Contribution of nature-based recreation and tourism to well-being in Finland

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Landowner structure and forest services in Finland

- Finland is covered by forest (86%)
- Forests are distributed evenly and they are easy to reach
- Private forests are located in Southern Finland and State owned forests are located in Northern Finland

Private owned forests

- Private 53%
- Community, church etc. 5%
- State 34%
- Forest industry 8%
Features of Nature-Based Tourism (NBT)

- NBT has developed an important economic branch in many rural and peripheral areas across countries.
- Over 7.4 million visits to Finland, 1/3 of international tourists engage in outdoor activities.
- 43% of Finns engage in nature-based tourism, 90% participate in outdoor recreation.
- NBT builds largely on pure and attractive nature and nature experiences.
- **NBT Definition:** “leisure travel under-taken largely or solely for the purpose of enjoying natural attractions and engaging in a variety of outdoor activities”
Tourism in Finland

• Tourism’s share of Finland’s FGP in 2014 was 2.5 %.

• A growth area, a key development area for the Government of Finland.

• Nature is an important motive for visiting Finland
  ->Importance of recreational and tourism use of forests has increased.

• Southern Finland and the archipelago most important areas (63 % of overnights).
• The Lakeland area increasingly attractive (17 % of overnights).
• Finnish Lapland (21 % of overnights).
Roadmap of Tourism for 2015-2025

Achieving more together – growth and renewal in Finnish tourism – strategic projects

- Preparation of the strategic programme for tourism (TEM)
- Finland Stopover – making Finland a leading stopover country (VF)
- Finrelax® - turning Finland into a top country for wellbeing tourism (VF)
- Making the Finnish archipelago internationally known (VF)
- Making tourism services easy to find and buy digitally (TEM)
- Creation of a demonstration project targeting at sustainable waterway tourism utilising bio economy, cleantech and digital technology (TEM)
Thematic Focal Points of Well-being Tourism

- Finnish way of sauna bathing; habits and manners
- The comprehensive sauna experience (before and after)
- Sauna traditions
- Sauna and silence
- Special services: sauna yoga, peat sauna etc.
- Supplementary services (food, culture etc.)

Finnish sauna

- Traditional bonesetting
- Kajava treatment, a traditional Finnish massage
- Method Putkisto
- Finnish cosmetics brands and treatment products
- Finnish equipment

Pure nature

- Exercise in the nature
- Pure water, air
- Well-being from the forest
- Silence
- Space
- Light, the polar night
- The seasons
- Safety

Natural luxury and harmony

- Healthy food
- Local food
- Organic food
- Special diets
- The gifts of Finnish nature (berries, herbs etc.)
- Gathering food in the nature and preparing it

Food
Psychological health benefits of nature

• Nature areas help to reduce stress, and generally enhance psychological recovery (Ulrich ym. 1991, Bowler et al. 2010).

• Psychological well-being citizens increased when urban nature areas are used at least 5 hours per month (or 2-3 visits to country side, Tyrväinen et al 2007).

• Forest visits bring beneficial changes in human physiology compared to urban environment (blood pressure, heart rate variability, stress hormones (e.g. Lee et al 2012, 2013),
Health and Well-being research project 2012-2015, Academy of Finland
GreenHealth -project field experiment in Helsinki (Tyrväinen et al 2014)

Kuvat Erkki Oksanen/Metla

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Challenges in developing nature-based tourism

- **Sustainable** nature-based tourism development
- Integration of tourism with forestry and other traditional rural land-uses
- Delivering benefits of forest recreation and tourism to local communities.
Benefits of Finland’s National Parks

- a total of 39 national parks
- 2,63 million visits in 2015
- 6 national hiking areas
- 12 wilderness areas
Local economic impacts of national park visitation

- Money spent on management and services of national parks and other PAs comes back many-fold through local private businesses and creates a plenty of jobs
Use of visitor information in National Parks

Data collected through visitor surveys:

- **Annual number of visits**

- **Visitor spending in the park and its surroundings**
  - Spending related to the trip: yes / no?
  - Costs per visitor / party divided in 7 categories (accommodation, restaurants etc.)

- **Other visitor information**
  - How important destination the NP is?
  - Municipality of residence
  - Length of stay
  - Size of the party
Economic benefits in National Parks
Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services 2016

• National parks’ visitor spending 2015 results totally in
  – 141 million euros income / year (12.5 % increase from 2014)
  – 1 400 man-years

– On average 1 euro investment in national parks brings over 10 euros back through local economic benefits.

