
Social licence for the utilization of wild berries in the context of local traditional rights and the interests of the berry industry

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ABSTRACT

Everyman's right, as applied in Finland and other Nordic countries, allows the picking of natural products (wild berries, mushrooms, etc.) regardless of land ownership. Harvesting and selling natural products has been an important source of income in rural areas of northern Finland. As household berry picking has more or less replaced small-scale commercial berry picking, foreign seasonal pickers are now supplying raw material for the berry industry. This has aroused vivid discussions about the limits of everyman's right and inhabitants' rights to local natural resources. Critics claim that commercially organized berry picking makes it difficult for inhabitants to fully use natural resources. In this article, we present the results of a survey aimed at nature-oriented, mainly northern residents of Finland and a telephone and e-mail service to which residents of northern Finland sent feedback regarding foreign berry pickers. The results of the survey and the feedback show that, in general, organized berry picking by foreign labourers is accepted if some basic guidelines or rules are respected. These

guidelines may stem from local customary laws or traditions which have regulated berry picking. Another factor which would improve local acceptance and promote social licence for organized berry picking by foreign and non-local labourers is the distribution of benefits. At present, the advantages of organized berry picking are seen as benefiting stakeholders outside the local community, whereas local communities have to bear the costs: for example, increased berry picking activity in areas which they have utilized for a prolonged time, sometimes through generations.

Keywords: wild berries, berry industry, social licence, everyman's right

INTRODUCTION

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs), also known as natural or wild products, are products of biological origin other than wood that are derived from forests, other wooded land and trees outside forests (Laird et al. 2010). The most important natural products in Finland and other parts of the Barents region are wild (or forest) berries. Berry picking is a popular form of forest multiple-use in Finland (Turtiainen and Nuutinen 2012). Everyman's right, which is applied in Finland and other Nordic countries, allows the picking of natural products such as wild berries and mushrooms no matter who owns the land on which they are found. It is estimated that approximately 60–70% of Finns pick wild berries (Mikkonen et al. 2007, Sievänen and Neuvonen 2010). Berry and mushroom picking is the most popular wilderness activity among Finns (Hallikainen 1998).

The value of wild berries purchased for wholesale trade markets ("commercial picking") varied between 5.4 and 13.3 million euros per year during 2000–2010 in Finland (Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2011). Household picking is not included in these numbers, but it has been estimated that the combined value of household and commercial picking may be approximately 77 million euros in years when berries are plentiful (Finnish Forest Research Institute 2010). The most important wild berries in Finland are bilberries (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), lingonberries (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and cloudberries (*Rubus chaemomorus*). These three berry species represent more than 90% of commercial berry picking (Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2011). The Barents region is the main production area for wild berries. In Finland, the Barents region areas (Lapland and Oulu provinces) produced on average 70% of commercially picked berries during 2002–2011 (Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2012).

In 2004 it was estimated that there were approximately 2000 person-years in the wild berry industry in Finland (Moisio 2004). The companies involved in the wild berry industry are small and medium-sized enterprises. The smallest companies (1–5 staff members) often act as berry-buying agents for larger companies, which typically process the berries into jellies, juices, jams, powders and nutraceuticals. Most of the wild berries picked commercially in the Barents region are purchased by a few companies, which gather large volumes of fresh berries and sell the frozen and cleaned berries to national and international industrial customers (Paassilta et al. 2009).

In the past, wild berries were an important source of income especially in remote areas of northern Finland. However, due to urbanization and the rising standard of living, nowadays less than 10% of Finnish citizens pick wild berries commercially (Mikkonen 2007). Since commercial picking by permanent inhabitants has decreased and everyman's right generally applies to foreign citizens as well as national residents, the Finnish and Swedish berry industries – especially the companies selling large volumes of frozen berries to international companies – have utilized foreign labourers in order to provide sufficient supplies of wild berries. The annual number of foreign berry pickers in Finland is nowadays approximately 4000, roughly 50–70% of them working in the Barents region provinces of Finland. In Sweden the number of foreign pickers was as high as 7000 in 2009, but by 2012 the official number of pickers had decreased to 2000 (Rantanen and Valkonen 2011). These foreign berry pickers, who are invited by Finnish and Swedish berry companies, come mainly from Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe.

Although these berry pickers come to Finland with seasonal workers' visas, they do not have a formal employment relationship. Instead, they sell the berries they have picked, usually to the company that invited them, covering their expenses (travel, accommodation and daily expenses) through part of the income they receive from the berries (Finnish Ministry of the Interior 2007; Rantanen and Valkonen 2011). In 2011, roughly 80% of commercially picked berries in Finland were picked by foreign labourers (Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2012). In Sweden most of the commercial picking of wild berries is also done by foreign pickers, but the pickers are employed by the company that invites them or by an employment agency which charges the berry company for the berries they pick (Rantanen and Valkonen 2011).

The use of foreign berry pickers has aroused a debate in Finland in which accusations of human trafficking, labour deprivation and the misuse of everyman's right have been presented. Furthermore, the sudden appearance of numerous foreign berry pickers in

isolated, sparsely-populated villages in remote areas has awoken controversy among local inhabitants.

The discussion appears typically in letters to the editor of local and regional newspapers and electronic message boards. In order to get a more detailed picture of opinions about foreign labourers involved in berry picking, we conducted a survey among Finns who are nature-oriented and mainly residents of northern Finland. There were two dimensions to the survey: one measuring attitudes towards the place of origin of the berry pickers (local – non-local – foreigner), and one measuring attitudes towards the purpose of the picking (household – commercial – organized commercial).

