

Additional file 3. Reasons for article exclusions.

In some cases, more than one reason for exclusion was recorded for a single article.

Screening on abstract (of 1,197 articles)	no. of studies
Excluded on subject (not a study of cover, biomass, diversity, structure, composition or productivity of vegetation)	538
Excluded on exposure (not a study of effects of reindeer herbivory or discontinued reindeer herbivory)	219
Excluded on vegetation type (study conducted in boreal coniferous forest)	37
Excluded on study design (simulation modelling or simulated herbivory)	0
Included	376
Screening on full text (of 415 articles)	
Excluded on subject (not a study of cover, biomass, diversity, structure, composition or productivity of vegetation)	67
Excluded on exposure (not primarily a study of effects of reindeer herbivory or discontinued reindeer herbivory)	83
Excluded on vegetation type (study conducted in boreal coniferous forest or former meadow)	19
Excluded on study design (e.g. simulation modelling, simulated herbivory, vegetation removal, transplantation, or conclusions on grazing intensity based on vegetation properties)	22
Excluded on language (full text not in English, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, German or Russian)	4
No primary data on relevant outcomes (properties of vegetation)	67
No data on exposure differences (differences in reindeer herbivory in time or space)	49
No relevant primary data but potentially useful as a review	30
Full text not found	28
Included	96
Quality assessment (of 100 articles)	
Excluded on methodological detail (methodology inadequately described)	13
Excluded on comparator (comparison between summer and winter grazing, use of small-mesh exclosures, or comparator difficult to interpret for the purposes of this review)	8
Excluded on no. of replicates (no replicates at lowest level)	12
Excluded on use of statistics (e.g. no data on variability)	11
Vegetation data difficult to interpret	16
Reindeer data difficult to interpret	17
Excluded on redundancy (primary data also published elsewhere)	11
Included	40