– The impacts per park have large range (nr of visitors and amount of services)

• The largest effects were at Pallas-Ylläs National Park:

  – 36.5 million euros 2015
Growth of nature-based tourism expands recreational use increasingly into commercial forests.

How to combining nature-based tourism and forestry?
Attitudes of foreign tourists towards forest management?
How well do these environments fit for your outdoor recreation needs and expectations in Lapland?

Attitudes of foreign visitors towards forest management practices?

Over 750 foreign visitors participated the survey 2009-2010 in North-Finland
Effect of forest management practices on landscape (summer/winter), Tyrväinen et al. 2015

Mean and 95% confidence interval. Scale: 0 = not at all, ..., 10 = perfectly. Statistical difference (t-test): *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001.
Results of pairs of photographs (summer/winter).

Winter landscapes received higher scores in evaluations.
Results of pairs of photographs (summer/winter). Winter landscapes received higher scores in evaluations.

Keskiarvo ja 95 % luottamusväli. Asteikko: 0 = ei lainkaan, ..., 10 = täydellisesti.
Need for adaptations in forest management

- In winter, commercial forests fulfill the requirements of international tourists fairly well (snow cover effect).

- Least valued were clearcut and natural regeneration areas (with a few remaining trees) with clear signs of logging.

- all-year-round nature-based tourism; call for adapted management, (small scale unevenaged forestry)

- Profits from landscape management to landowner, compensation of timber values?
- Payments for ecosystem services (PES)
- Example of Landscape and Recreation value trade
Landscape and Recreational Values Trading (LRVT) mechanism

- Everyman’s rights **do not secure** landscape and recreational services
- Efficient models for distributing tourism income or amenity values to private landowners are missing

- New types of agreements and markets are needed
  - Between entrepreneurs (or municipality) and landowners
  - To enhance landscape management in private forests for tourism use
Proposal for a Landscape and Recreational Values Trading (LRVT) scheme (Tyrväinen et al. 2014)

- **Voluntary agreements** on the enhancement of landscape and recreational values
- **Funds collected from beneficiaries** of landscape and recreational services (tourists or tourism enterprises)
  - Payments made in connection to services (accommodation prices)
- **Compensations to forest owners** paid from the environmental management fund
- **Wide range of forest management options**
- **Important criteria for an LRVT mechanism:**
  - Voluntary basis, mutual benefits
  - Transparency, flexibility, long-run sustainability
Case Study at Ruka-Kuusamo area

- Located in town Kuusamo, near Russian border in North-East Finland
- Appr. one million visitors in Ruka-Kuusamo tourism resort every year
- 90% of forests privately owned
Visitor surveys in the Ruka-Kuusamo Tourism Area

• Tourists’ willingness-to-pay for environmental and recreational benefits of forests

• Guided on-site survey for visitors (Choice Experiment method, five languages, over 1100 respondents)

Results:

• Tourists are willing to pay for both (visual) landscape management and measures increasing biodiversity (Tyrväinen et al. 2014)
  – Not for more outdoor recreation routes or increasing carbon sequestration in the forests.
Landowners’ attitudes in Ruka-Kuusamo

• Acceptable conditions for forest owners to make contracts has also been also studied (Mail survey 2013).
  – Forest owners interest to participate depend on the terms of contract.
  – Important features: Initiator of a contract, cutting restrictions, amount of compensation, duration of contracts.

• Piloting LRVT in Ruka-Kuusamo 2016-2018.
  – interest to combine landscape management and biodiversity enhancement
Projects and initiatives

• New ways to develop nature-based tourism and recreation in Finland (Prime minister’s office 2016-2017, Luke, UEF, SYKE)
  - Synthesis of sectors’ economic and employment effects, monitoring systems, new business models, PES models (Payments for Ecosystem Services).

  – Continuation of Well-being from Forests - research program (Metla, 2009-2014)

• Active international co-operation within Nordic and EU countries

• e.g. COST Action is 1204 ToBeWell (Tourism, Ecosystem Services, Well-being), COST FP1204 GreenInUrbs etc.

• Smart Delivery of Public Goods by EU Agriculture and Forestry, PROVIDE project (EU Commission, 2015 - ).
Thank you!
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