A parallel channel for acquiring data concerning the attitudes was an officially established telephone and e-mail service to which residents of northern Finland could send messages by sms or e-mail in order to give their opinions regarding foreign berry pickers. We have analyzed the central experiences and concerns which the locals expressed through this service. Qualitative content analysis of the feedback given through calls and messages to the telephone service focused on the following dimensions: the various parties involved in berry picking and the various topics that were raised in callers' statements.

The aim of the research was to find out what kind of nuances there are in opinions regarding foreign berry pickers and the utilization of everyman's right for business purposes, and whether there are factors in the respondents' background which correlate with their opinions. Another aim was to determine the preconditions which should be fulfilled in order to get social licence for the organized, industrial utilization of wild berries. Such a licence is one of the prerequisites for the social sustainability of wild berry utilization.

SOCIAL LICENCE AS A PREREQUISITE FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Social licence to operate refers to the local community's acceptance of a company or industry which operates in the area. The idea of social licence has been developed within the mining industry, but it can also be applied to other land-users or industries utilizing natural resources (Black 2013; Eerola and Ziessler 2013). In this article we apply the concept to berry picking.

As social licence is an informal phenomenon, its development usually occurs outside regulatory processes and formal permits (Yates and Hovarth 2013). The term *social licence* emphasizes the differences between legal permits and social acceptability or legitimacy. The basis of social licence is the benefits that the community acquires from the company or industry. As the licence is “granted” through a social process by a local or regional community, it is based on the beliefs, observations and opinions of local people concerning the activities of the industry. Social licence can appear in many forms. Sometimes it is a lack of resistance to a business, or sometimes broad support or even advocacy for the business (Yates and Hovarth 2013). Obtaining social licence requires a great deal of time and effort, and yet it is dynamic and temporary. It is not tangible if beliefs and opinions are not measured, which means it may be difficult to determine when social licence is granted and when it is not.

Social expectations partly exist independently of the prevailing regulations. Communities do not necessarily accept legal practices as such. A community’s distrust of a business may lead to political pressure and possibly new regulations and legislation. For a business, social licence is not only a tool for risk management, but a way to avoid new and possibly costly regulations. Social licence is emerging as a critical success factor in many business areas. Operating beyond the minimum-level actions required by formal legislation is an important factor for the long-term reputation of a company in the eyes of the stakeholders and local communities.

Earlier, companies were generally welcomed as employers (Black 2013). Nowadays, the potential of a company to provide employment for local people is not always enough to establish a community’s trust in a business. It should be ensured that the benefits for the local community exceed the costs, which are often immediate and local, whereas the benefits of business typically are spread widely and are often realized only in the long term.

Both *community* and *social licence* are theoretical terms which aim to capture essential features of reality. However, they are not easily observable, may change over time, and are inherently vague to a certain extent. This affects how the development of social licence is to be seen (Wilburn and Wilburn 2011). Usually full consensus does not exist because there are varying interests. Due to the dynamic nature of social licence, the question arises whether it is possible to measure its actualization. Understanding local conditions, equal distribution of benefits, land ownership regimes, and the environmental impacts of a project are essential factors when evaluating the preconditions for social licence.

From the point of view of social sustainability, it is essential to understand that social licence is company- or industry-based and its contribution to sustainability is indirect. However, it is still a step towards sustainability. Eventually the question is who will get some benefits and who will lose something, which leads to questions of justice. Justice and fairness are preconditions for social stability and sustainability. At the same time, new instruments for co-operation are being developed. This will improve the social-ecological system's adaptive capacity: its ability to cope with unexpected external or internal changes. Licence developing is a process of social learning. During this process some common interests between local people, berry pickers and berry companies can be seen.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study consists, firstly, of a quantitative survey and, secondly, the qualitative analysis of messages to the telephone and e-mail service mentioned earlier. The survey thus gives a more general view of the issue, while the qualitative data go into more localized and specific issues.

The **survey** was based on a questionnaire which was distributed in fairs, seminars and exhibitions connected with agriculture and the use of nature mainly in northern parts of Finland. A four-point scale, plus the alternative "I cannot say" (Table 1), was used to ask about attitudes towards restrictions on berry picking. The set of variables described two dimensions: 1) the origin of the pickers: local pickers, non-local Finnish pickers and foreign pickers, and 2) the purpose of the activity: picking for one's own use, for sale (later called "commercial"), and organized picking for sale (later called "organized commercial").

<p>MAIN QUESTION: SHOULD EVERYMAN'S RIGHT BE LIMITED IN THE FOLLOWING CASES?</p>	<p>ANSWER ALTERNATIVES (CORRESPONDING ANSWER SCORES ARE GIVEN IN PARENTHESES)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berry picking for household use by local people • Commercial berry picking by local people • Organized commercial berry picking by local people • Berry picking for household use by non-local Finns • Commercial berry picking by non-local Finns • Organized commercial berry picking by non-local Finns • Berry picking for household use by foreign people • Commercial berry picking by foreign people • Organized commercial berry picking by foreign people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No limitations (1) • Slight limitations (2) • Rather strong limitations (3) • Very strong limitations (4) • I cannot say (5)

Table 1. Questionnaire used in the survey

The survey also gathered information about the respondents' gender, age, place of residence, educational level, income and modes of nature use (berry picking, fishing and hunting).

Missing values in the data were imputed using the SPSS multiple imputation (MI) procedure (see Rubin 1987) to get complete data. The imputation of continuous variables was done using a regression model and categorical variables using a logistic imputation model. All the variables were imputed simultaneously. Five imputations were used, the mean value representing the final value for the continuous and median values for the categorical variables. If the median was not an integer, it was rounded to the nearest integer.

