

Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

- 19 December 2006 [shall come into force on 1 January 2007];
- 14 June 2007 [shall come into force on 11 July 2007];
- 16 December 2010 [shall come into force on 1 January 2011];
- 15 November 2012 [shall come into force on 1 December 2012];
- 20 June 2013 [shall come into force on 1 January 2014];
- 9 July 2013 [shall come into force on 1 January 2014];
- 26 November 2015 [shall come into force on 2 December 2015];
- 24 October 2019 [shall come into force on 20 November 2019];
- 17 December 2020 [shall come into force on 23 December 2020];
- 11 November 2021 [shall come into force on 1 April 2022];
- 22 June 2023 [shall come into force on 29 June 2023].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*<sup>1</sup> has adopted and  
President has proclaimed the following law:

# Hunting Law

## Chapter I General Provisions

**Section 1.** The following terms are used in this Law:

- 1) **limited game animals** - game animals for which a hunting quota has been specified;
- 2) **hunting permit** - a document which allows to hunt a specific number of the limited game animals of the respective species in the indicated area;
- 3) **hunting district** - a continuous hunting area that is managed by the one user of hunting rights;
- 4) **hunting area** - an area that is fit for free living of game animals and can be used for hunting;
- 5) **hunting products** - game animal trophies, meat and offal acquired as a result of hunting;
- 6) **hunting resources** - all game animals in the territory of Latvia;

6<sup>1</sup>) **sustainable management of hunting resources** - management of the population and habitat of hunting animals and the natural resources related thereto in such a way as to protect the biological diversity and renewal ability of hunting resources, ensuring hunting resources for next generations, as well as to promote the protection of game animals, taking into account economic, social and environmental interests and without endangering the implementation of nature protection measures in the distribution area of game animal species;

- 7) **hunting tools** - cage traps, traps or other tools employed in the hunting of game animals;
- 8) **hunting management** - a system for the management of natural resources which, concurrently with the acquisition of hunting products, ensures sustainable management of such resources;
- 9) **hunting rights** - the rights of the land owner or legal possessor to hunt in his or her plot of land in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law and laws and regulations governing hunting. The owner or legal possessor of the land may exercise the hunting rights solely for himself or herself or transfer them to another person;

9<sup>1</sup>) **owner of hunting rights** - the owner or legal possessor of the land who has hunting areas in the plot of land in his or her ownership or possession;

10) **user of hunting rights** - a natural or legal person in whose name the hunting district is registered;

11) **game animal trophy** - antlers together with the skull of the game animal (upper jaw or frontal bone), tusks, skulls and skins;

12) **game animals** - mammals and birds living in the wild, including wild mammals and birds which are hunted in accordance with the laws and regulations governing hunting, and animals of such species which are kept in fenced areas in conditions similar to the wild;

13) **hunter's seasonal card** - a document that gives the right to hunt with hunting firearms and hunting tools during the particular hunting season;

14) **hunter** - a person who has received a hunter's certificate in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law;

15) **unlimited game animals** - animals for which a hunting quota has not been specified;

16) **dark hours of the day** - the period which starts two hours after the sunset and ends two hours before the sunrise.

[15 November 2012; 20 June 2013; 11 November 2021]

**Section 2.** The purpose of this Law is to lay down the basic rules for hunting management.

**Section 3.** (1) Hunting is a set of activities or separate activities where game animals are tracked or looked for, caught, captured, injured or killed by using hunting firearms, tools or techniques.

(2) The following shall be considered as equivalent to hunting:

1) killing of game animals kept in a fenced area in conditions similar to wild with hunting firearms and hunting tools. Only the safety requirements laid down in the laws and regulations governing hunting shall apply to killing game animals kept in a fenced area in conditions similar to the wild;

2) killing of escaped animals that were bred in captivity in hunting areas (upon written request of the owner to a user of hunting rights) with hunting firearms and hunting tools;

3) killing of stray pet animals in hunting areas with hunting firearms and by conforming to the international agreements governing animal protection and other laws and regulations.

(2<sup>1</sup>) If game animals endanger public order and safety or cause damage, hunting in urban areas is permitted in accordance with the procedures laid down by the local government. The local government shall issue binding regulations regarding hunting in a city, determining the areas (zones) where hunting is allowed, and, where necessary, also determine the tools, equipment, methods, techniques and safety provisions to be used for hunting in addition to the restrictions imposed by laws and regulations.

(3) It is prohibited to hunt:

1) [11 November 2021];

2) in cemeteries;

3) places where a hunting district has not been registered, except for:

a) the hunting of unlimited game animals where the owner of hunting rights or a person authorised in writing thereby is participating;

b) the hunting of unlimited game animals in public bodies of water and their towpaths;

c) the tracking of an injured game animal in accordance with the procedures provided by the laws and regulations;

4) in other cases provided by the laws and regulations.

(4) Game animal species, hunting periods, and also the cases when hunting outside hunting periods is possible shall be determined by the Cabinet. Periods for hunting game birds shall not be determined during their breeding period or other stage of importance to the development of species.

(5) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which the State Forest Service shall be entitled to change periods for hunting mammals, as well as impose additional restrictions or reliefs for the organisation of hunting

according to the state of the respective animal population, meteorological conditions and phenological status.

