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Culling a Feral Flock of Coastal Goats in Norway

ERFP Assembly, Innsbruck, Aug 23, 2025

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Photo: Gerd Auan Feb 2024

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Two local goat breeds in Norway



Norwegian Dairy Goat

- 2015: 23 700 females 2024: 18 000 females
- Commercial breeding organisation



Norwegian Coastal Goat

- 2015: 280 females 2024: 1 000 females
- Breed society – the breed is included in the Norwegian conservation programme for AnGR

Photo: Ingunn Nevdal, NSG and Brit Hareid

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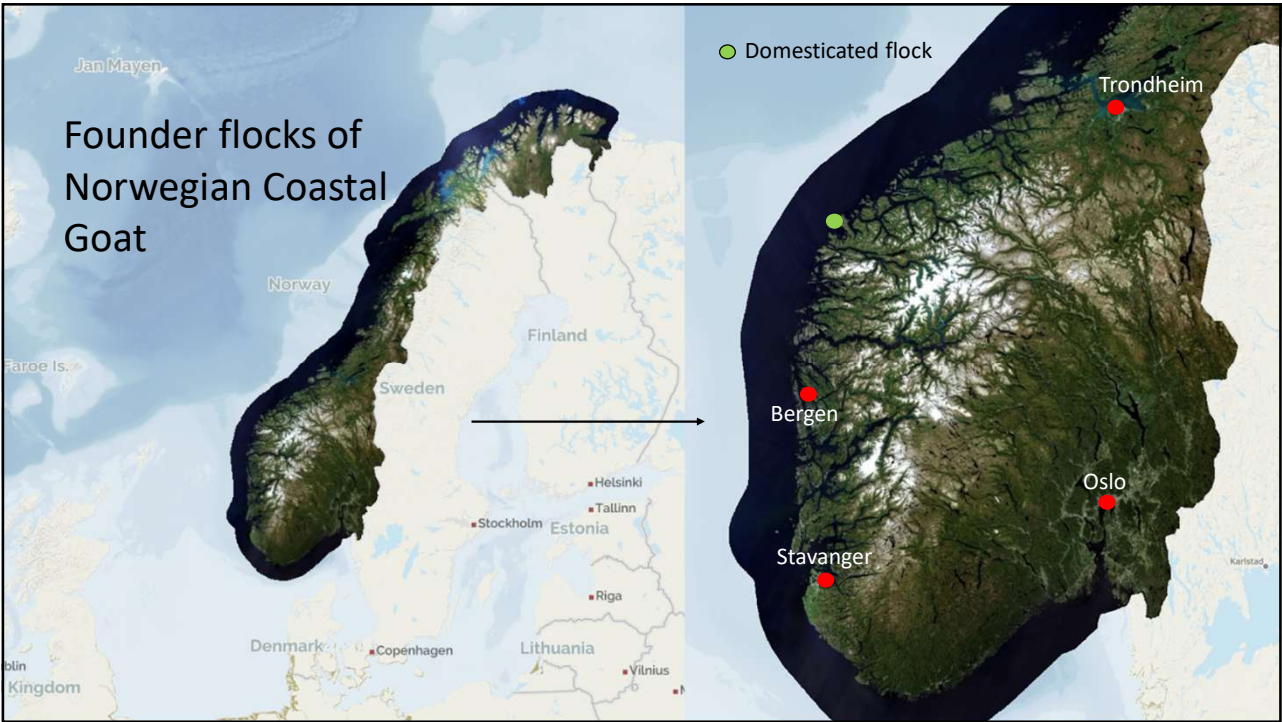
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What is a Coastal Goat?