Due to the scales and distribution of the original variables, Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient was computed to define the relationships between the nine attitude

variables (the distributions in Fig. 2) concerning the degree of restrictions that the respondents thought ought to be imposed on berry picking. The alternative “I cannot say” was omitted in the correlation analysis. Thus, the number of respondents who had an opinion concerning the need for restrictions was 454 instead of 495. Spearman’s correlation matrix was later used in explanatory factor analysis (principal axis factoring, varimax rotation). The eigenvalues (> 1) and chi-square test for the fit of the factor model were used to define the number of factors. Three factors gave the best fit and allowed for an interpretable factor solution. The rather large quantity of data reduced the fit of the factor model. However, the main goal of the factor analysis was to guide the formation of sum variables (the mean of the values of the variables belonging to a certain factor), compacting the information involved in the attitudes. Cronbach’s alphas were calculated to study the consistency of the factors. The distributions of the sum variables approached normal distribution. Two of the nine attitude variables did not have enough variation, and their contribution in the factor solution was very low. Thus, the variables “Picking by local pickers for their own use” and “Commercial picking by local pickers” were omitted in the factor analysis.

The respondents were divided into three attitude categories using k-means cluster analysis based on the three sum variables describing attitudes towards the need for restrictions on berry picking. The number of groups was based on the F-values of the sum variables in the clustering and the stability of the cluster solution. The latter means that the analysis was re-run several times, using different starting values and checking the results. In addition, the cluster solution had to include as many different groups as possible and the groups had to be interpretable. The groups in the cluster solution were interpreted (named), and the relationships between the demographics and the cluster groups (attitude groups) were defined using cross-tabulations with chi-square tests and log-linear models. Sparse frequencies in the cells of the multi-way contingency tables allowed for only three variables in the log-linear models (Steltzl 2000). The significant dependencies were reported in the results. Furthermore, the means of the scores of the sum variables were studied by the purpose and importance of berry picking to the respondents, and the differences were tested using ANOVA and TukeyHSD (pairwise comparisons). All the other analysis, except for imputation, was run using the R-Statistical environment (R Development Core Team 2009).

The **qualitative data** consist of 62 messages received in 2012 and 102 messages from 2013. Thus, the number of messages is 164 altogether. Despite the larger number of messages in 2013, the transcribed data from that year cover nine pages, whereas the transcriptions from 2012 cover ten pages, which means that the messages in 2013 were shorter.

The telephone service was established in 2009 by the Regional Council of Lapland, the companies that invite pickers from abroad, and the Association of Villages of Lapland (Lapin Kylätoiminnan Tuki Ry) in order to exchange information between the residents of Lapland and the companies involved. In 2010, the possibility to send e-mails was added to the telephone service. Agrifood research Finland have maintained the telephone and e-mail service since 2012.

The reason for collecting this information was to figure out how well the pickers and companies follow the berry-picking guidelines established by the different parties and to further develop guidelines and collect information concerning problems related to commercial berry picking. Senders were asked in the feedback to give their name, the time and place, and suggestions for development. Furthermore, if the feedback was related to a specific group of pickers, the registration plate of the car or some similar identifying feature was requested. The messages were transcribed at least once per day during weekdays and delivered to the company in question or to all the companies, depending on the nature of the feedback. Generally, the most important issues in the feedback concerned berry picking too close to houses or in village areas (Peltola 2013).

Our analytical method is best described as deductive qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis means structuring the transcribed data, clarifying the essential parts of the data from the point of view of the research question and condensing and categorizing the data for interpretation (Kvale 1996). Deductive content analysis is used when the structure of analysis is operationalized on the basis of previous knowledge (Elo and Kyngäs 2008), which is the case in this research as the ideas of social licence and social sustainability serve as a theoretical framework in reading and interpreting the transcribed data. Thus, the textual material is organized according to the themes that arose in regard to our research questions concerning what kind of nuances there are in opinions regarding foreign berry pickers and the utilization of everyman's right for business purposes, and what preconditions should be fulfilled in order to get social licence for the organized, industrial picking of wild berries.

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey respondents (n = 495) represented middle-aged, nature-oriented northern residents (Fig. 1). All modes of nature use (berry picking, fishing and hunting) and forest ownership were overrepresented as compared to the average Finnish population (Statistics Finland 2012, 2013; Finnish Forest Research Institute 2012; Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute 2011, 2013; Mikkonen et al. 2007).