(6) If there is no other acceptable solution and it does not harm the population of the respective species, individuals of game bird species may be, by receiving a permit each time, acquired outside the specified hunting period for the following purposes:

- 1) in the interests of public health protection and safety;
- 2) in the interests of air safety;
- 3) in order to prevent serious damage to cultural crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water;
- 4) in order to protect flora and fauna;
- 5) for research and training when restoring a population, reintroducing species and effecting the propagation necessary for such purpose;
- 6) for the selective capturing or holding of individual birds, or other reasonable use of such birds in strictly controlled circumstances.

(7) In the cases referred to in Paragraph six of this Section, the Nature Conservation Agency shall issue a permit for the acquisition, hunting or holding in captivity of individuals of non-game species in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding issuing a permit for the acquisition of individuals of non-game species and shall inform the State Forest Service of the issued permits.

(8) The procedures by which supplemental feeding of wild game animals shall be permitted and the cases when it shall be permitted shall be determined by the Cabinet.

*[20 June 2013; 11 November 2021]*

**Section 4.** (1) Wild game animals become the property of natural and legal persons only after they have been hunted in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law and other laws and regulations governing hunting.

(2) Game animals kept in a fenced area in circumstances similar to the wild, and also game animals born in a fenced area are the property of such natural or legal person who has received the permit for keeping wild game animals in captivity in the specific area in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

*[20 June 2013]*

**Section 5.** (1) It is prohibited to misappropriate game animals and hunting products.

(2) The procedures for moving a hunted animal shall be determined by the Cabinet.

*[20 June 2013]*

**Section 6.** Hunting resources shall be used so as to ensure the protection and preservation of the population and gene pool of game animal species, and the habitat populated by game animals. Resources of game bird species shall be used so as to ensure that bird hunting does not endanger the implementation of nature protection measures in the distribution area of such species. The principles for reasonable use and ecologically balanced control of game animals, the size of population of game animals, including migrating birds, shall be complied with in hunting practice.

*[15 November 2012]*

**Section 7.** A hunting season is a period from 1 April until 31 March of the following year.

**Section 8.** The Cabinet shall determine:

- 1) obligations and rights of the head of a hunt;
- 2) the procedures for marking of purebred hunting dogs and their use in hunting;
- 3) the procedures for actions with game animals the cause of death of which is not hunting, capturing or holding in captivity.

*[20 June 2013]*

**Section 9.** (1) The user of hunting rights shall determine the hunting procedures in his or her hunting district.

(2) A unit of the State Border Guard is entitled to prohibit or stop a hunt in a hunting district or its part which is located in the territory of borderland if enhanced border control, emergency situation or state of exception has been determined in the abovementioned territory or the State Border Guard is organising tactical training, informing the user of hunting rights thereof without delay.

[20 June 2013]

**Section 10.** (1) Game animals may be caught in the wild, brought into Latvia, used in training of purebred hunting dogs or scientific research, kept in captivity, as well as released in the wild if a permit has been received from the State Forest Service in each individual case.

(2) The procedures for issuing and cancelling permits for catching game animals in the wild, bringing into Latvia, using in training of purebred hunting dogs or scientific research, keeping in captivity and releasing in the wild shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[20 June 2013]

**Section 11.** (1) Wild non-game animals may be acquired, hunted or kept in captivity if a permit has been received from the Nature Conservation Agency in each individual case.

(2) The procedures by which permits for the acquisition, hunting or holding in captivity of wild non-game animals shall be issued and cancelled shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[15 November 2012]

## **Chapter II**

### **Hunter's Certificate and Right to Hunt**

**Section 12.** The hunter's certificate is a document which is necessary in order to receive a hunting permit, hunter's seasonal card and authorisation for the acquisition of a hunting firearm, and in order to hunt in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law and other laws and regulations governing hunting.

**Section 13.** (1) Hunters to whom an authorisation for the possession of a hunting firearm has been issued by an institution of the State police are allowed to hunt with hunting firearms.

(2) The procedures for using a hunting firearm and hunting ammunition, and also the safety requirements to be complied with hunting shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(3) The procedures for using hunting tools and high energy pneumatic weapons shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[20 June 2013; 24 October 2019]

**Section 14.** (1) The State Forest Service shall issue a hunter's certificate or a head of a hunt's licence to persons who have passed the respective examination before the hunter examination board.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for training hunters and heads of a hunt, the programme for testing and procedures for examining the theoretical knowledge and practical skills, the procedures for issuing, exchanging and cancelling hunter's certificates, head of a hunt's licences and the permit for a foreigner to hunt in the territory of Latvia, and the procedures for renewing and issuing new hunting documents or for refusing to renew hunting documents.

[9 July 2013]

**Section 15.** (1) The examination of candidate hunters and candidate heads of a hunt shall be performed by the State Forest Service.

(2) The procedures by which the State fee for the examination of candidate hunters and candidate heads of a hunt shall be paid, and also the amount of the fee shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[9 July 2013 / See Paragraph 10 of Transitional Provisions]

**Section 16.** Foreigners who do not have a hunter's certificate issued by the State Forest Service may hunt in the territory of Latvia and they are entitled to use hunting firearms and hunting tools in hunting if they have a document issued by the relevant competent authority of a foreign country which certifies the right to hunt in their own country, and they have received a permit in the State Forest Service allowing a foreigner to hunt in the territory of Latvia.

