

ABSTRACT

SHEARING IS CARING //
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SHEARING IS CARING

AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLE OF SHEEP IN SHAPING
REGENERATIVE PRACTICES IN AN ALTERING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

This diploma project revolves around the potential of sheep resources in Norway. Through the study, I aim to highlight the unused value of sheep, with an emphasis on wool production as an underutilized asset as well as the sheep's role in maintaining a cultural landscape.

Inspired by the historical interdependence between sheep and humans, the aim is to develop a framework fostering collaboration between the two to optimize wool quality and enhance a specific coastal landscape called Hvaler, an archipelago located southeast of Oslo.

The proposal involves implementing a rotational grazing system that serves as a showcase for landscape maintenance.

The wool industry in Norway holds a rich heritage deeply intertwined with the country's agricultural landscape. However, despite its historical significance, modern challenges have led to a decline in the prominence of this industry. We can still see traces of this cultural landscape such as stone fences and walls, albeit many traditional practices have fallen into disuse. The waning prevalence of these practices can be attributed to shifts in global consumer demand.

The colored wool of historic sheep breeds are being replaced by alternative textiles. There is a significant issue with excess wool being discarded due to its downgrading. The biggest factor for wool being discarded, is the vegetable matter sticking to the fleece. How

this happens, depend on what the sheep eat, where it is grazing before shearing and how it is transported.

The project seeks to minimize wool wastage and address challenges facing Norway's wool industry, such as excessive wool disposal and declining traditional practices.

At the same time it contribute to preserving Hvaler's coastal cultural landscape, which faces the risk of woody encroachment. The rotational grazing system proposed integrates traditional sheep farming practices from the local cultural heritage with modern landscape management approaches. The layout of the pastures builds on the characteristic elongated formation of the Hvaler geology with its fertile low-lying and higher bedrock strips.

Introducing herbal ley as pasture, with a diverse mixture of herbaceous plants, legumes and grasses will promote high-quality wool, sheep health, and biodiversity.

Traditional stone fences, stone walls and watering troughs together with the natural rock formations work as both enclosures for the grazing areas, and habitat. Introducing orchards further enhance the landscape's ecological, historical and aesthetic value and, together with the pasture, provide habitat and sustenance for a multitude of species.

'Shearing is caring' illustrates how the mutual care between sheep, humans, and the environment can lead to sustainable landscape management and cultural

preservation. In essence, 'Shearing is caring' encapsulates a holistic approach to agriculture and landscape management—one that recognizes the mutual dependency between humans, animals, and nature, and emphasizes the importance of nurturing these relationships for the well-being of all.