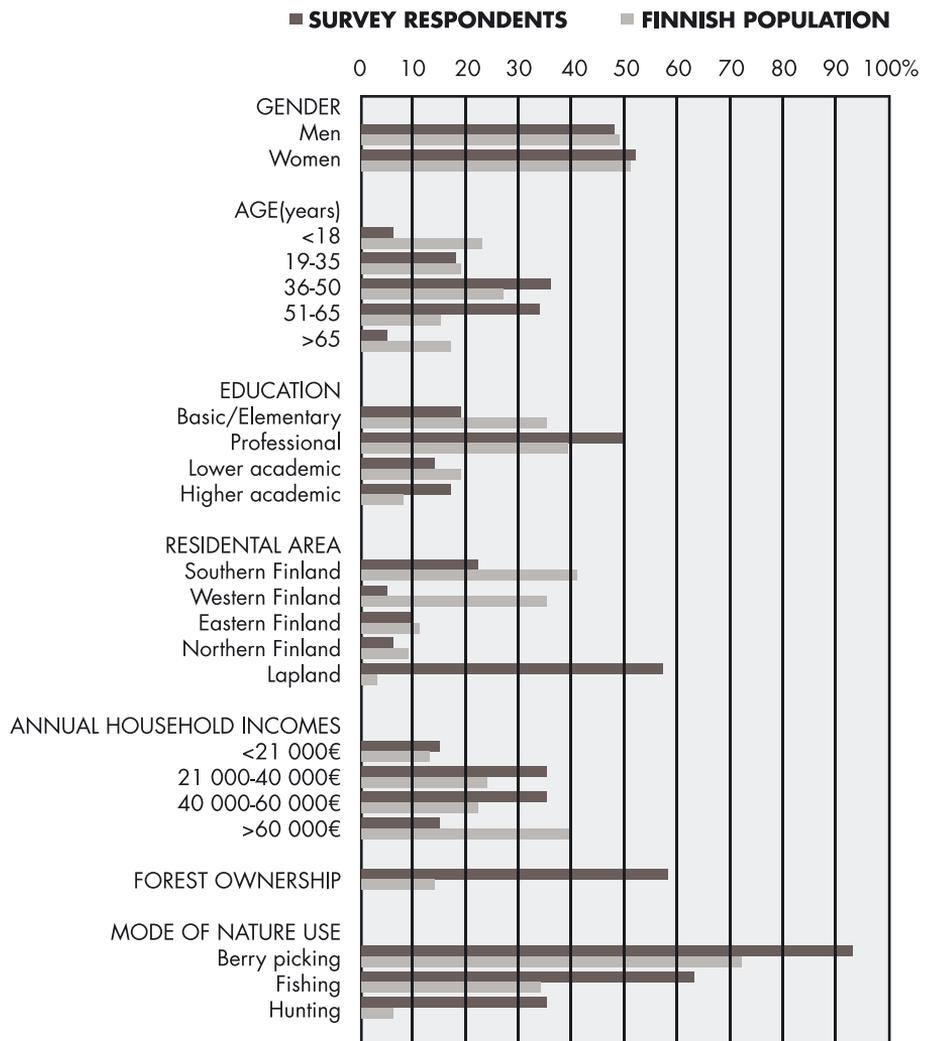


Figure 1. Comparison of survey respondents' background information to the Finnish population in general.

Differences between attitudes towards the pickers' origin and the purpose of berry picking were detected. Local berry pickers enjoy the broadest acceptance; the most condemnatory attitude is faced by foreign berry pickers. A similar trend was found with respect to the purpose of picking. The most widely accepted purpose is berry picking for household use, whereas organized commercial picking faces the most restrictive attitude (Fig. 2).

DESIRE FOR RESTRICTIONS

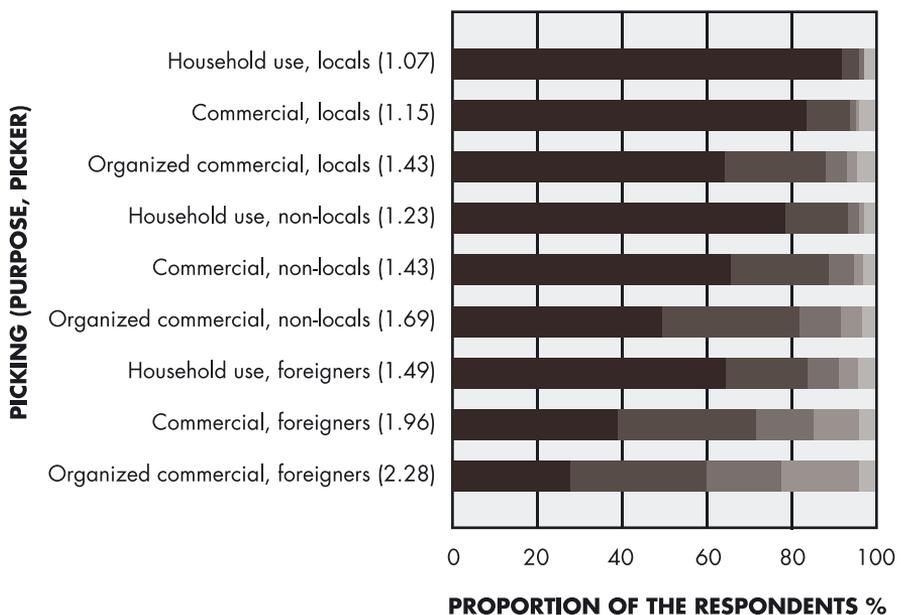
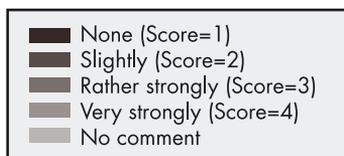


Figure 2. Respondents' attitudes towards restrictions on berry picking by different picker groups. The grouping is based on the purpose of the berry picking and the origin of the pickers, n=495. Average score for the desire for restrictions is given in parentheses after the variable.

The results of factor analysis suggested three rather consistent factors (Cronbach's alphas 0.79 or higher, Table 2). Based on these factors, three sum variables were distinguished according to the combinations of the origin of the picker and the purpose of the picking, namely (1) foreign pickers, all picking purposes (2) organized picking by Finnish pickers, and (3) non-local Finnish pickers (Table 2). Since the variables "Picking by local pickers for their own use" and "Commercial picking by local pickers" did not have enough variation and their contribution in the factor solution was very low, they were omitted in the factor analysis.