[20 June 2013]

**Section 17.** (1) A hunting district shall be registered if the hunting areas to be included therein are not smaller than:

1) 350 hectares if the hunting district is registered by the owner of hunting rights or owners of hunting rights whose hunting areas are located next to each other and who have concluded a mutual contract for the joint exercising of the hunting rights;

2) 1000 hectares if the hunting district is registered by the owner of the hunting rights.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine:

1) the procedures for establishing and registering hunting districts, and also the criteria for the recognition of hunting areas as continuous hunting area;

2) the circulation of the hunting rights, stipulating the procedures and the minimum period for their transfer, the procedures for exercising, and also revoking such rights;

3) the procedures by which the fee and fee abatements for exercising the hunting rights in hunting areas under jurisdiction or belonging to the State shall be determined.

[20 June 2013; 11 November 2021; 22 June 2023]

**Section 17.<sup>1</sup>** (1) Until alienation of the relevant immovable properties or parts thereof or changing of the possessor of State-owned land from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Defence, the contracts for the transfer of hunting rights in the territories of military training areas which are concluded with *akciju sabiedrība "Latvijas valsts meži"* [joint-stock company Latvian State Forests] may, on the basis of agreement of the parties, be renewed or supplemented with the provisions which are necessary to ensure the needs of the National Armed Forces.

(2) Until alienation of the relevant immovable properties or parts thereof, the Ministry of Defence may take the decision to supplement the contracts for the transfer of hunting rights in the territories of military training areas with special provisions which are necessary to ensure the needs of the National Armed Forces. Such decision shall be a general administrative act and it shall be published in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

(3) At the end of the term of the contracts referred to in Paragraph one of this Section, they may be extended for a term not exceeding 10 years without organising an auction of hunting rights.

[22 June 2023]

**Section 18.** It is permitted to hunt game water fowl in public bodies of water and their towpaths without agreeing thereupon with the user of hunting rights in the hunting district of which the relevant body of water is located. The procedures for hunting animals of the unlimited game animal specified in public bodies of water and their towpaths shall be determined by the Cabinet.

[20 June 2013]

## **Chapter III**

### **Hunting Areas, Hunting Quota and Hunting Permit**

**Section 19.** (1) The minimum hunting areas where game animals may be hunted in the relevant hunting district shall be as follows:

1) for roe-deer and wild boar hunting - at least 350 hectares, including the following categories of land: agricultural land, forest, bush, swamp, land of water bodies (except for lakes) and other land, except for linear functioning infrastructure objects which have been separated as a separate land parcel;

2) [11 November 2021];

2<sup>1</sup>) for red deer doe and fawn hunting - at least 1000 hectares, including only forest tracts or their parts and individual parcels of forest land (clumps), bushes and swamps;

3) for red deer stag hunting - at least 2000 hectares, including only forest tracts or their parts and individual parcels of forest land (clumps), bushes and swamps;

4) for elk hunting - at least 2500 hectares, including only forest tracts or their parts and individual parcels of forest land (clumps), bushes and swamps.

(2) [20 June 2013]

(3) If a hunting district does not conform to the requirements laid down in Paragraph one of this Section, the users of hunting rights may conclude mutual contracts for the organisation of hunting of limited game animals in adjacent hunting districts. An integral part of the contract is a mutual agreement on the common borders of hunting districts of parties to the cooperation contract. The hunting quota for animals of limited game animal species shall be determined for the total hunting area indicated in the contract.

(4) [20 June 2013]

*[19 December 2006; 20 June 2013; 11 November 2021 / Amendment to Paragraph three regarding its supplementation with a new second sentence shall come into force on 1 April 2023. See Paragraph 24 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 20.** (1) In order to ensure the preservation of the gene fund of the population of limited game animal species and to restrict the damage caused by limited game animals to agriculture and forestry, the State Forest Service shall, based on the game animal population evaluation data, determine the hunting quota for animals of the limited game animal species in hunting areas each year.

(2) The state of game animal population shall be evaluated by the State Forest Service.

(3) The state of game animal population shall be evaluated and the hunting quota shall be determined according to the methodology approved by the Minister for Agriculture.

(4) The measures for regulating the number of wild mammals in specially protected nature territories where hunting restrictions are in effect shall be determined in the respective individual rules for the protection and use of the specially protected nature territory.

*[20 June 2013]*

**Section 21.** A hunting permit and hunter's seasonal card shall be required for hunting limited game animals, but a hunter's seasonal card - for hunting unlimited game animals.

**Section 22.** (1) The State Forest Service shall issue hunting permits to the users of hunting rights according to the hunting quota. The procedures for issuing hunting permits shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(2) *[14 June 2007]*

(3) *[14 June 2007]*

(4) *[11 November 2021]*

(5) *[11 November 2021]*

*[14 June 2007; 20 June 2013; 11 November 2021]*

**Section 23.** (1) The procedures for paying the State fee for the issuance of a hunter's certificate, a head of a hunt's licence, a hunter's seasonal card and a hunting permit, as well as for the issuance of a permit for a foreigner to hunt in the territory of Latvia and the amount of the fee shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which hunting trophies are to be exported from Latvia.

