



Post mortem tools for otter: monitoring and research

Workshop 24. – 27. February 2010 at the Game Management School and National Environmental Research Institute, Rønde, Denmark

An international workshop to develop and coordinate conservation measures for otters organized by Swedish Museum of Natural History & National Environmental Research Institute, Denmark on behalf of IUCN Otter Specialist Group, Europe.

Aims

The workshop aims at developing standardized post mortem procedures for otter (*Lutra lutra*) and at initiating a platform for scientists to exchange and share information on otter samples to encourage and promote more detailed pan-European studies on otters. The post mortem protocols will be presented as guidelines from the European section of the IUCN Otter Specialist Group.

Background & Objective

The Eurasian otter is protected in all European countries. In the European Union the otter is strictly protected under the Habitat Regulations and all member states must conserve and manage the population and its habitats to ensure favourable conservation status. Member states in EU shall also establish a system to monitor incidental captures and killings of otters, e.g. road casualties, and in the light of the information gathered take further research or conservation measures as required to ensure that incidental captures and killings does not have a significant negative impact on the conservation status of the otter.

The otter is a shy and secretive species, why several methods are needed to monitor population status and development. Recovery of carcasses, post mortems and analyses of organs and tissues allow researchers and conservationists to gain valuable knowledge on the health and status of otter populations. Population densities of otters are low why widespread active sample collection is expensive and given the species protected status also unacceptable. Hence, it is important to maximize the information that can be extracted from recovered otter carcasses for incidental killings.

The need for a workshop focusing on standardized post mortem protocols for otters was discussed on the European Otter Workshop in October 2008. Presently, the recovery and examination of otter carcasses vary widely between countries; from well established and funded systematic collection and post mortem analyses, e.g. in Sweden and United Kingdom, to occasional recovery of single carcasses through individual researcher's networks or specific short term projects.

Depending on the state of each carcass and available resources for post mortem analysis a set of post mortem protocols are needed. During the Bloody Workshop different standards for post mortem on otters will be tested. The outcome of the workshop will be standardized protocols for post mortem examinations of otters.

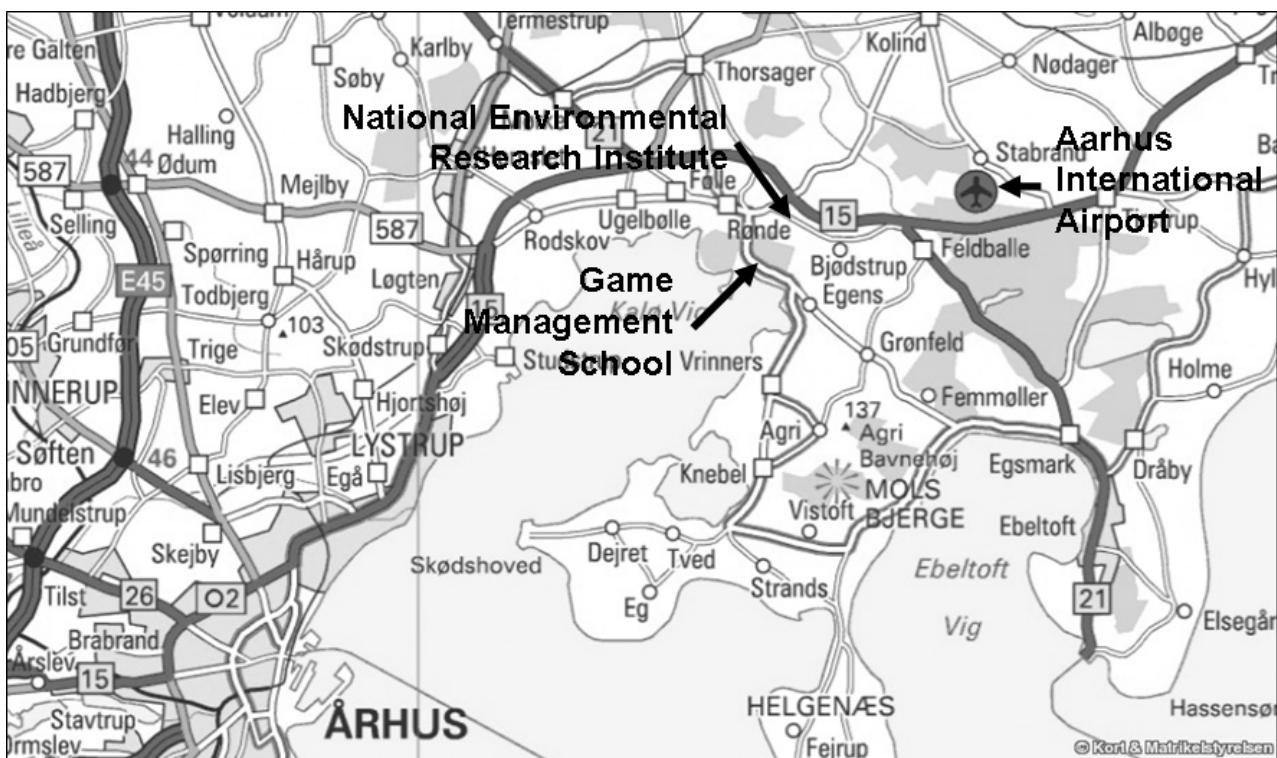
Standardized post mortem analysis, sample storage and a database on tissue banks in the different countries can encourage and promote closer cooperation and between researchers and conservationists. Larger detailed pan-European studies may ultimately result in more efficient management tools and conservation plans for otters.

Venue

The workshop will be held at the National Environmental Research Institute (NERI), Department of Wildlife Ecology & Biodiversity and the Game Management School (GMS) of the Danish Hunting Association at Kalø, Denmark. These two institutions are situated 2 km from each other close to the small town of Rønde and in the vicinity of the Aarhus International airport.

The delegates arrive during the afternoon on 24 February shuttled from the nearby airport and gather the Game Management School for reception and evening meal. Accommodation, meals and morning talks will be at the GMS. The practical exercises and afternoon talks will be at NERI. There are abundant opportunities for coastal and woodland walks in the immediate area.

The workshop is organized by Department of Contaminant Research, Swedish Museum of Natural History and Department of Wildlife Ecology and Biodiversity, National Environmental Research Institute, Aarhus University on behalf of the IUCN Otter Specialist Group, Europe.



Organizers

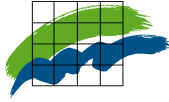
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Programme

Wednesday, 24. Feb.

Afternoon Arrival & registration (GMS)
20.00 - Welcome reception and ice breakers (GMS)

Thursday, 25. Feb.

09.00 - 09.30 Opening & presentation of Centre for Wildlife Health – Aksel Bo Madsen & Ole R. Therkildsen.
09.30 - 10.30 Oral presentations and discussion:
Tour de Europe - carcasses recovery and post mortem procedures – quick country report for represented countries
What is needed and what is wanted by vets. and biologists. - Arno Gutleb
10.30 – 11.00 Coffee & tea break
11.00 – 12.00 Oral presentations and discussion:
Presentation of post mortem protocol – basic and minimum - Hugh Jansman
Presentation of post mortem protocol – the comprehensive – Vic Simpson
12.00 - 14.00 Lunch break – transport to NERI lab.
14.00 - 17.00 Practising post mortem of otters – the comprehensive standard (NERI lab.)
19.00 - Dinner (GMS)

Friday, 26. Feb.

09.00 - 10.30 Oral presentations and discussion:
Storage of tissues and organs – state-of-the-art standards NRM – Anna Roos
Database for stored tissues and organs – Liz Chadwick
10.30 – 11.00 Coffee & tea break
11.00 – 12.00 Oral presentations and discussion:
- open
12.00 - 14.00 Lunch break – transport to NERI lab.
14.00 - 16.00 Practising post mortem of otters – minimum and basic standard (NERI lab.)
16.00 - 17.00 Evaluation of post mortem protocols – how to proceed (NERI)
20.00 - Official workshop dinner – and social evening

Saturday, 27. Feb.

10.00 - Excursion – guided by Bjarne Søgaard