Three different groups of respondents were distinguished based on the sum variables using K-means cluster analysis. The groups were categorized as follows:

1) Permissive (means of scores, see Table 1, by the sum variables: Non-organized picking by non-local Finns = 1.07, organized picking by Finns = 1.19, picking by foreigners = 1.35, n = 212),

2) Medium (means of scores, see Table 1, by the sum variables: Non-organized picking by non-local Finns = 1.55, organized picking by Finns = 1.87, picking by foreigners = 2.66, n = 139), and

3) Restrictive (means of scores, see Table 1, by the sum variables: Non-organized picking by non-local Finns = 2.56, organized picking by Finns = 3.27, picking by foreigners = 3.18, n = 33).

Thus, the respondents belonging to the permissive group did not want to impose any restrictions on any kind of picking. Those in the medium group wanted only slight restrictions on picking by locals and non-local Finns but stronger restrictions on foreign pickers. The members of the restrictive group wanted to restrict rather strongly all picking described by the sum variables (Fig. 3). The sum variable "Picking by foreigners" had the highest contribution ($F=795.5$) in the clustering of the respondents.

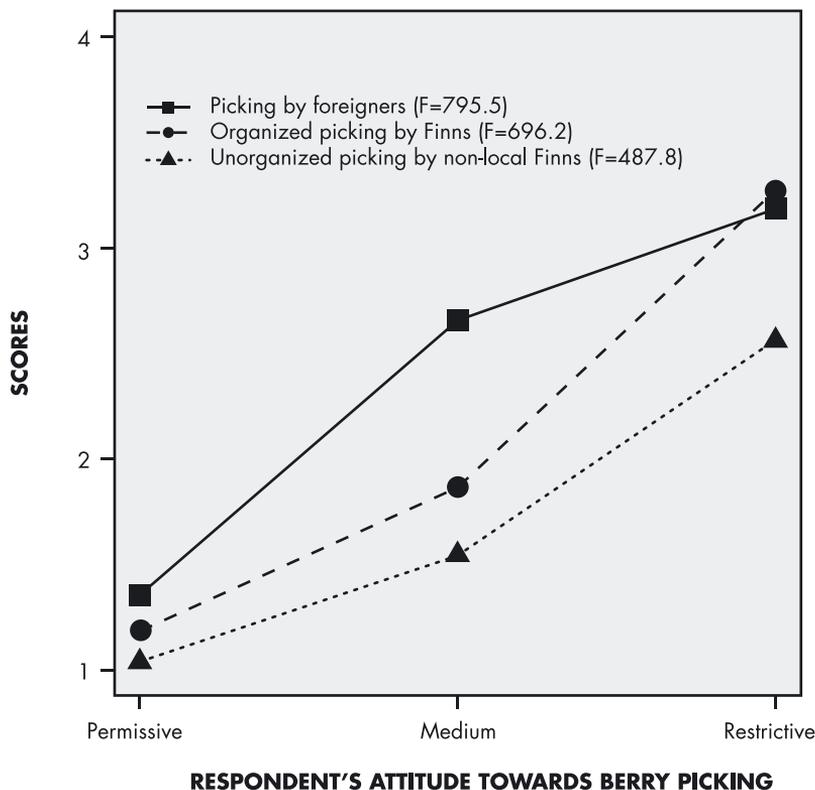


Figure 3. Respondents' attitude groups towards berry picking (K-means cluster groups) based on the three sum variables describing picking (the pickers, their origin, and the purpose of the berry picking). Mean scores with 95% confidence intervals are presented. The interpretation of the scores (desire to restrict picking): 1 = none, 2 = slight, 3 = rather strong, 4 = very strong.

Cross-tabulations and log-linear models revealed one significant relationship between the attitude groups and the demographics of the respondents: the relationship between a respondent's educational level and his or her attitudes. In general, more highly educated respondents had more permissive attitudes concerning berry picking (Fig. 4).

ATTITUDE GROUP

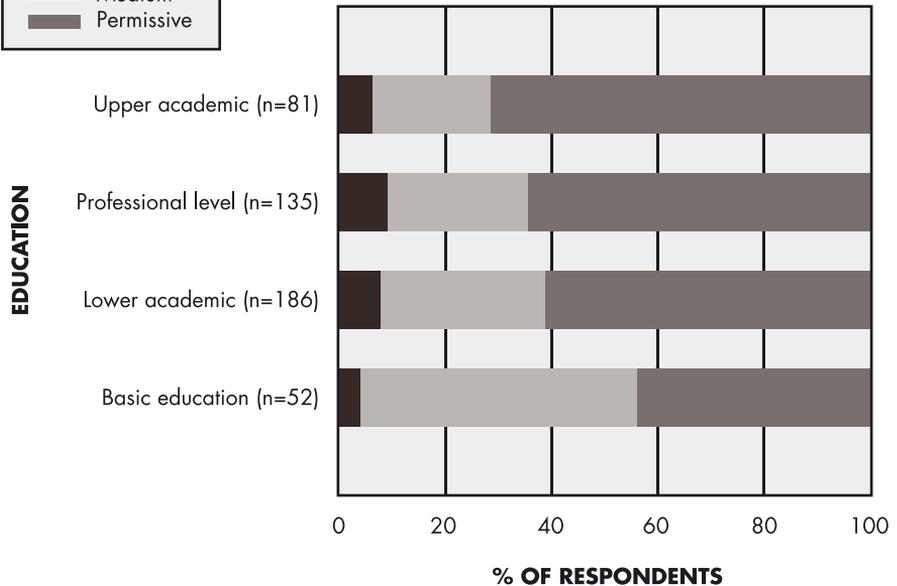


Figure 4. Relationship between respondent's educational level and his or her attitude towards restrictions on berry picking. The test for the relationship between educational level and attitude group controlled by respondent's income in the log-linear model was: deviance = 14.063, $df = 6$, $p = 0.029$.