(3) The procedures for issuing a hunter's seasonal card shall be determined by the Cabinet.

*[16 June 2013; 9 July 2013 / See Paragraph 10 of Transitional Provisions]*

## **Chapter IV**

### **Illegal Hunting**

**Section 24.** The following shall be recognised as illegal hunting:

1) hunting in such a period and according to such procedures which do not conform to the periods and procedures laid down in the laws and regulations governing hunting;

2) being in a hunting area with a firearm or hunting tool prepared to be used without the agreement of the user of hunting rights, as well as in areas where hunting is prohibited, except for the cases referred to in Section 3, paragraph three, Clause 3, Sub-clause "c" and Section 29, Paragraph five, Clause 3 of this Law;

3) hunting with a firearm if a hunter's certificate, a hunter's seasonal card or an authorisation for the possession of a hunting firearm has not been obtained or has been withdrawn in accordance with the procedures specified in laws and regulations, and also the hunting of limited game animals without a hunting permit;

4) hunting of game animals with hunting tools if a hunter's certificate or a hunter's seasonal card has not been obtained or has been withdrawn in accordance with the procedures specified in laws and regulations, and also the unauthorised use of hunting tools;

5) moving of a limited game animal from the area where it was hunted, or tracking of an injured limited game animal if a hunting permit has not been completed;

6) hunting in areas where hunting is prohibited and also in areas where hunting of the respective animal species is prohibited, except in the cases referred to in Section 29, Paragraph five, Clause 3 of this Law;

7) hunting of unlimited game animals without the consent of the user of hunting rights, except for the cases referred to in Section 18 and Section 29, Paragraph six, Clause 3 of this Law;

8) hunting in conditions when animals are fleeing from natural disasters;

9) hunting while using the following illegal means of hunting, tools, methods and techniques:

a) "bird lime", blind or mutilated animals as bait;

b) sound recordings;

c) artificial light sources in the dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

d) night sights with electronic magnification or image transformation in the dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

e) mirrors and other blinding devices;

f) laser type sights;

g) nets, which work non-selectively according to the terms for use or conditions for use;

h) leg-hold traps and traps or snares which work non-selectively according to the terms for use or conditions for use;

i) crossbows, bows;

j) semi-automatic or automatic firearms, the total capacity of cartridge chamber and magazine (cartridge feeding mechanism) of which is more than three cartridges, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

k) aircraft, moving motorised land and water vehicles;

l) weapons that are not classified as hunting firearms;

c) thermal sights in dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

10) hunting using the following prohibited generally dangerous means of hunting, hunting tools, techniques and methods:

a) trap-holes, snares, hooks, setting up of sharp objects on animal tracks;

b) electric or electronic devices that are capable of stunning or killing an animal;

c) explosives, trip mechanisms;

d) poisons and poisoned or immobilising bait;

e) gases or smoke;

11) keeping of game animals in captivity if a permit from the State Forest Service has not been received;

12) hunting, using any mass or non-selective means, measures or techniques for capturing or killing birds, also such means, measures or techniques which may cause extinction of species in the territory of a local government or the State.

[20 June 2013; 9 July 2013; 11 November 2021]

## **Chapter V**

### **Supervision of Hunting Resources and Hunting Control**

**Section 25.** Compliance with this Law and other laws and regulations governing hunting shall be supervised by the institutions subordinate to or under supervision of the State Forest Service, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and the Ministry of the Interior according to the competence thereof.

[9 July 2013]

**Section 26.** (1) The procedures for documenting hunting process and the procedures for the circulation of information in the field of hunting shall be determined by the Cabinet.



(2) In order to conclude a contract for the transfer of hunting rights or to organise the tracking of an injured animal in an area directly adjacent to the hunting district, the owner of hunting rights or the user of hunting rights may submit a request to the State Forest Service or local government to provide the contact details (telephone number and e-mail address) of the owner or legal possessor of the plot of land. The State Forest Service or the local government shall provide the contact details at their disposal which have been provided to the abovementioned authorities by the owner or lawful possessor of the plot of land when receiving another service.

[20 June 2013; 11 November 2021]

**Section 27.** (1) Upon the request of such persons who are supervising compliance with this Law and other laws and regulations governing hunting and carry out hunting control, the hunter shall be obliged to:

1) present the firearms at his or her disposal and the authorisation for the possession thereof, as well as ammunition, hunting tools, hunting documents and hunting products;

2) provide orally or in writing an explanation on the hunting in which he or she is participating.

(2) If illegal hunting has taken place, persons who are supervising compliance with this Law and other laws and regulations governing hunting and carrying out hunting control are entitled to suspend hunting documents and withdraw from use firearms, ammunition, hunting tools and hunting products.

**Section 28.** If any of the authorities referred to in Section 25 of this Law has temporarily suspended or debarred a hunter's certificate or withdrawn a hunting firearm from use, it shall notify thereof the institution of the State Police which issued the authorisation for the possession of hunting firearm within three working days.