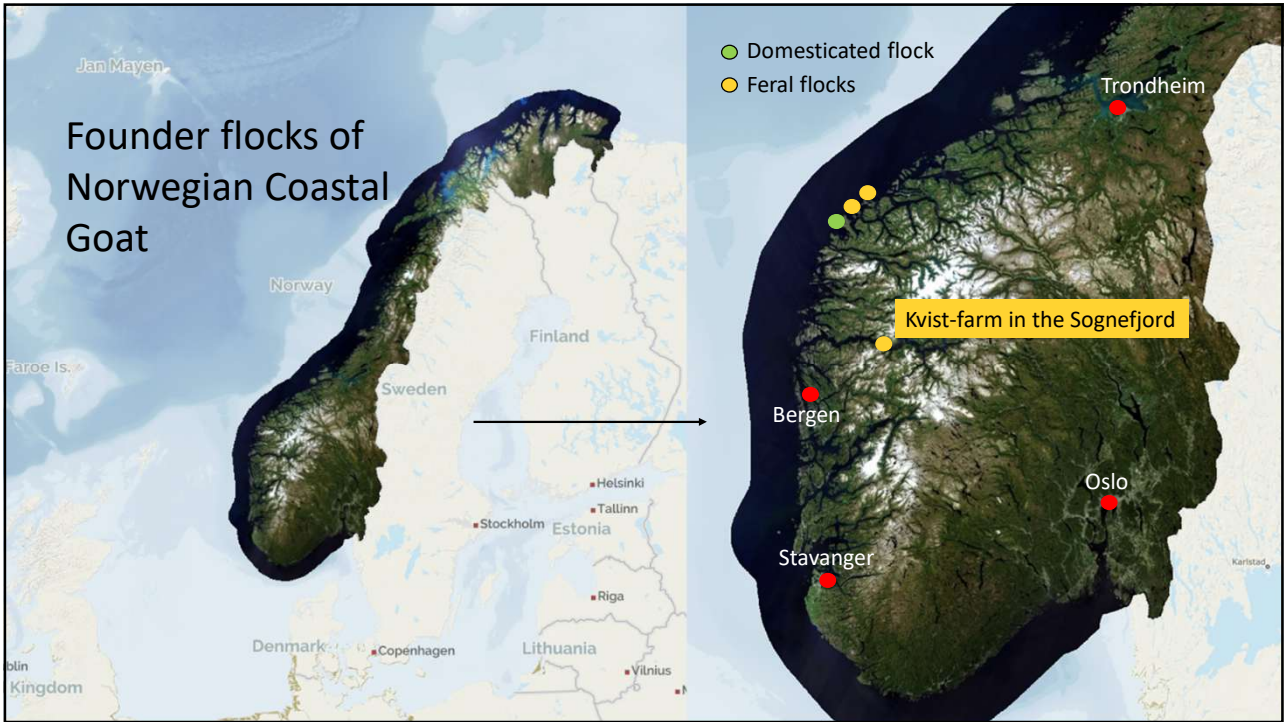
Goats used for grazing and meat production for centuries along the west coast of Norway



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The Kvist-goats

- Dairy goats up to the 1970's
- Gone feral since some time during the 1970's

Photo: Geir Ove Elvseter, April 2023

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The Kvist-goats's grazing area



Photo: Geir Ove Elvseter, April 2023



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Why culling them?

- The Norwegian Food Safety Authority has placed the flock under restrictions
 - Poor animal welfare for the feral flock
 - The owner cannot look after the flock as farm animals
 - The animal husbandry must be discontinued - culled