A respondent's own purpose for berry picking and the importance of berry picking to him or her affected his or her attitudes towards other people's picking only slightly. The only significant difference in attitudes towards picking by foreigners was found when commercial pickers and those who do not pick at all were compared (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2. Varimax-rotated factor analysis of respondents' attitudes towards the restrictions of berry picking by various picker groups. The number of observations in the analysis was 454 with chi-square = 10.83, $p = 0.013$. Tucker Lewis Index of factoring reliability = 0.97.

Variable	FACTOR 1: Foreign pickers	FACTOR 2: Organized picking by Finnish pickers	FACTOR 3: Non-local Finnish pickers	Community
Foreigners, commercial	0.91	0.21	0.23	0.93
Foreigners, organized commercial	0.75	0.44	0.08	0.76
Foreigners, for own use	0.60	0.11	0.33	0.49
Non-local Finns, organized commercial	0.26	0.91	0.30	0.98
Local inhabitants, organized commercial	0.18	0.63	0.18	0.46
Non-local Finns, for own use	0.21	0.23	0.76	0.67
Non-local Finns, commercial	0.32	0.50	0.73	0.73
SS loadings	2.00	1.78	1.24	
Proportion explained	0.29	0.25	0.18	
Cumulative proportion explained	0.29	0.54	0.72	
Cronbah's alpha	0.86	0.82	0.79	

Table 3. ANOVA tests with TukeyHSD pairwise comparisons for the sum variables by the purpose of respondent's berry picking, and comparisons between the sum variable groups within the berry picking purpose categories. F-value for ANOVA with degrees of freedom (df) and differences of TukeyHSD's pairwise comparisons are expressed with adjacent significances (p). TukeyHSD test results are omitted if the F-test results are not significant at 5% risk level. The table corresponds to Fig. 5a.

Variable, differences between categories	F/ difference	df	p
Sum variables by picking purpose categories			
Picking by foreigners / respondent's own picking	3.70	0.451	0.026
- commercial - household use	-0.23		0.152
- commercial - no picking	-0.51		0.020
- household use - no picking	-0.29		0.163
Organized picking by Finns / respondent's own berry picking	1.06	2.451	0.347
Non-organized picking by non-local Finns / respondent's own berry picking	0.29	2.451	0.751
Differences within picking categories by sum variables			
Commercial / sum variables	13.73	2.159	0.000
Picking by foreigners - organized picking by Finns	-0.65		0.000
Picking by foreigners - non-organized picking by non-local Finns	-0.73		0.000
Organized picking by Finns - non-organized picking by non-local Finns	-0.10		0.791
Household use / sum variables	58.54	2.1104	0.000
Picking by foreigners - organized picking by Finns	-0.31		0.000
Picking by foreigners - non-organized picking by non-local Finns	-0.56		0.000
Organized picking by Finns - non-organized picking by non-local Finns	-0.25		0.000
No picking / sum variables	1.78	2.90	0.174

Those who pick berries for income wanted to restrict slightly “Picking by foreign pickers” (mean score 2.1, Fig. 5). However, the difference in the attitudes between the commercial pickers and those who do not pick berries at all was practically very small (Fig. 5a). “Organized picking by Finns” and “Non-organized picking by non-local Finns” aroused less desire to impose restrictions. A similar trend could be observed for those who pick berries for household use, but the variable “Picking by foreigners” was not distinguished as clearly as in the case of respondents who pick berries for income. Those respondents who do not pick berries at all were the least segregated by the sum variables (Fig. 5a).

Slightly restrictive attitudes towards “Picking by foreigners” could also be distinguished when the sum variables were observed in the light of the importance of berry picking for the respondents (Fig. 5b). When berry picking was very important for the respondents, the variable “Picking by foreigners” was distinguished from the other sum variables. When the importance of berry picking for respondents decreased, the differences between restrictive attitudes towards the picker groups described by the sum variables also decreased.