**Section 29.** (1) The owner or legal possessor of the land shall be responsible for the damage and losses caused by game animals on the land in his or her ownership (possession), if the hunting rights have not been transferred to another user of hunting rights.

(2) If the owner of hunting rights transfers the hunting rights to another user of hunting rights, the obligations and rights of the parties shall be determined in the contract for the transfer of hunting rights, insofar as it is not in contradiction with Paragraph four of this Section.

(3) The owner of wild animals bred in captivity shall be responsible for the losses caused by animals.

(4) In order to reduce the damage caused by game animals:

1) if the contract for the transfer of hunting rights does not provide otherwise, the owner or legal possessor of the land has an obligation to ensure measures on the land in his or her ownership, possession or use for protection against the potential damage caused by game animals, insofar as it is not in contradiction with environmental and nature protection requirements, and to inform the user of hunting rights thereof;

2) the user of hunting rights has an obligation to hunt in the hunting district, ensuring sustainable management of hunting resources;

3) the land owner (user), the manager of infrastructure objects and the user of hunting rights have an obligation to ensure, without delay, mutual exchange of information on the established damage caused by game animals;

4) the State Forest Service is entitled, in accordance with the laws and regulation governing hunting management, to permit hunting of mammals of unlimited game animal species in the places where damage is caused outside the specified hunting period, and also to issue hunting permits for hunting mammals of limited game animal species, exceeding the hunting quota and, if the hunting co-ordination committee has taken a respective decision, without applying the requirements laid down in Section 19, Paragraph one of this Law regarding minimum hunting areas.

(5) In cases of epizootic threats, and also when game animals cause damage to the property and environment in State melioration systems, melioration systems of State significance or areas where hunting is prohibited or where the cause of such damage is located, the hunting co-ordination committee established by the respective local government shall, by inviting users of hunting rights from the adjacent areas and experts of the respective sector, determine in the particular area:

1) the extent of damage caused to agriculture, forestry, amelioration systems and infrastructure objects;

2) the amount of such financial losses which have been caused to agriculture and forestry by game animals;

3) the measures for restricting or liquidating the damage and its consequences.

(6) If game animals have caused damage in areas where hunting is not prohibited, the hunting co-ordination committee established by the respective local government shall, by inviting the user of hunting rights and the owner or user of land, determine in the particular land parcel:



1) the extent of damage caused to agriculture, forestry, amelioration systems and infrastructure objects;

2) the amount of such financial losses which have been caused to agriculture and forestry by game animals;

3) the measures for restricting or liquidating the damage and its consequences. Upon receipt of consent of the owner of hunting rights, the hunting co-ordination committee has the right to take over and exercise the hunting rights in the particular land parcel for the period of taking the abovementioned measures. Contesting of the decision of the hunting co-ordination committee shall not suspend its operation.

(7) The Cabinet shall determine:

1) the procedures by which the extent of damage caused to agriculture, forestry, amelioration systems and infrastructure objects by game animals, the level of damage, the criteria for determining the extent and level of damage, and also actions in such cases shall be determined;

2) the procedures and conditions for issuing a hunting permit for hunting game animals in the damaged areas;

3) the procedures by which the amount of financial losses caused to agriculture and forestry by game animals shall be determined;

4) the procedures by which the State fee shall be paid for determining the extent of such damage and the losses which have been caused to agriculture, forestry, amelioration systems and infrastructure objects by game animals shall be calculated;

5) the composition, rights and obligations of the hunting co-ordination committee, as well as the procedures by which measures for the restriction or liquidation of damage and its consequences shall be determined;

6) the procedures by which losses caused by natural or legal persons by violating the requirements of the laws and regulations governing hunting shall be reimbursed, and the amount of such losses, as well as the procedures and amount for reimbursing the value of the illegally acquired hunting products.

[20 June 2013]

#### **Section 30.**

[20 June 2013]

## **Chapter VI Hunting Management Development Fund**

**Section 31.** (1) In order to develop hunting management, a Game Animal Management development Fund shall be established. The holder of the Fund shall be the Ministry of Agriculture.

(2) The assets of the Hunting Management Development Fund shall be formed by:

1) grants from the following revenues of the State basic budget:

a) the full amount of the State fee for the issuance of hunting permits;

b) the full amount of the State fee for the issuance of hunter's certificates, head of hunt's licences, hunter's seasonal cards and permits for foreigners to hunt in the territory of Latvia;

b<sup>1</sup>) the full amount of the State fee for the examination of the candidate hunters and candidate heads of a hunt;

c) compensation of the losses that have been caused by natural persons or legal persons violating the requirements specified in this Law or other laws and regulations governing hunting, as well as compensation for the value of the illegally acquired hunting products;

2) donations.

(3) The assets of Hunting Management Development Fund shall be used for:

1) the monitoring of game animals and additional protection measures of populations;

2) the scientific research of game animals and populations thereof;

3) participating in international hunting organisations;

4) the educating of hunters.

(4) The Cabinet shall approve the by-laws of the Hunting Management Development Fund.

