

The hunting of the mallorcan wild goat in the context of cynegetic tourism

I. INTRODUCTION

Recent works have shown the expansionist process that hunting tourism has experienced in the last decades, both nationally and internationally (Rengifo, 2008, 2009, 2011; Seixas, 2009). Therefore, cynegetic tourism is the subject of a continuous debate in which the positive and negative repercussions that these movements can have for the development of the local societies and the conservation of spaces and species of hunting are being discussed (Lindsey et al. 2007a; Lindsey et al. 2007b; Rengifo, 2010; Packer et al., 2011; Buckley&Mossaz, 2015; Coca et al., 2015; Crosmary et al., 2014). For this reason, attention is drawn on the need for hunting to be practiced under proper management criteria, for better economic and conservation benefits, as it can be certified in numerous examples spread throughout the world, in both developed and developing countries.

From the conceptual point of view, hunting tourism, in the context of the XXI century, is limited to the set of activities whose primary purpose is the capture of an animal (big or small) in a context of leisure and recreation that, according to the regulations in force in the territory where hunting is practiced, is considered game (Rengifo, 2008).

The current reality points out the existence of two major potential markets for hunters worldwide: North American - 13 million hunters (US Fish and Wildlife Service, 2014) and European - 7 million hunters - (FACE, 2010). Other contingents of hunters spread throughout the world would be added. In Europe, figures close to 20% have been used to determine the volume of hunters

travelling abroad to hunt (Hofer, 2002), although these figures would show very different proportions depending on the different countries. In Spain, the official figures show the presence of foreign hunters and an intense movement of national hunters who move between autonomous communities (Rengifo, 2011).

This article is justified by the lack of work that addresses the specific role played by certain species of big game, which are characterized by their limited natural distribution and by being susceptible to be taken under trophy hunting, in the promotion of cynegetic tourism. In addition, in the specific case of the wild goat, there are several unique circumstances that are still to be analysed as a result of its recent incorporation into international hunting circuits, after being recognized in 2004 by the Safari Club International (SCI) and in 2009 by the International Council for Hunting and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), as a big game species. The work focuses on the island of Mallorca because it is the only territory in which the hunting of trophies of the *Balearian boc*, the central object of the article, is practiced.

II. HUNTING IN THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

The Balearic Archipelago is made up of the islands of Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza and Formentera, as well as several smaller islands and islets which, together, cover an area of 4,984.59 km². The Autonomous Community, with a population that reached 1,103,442 inhabitants (Ibestat, 2015a) in 2014, is densely populated (221 inhabitants

/ km²), presenting values that more than double the average Spanish density. The relief is characterized by its softness, except in the Sierra de Tramuntana de Mallorca (declared World Heritage in 2011 in the category of Cultural Landscape by Unesco) where the highest heights that culminate with the Puig Major (1,445 meters above sea level) can be found. The Mediterranean climate, the calcareous materials and the strong humanization derived from the high population density, condition the presence of a complex landscape mosaic. Tourism is currently the main engine of the island economy.

During its history, hunting has been in the Balearic Islands a constant that has been transmitted from generation to generation.

1. CURRENT SITUATION

Hunting in the Balearic Islands is currently characterized by the following aspects:

- Significant number of hunting licenses, quantified at the end of the first decade of the XXIst century in more than 27,000 (Barceló, 2009).
- More than 1,900 game reserves that cover 72% of the total area.
- A remarkable role of hunting associationism represented by about 100 hunter societies.
- Diversity of physical and natural factors that favour a significant number of game species, both sedentary and migratory (Table 1).
- Survival of traditional hunting modalities. In the Balearic Islands there are traditional hunting practices that have been forming a very particular heritage. It is the hunting of thrushes with "*filats a coll*", the hunting of rabbits with Ibizaian warren hound, the hunting *amb cans de conills* of Menorca, the hunting of goats with dogs and rope and the hunting of partridge with *bagues*. They are also indigenous hunting breeds, as well as the Ibizaian warren hound, the *ca de conills* of Menorca, the *ca mè mallorquí* and the *ca rater*.

2. THE PROTAGONISM OF THE ISLAND OF MALLORCA IN THE CYNEGETIC ACTIVITY

The island of Mallorca plays a fundamental role in hunting in the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands. It has an area of 3,622.54 km², which represents

72.67% of the Balearic territory. At present, it has a total of 1,466 hunting areas, which together with the common hunting grounds, means that it is possible to hunt on 92.01% of the island (Barceló, 2015).

Another fact that comes to confirm the weight of Mallorca in the regional hunting scene is the number of licenses issued. During the year 2013, 18,236 hunting licenses were issued on the island of Mallorca, corresponding to approximately 2% of its island population.