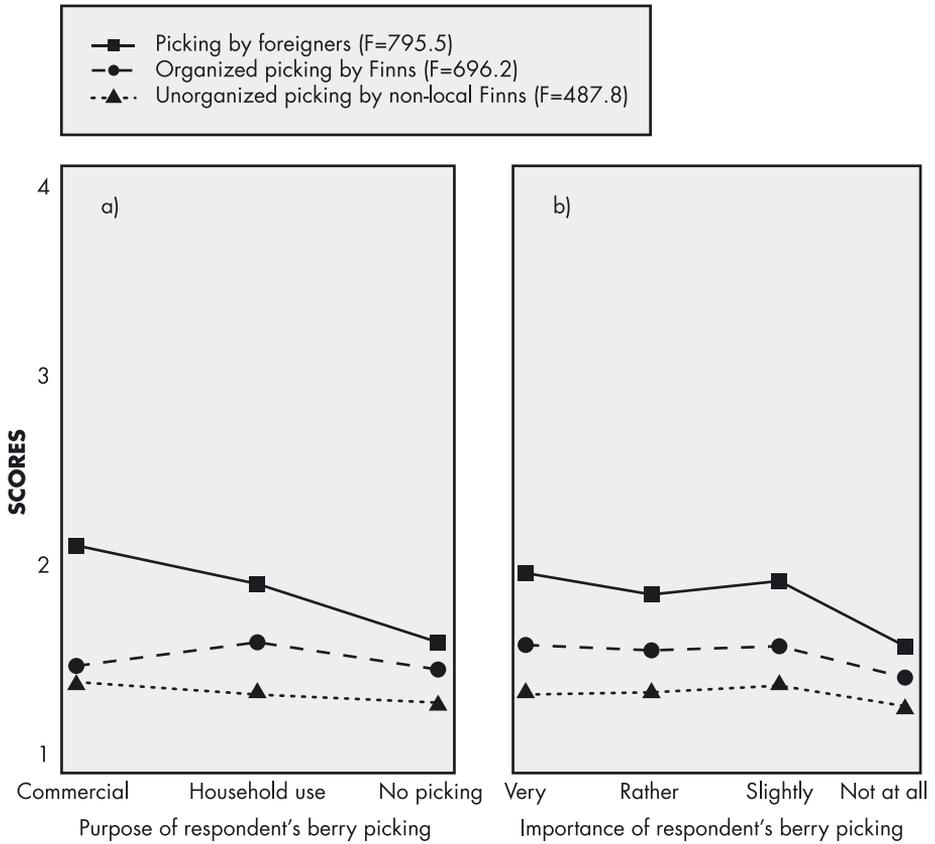


Figure 5. Mean scores with 95% confidence intervals of the sum variables describing berry picking and picker's origin by respondent's purpose of berry picking (a) and the importance of picking to the respondent (b). The scores correspond to Fig 3.

There were no significant differences between the attitudes towards the various berry-picking groups or the purposes of the berry picking based on the place of residence of the respondents, although variations in the scores were smaller in the northern part of Finland. Neither did a respondent's income, forest ownership, gender, education or age have a significant effect on his or her attitudes towards the berry pickers or the purposes of the picking.

RESULTS OF THE FEEDBACK DATA

The opinions regarding foreign berry pickers are discussed here by examining the different actor groups distinguished in the feedback obtained through the telephone and email service and the way in which the different groups are described and their relations are represented. The main actor groups in the feedback are, firstly, the locals, secondly, the foreign berry pickers and, thirdly, the berry companies.

The most frequent comments in connection with locals are that they are old, they have difficulty walking, they do not own a car or have a driving licence, and, in some cases, they are working people who need to get berries for their children and do not have much time because of work. In addition to permanent residents, second home owners receive a great deal of attention; they are regarded as having the same rights as the permanent locals. There are also references to locals who are seen as some kind of 'betrayers' because it is claimed that they guided the foreigners to the best berry places. Some references to land ownership are also made, but there is more discussion about locals' traditional, unofficial territories.

Foreign berry pickers are mainly described in a positive way as being hard-working and smiling. However, they are not regarded as being entitled to the same land-use rights and everyman's right as the locals or other Finnish people. They are referred to as "poor fellows", but in some cases they are described as greedy and unfriendly and are given racist-type nicknames. In some of the comments it is said that pickers "who looked like foreigners" or "looked like Asians" had been encountered in the forest. Phrases like "army of pickers" and "foreigners are terrorizing the area" appear as well. In addition, one common claim is that the foreign pickers leave rubbish in the forests.

Although many feedback messages claim that the berry pickers themselves come to culturally and economically important berry places and act in a culturally inappropriate manner, there are many more that say the berry companies are the ones to blame. The companies are described as not being committed to the agreements and agreed-upon rules and acting against their compatriots. The companies are seen as having an obligation to deliver information and guide the pickers. The companies are mentioned by name and are compared with each other; some are regarded as worse than others.

The issue of everyman's right is raised in many comments, especially those from 2012. There are statements that berry picking by foreigners is a misuse of everyman's right. One commentator distinguished between picking and harvesting, stating that harvest-

ing is large-scale, whereas picking is a small-scale activity, and the latter is in congruence with the idea of everyman's right. It was stated in a provocative way that everyman's right cannot be "everycompany's right". The difference between private activity and commercial activity is emphasized. In addition, there are many references to the traditional rights of the locals or to respect for private property, although everyman's right does not differentiate between public and private land.

DISCUSSION

There is a very limited amount of available data on general attitudes towards foreign berry pickers. In 2012 Finnish TV channel MTV3 commissioned Think If Laboratories Inc to conduct a survey which asked, "Should free berry-picking based on everyman's right apply only to Finnish residents?" In this survey 45% of the respondents answered "Yes" (Think If Laboratories 2012). Such a survey may give the impression that 45% of respondents support very strong limitations on the use of foreign labourers for berry picking.

In our study, the overall mean score of the four-point answer scale (1-4) to the question "Should everyman's right be limited with respect to organized commercial berry picking by foreign people?" was the highest, revealing the most condemnatory attitude. However, the mean score of answers to this alternative was 2.28, which closely matches the mean score for the alternative chosen by those who were slightly in favour of imposing restrictions, and the portion of respondents who chose the most restrictive alternative ("very strong limitations") was less than 20% of all respondents. This clearly indicates that the attitudes are nuanced, a fact that is not revealed by surveys giving only yes / no answer alternatives.