[20 June 2013; 9 July 2013 / See Paragraph 10 of Transitional Provisions]

## **Chapter VII**

### **Administrative Offences in the Field of Hunting and Competence in Administrative Offence Proceedings**

[24 October 2019 / Chapter shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 22 of Transitional Provisions]

**Section 32.** (1) For being in a hunting area with a firearm or hunting tool prepared to be used without agreement of the user of hunting rights and also in areas where hunting is prohibited, except for the cases referred to in Section 18 and Section 29, Paragraph five, Clause 3 of this Law, a fine from eight to seventy units of fine shall be imposed.

(2) For hunting with a firearm or a high energy pneumatic weapon, or hunting tools, if a hunter's seasonal card or a permit for a foreigner to hunt in the territory of Latvia has not been obtained in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations, a fine from four to seventy units of fine shall be imposed.

(3) For hunting with a bow, a fine from four to seventy units of fine shall be imposed.

(4) For keeping game animals in captivity if a permit from the State Forest Service has not been received, a fine from four to seventy units of fine shall be imposed.

(5) For moving a limited game animal from the area where it was hunted if a hunting permit has not been completed, a fine from eight to one hundred units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year.

(6) For hunting in areas where hunting is prohibited, a fine from eight to one hundred units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year.

(7) For the hunting of unlimited game animals without the consent of the user of hunting rights, except for the cases referred to in Section 18 and Section 29, Paragraph six, Clause 3 of this Law, a fine from eight to one hundred units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year.

(8) For hunting using the following illegal hunting means and tools listed in this Paragraph of the Section, a fine from eight to one hundred units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year:

1) artificial light sources in the dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

2) night sights with electronic magnification or image transformation in the dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

3) semi-automatic firearms, the total capacity of cartridge chamber and magazine (cartridge feeding mechanism) of which is more than three cartridges, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting;

4) crossbows;

5) weapons that are not classified as hunting firearms;

6) thermal sights in dark hours of the day, except for wild boar, fox and raccoon dog hunting.

(9) For ignoring the hunting periods and also for violating the restrictions for organising hunting imposed by the officials of the State Forest Service or the State Border Guard, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(10) For hunting with a firearm or a high energy pneumatic weapon if a hunter's certificate or an authorisation for the possession of a hunting firearm has not been obtained in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations or if it has been withdrawn, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(11) For the hunting of limited game animals if the hunter or the user of hunting rights has no appropriate hunting permit, or for the tracking of an injured limited game animal if a hunting permit has not been completed, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(12) For the hunting of game animals with hunting tools if a hunter's certificate has not been obtained in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations or if it has been withdrawn, and also for unauthorised use of hunting tools, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or

without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(13) For hunting in such conditions where animals are fleeing from natural disasters, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(14) For hunting while using the following illegal means of hunting, tools, methods, and techniques listed in this Paragraph of the Section, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years:

- 1) "bird lime", blind or mutilated animals as bait;
- 2) sound recordings;
- 3) mirrors and other blinding devices;
- 4) laser sights;
- 5) nets which work non-selectively according to the terms for use or conditions for use;
- 6) leg-hold traps and traps or snares which work non-selectively according to the terms for use or conditions for use;
- 7) aircraft, moving motorised land and water vehicles;
- 8) [11 November 2021].

(15) For hunting using any mass or non-selective means, measures, or techniques for capturing or killing birds, including such means, measures, or techniques which may cause extinction of species in the territory of a local government or the State, a fine from eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the withdrawal of hunting rights for a period of up to three years.

(16) For catching game animals in the wild, bringing them into Latvia, using them in the training of purebred hunting dogs or scientific research, and also releasing in the wild without a permit from the State Forest Service, a warning or a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed.

(17) For the failure to present the firearms, the authorisation for the possession thereof, ammunition, hunting tools, hunting documents, and hunting products, and also for the failure to provide an explanation on the hunting upon request of a competent authority, a warning or a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed.

(18) For violating the requirements specified for activities equivalent to hunting, a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed.

(19) For violating the provisions for the supplemental feeding of wild game animals, a warning or a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person, or from ten up to two hundred units of fine on a legal person.

(20) For violating the provisions for the use of a hunting firearm or a high energy pneumatic weapon during hunting, a fine from ten to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year.

(21) For violating the safety requirements provided for in the hunting regulations during hunting, a fine from ten to fifty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise hunting rights for a period of up to one year.

(22) For the purchasing, selling, processing, transportation, or storage of hunting products obtained without an appropriate hunting permit, a fine from five up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person, but from twenty up to fifty units of fine on a legal person.

(23) For the acquisition, hunting, or holding in captivity of wild non-game animals if a permit has not been received from the Nature Conservation Agency in each individual case, a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed.

(24) For misappropriation of hunting products, a fine from five up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person, or from twenty up to fifty units of fine on a legal person.

(25) For the failure to fulfil the obligations provided for the head of a hunt, a fine from two to fifty units of fine shall be imposed with or without the prohibition to exercise the right to lead hunts for a period of up to two years, or with or without the withdrawal of the right to lead hunts for a period of up to two years.

(26) For other violations of hunting regulations not referred to in this Section, a warning or a fine of up to fifty units of fine shall be imposed.

[24 October 2019; 11 November 2021]

**Section 33.** (1) Administrative offence proceedings for the offences referred to in Section 32 of this Law, except for the cases referred to in Paragraph twenty-three thereof, shall be conducted by the State Forest Service.

