data from the actors who were not interviewed here.

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Nevertheless, this study has attempted to shine a light on conflicts that produce different narratives and power dynamics. In addition, the study has argued for the usefulness of a political ecological approach, especially in a location that still would benefit from getting more attention. As such, it offers a good starting point for further discussions about the role of power and the potential for improvement in ensuring more ethical solutions. The thesis has shown that there is an increased focus on traditional knowledge both globally and nationally, yet it still needs to be specified how it may effectively influence decision-making at the local scale. Furthermore, the thesis highlights the importance of investigating the processes and knowledge collection that takes place within nature management, to ensure that they are ethical and transparent.

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Appendix

Appendix 1.

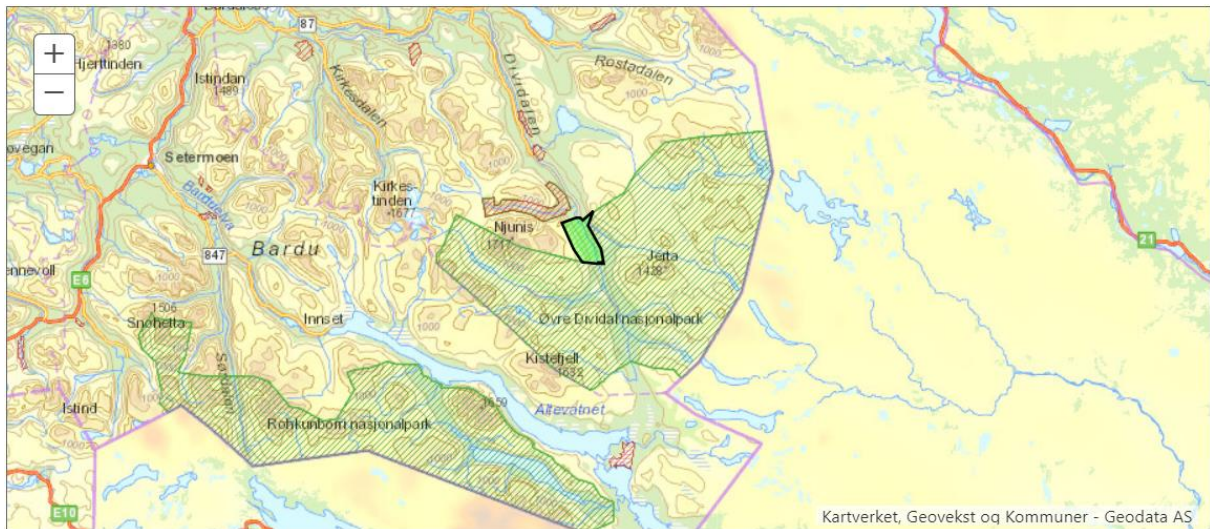


Figure 1. A map showing Upper Dividalen National Park and the adjoining landscape conservation area. The latter is the smaller, bright green area. (Norwegian Environment Agency, n.d.-d).

Appendix 2.

Intervjuguide/temaliste

Siden intervjuet er semistrukturert kan avvik fra denne listen med eksempelspørsmål forekomme, da respondenten kan ta opp egne temaer som oppleves som særlig viktig. Listen anses likevel som nyttig for å holde intervjuet på rett spor.

Hovedtemaer som utforskes på tvers av aktørgruppene: Deres narrativ og maktforhold, samt diverse typer kunnskap som er utgangspunkt for disse (basert på for eksempel ulike bakgrunner og kultur).

Eksemplspørsmål 1. Sammenslåing av Mauken-Blåtind skyte- og øvingsfelt:

- Hvordan opplevdes aktørgruppens situasjon før konflikten?
- Hvordan ble konflikten opplevd mens den pågikk?
- Hvordan har det vært å forhandle i denne konflikten?
- Hvilke behov og hva slags kunnskap driver aktørgruppene synspunkt?
- Hvordan foregikk konfliktløsningen, og hvordan opplevdes den?
- Hvilket forhold har de ulike aktørgruppene til hverandre?

- Hvordan oppleves utfallet i ettertid?
- Hva er hovedutfordringene?
- Hvordan oppleves reindrift som en næring i utvikling i møte med kommune, fylke, stat og Forsvaret?
- Hvordan foregår oppryddingen av feltet for å begrense fare for rein, mennesker og natur?
- I hvilken grad tas det hensyn til tradisjonell kunnskap?
- Hva ofret hver part for å få til avtalen?
- Har politikere hatt mye makt i å påvirke?
- Hvordan foregår dialogen i dag?