Everyman's right does not distinguish between local and non-local berry pickers (Tuunanen and Tarasti 2012). However, the variables "Picking by local pickers for their own use" and "Commercial picking by local pickers" were the most widely accepted, in comparison with variables involving non-local pickers. This may indicate local or regional customary law systems regulating berry picking among local inhabitants. Most of the respondents (almost 60%) were residents of Lapland or Northern Finland. As customary law systems regulating the use of natural resources are known to exist in the Sámi regions of Lapland and northern Scandinavia (Helander 2004), it may be proposed that condemnatory attitudes towards non-local or foreign berry pickers stem from similar customary law systems in other parts of Lapland as well. This is especially

clear in the feedback data: everyman's right is emphasized, but much more attention is paid to the traditional spatial division of picking places everywhere in Lapland.

In the attitude group classified as "medium", picking by foreigners was clearly opposed more than organized and non-organized picking by Finns, although organized picking by Finns was opposed slightly more than non-organized picking by non-local Finns. Possibly the difference stems from the customary law system mentioned previously, in which non-local Finns are still considered to be nearer in status to local berry pickers than foreigners are. Interestingly, the respondents belonging to the "restrictive" group opposed organized picking by Finnish pickers as much as picking by foreigners. Since picking by foreigners is practically always organized picking, it can be assumed that this group sees the "commercialization" of everyman's right as a misuse of the right. This can be compared to the situation in the Sámi region, where local practices of nature-use and nature-based tourism meet. On one hand, it is admitted that the tourism industry has the right to utilize natural resources, but at the same time the locals are considered to have a stronger right to natural resources due to tradition (Länsman 2004). Now and then the possibility of limiting public access to natural resources has been discussed. For instance, in certain parts of Norway, cloudberry picking is a privilege accorded only to locals (Kaltenborn et al. 2009).

Increasing objection when berry picking turns from household picking to organized commercial picking is a rather controversial phenomenon. Although highly organized berry picking by foreign pickers did not exist earlier, several thousand tons of forest berries have annually been exported from Finland since the beginning of the 20th century (La Mela 2014), indicating a long tradition of commercial berry picking. This raises the question whether condemnatory attitudes towards organized berry picking existed in the days when berry picking was a more important source of secondary income in rural areas of Finland.

The results of our study suggest that higher educational levels led to higher degrees of permissiveness in respondents' attitudes towards various forms of berry picking. Although educational level was the strongest explanatory variable in the log-linear models over respondents' age, one should remember that educational level is closely related to age. The distribution of education among people is rather similar in the countryside of southern and northern Finland (Statistics Finland 2012). Thus, the home regions of the respondents are not related to the differences between their educational levels. However, although the study found that higher education increases permissive

attitudes, the portion of the “restrictive” group was lowest among respondents with only a basic education.

Respondents who picked berries as part of their income or who considered berry picking to be important for them had the most negative attitude towards foreign berry pickers. This can be interpreted as a desire to reduce competition. Although forest berries are abundant in Finland, there may well be a great deal of competitive pressure in high-yield, easily accessible areas close to villages. Even so, attitudes cannot be stated to be very condemnatory: average attitude scores did not exceed 2.1 (a desire for the imposition of slight limitations), even for respondents who pick berries as part of their income.

The feedback suggests that, in general, organized berry picking by foreign labourers is an accepted phenomenon if certain guidelines or rules, which probably stem from local traditions, are followed. An example of such a rule could be, for example, setting aside berry areas that are in close proximity to villages for older inhabitants. This practice is part of customary law in Sámi regions (Länsman 2004). In regard to the Swedish situation, Sandell and Fredman (2010) suggest that the various parties should be cautious due to the risk of erosion of common understanding. They refer to Ostrom (2000), who states that the transmission of common understandings, the monitoring of behaviour, and the imposition of sanctions for bad behaviour are important. When considering the idea of social licence, it can be assumed that most of the problems would be solved if guidelines were agreed between the different parties: the berry companies, the local residents and, to some extent, the foreign pickers as well. The question of who should represent the local residents is difficult, but hearings could be arranged by, for example, the Regional Council and targeted specifically at those areas and problematic issues revealed by the feedback data. In addition, personal relationships between foreign pickers and local residents could be enhanced by creating positive activities, such as village parties, in order to develop social interaction. Thus, local acceptance could be achieved. Of course, this does not mean there would be total consensus, as the debate about organized commercial berry picking by foreigners is part of a wider discussion about everyman’s right. What makes everyman’s right problematic is that it does not cover activities which damage the environment or disturb others, but the understanding of damage and especially disturbance is situational and depends on subjective evaluation (Tuulentie and Rantala 2013).

Social licence to operate is an important step towards social sustainability and corporate social responsibility, which further benefit companies in the long term. Although local communities' acceptance of organized berry picking is not currently required by legal practices and formal regulatory processes, it is quite obvious that statements accusing berry companies of disregarding traditions concerning local nature use and misusing everyman's right could be detrimental to the wild berry companies. The detrimental consequences could include damage to business reputation or even a demand for new legislation or regulatory processes restricting the commercial utilization of everyman's right, which could endanger the availability of wild berries for berry companies. Thus, a strong social licence to operate would clearly be beneficial for the wild berry industry. Social licence would be more easily achieved if the local community benefitted from the berry picking. The berry industry is beneficial to the Finnish economy and may therefore benefit local communities indirectly. Direct benefits to local communities are, however, difficult to concretize. Often the accommodation buildings (typically, old school buildings that are no longer in use) owned by the berry companies are available outside the picking season for meetings and recreational purposes. However, the most concrete benefit for the local community would be direct economic profit. As campgrounds and rental cottage companies have also been used to accommodate pickers, accommodation services, for example, would provide direct economic benefits to local communities. In any case, if the local communities, which have to bear the costs of organized, commercial berry picking, feel that the beneficiaries of the activity are outside the community, strong social licence is more difficult to achieve.

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