(2) Administrative offence proceedings for the offences referred to in Section 32, Paragraph twenty-three of this Law shall be conducted by the Nature Conservation Agency.

(3) The State Forest Service shall make a relevant entry on any withdrawal of hunting rights, prohibition to exercise hunting rights, withdrawal of the right to lead hunts, or prohibition to exercise the right to lead hunts in the State Forest Register, specifying the time period for which the additional punishment has been imposed.

[24 October 2019 / This Section shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 22 of Transitional Provisions]

## Transitional Provisions

1. With the coming into force of this Law, the Hunting Law (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1995, No. 13; 1997, No. 14; 2000, No. 9) is repealed.

2. By 1 January 2004, the Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in this Law.

3. Until the day of coming into force of the relevant Cabinet regulations, but not longer than until 1 January 2004, the following Cabinet Regulations shall be applicable insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

1) Cabinet Regulation No. 251 of 8 August 1995, Hunting Regulations (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1995, No. 19; 1997, No. 21);

2) Cabinet Regulation No. 398 of 14 November 2000, Regulations Regarding the Amount of Compensation for Losses Caused to Hunting Management (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 2000, No. 24);

3) Cabinet Regulation No. 478 of 13 November 2001, By-laws of the Hunting Management Development Fund (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 2001, No. 24).

4. Hunter's certificates and head of a hunt's licences issued until the day of coming into force of this Law shall also be valid after the day of coming into force of this Law.

5. Section 31, Paragraph two, Clause 1, Sub-paragraph "c" of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2005.

6. If hunting areas are located in the territory of Gauja, Slītere or Ķemeri National Park or also Teiči, Krustkalni, Grīņi or Moricsala Strict Nature Reserve, the administration of the respective territory shall issue hunting permits to the persons exercising the hunting rights and owners of a hunter's seasonal card until 31 March 2008.

[14 June 2007]

7. The administration of Gauja, Slītere and Ķemeri National Park and Teiči Strict Nature Reserves shall receive the forms for a permit to hunt limited game animals and a hunter's seasonal card until 31 March 2008 from the State Forest Service and within two months after the end of the 2007/2008 hunting season submit information to the State Forest Service on the number of hunted animals, as well as hand over the unused hunting permits thereto and cancel the hunter's seasonal cards not issued to hunters.

[14 June 2007]

8. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 3, Paragraphs four and five, Section 5, Paragraph two, Section 8, Section 10, Paragraph two, Section 13, Paragraphs two and three, Section 14, Paragraph two, Section 15, Paragraph two, Section 17, Paragraph two, Section 18, Section 22, Paragraph one, Section 23, Paragraphs one and three, Section 26 and Section 29, Paragraph seven of this Law not later than by 1 April 2014.

[20 June 2013]

9. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Paragraph 8 of this Law, the following Cabinet regulations shall apply, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

1) Cabinet Regulation No. 109 of 2 March 2004, Regulations Regarding the State Fee for the Issuance of a Hunter's Certificate, a Seasonal Card of Hunter and a Hunting Permit, for the Issuance of a Permit to a Foreign Hunter for Hunting in the Territory of Latvia and for the Issuance of a Permit for Bringing out a Hunting Trophy from Latvia, as well as the Procedures for Bringing out Hunting Trophies;

2) Cabinet Regulation No. 110 of 2 March 2004, Regulations Regarding Procedures for Training Hunters and Heads of Hunts, the Knowledge and Practical Skills Examination Programme, as well as Procedures for the Issuing of a

Hunter's Certificate and Head of a Hunt's Certificate;

3) Cabinet Regulation No. 111 of 2 March 2004, Procedures for Compensation of Losses Caused by Natural or Legal Persons Violating the Requirements Specified in Laws and Regulations Governing Hunting, Determining the Amount thereof, as well as the Procedures and Amount of Compensation for the Value of Illegally Acquired Hunting Products;

4) Cabinet Regulation No. 409 of 19 June 2007, Procedures for Determining the Fee for Exercising Hunting Rights in Hunting Areas under Jurisdiction or Belonging to the State;

5) Cabinet Regulation No. 497 of 17 July 2007, Procedures for Determining the Amount of Financial Losses Caused to Agriculture and Forestry by Game Animals;

6) Cabinet Regulation No. 743 of 6 November 2007, By-laws of the Hunting Management Development Fund;

7) Cabinet Regulation No. 975 of 20 December 2011, Regulations Regarding the State Fee for Forestry Activities, Examinations of Hunters and Heads of a Hunt and Calculation of the Losses Caused by Game Animals;

8) Cabinet Regulation No. 113 of 26 February 2013, Hunting Regulations.

[20 June 2013]

10. Amendments to Section 15, Paragraph two, Section 23, Paragraph one and Section 31, Paragraph two of this Law shall come into force concurrently with the respective amendments to the law On Taxes and Fees.

[20 June 2013]

11. The requirement laid down in Section 17, Paragraph one of this Law shall be applied to such hunting districts which are registered after 1 January 2014.