Finally, the hunting importance of the island of Mallorca is also felt in the rich social fabric that surrounds the 86 societies of hunters (Figure 3) (Barceló et al., 2015).

3. CYNEGETIC TOURISM INITIATIVES ON THE ISLAND OF MALLORCA

During the last decades, along with the development of tourism modalities related to nature and rural areas, initiatives associated with hunting tourism have appeared on the island of Mallorca (Barceló et al., 2009). Tourism infrastructures, favourable climate throughout the year, good connectivity by sea or air and the need to encourage the rural economy are factors that, together with the exclusivity of various species and hunting modalities, grant Mallorca an interesting potential as a destination for cynegetic tourism. (Barceló&Seguí, 2004; Cardell, 2006; Barceló et al., 2009). In this sense, we must point out the existence, in the year 2015, of 11 preserves that offer commercial services of hunting tourism in Mallorca (Table 2), of which 3 preserves are dedicated to small game, 7 to big game and 1 is mixed. Most of these preserves have begun to exploit their hunting resources, in relation to hunting tourism, less than a decade ago.

In the hunting offer of Mallorca, the intensive preserves play an undoubted role. The 11 preserves with hunting tourism services cover 2.06% (5,822 ha) of the delimited area of the island of Mallorca, distributed between 0.25% (723 ha) that corresponds to preserves exclusively for small game and 1.74% (4,901 ha) with only for big game. Finally, the remaining 0.07% (198 ha) belongs to a preserve that includes both possibilities.

In any case, the insular touristic offer in terms of available hunting areas is modest, but not without interest due to factors that make the hunting experience unique and exclusive (landscape, traditional modalities or singular species). In addition, being a very localized and minority tourism compared to other modalities, it is necessary to consider its strategic value at the local level since it allows the creation of permanent and temporary

jobs, and ensures the management and investments in farms otherwise limited in terms development opportunities, circumstances to which the proper conservation of spaces should be added.

III. THE MALLORCAN WILD GOAT: A SINGULAR GOAT

Wild goats were not really present in the Mediterranean islands before the end of the IX-VIII millennium BC. (Masseti, 2014). In the case of Majorca, it is stated that the colonization of the island by humans took place between 2350 and 2150 BC, without any evidence of any previous human presence (Alcover, 2010). For its part, the arrival of the first goats is documented between the years 2300 and 2050 BC. (Seguí et al., 2005).

Among the phenomena leading to the differentiation of the different Mediterranean insular populations of *Capra* over the millennia with respect to the original breed, the adaptive to the insular ecosystems in conditions of freedom converge with those derived from the anthropic action. As a determining factor in recent times, there has been a genetic introgression by domestic goat breeds of cattle interest imported during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which eventually escaped to the natural milieu.

Consequently, the present situation of the Mallorcan wild goat is that of isolated populations characterized genetically and phenotypically, that reflect both their ancestral character and the effects of the anthropic management differentiating the original breed, maintained with conservation efforts linked to their use of quality. Most of the Sierra de Tramontana and Artá massif are occupied by a heterogeneous population of goats with different weight of one and another domestic breed over the absent or minority Mallorcan substrate, all of them in absolute freedom.

1. MORPHOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Mallorcan wild goat is well characterized morphologically and genetically (Seguí et al., 2005) and its phenotypic recognition for the purposes of management and normative use is included in the *Decreto 91/2006, de 27 de octubre, de regulación de poblaciones caprinas, de ordenación del aprovechamiento cinegético de la cabra salvaje mallorquina y de modificación de los planes técnicos* (Decree 91/2006, of October 27, on the regulation of caprine populations, on ordering the game

hunting of the Mallorcan wild goat and modifying the technical plans.)

In terms of morphology (Figure 5), the Mallorcan wild goat is slightly smaller than the domestic goat (*Capra hircus*), with sublongillary proportions and body length superior to the thoracic perimeter. The males weigh an average of 50 kg and the females weigh 32 kg. The height at the withers is 70 cm in males and 56 cm in females (Seguí et al., 2005)

2. DISTRIBUTION

The goat populations are basically located in the Sierra de Tramontana, a mountainous alignment that runs along the North-western fringe of the island, and in the mountains of Artá, in the Northeast. They occupy all mountain habitats, from sea level to the highest peaks, including coastal cliffs, pine forests and holm oaks and the most inaccessible rocky areas.

Hybrid populations extend along the territories mentioned, coexisting in certain nuclei with dispersed fine populations (mainly from the northern slope of the Tramontana mountain range and the center of the Artá mountains). It is precisely in the preserves with Quality Certificate of Big Game Hunting, all of them in the Sierra de Tramontana, where the fine, stable and healthy populations of Mallorcan wild goat are found (Figure 6).

The quality certification of big game is done by the competent hunting management administration. Technically it implies a complex procedure, of the most exhaustive ones that are applied in the national territory in the area of big game management. It implies a semi-annual population estimation, made by the administration itself, in which it must be fulfilled that 70% of the observed individuals are phenotypically assigned to the fine population (Certificate of Second Category). If more than 90% are observed as such, the certificate is First Class.

In general terms, the dominions of the Mallorcan wild goat are characterized by the importance of the relief, the low transformation of the environment and the high levels of environmental protection. As for the hunting characteristics of these spaces, bounded terrains coexist with wildlife refuges and common hunting areas.

IV. BIG GAME HUNTING IN MALLORCA

Big game hunting in Mallorca focuses exclusively on goat hunting, although this has not always been the case.

During the Middle Ages, the Majorcan monarchs were big hunters, imitating the behavior of the French monarchy. Hence a great liking for falconry and the introduction in certain enclaves of certain species, especially of big game (Sastre, 1988). At the same time, the availability of quality hunting areas was important, so between 1300 and 1313 the Crown acquired the Teix Mountain in Buñola and Ferrutx in Artá with the intention of creating hunting reserves. In addition, King Jaime II (king of Mallorca 1276-1311) promoted the creation of a pasture around Bellver Castle in Palma (Sastre, 1988; Pons, 1975).

In Majorca, there were basically small game species (several introduced by humans – red partridge, pheasant, rabbit and hare), which conditioned hunting modalities very differently from those practiced contemporaneously in the peninsula and in other parts of Europe with the presence of big game species. In fact, once the preserve of Artá was created, the King decided to repopulate it with deers who were raised in the wild in the marinas of Lluçmayor and other areas of Majorca, and then transported by sea to Ferrutx. Nevertheless, it was during the reign of Sancho I (king of Majorca 1311-1324) that, in addition to reaching the maximum territorial extent, Artá's preserve was repopulated with wild boars, pheasants and herons (Sastre, 1988). During this period, the hunting was marked by the establishment of regulations and periods of prohibition, and the rights related to the property were reinforced.

In general, between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, it has been documented in different territories of the island, thanks to previous works of a historical nature (Rosselló, 1979; Danús, 1990; Xamena, 2000; Bover&Rosselló, 2003, among others), the presence of deer, fallow deers, wild boars and gazelles (Barceló, 2009). However, various citations appearing in Alcover (2010) indicate that deer and fallow deer were already introduced in Mallorca following Roman colonization (123 BC).

With these historical antecedents, it must be pointed out that big game hunting on the island, as it is known today, is a relatively modern hunting practice. On the one hand, the recent use of wild goats, well into the second half of the twentieth century, is framed around the figure of the shepherd - hunter. In this scenario, the capture of goats, through traditional methods, is part of the cattle management of large mountain farms. This is confirmed by the few localized texts on the subject, such as the *Die Balearen* by Archduke Luis Salvador de Austria (1999-2003). The author does not mention the Mallorcan goat in the wide hunting chapter of the work but rather includes it in the livestock section (third volume, Mallorca

- general part), describing that domestic and wild existed being different. At the same time, in the notes on the wild goat that appear in the magazine *Lluch* (M., 1928) it is indicated that once a year, in the farms of the Sierra de Tramontana, there were intents to capture the elusive goats with dogs and rope. The occasion gathered pastors and porters from all over the area, and even masters and gentlemen participated in this retreat. In no case is this practice classified in a clearly hunting scenario, although what is very clear is the existence of a wild goat typology differentiated from the domestic one.

On the other hand, it will be necessary to wait until the end of the twentieth century for the Mallorcan wild goat to acquire the category of big game and, consequently, recognize this modality on the island. In fact, the Spanish hunting literature, composed of chapters of books and articles published during the last century (and some still in the present one) do not mention the big game in Majorca.

The primordial economic activity in the Sierra de Tramontana was, until the beginning of mass tourism, the agrarian one. The main organizing element was the great exploitation, known on the island of Majorca by the term “*possessió*”, where all the agrarian activities of the Mallorcan mountain were integrated and maintained an almost absolute hegemony until the end of the nineteenth century and, with considerable weight, until 1950. *L'amo en Bernadí de Muntanya*, born in the hamlet of Binibona in 1929, and who was raised with goat's milk, remembers that each farm of the Sierra had its own lines of goat (*cabra cimarrona*). In each farm a single breeding male was left. He took young goats, always with a rope, to eat and to sell, and he affirms that goats have always been the main subsistence factor in the Sierra (Colom, 1991).