Eksempelspørsmål 2. Utvidelsen av Øvre Dividal nasjonalpark:

- Hva drev beslutningen om å utvide Øvre Dividal nasjonalpark, samt etablere landskapsvernområde?
- Hva er perspektivene for og mot vern?
- Hvordan er situasjonen i dag med bruk og vern?
- Hvilke behov og kunnskaper driver aktørgruppens synspunkt?
- Hvilket forhold har de ulike aktørgruppene til hverandre, f. eks. relatert til makt?
- I hvilken grad føler aktørgruppene seg hørt i beslutningsprosessen?
- Opplevs situasjonen som bedre eller verre enn før utvidelsen?
- Hva er holdningene blant lokale som ikke har vært involvert i beslutningen?
- Er tradisjonell kunnskap inkludert i beslutningsprosess?
- Hvordan var dialogen og konflikthåndteringen under beslutningsprosessen, og hvordan er den i dag?
- Hvordan er dialogen i lokale verneprosesser generelt?

Eksempelspørsmål 3. Rovvilt i møte med reinsdyr og sau:

- Hvordan er situasjonen i dag, hva slags aktører er involvert?
- Hvilke behov og hva slags kunnskap driver aktørgruppens synspunkt?
- Hvilket forhold har de ulike aktørgruppene til hverandre, særlig med tanke på maktforhold?
- Hvordan har situasjonen utviklet seg over tid?
- Føler du at synspunktet til din aktørgruppe blir hørt og kommer frem i beslutningsprosessen?

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- I hvilken grad tas det hensyn til mer tradisjonell kunnskap?
- Hvordan er konfliktnivået?
- Hvordan foregår konflikthåndtering?
- Hvordan foregår dialog?
- Hva er synspunktene for og mot saueneiering og reindrift i Indre Troms?

Appendix 3.

Table 1. Number of interviewed actors within the various actor groups.

Sheep farmers	4
<i>Målselv</i>	2
<i>Bardu</i>	2
Sámi reindeer herders	3
<i>Norwegian</i>	2
<i>Swedish</i>	1
Local nature users	6
<i>Forest users</i>	3
<i>Others</i>	3
State actors	14
<i>The defense sector</i>	2
<i>The County Governor</i>	5
<i>SNO</i>	2
<i>The Norwegian Food Safety Authority</i>	1
<i>Statskog</i>	1
<i>Municipality workers</i>	2

Appendix 4.

Det innsendte meldeskjemaet med referansekode 298084 er nå vurdert av NSD.

Følgende vurdering er gitt:

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen, så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet 12.09.2018 med vedlegg. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD ENDRINGER

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Dersom behandlingen av personopplysninger endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. På våre nettsider informerer vi om hvilke endringer som må meldes. Vent på svar før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle særlige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 30.06.2019.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og art. 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes uttrykkelige samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a), jf. art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav a, jf. personopplysningsloven § 10, jf. § 9 (2).

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD finner at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

- om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

De registrerte vil ha følgende rettigheter i prosjektet: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art.

19), dataportabilitet (art. 20). Rettighetene etter art. 15–20 gjelder så lenge den registrerte er mulig å identifisere i datamaterialet.

NSD vurderer at informasjonen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og eventuelt rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp behandlingen av personopplysninger ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Lasse André Raa

Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

[Appendix 5.](#)

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet ”Conflicts over Nature Management in Indre Troms: Exploring how Narratives and Power Relations Affect Decision-Making”?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å vurdere konflikter over naturforvaltning i Indre Troms med særlig hensyn til de ulike aktører involvert og deres respektive interesser, hvordan maktforhold oppfattes her av de ulike aktørene, samt

konfliktløsning. I dette skrivet gir jeg deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Mitt navn er Karina Finn, og dette prosjektet er en del av en masteroppgave jeg skriver i programmet International Environmental Studies på Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet. Målet med prosjektet er å se nærmere på tre konflikter over naturforvaltning i Indre Troms, identifisere de involverte aktørgruppene og lære mer om deres respektive narrativer. Videre vil jeg undersøke maktforholdet mellom disse, samt hvordan det har utviklet seg over tid. Masteroppgaven er dermed en narrativanalyse med feltet politisk økologi som rammeverk. De tre konfliktene gjelder sammenslåingen av Mauken-Blåtind skyte- og øvingsfelt, utvidelsen av Øvre Dividal nasjonalpark, samt rovvilt i møte med reinsdyr og sau. Å snakke med de ulike aktørgruppene kan gi innblikk i individuelle forståelser av hva problemet er og hvordan det kan løses, i tillegg til graden det blir tatt hensyn til i beslutningsprosessen.

