

WILD UNGULATES OF RUSSIA: TRENDS OF THEIR POPULATION DYNAMICS

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Received 19 March 2018, revised 14 May 2018, accepted 12 June 2018

Danilkin A. A. Wild Ungulates of Russia: Trends of Their Population Dynamics. *Povolzhskiy Journal of Ecology*, 2018, no. 3, pp. 357 – 367 (in Russian). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18500/1684-7318-2018-3-357-367>

According to a forecast of the specialists from “Centrokhotkontrol”, due to the natural climatic cyclicality, a recurrent reduction in the population of ungulates, the moose in particular, should occur in Russia from 2007 – 2010, which “will lead to a recurrent significant age minimum number” in the 2020s (in 2014 – 2015 in Central Russia). In reality, the abundance of the majority of species, including the moose, the European and Siberian roe deer, the red deer, the sika deer and the reindeer, has been steadily growing despite this “trophiclimatic” forecast. The decrease in the boar population is caused by the excessive destruction of the species due to the epizootic of African swine fever rather than by climatic changes. The populations of ungulates, however, increase unacceptably slowly (an annual growth of less than 3%), the available resources being about 5 times lower than the estimated potential. The main factors that inhibit the growth of populations are irrational legal and excessive illegal hunting and predation. The state hunting policy, the organization of hunting and resource management are still far from common sense. And all this does not guarantee the population of wild ungulates from new large-scale depressions.

Key words: wild ungulates, resources, population dynamics, shooting, “trophiclimatic” hypothesis.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18500/1684-7318-2018-3-357-367>

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