

Unit 6. Wildfire prevention and restoration

Coastal heatherlands



Description

The Norwegian west coast was deforested since the 1500s or so. It used to be forested, but was logged from neolithic into medieval times, and colder climate in combination with a growing agricultural population prevented the forest from growing back.

Over time, the coastal land transformed into a heather-landscape, dominated by røsslyng (*Calluna vulgaris*), Einer (*Juniperus communis*), vier (*Salix*), and other low-growing wooden growth. The main usage of the area was grazing-land for cattle and sheep.

Today, this heather-landscape is threatened, as grazing has been drastically reduced, and milder climate enables regrowth of larger trees, drastically changing the landscape.



Goals

Coastal heatherlands are a protected landscape-type in Norway. One of the main management strategies is to use controlled burning of old heather to promote regrowth of new. This new heather is a good source of food for sheep in particular, so controlled grazing is also a part of the main strategy.



Activities

Presently, management by burning is used all along the coast. The burning is carried out in cooperation between the farmers/landowners and the organisations working to promote and preserve the ancient coastal heather. In 2013 an Action Plan was approved by the Norwegian Environment Agency. Local volunteers and environmental groups are also actively participating

Impact

The remaining sites are spread all along the coast of Norway.



Websites

- <https://muho.no/lyngheisenteret>
- <https://www.miljodirektoratet.no/globalassets/publikasjoner/m23/m23.pdf>
- <https://www.statsforvalteren.no/contentassets/0e4d3c9dad2e4e369c6eac71010c953f/lyngsvii ng.pdf>