To forskningsspørsmål har blitt utviklet utfra dette:

1. Hvilke aktørgrupper er påvirket i hver av konfliktene over naturforvaltning, hva er deres respektive narrativer, og hva kan disse fortelle oss om eksisterende maktforhold?
2. Hvordan påvirker maktforhold beslutningsprosessen i hver konflikt, særlig med tanke på håndteringen av konflikt og skapelsen av vinnere og tapere?

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Denne oppgaven blir skrevet i forbindelse med programmet International Environmental Studies (M-IES) ved Fakultet for landskap og samfunn (LANDSAM) på Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet (NMBU).

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Informanter som får spørsmål om å delta har enten blitt identifisert som del av de påvirkede aktørgruppene i konfliktene på bakgrunn av for eksempel aktuelle nyhetsartikler, eller blitt henvist til av andre informanter gjennom metoden «snøball-sampling». Minst 30 informanter som er tilknyttet en eller flere av konfliktene blir kontaktet for intervju.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Deltakelse i prosjektet innebærer å bli intervjuet. Intervjuet er kvalitativt og vil dermed være semistrukturert. Dette betyr at jeg vil ta opp visse temaer som jeg anser som relevant for konfliktene og prosjektet, og at vi kan ha en samtale rundt disse hvor respondenten selv kan vurdere hva som er relevant informasjon. Et semistrukturert intervju er dermed viktig fordi det åpner opp muligheten for at jeg som forsker kan lære mest mulig. Da jeg undersøker tre konflikter kan temaene jeg tar opp variere basert på hvilken konflikt informanten er involvert i, og i hvilken sammenheng. Likevel vil fellestrekk være hvordan aktørgrupper anser sin egen situasjon, samt forholdet til andre aktørgrupper. Jeg ønsker å benytte både lydopptak og notater under intervjuet, dersom dette godkjennes av deg.

Oppgaven vil skrives på engelsk, men intervjuene vil foregå på norsk. Du vil få tilsendt en skriftlig kopi av intervjuet i etterkant, samt en oppsummering av hvordan jeg tolker det som kommer frem. Dette vil gi deg mulighet til å gi meg tilbakemelding.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Bare jeg vil ha tilgang til opplysningene dine.
- Navn og andre identifiserbare opplysninger vil erstattes med en kode som lagres adskilt fra annen relevant data. Datamaterialet vil lagres og behandles på Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitets server.
- Informanter vil anonymiseres i den ferdige oppgaven. Dersom du for eksempel ønsker opplysninger som navn eller stilling kjent, vil det bes om spesielt samtykke til dette. Dersom din relevans for studiet, for eksempel basert på arbeidsted, gjør det mulig for noen andre å identifisere deg, vil jeg også be om spesielt samtykke til å publisere denne informasjonen.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes juni 2019. All innsamlede data vil da anonymiseres og slettes. Dette gjelder også alle lydopptak.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.


På oppdrag fra Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta gjerne kontakt med meg på epost eller telefon. Du kan også kontakte:

- Min veileder Tor Arve Benjaminsen ved Fakultet for landskap og samfunn (LANDSAM) på Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet, via epost (t.a.benjaminsen@nmbu.no)
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personvernombudet@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen



Karina Eileen Finn

M-IES Student

Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet

(+47) 94199701

karina.eileen.finn@nmbu.no

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «Conflicts over Nature Management in Indre Troms: Exploring how Narratives and Power Relations Affect Decision-Making», og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i intervju
- at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes (gjennom navn) – hvis aktuelt
- at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes (gjennom arbeidssted) – hvis aktuelt
- at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes (gjennom stilling) – hvis aktuelt

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. juni 2019.

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)



Norges miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet
Noregs miljø- og biovitenskapelige universitet
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