[20 June 2013]

12. The measures to mitigate the classical swine fever threat shall be implemented until the boar population density is reduced to one boar per 200 hectares, but no longer than until 31 March 2020. In order to mitigate the threat of African swine fever, the measures specified in Paragraphs 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 of these Transitional Provisions shall be implemented until Latvia receives the status of a State that is officially free from African swine fever. The Ministry of Agriculture shall, without delay, publish the announcement that Latvia has received the status of a State that is officially free from African swine fever in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

[26 November 2015; 17 December 2020]

13. In the time period referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions, a user of hunting rights shall reduce the boar population density while hunting in the hunting area in his or her jurisdiction in accordance with the minimum boar hunting amount specified by the State Forest Service.

[26 November 2015]

14. In the time period referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions, boars may also be hunted:

1) in a hunting district with the area from 200 to 1000 hectares, including forest land and agricultural land;

2) in the hunting areas (locations) where hunting is prohibited in accordance with Section 3, Paragraph three, Clauses 3 and 4 of this Law or in areas where the owner of the land exercises the hunting rights himself or herself or has authorised another person in writing to exercise hunting rights for the hunting of unlimited wild game animals;

3) in a hunting district with the area less than 200 hectares.

[26 November 2015]

15. The State Forest Service shall appoint a responsible user of hunting rights for the hunting of boars for the time period referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions:

1) in the areas referred to in Paragraph 14, Sub-paragraphs 2 and 3 of these Transitional Provisions;

2) in a hunting district with the area from 200 to 1000 hectares if it is registered after the day these amendments come into force and has formed as a result of the division of a previously registered district.

[26 November 2015]

16. The State Forest Service, after the evaluation of the location of natural and artificial obstacles (reservoirs, motor roads, localities, etc.) in the area, shall appoint the responsible user of hunting rights referred to in Paragraph 15 of these Transitional Provisions in accordance with the following criteria in the order of priority:

1) the user of hunting rights has a registered hunting district where boars may be hunted;

2) the user of hunting rights has entered into a mutual agreement regarding the external borders of the hunting district;

3) the hunting district of the user of hunting rights has a longer border with the adjacent area. If several users of hunting rights meet this criterion, the advantage is given to the user of hunting rights who hunted down more boars in the previous hunting season per 1000 hectares of the total area of the relevant hunting district.

*[26 November 2015]*

17. If the obligation provided for in Paragraph 13 of these Transitional Provisions is not being fulfilled, the State Forest Service has the right to appoint another responsible user of hunting rights in accordance with the criteria referred to in Paragraph 16 of these Transitional Provisions.

*[26 November 2015]*

18. The State Forest Service shall communicate the decision on the appointment of a responsible user of hunting rights for the implementation of the measures referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions to the addressee and the person whose rights or legal interests may be limited. The decision of the State Forest Service may be contested and appealed in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations. The contesting and appeal of the decision of the State Forestry Service shall not suspend the validity thereof.

*[26 November 2015]*

19. In the cases where the responsible user of hunting rights has been appointed for hunting areas or a hunting district in accordance with Paragraph 18 of these Transitional Provisions, the owner of hunting rights or the user of hunting rights has no right to prohibit boar hunting or create obstacles for such hunting in such areas.

*[26 November 2015]*

20. The responsible user of hunting rights, as part of the implementation of the measures referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions, shall notify the following before the start of boar hunting:

1) the owner of the land who exercises the hunting rights himself or herself or has authorised another person in writing to exercise hunting rights for the hunting of unlimited wild game animals;

2) the user of hunting rights, in a hunting district with the area less than 200 hectares;

3) the user of hunting rights, in a hunting district with the area from 200 to 1000 hectares if it is registered after the day these amendments come into force and has formed as a result of the division of a previously registered district.

*[26 November 2015]*

21. In the period provided for in Paragraph 12 of these Transitional Provisions, the State Forest Service may, upon a proposal of the Food and Veterinary Service, specify different requirements:

1) for the restrictions provided for in this Law and in the hunting regulations concerning the hunting manner, means, tools, methods, or techniques during wild boar hunting;

2) for the circulation of information provided for in hunting regulations and documentation of hunting process.

*[26 November 2015; 11 November 2021]*

22. Chapter VII of this Law shall come into force concurrently with the Law on Administrative Liability.

*[24 October 2019]*

23. The decisions of the State Forest Service on the registration of such hunting districts which do not conform to the requirements of Section 19, Paragraph one of this Law shall be in effect until 31 March 2023.

*[11 November 2021]*

24. Amendment to Section 19, Paragraph three of this Law regarding its supplementation with a new second sentence shall come into force on 1 April 2023.

*[11 November 2021]*

25. The Cabinet shall, by 1 October 2023, make amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 1194 of 29 October 2013, Procedures for Determining the Fee for Exercising the Hunting Rights in Hunting Areas under Jurisdiction or Belonging to the State, providing for fee abatements for exercising the hunting rights in hunting areas under jurisdiction or

belonging to the State in the person of the Ministry of Defence which are located in the territories of military training areas.

[22 June 2023]

## Informative Reference to European Union Directives

[15 November 2012]

The Law contains legal norms arising from:

- 1) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;
- 2) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 8 July 2003.

Acting for the President, the Chairperson of the *Saeima* I. Ūdre

Rīga, 23 July 2003

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<sup>1</sup>The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

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