The arrival of mass tourism, whose starting point can be established in the decade 1950-60, dragged the agrarian activities to an almost residual state. In certain municipalities, “*possessions*” become recreational areas and / or secondary residences, and their lands became large hunting reserves that, if they are commercially exploited, offer incomes that surpass those obtained with the traditional agricultural use (Salvá, 1979). Parallel to this global transformation, basic trades such as that of shepherd practically disappeared and others like that of hunter completely extinguished, with hunting being an idle occupation. This process described in the case of Sierra de Tramontana is applicable to other mountainous areas of the island.

It is therefore in the second half of the twentieth century when several factors converged that a situation suitable for the emergence of big game hunting in Mallorca

was created, it was already understood as a recreational practice and unrelated to livestock production. Nevertheless, various decades and stages passed before a model of hunting use and management of the Mallorcan wild goat got consolidated.

Today, three types of big game hunting associated with the goat can be distinguished: selective breeding, young goat hunting and trophies hunting. Of these three, from the touristic point of view, the one that keeps interest is the hunting of trophies, a type of hunting that is in vogue on a world scale and that in the case of the Balearic boc is practiced exclusively in the island of Mallorca. The hunting season is wide and the economic benefits directly revert in the mountain farms and in the rural groups that work in this activity. The trophy hunter has a profile associated with quality tourism, with high purchasing power, not mass, with little impact with low consumption of natural resources and with a high demand of the complementary offer related to the gastronomy or products of the land, among others (Barceló&Seguí, 2004). The hunting of trophies, especially since the recognition of the *Balearian boc* by the SCI, has experienced a great boom in the island, all also driven by the media repercussion of this hunting phenomenon in national and international media (mainly magazines and specialized television programs). Thus, between 2008 and September 2015, 256 people (most hunting tourists) from 22 different nationalities have opted for a Mallorcan wild goat trophy (Table 3). The largest percentage of hunters were North Americans (36.33%), followed by Spanish (31.25%), Russians (7.03%), Danes (4.69%) and French (4.30%). The remaining 16.41% came from other countries, most of which were located in the European Union.

A novel and peculiar initiative is the big game hunting without death promoted by the *Associació de Caçadors de Cabrits amb Cans i Llaç*, which already includes the current Balearic hunting law. It opens here the possibility of catching copies of the *Balearian boc*, and later release them after making the measurements of the live trophy. This novel hunting option makes it attractive to a younger, more adventurous profile with a conservationist sensitivity, as well as posing a different challenge to the classic trophy hunter. In fact, following the growing demand, the Society of Hunters of Alcudia has already included in its offer this original proposal. For its part, the Council of Mallorca is studying, together with the SCI, the possibility of homologation without death of the Balearian boc (Seguí et al., 2014). It is a unique and differentiated product, linked to the traditional hunting modality with dogs and rope. Colom (2014) describes it as

“The old freedom to catch the big boc alive, to look into his eyes and, from humility, to release him.”

V. CONCLUSIONS

Cynegetic tourism is a specific form of tourism that has experienced an outstanding boom in recent years, both nationally and internationally. This growth in hunting tourism is directly related to the changes experienced by a series of general and specific factors, favouring the growth of a demand for competing destinations all over the world. Among these destinations is the island of Mallorca, where it has been developed, especially during the last decade, a hunting offer directed to the foreign hunter. This offer, which is currently made up of a series of small and big game reserves, is particularly characterized, within big games preserves, by the presence of the so-called Mallorcan wild goat that circumscribes its distribution to the island of Mallorca. In this sense, the island of Mallorca has joined the list of destinations for hunting trophies existing on a global scale, after the recognition of the *boc balear* as a trophy that can have homologation and its subsequent integration into the commercial hunting circuits. This incorporation is based on several fundamental facts:

The recognition that the Safari Club International did, in 2004, of this species as cynegetic (*Balearian boc*). In this sense, it should be noted that this important entity, created in the early 1970s in the United States, has more than 55,000 members spread over almost two hundred groupings, called Chapter. All over the planet. As a result, Mallorcan wild goat, or Balearian boc, is included in the trophy books that this body publishes, with the consequent promotion of this fact and the interest it will arouse among thousands of trophy hunters. Along the same lines, the recognition by the International Council of Hunting and Wildlife Conservation in 2009 had an impact.

The application of management models whose purpose has been to combine the conservation of this goat variety (through the recovery of genetic purity) and the conservation of vegetation (influencing the overpopulation of mixed goats). This attitude connects with the feeling of the conservationist hunter who values spaces and species that are defined by their biological and environmental quality.

Normative actions that favour the survival of unique traditional hunting modalities that can serve as an incentive for the arrival of new hunters. In this context, we must highlight the hunting of the goat with dogs and rope.