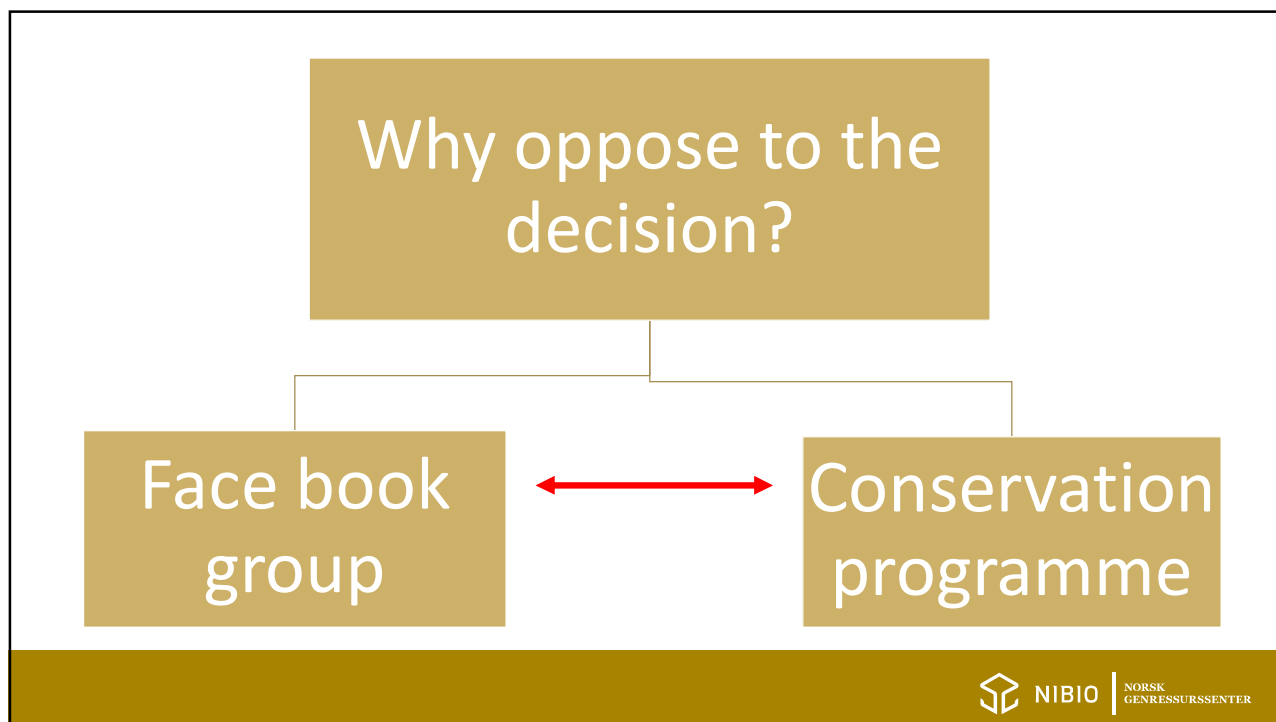
Photo: Nina Svartedal



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Why oppose the decision to cull the herd?

- Face book group:
 - The animal welfare is great!
 - These are the happiest animals on earth!
 - It's a cultural heritage and we need grazing animals.
 - The Food Safety Authority is totally wrong.
- The AnGR conservation programme:
 - No genetics conserved from "old Norwegian landrace goat"
 - The genetic material in this herd is of great interest
 - We need time and resources to conserve genetic material from the feral flock.
 - HOW can we conserve some of the animals?
 - Been in dialogue with the Food Safety Authority for 15 yrs...
 - The animal welfare is not good.

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FB-group: Oh – they are so cute and happy!



Photo: Stian A Åsebo, April 2024

These are NOT posted in the FB-group:



Photo: unknown



The destiny of the feral Kvist-goats was discussed on Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, Feb 17, 2025.

Appr 2.5 mill listeners...



The Norwegian Parliament in April 2025:

The Norwegian Parliament **urges** the government to take the initiative so that the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, **instead** of discontinuing the entire feral goat population... **continues** working to find solutions that *safeguard the welfare of the Kvist goats and preserve their genetic resources for future livestock production.*

2025 – finally a solution is in sight!



- 11th of February : a newborn kid was rescued and picked up by a passing local ambulance driver.
- During February, nine kids were rescued, picked up along this road.

Photo: Ina



The kid-host lives here

Photo: Geir Ove Elvseter, April 2024

The kids were malnourished and deficient in selenium and vitamin D.



Photo: Anne-Jo Bjordal



Photo: Anne-Jo Bjordal

The rescued kids now, in July 2025



Photo: Nina Svartedal

Status 2025

- Norwegian Food Safety Authority has placed the tamed flock under restrictions – at least for four years.
- The kid-host will keep the herd as long as it takes.
- The relevant authorities, the kid-host and the owner of the feral flock cooperate very well.



Photo: Elin Lønne Haugen, April 2023

The way forward

- Main goal:
 - Secure genetic material for the future
 - Discontinue the feral flock
- Actions:
 - Try to tame some of the feral animals Dec-Jan 2025/2026
 - Start culling (by hunting) the feral flock during fall 2025
 - Rescue more newborn kids in Feb-26
- Agreements – in proses:
 1. Food Safety Authority must accept the action plan
 2. Agreement on “conservation herd” for the tamed herd
 3. Agreement between host and owner of the flock



Photo: Synne Catrin Øren, March 2023



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To be
continued...

Thanks for your
attention!



Photo: Nina Svartedal



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