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SCIENCE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED
AND SUSTAINABLE DECISIONS
ABOUT NATURAL CAPITAL

Country Fact Sheet **FINLAND**

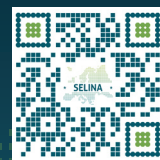


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Country Fact Sheet: FINLAND (FI)

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If you feel there are ongoing or upcoming research projects, policy initiatives or legislations, concerning the use of biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services knowledge in decisions and policies, missing, please contact inge.lieken@vito.be and we update the country fact sheet (until March 2027)

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Update on projects concerning biodiversity, ecosystem condition and ecosystem services assessment and accounting since 2022

The objective of the national **Priodiversity LIFE** (2024-2031) project is to halt biodiversity loss in Finland. Biodiversity action plans are drawn up for eight counties. Each regional biodiversity action plan will identify biodiversity hotspots, their buffer zones and corridors connecting them. Regional nature restoration and rehabilitation measures will be planned and carried out. New business opportunities on restoration are created.

The aim of the **BIODIVERSEA LIFE IP** (2021–2029) project is to safeguard the biodiversity of the Baltic Sea in Finland. The EU goal is protect 30 per cent of Europe's marine areas by 2030. About 12 per cent of Finland's marine areas are currently protected. The project produces information for determining how the 30 % goal can be achieved in the most efficient and in a socially sustainable way. Based on the data produced in the Finnish Inventory Programme for Underwater Marine Diversity (VELMU), the most diverse and valuable underwater nature sites will be identified. A road map is drawn up to develop the network of marine protected areas.

The **ECOPLASMA** (2024-2025) project develops statistics and accounts for ecosystem services, plastic

waste and material flows. Concerning ecosystem accounting, the aim is to compile proposed mandatory physical supply and use accounts for nature-based tourism in Finland and voluntary accounts on nature-based daily recreation. The accounts are compiled using spatial tools and methods made available or supported by EUROSTAT (e.g. QGIS INCA and recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS)), and then compared to accounts compiled using spatial market-based methods (e.g. method derived from simulated exchange value (SEV) and national data on the extent and condition of ecosystems and on the institutional context. This is done to test the fitness of the tools and methods for ecosystem accounting, and to suggest improvements to them. The second main objective of ecosystem accounting is to prepare a data production process aiming at fulfilling the requirements of upcoming amendments to the regulation on European environmental economic accounts regarding ecosystem accounts. The process will be designed using Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) which describes and defines the set of actions needed to produce official statistics.



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Examples of uptake in decision processes, regulations and/or legislation

The Finnish government aims to facilitate the creation of nature value markets. The 2023 amendment to the Nature Conservation Act laid down detailed provisions on the voluntary ecological compensation procedure and offset criteria. Further provisions on voluntary ecological compensation are laid down in the Decree of the Ministry of the Environment. There is some interest among companies operating in Finland to voluntarily compensate their unavoidable negative impacts on nature.

Concerning the goals of the EU Water Framework Directive, the Finnish government is considering pos-

sible legislative changes to clarify the conditions for nutrient compensation, i.e., compensating the nutrient emissions of operations by reducing nutrients from the waterbody. Typically, nutrient compensation would be implemented as a part of project licensing.

Like all EU member states, Finland is planning its national implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Law. Understanding the value of ecosystem services is integral for deciding where and what to restore.

3

Perceived barriers and needs to enhance uptake

Ecological compensation or following the no-net-loss principle is not mandatory in Finland, which slows down the development of nature value markets. Businesses are interested in enhancing their nature handprints, i.e., doing good nature deeds beyond compensations and detached from their footprints. For both footprints and handprints, businesses crave official, credible criteria to avoid any claims of greenwashing.

The Finnish agriculture and forestry sectors were against EU Nature Restoration Law. They saw benefits as uncertain, in the future, and mainly for non-land-owners and for other sectors than themselves. Societal discussion on who benefits from nature restoration, and how much, is needed in Finland.





4

On the way to transformative change

4.1 Community of practice

Finland has a knowledge co-creation and dissemination network for cities and municipalities that interested in the protection of biodiversity. The name of the network is Luontokunnat (= Nature municipalities. Regular meeting and seminars are arranged, and a network Luontoviisaat kunnat (= Nature-wise municipalities) is for more committed and target-oriented action. The networks are led by the Finnish Environment

Institute Syke and Kuntaliitto (Association of Finnish Cities and Municipalities).

Finnish businesses have their own networks for exchanging biodiversity knowledge. Finnish Business and Society (FIBS) organizes seminars and networking events. In 2024, compliance with the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, and the EU Deforestation Regulation are at focus.



4.2 Seeds of transformative change

Visit Finland has its criteria for Sustainable Travel Finland. Sustainable tourism includes the protection nature, landscapes, and biodiversity. Tourism activities are defined as not transgressing the carrying capacity of nature.

COEVOLVERS - Coevolutionary approach to unlock the transformative potential of nature-based solutions for

more inclusive and resilient communities: To explore how nature-based solutions (NBS) can contribute to the societal change needed to address the ongoing biodiversity and climate crisis. To provide an understanding of the genesis and establishment of fairer NBS, especially from the perspective of the most vulnerable humans and non-humans



Project duration: 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2027

Keywords: biodiversity, ecosystems, ecosystem services, natural capital accounting, evidence-based decision-making, transformative change

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PROJECT PARTNERS

-  Leibniz University Hannover
-  Stichting Capitals Coalition
-  Ecostack Innovations Limited
-  University of Trento
-  Pensoft Publishers
-  Centre for Ecological Research
-  Mykolas Romeris University
-  Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
-  University of Patras
-  space4environment
-  National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography
-  Rey Juan Carlos University
-  University of Salzburg
-  University of Bucharest
-  Flemish Institute for Technological Research
-  Foundation for Sustainable Development
-  Baltic Environmental Forum
-  Adam Mickiewicz University
-  National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
-  Copenhagen University
-  Norwegian Institute for Natural Research
-  Estonian University of Life Sciences
-  The Cyprus Institute
-  Wageningen University
-  The Finnish Environment Institute
-  Global Change Research Institute SarVision
-  Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic
-  Gaspar Frutuoso Foundation
-  Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest
-  Municipality of Trento
-  Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania
-  Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia
-  Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources
-  University of Haifa
-  COHAB Initiative Secretariat
-  KTH Royal Institute of Technology
-  Croatian Forest Research Institute
-  SEAcop
-  Macroplan
-  University of Reunion Island
-  Spatial Services
-  Asplan Viak
-  denkstatt
-  Wolfs Company, part of Grant Thornton
-  Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge
-  ETH Zürich
-  Joint Research Centre
-  UNEP-WCMC
-  South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute

