

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services
Protecting Finland's
natural treasures

SISÄLLYS

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Making the most of Finland's
natural assets in 201111

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*Cover: The scenic hills of Koli are
a popular high spot for hikers
in Eastern Finland. Photo: Markku Tano.*

Metsähallitus,

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FOREWORD

Nationwide support for Natural Heritage Services' work

During 2010 it has become clear that our work at Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services is widely seen as indispensable. When we were faced with the threat of funding cuts amounting to millions of euros, as part of a wider drive to reduce public spending, we received extensive backing in Parliament from all parties. This backing is also reflected in positive comments sent to us by MPs for inclusion in this report.

We also received support from business, organisations promoting physical education, trade unions, non-governmental organisations, and local and regional authorities around Finland.

It is gratifying that the natural heritage we preserve and the related services we provide to promote well-being are seen as so important, that people will pull together to defend them. But this should really be no surprise, since this work benefits everyone throughout society.

Particularly when it comes to managing protected areas, our work promotes both the conservation of biodiversity and the growth of nature tourism – helping to strengthen Finland's image and brand. Our services promote well-being by providing facilities for people who want to simply enjoy peaceful natural settings, as well as those interested in activities like hiking, fishing and hunting.

All of our work is based on the principle that Finland's most valuable natural settings must not be endangered. Protected areas are the most important tool for nature conservation – and also a good way to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Natural Heritage Services helps Finland to meet many of its conservation commit-

ments related to international policies including EU targets and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The latest Red List evaluation of Finland's native species, published in December 2010, also showed how such work is urgently needed to combat the ongoing decline in biodiversity.

Preserving valuable natural features is also vital for Finland's expanding nature tourism. Our customer surveys show that the main reasons visitors come to national parks are their landscapes and wildlife.

We have every reason to believe that after Metsähallitus's reorganisation following the parliamentary elections in April 2011 we should be able to carry on with our work to the continued satisfaction of all our stakeholders, including ordinary citizens, politicians and our employees.

The way we work at present to carry out our public administrative tasks under the control of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry ensures that our work is effective and impartial. This puts us in the best possible position to work with others to safeguard citizens' basic rights of access to the land, and to bring welcome income and employment to rural regions. It also enables us to expand our funding base by obtaining other public funds, which are vital for our work.

I particularly hope that during the coming reorganisation process decision-makers will remember we are a public body whose work promotes the common good. We are keen to maintain this role in the future.

*Rauno Väisänen, Director of
Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services*

Rafting on the River Kitkajoki in Oulanka is a marvellous experience. Professional guides ensure that everyone from beginners to thrill-seekers can enjoy such activities safely without disturbing nature. PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS /

MINNA KORAMO



National parks as the cornerstones of nature tourism

Our national parks are national treasures, which also bring significant economic benefits. Our most popular national parks generated nature tourism income for local economies amounting to 20–30 euros for every euro invested in providing their services. Altogether our parks contributed an estimated 108.9 million euros to local economies during 2010, and created jobs amounting to 1,403 person-years in addition to employment provided directly by Metsähallitus.

Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services uses public funds to provide free basic services and facilities in Finland's protected areas and hiking areas.

Local economies benefit in terms of employment and income when local businesses provide additional services in connection with these areas. In this way the public sector and the private sector are together building up sustainable nature tourism.

Facilities from the arctic fells to the Baltic archipelagoes

The impacts of Finland's national parks, national hiking areas and four other major natural areas on local economies during 2010 totaled an estimated 143.5 million euros. The top three areas in these terms were the national parks of Pallas–Ylläs-tunturi, Urho Kekkonen and Oulanka. Significant income was also generated by the

“ Beautiful landscapes and unspoilt nature are Lapland's greatest assets for tourism.

As the largest land-holder in Lapland by far, Metsähallitus has a great responsibility to preserve these features. Sustainable nature tourism will become increasingly important for the whole economy, and Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services will play a key role in enabling this.”

— HANNES MANNINEN, CENTRE PARTY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.

Käsivarsi area in NW Lapland, where recreational tourism brings around 4.3 million euros a year to the local economy in the municipality of Enontekiö.

The areas managed by Natural Heritage Services are renowned for their impressive scenery. Visitor surveys indicate that the landscapes and wildlife are the main attractions.

National parks and hiking areas benefit the entire tourism sector. Natural Heritage Services enters into collaboration agreements with local service providers committed to sustainable nature tourism. Such businesses may organise excursions and activities in the areas, or provide transportation, accommodation and catering services. At the end of 2010 a total of 297 such agreements were in effect.

At a seminar organised for Natural Heritage Services' partners, **Marie Louise Fant** of the Saimaa Holiday network said that national parks provide credibility for nature tourism, as well as well-maintained facilities and trails. "For individual

“ *The beautiful natural features of our archipelagoes are unique, but they could easily be damaged by large numbers of visitors. As nature tourism increases, the services and guidance provided by Metsähallitus will become increasingly important, since they help to channel tourism in all of our national parks so as to minimise negative environmental impacts. This makes it vital to provide sufficient resources for the management of national parks and nature reserves.*” — CHRISTINA GESTRIN, SWEDISH PEOPLE'S PARTY. MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.

firms, this means national parks bring visibility and clients,” she explained.

To steer the longer-term development of nature tourism in national parks and their surroundings, Natural Heritage Services creates specific nature tourism plans. One

such plan drafted during 2010 for the Koli–Ruunaa area involved working with local tourism service providers to identify ways to promote sustainable nature tourism.

Momentum through collaboration

Projects focusing on coastal areas were particularly prominent during 2010, including many schemes that benefit from EU funding. Work has commenced on the renovation of the historic lighthouse island of Söderskär in the Gulf of Finland. Lodgings and cultural landscapes have been restored on islands in the Eastern Gulf of Finland National Park with the goal of promoting tourism. In the Kvarken Archipelago World Heritage Site, we have been working with various partners through the Feniks project to create basic facilities for hiking that will not endanger the natural features of this unique emergent coast.



*Snowshoe trekking is rapidly increasing in popularity. During sunny spring weather trekkers can enjoy memorable days out in the snow-covered forests of Lapland.*PHOTO:

METSÄHALLITUS / OLLI VAINIO.



Korouma Nature Reserve in Posio is an ideal place for a leisurely summer ramble. PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / MARI LINNELL

Natural settings as a source of well-being

Enjoying outdoor activities in Finland's most scenic spots – in national parks, wilderness areas and national hiking areas – brings both physical and psychological benefits. Natural Heritage Services' work promoting outdoor recreation for everyone was recognised through two awards granted during 2010. During the year we also initiated more systematic actions to enhance, produce and examine well-being services linked to outdoor recreation and nature.

Research findings confirm the widely held belief that enjoying outdoor activities and natural settings benefits people both physically and psychologically, though more systematic studies still need

to be conducted to discover the extent of such health impacts.

“At the end of 2010 Natural Heritage Services' management approved a new programme that will use national parks to promote health,” says senior advisor **Martti Aarnio**. “One goal is that together with well-being service providers we should create purposefully designed, marketed and realised products. Facilities like our safe hiking routes will become increasingly important as the population ages.”

Together with the Finnish Forest Research Institute and other research organisations we have begun to devise new ways to understand and demonstrate the health benefits of protected areas. As a basis for this work, we made a compre-

“No one can have a private right to nature. All citizens must continue to have the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from our wonderful natural heritage. To enable us to gain the benefits of these natural assets, we must cherish our natural places. Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services contributes to this valuable work.”

— SUSANNA HUOVINEN, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010

hensive assessment of good health-promoting practices applied in different parts of the world, with help from partners including the US National Parks Service and Parks Victoria from Australia.

“It’s vital that people should also be able to gain health benefits from nature in their immediate surroundings, even around cities. For this reason during 2010 we applied for funding to develop safe, health-promoting facilities for visitors Nuuksio National Park near Helsinki and natural areas in the vicinity of Oulu. In Nuuksio we’re particularly focusing on the needs of pensioners,” explains Aarnio.

Getting Finns out into the Great Outdoors

Areas managed by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services received 4.8 million visits during 2010. Hunting and fishing are also on the rise. In 2010 Metsähallitus sold 106,000 permits for hunting and fishing in state-owned lands and waters. Outdoor recreation in natural settings clearly has benefits in terms of public health and well-being, even if these impacts are not yet fully understood.

The Finnish Central Association for Recreational Sports and Outdoor Activi-

CUSTOMER SERVICE IN NUMBERS 2010

- 4.8 million visits to areas managed by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services (see back cover for details)
- 849,000 visits to customer service points (see back cover for details)
- 45,000 participants in client groups provided with guidance
- 2.5 million visits to the Luontoon.fi/Outdoors.fi websites
- 1 million visits to the Retkikartta.fi/Excursionmap.fi map website
- 69,200 fishing permits purchased
- 37,000 hunting permits purchased
- Customer satisfaction ratings averaging 4.2 (on a scale of 1–5)
- Satisfaction ratings among fishers and hunters averaging 3.7 (on a scale of 1–5)

VISITOR FACILITIES IN NUMBERS

- 3,155 campfire sites and maintained picnic sites
- 2,276 maintained waste collection points and dry compost toilets
- 6,378 km of maintained trails, including informative nature trails

ties gave its award for “Finnish Mover of the Year” for 2010 to Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services. “Visitor numbers and the numbers of permits issued are very significant in terms of the well-being of the Finnish population. Getting out into the forests and national parks can help Finns to stay healthy physically, psychologically and socially,” said the association’s executive director **Eki Karlsson** when granting the award.

A new system has been adopted to enable hunters to apply and pay for elk-hunting permits for specific areas and seasonal small game permits using the internet.

To mark the beginning of the summer holidays, Metsähallitus designated a day when under-18s could fish free of charge in 11 of our waters. An estimated 500 young fishers took advantage of this offer.

Recognition for the Outdoors.fi website

The Finnish Guild of Travel Journalists granted its award for the best website in 2010 to our Luontoon.fi/Outdoors.fi site, which last year attracted 2.5 million hits. These web services, available in English, Swedish and Sámi as well as Finnish, form part of the services freely provided by Natural Heritage Services for visitors to Finland’s national parks and hiking areas. When granting the award the Guild praised the way these websites have expanded free access to Finland’s natural areas to the internet.

“Luontoon.fi is one way for us to carry out the task assigned to Metsähallitus by Finland’s Country Brand Delegation, to attract people out into the natural environment,” says the website’s editor-in-chief **Katariina Hopponen**.

The complementary map website Retkikartta.fi/Excursionmap.fi was revamped during 2010, when for the first time it attracted more than a million visits over the year.

Praise for Evo’s facilities for children and the disabled

In many of our popular areas nature trails and picnic sites have been made accessible to visitors with wheelchairs or push-chairs.

The disabled citizens’ board of the City of Hämeenlinna granted its Good Deed Award for 2010 to the Evo Hiking Area for improving the accessibility of its facilities for disabled visitors.

A 100-hectare camping area jointly developed by Metsähallitus and the Finnish Scouts was completed at Evo during summer 2010. This site and its facilities are suitable for camps and events with up to 10,000 participants. At the end of July the major scout camp event Kilke brought about 11,000 visitors to Evo.

“Over the centuries our forests have sheltered and safeguarded Finns when enemies have threatened us. People used to make poor man’s flour from the soft parts of pine trees to add to the bread they ate with meat from forest game and fish from the lakes. Through its heritage farms and forest cabins Metsähallitus enables Finns today to learn about how our forefathers survived in these cold northlands.”

— PENTTI OINONEN, TRUE FINNS, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.

“ Our national parks and nature centres play a significant role in the environmental education of our children and young people. They enable our young people to learn about our national landscapes and the importance of taking responsibility for all creation.” – KARI KÄRKKÄINEN, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.



Natural open bogs like those in Torronsuo National Park are popular with birdwatchers, berry-pickers and walkers of all ages.

PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / MIKKO THIRA.

Boosting biodiversity and natural values

The UN designation of 2010 as the international year of biodiversity was reflected in many ways in our work managing natural habitats, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and areas, and conducting surveys of ecosystems and species.

Our publicity work also had a special focus on biodiversity. Good news from our protected areas featured prominently in our communications. Examples of our conservation work during 2010 reveal that good news comes from good deeds.

Action to preserve mire habitats

The Boreal Peatland LIFE project was launched at the beginning of 2010. This will be the most extensive EU LIFE nature conservation project ever run in Finland. EU funding will cover half of the project's total budget of 6.7 million euros.

The project aims to restore more than 4,000 hectares of different kinds of peatland habitat to their natural state, in 52 protected areas.

"We also aim to increase public awareness and enjoyment of our natural peatlands. One target group is citizens who require disabled access to trails and facilities," explains project manager **Mikko Tiira**. "During this first year we've made habitat restoration plans for 8 sites, cleared more than 400 hectares of tree growth in 16 sites, and blocked artificial drainage ditches over an area of almost 700 hectares. Before restoration commences, we work with our project partners to survey populations of species including marshland butterflies, dragonflies and golden plovers so that we can later find out how they benefit from the restoration work."



National parks and other protected areas provide refuge for the rare lady's slipper orchid (*Calyptrocheilus bulbosa*). PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / MINNA KORAMO.

“*Natural Heritage Services has been involved in commendable collaboration with Parliament's environmental and natural resource committees during the international biodiversity year. Natural Heritage Services has held its own, particularly in the face of planned budget cuts, and will hopefully continue to succeed in this respect. Our national parks are calling out for infrastructural improvements!***”**

— PENTTI TIUSANEN, LEFT ALLIANCE. MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.

Progress on surveys of underwater ecosystems

Our limited knowledge of underwater marine habitats is problematic, since there is considerable pressure to develop marine areas in various ways. To meet this chal-

lenge Natural Heritage Services initiated in 2009 a globally unique study to find out whether aerial surveys could produce useful data on natural features in marine waters. Results obtained during 2010 have already been promising.

Survey findings indicate that aerial surveys using LiDAR laser sensing techniques can identify underwater habitat types. The greatest advantage is the speed of such surveys, but they can also provide reliable information on aquatic vegetation.

"Aerial surveys can compile ecological data on about 30 km² of marine habitat every day, whereas team of boat-based surveyors using conventional methods would only be able to study about 10 km² during an entire summer season," says senior advisor **Michael Haldin**, who heads the project team.

The survey methods can be useful particularly in shallow marine waters, which tend to have the most valuable marine habitats and also face the greatest development pressure. In spite of their benefits, it is not likely that aerial surveys will ever completely eliminate the need for diving surveys, however.

The most extensive diving surveys of aquatic vegetation conducted in the Bothnian Bay for almost 20 years revealed that these northernmost waters of the Baltic feature a surprisingly high level of diversity.

Slight increase in Saimaa ringed seal numbers

Natural Heritage Services has responsibility for protecting certain endangered species in Finland, including the Saimaa ringed seal. The total population of these unique lake seals today is estimated at just 270. The seals' numbers increased by about 10 during 2010, thanks to a snowy

“The future of the Saimaa ringed seal is literally in the hands of local people and holiday-makers in South Savo. If the seals become extinct, this would be a terrible setback for biodiversity and for tourism in the region. We need to act urgently to save our seals.”

— LENITA TOIVAKKA, NATIONAL COALITION PARTY.
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT 2010.

winter that increased the survival rates of pups, who are raised in lairs built in snow drifts on top of the frozen lake.

Unfortunately the seals' population overall is still too fragmented. New agreements were signed during the first half of 2010 considerably extending the areas where fishers voluntarily agree to avoid using fishing tackle that could harm seal pups during the breeding season. Almost all of the seals' main breeding areas now

lie within the 248 waters covered by such agreements, or waters managed by Metsähallitus. This makes it more likely that pups will survive through their first hazardous months.

Recognition for effective game management

A project run at Metsähallitus's Palosaari Estate in Pyhäjoki has harmonised game management and hunting in ways that also safeguard biodiversity. This work has been recognised internationally, with the estate becoming part of the Wildlife Estate Network and receiving the Edmond Blanc Prize. Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services personnel have created habitats favourable for game species in 27 sites within the estate. Forestry professionals regularly visit these sites to learn how they are managed. In some sites management favours the development of undergrowth which can shelter the broods of nesting game birds.

In recent times willow grouse (*Lagopus lagopus*) have vanished from most parts of Southern and Central Finland, probably due to the artificial drainage of their marshland habitat. But during 2010 their numbers almost doubled in this region, since unusually deep protective winter snow cover led to high breeding success rates. Metsähallitus has also restored natural conditions in many peatland areas both in protected areas and in commercially managed forests. Provisional monitoring results indicate that willow grouse have readily occupied restored mire habitats.

Our game and fisheries wardens, who have the same legal authority as the police, work to ensure that hunting and fishing regulations are duly observed. During 2010 they also participated in the monitoring of wolverine and ringed seal populations.



A hovercraft donated to WWF Finland by Nokia facilitated surveys of breeding Saimaa ringed seals conducted in late winter 2010. Metsähallitus, WWF and specially trained local volunteers attempt to survey the lake seals' entire range at a time of year when surveying work would not disturb the seals unduly. PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / LAAJAKANTTI OY / MARKKU TISSARINEN.

NATURE CONSERVATION IN NUMBERS 2010

- 2,245 hectares of forest and mire habitats restored
- 2,695 hectares of traditional agricultural biotopes managed
- 35,045 hectares of terrestrial biotopes surveyed
- 6,200 hectares of underwater biotopes surveyed
- 28,316 occurrences of significant species protected
- 2,148 archaeological relics and 191 protected buildings registered in protected areas



Vital surveys and habitat management

Our surveys of biotopes, wildlife populations and cultural heritage provide vital information that enables us to prioritise conservation and management work so as to maximise positive impacts on biodiversity and landscape diversity. We successfully reached targets set for data collection and management measures for 2010.

The latest Red List evaluating the statuses of Finland's species was published in December 2010. "Surveys conducted by Natural Heritage Services provided a wealth of data on many species, including lichens, polypore fungi and beetles," says conservation biologist **Esko Hyvärinen**.

The Red List classifies almost a quarter of Finland's breeding bird species as threatened (59 species). But the statuses of many species have improved recently. Two of the species for which Metsähallitus holds special responsibility, the white-backed woodpecker and the peregrine falcon, now have more favourable conservation statuses than previously. This progress has been achieved thanks to systematically planned conservation work conducted in collaboration with dedicated volunteers.

Earlier farming methods in Finland created farmland biotopes such as meadows and wooded pastures which are valuable for their rich biodiversity. Traditional agricultural biotopes with a total extent of more than 2,700 hectares were purposefully managed in Natural Heritage Services' lands during 2010. Volunteers make valuable contributions to our work preserving traditional agricultural biotopes.

← *Willow grouse numbers have increased in areas where Metsähallitus has restored natural conditions in artificially drained mires. The grouse have readily returned to restored mire habitats.* PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / TIMO ESKOLA



Niiles-Jouni Aikio sings a traditional Sámi "joik" for volunteers who have helped to restore heritage landscapes and a historical Sámi farmstead earlier settled by members of his own clan.

PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / PIRJO SEURUJÄRVI

During 2010 a total of 20 voluntary work camps were organised. Tasks included mowing meadows and clearing scrub.

Cherishing Sámi languages and heritage

In 2010 the Finnish Sámi Parliament granted a prize for efforts to promote the Sámi language to Metsähallitus, in recognition of the work we have been doing to promote the languages of Finland's indigenous Sámi peoples and other aspects of Sámi cultures.

Our Luontoon.fi/Outdoors.fi website also has a Sámi language version known as Lundui.fi. During 2010 we jointly published **Ilmari Mattus's** major study of Sámi place names in collaboration with the Finnish Sámi Parliament, The Inari Sámi language association and the Research In-

stitute for the Languages of Finland. Collaboration with the Sámi community during 2010 also included negotiations on hunting and fishing quotas, and the joint drafting of management plans for areas located in the Sámi Homeland Region.

In summer 2010 temporary staff employed by Natural Heritage Services through a publicly funded job creation scheme and volunteers from WWF worked together in Lemmenjoki National Park on the restoration of an old Sámi farmstead named after its former owner Kaapin Jouni. This farmstead will be opened to visitors interested in Sámi culture, and managed by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services in collaboration with the Finnish Sámi Parliament, the Sámi Museum Siida, and Lemmenjoki village association.

Creating jobs around Finland



Youth employment schemes have helped Metsähallitus create jobs for many young people in areas including the Kvarken Archipelago UNESCO World Heritage Site. PHOTO: METSÄHALLITUS / ANDERS ISAKSSON.

Our work cherishing Finland's natural heritage creates employment in all regions of Finland, both directly and indirectly.

Our nature conservation and management work and the customer services we provide through our visitor centres give employment to our own permanent and temporary staff, but the areas and recreational amenities we manage are also vital for our partners and other local firms who employ their own staff. This creates many jobs in areas including tourism, catering, accommodation, guiding, forestry and maintenance work. Our collaborative research projects also provide interesting and valuable work for researchers.

We particularly provide welcome seasonal employment during the summer for students and recent graduates. Many of these jobs are related to nature tourism, and half of our nature conservation work is carried out by temporary workers.

Work experience in national parks

Natural Heritage Services provided work for 160 unemployed young people last year around Finland using 1.6 million euros of additional job creation funds provided by the government.

The youngsters were given work managing natural habitats, providing customer services at visitor centres, entering ecological observations into data systems, and doing maintenance work on trails, signs and

“Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services has a valuable role to play in preserving our unique nature. Natural Heritage Services' work has many more benefits in addition to nature conservation and the provision of recreational amenities. The benefits of Pallas–Ylläs National Park to the local economy in Lapland, for instance, amount to as much as 30 million euros a year. Many young people also get their first work experience through temporary and seasonal jobs with Natural Heritage Services.” – ANNI SINNEMÄKI, GREEN ALLIANCE.

MINISTER OF LABOUR 2010.

buildings. There was also plenty of work to be done restoring valuable habitats and repairing storm damage. Many of the participants gained valuable experience in areas of interest for their future careers.

Jobs from the islands to the highlands

Natural Heritage Services carries out Metsähallitus's public administration functions related to nature conservation, the provision of free facilities for outdoor recreation, and the management of hunting, fishing, off-road traffic, log-floating and seed banks.

Half of our employees work in Southern Finland, a quarter work for our Pohjanmaa regional unit (covering an area extending from Vaasa to Oulu and Kuusamo), and a quarter work in Finnish Lapland. The overall productivity of our work has remained at a favourable level.

At the end of 2010 Natural Heritage Services had 550 employees. The total work input over the year amounted to 553 person-years, including 52 person-years worked through youth employment schemes. We continued to provide work for inmates from open prisons, amounting to 33 person-years during 2010.

Making the most of Finland's natural assets in 2011

At the end of 2010 Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services was given two important missions. Parliament assigned us to work during 2011 to further enhance nature tourism based on Finland's national parks. Finland's country brand delegation meanwhile urged us to expand our publicity work creatively so as to get Finns outdoors into our beautiful parks. But in order to build up sustainable nature tourism and enhance public well-being by promoting recreational activities, we must first safeguard the valuable natural areas we have been entrusted with.

Healthy parks – healthy people

During 2011 we will:

- Launch a new Health from National Parks programme and related projects. This will involve working with our partners to find the best ways to promote public well-being by encouraging people to get out into our most beautiful natural areas.
- Plan new visitor centres for the Nuukio and Pyhä–Luosto national parks and Liminganlahti Bay to provide gateways to enjoyable experiences in these natural settings.
- Initiate the planning and provision of services for the new Sipoonkorpi National Park, which will be established during 2011, creating a major new recreational amenity in the immediate vicinity of Helsinki.
- Expand our mobile and web-based fishing permit purchasing services to cover the national fisheries management fee and regional lure-fishing licence fees. Fishers will also be able to feed in details of their fishing trips and catches to a new web diary.

- Expand our Luontoon.fi/Outdoors.fi websites to enable users to share their experiences.

Partnerships for sustainable nature-tourism

During 2011 we will:

- Take on the mission assigned to us by Finland's country brand delegation, and together with our partners make Finland better known as a country with wonderful and unique natural attractions.
- Exploit the GeoPark status recently granted to the Rokua–Lake Oulujärvi region in international marketing in collaboration with our partners.
- Initiate the development of facilities for visitors to the planned Bothnian Sea National Park so as to support local firms working in nature tourism.
- Enhance visitor facilities on islands in the Gulf of Finland using project funding from the European Regional Development Fund. This will include restoring buildings on the lighthouse island of Söderskäer in time for its 150th anniversary, and enhancing the visitor centre exhibition and other facilities in the Ekenäs Archipelago National Park.

Managing natural resources and protected areas responsibly

During 2011 we will:

- Create a new tool from the Zonation decision analysis programme together with our network of partners to help target land acquisitions under the METSO conservation programme so as to ensure the most suitable and ecologically valuable sites are acquired.
- Prioritise supervisory measures to prevent the illegal hunting of bears, wolves,

wolverines and lynxes, and ensure that Saimaa ringed seals are duly protected.

- Prepare an assessment of the need to improve the management of Finland's bean goose population.
- Publish an action plan for the protection of the Finnish population of the European crayfish.
- Continue to develop the new LiDAR method for the aerial surveying of underwater ecosystems as part of the international SUPERB project, particularly with a view to identifying valuable features in shallow marine waters. Work is particularly needed to enhance data interpretation and develop a more effective camera for surveys of underwater ecosystems.
- Produce a new State of the Parks report comprehensively assessing the state of Finland's protected areas and the ways they are managed.

Effective organisation and networked collaboration

During 2011 we will:

- Enhance our management work and partnerships in the Kvarken Archipelago World Heritage Site by appointing a local coordinator.
- Support work towards the Finnish game authorities' goals for the sustainable use of game resources.
- Strengthen our resource base with the help of national and EU project funding.
- Find new opportunities to get various groups of people involved in voluntary work, to mark the EU's European Year of Volunteering 2011.

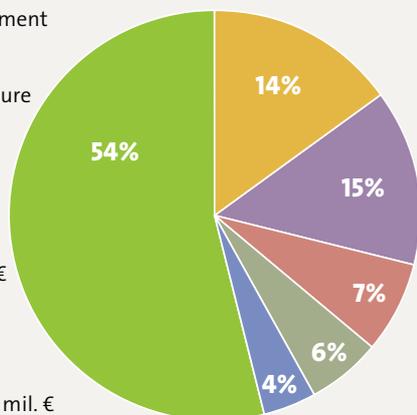


European Year of Volunteering 2011

NATURAL HERITAGE SERVICES' FINANCES IN 2010

Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services' activities are largely financed from the national government budget. Additional income is obtained from fees paid for hunting and fishing permits, and rent paid by tenants.

■ Ministry of Environment	27.2 mil. €
■ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	7.1 mil. €
■ Income	7.3 mil. €
■ Ministry of Employment and the Economy	3.6 mil. €
■ Other funding	2.9 mil. €
■ European Union	2.1 mil. €



Total: 50.2 mil. €

(Not including 3.8 million euros provided by the Ministry of the Environment to build up the share capital of Nuuksiokeskus Oy.)

METSÄHALLITUS'S PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FUNCTIONS

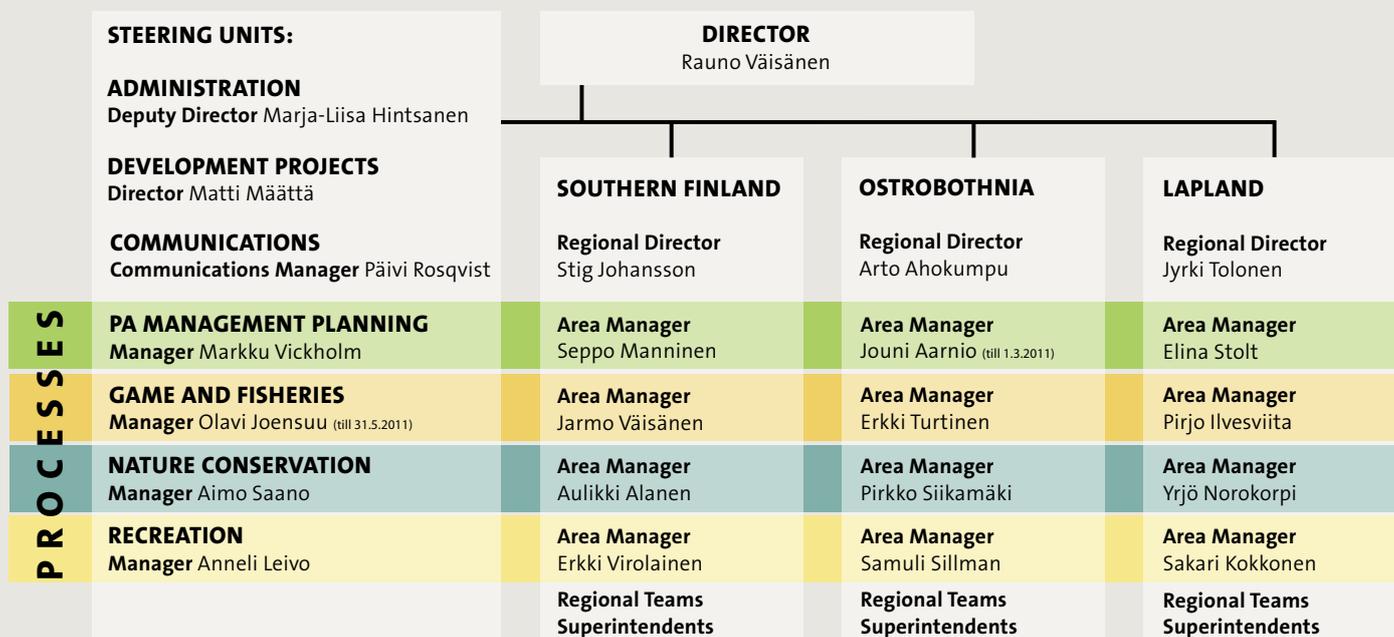
Metsähallitus is a state-owned enterprise that provides services related to natural resources. Metsähallitus's activities are divided into commercial operations (including forestry and real estate deals) and the public administration services provided by Natural Heritage Services (including nature conservation and the provision of free facilities for outdoor recreation). The public services are largely financed from the national government budget.

OUR AREAS IN NUMBERS 2010

The administration of lands and waters owned by the Finnish State (which amount to about a third of the country's total area) has been placed in the care of Metsähallitus.

- Metsähallitus administers areas with a total extent of 125,000 square kilometres, including 91,000 sq km of state-owned land and 34,000 sq km of state-owned waters.
- Of these totals Natural Heritage Services manages 39,000 sq km of land and 31,000 sq km of waters (totaling 70,000 sq km), including:
 - 35 national parks, 19 strict nature reserves, and about 500 other nature reserves (together totaling 16,000 sq km)
 - 12 wilderness areas (with a total extent of 15,000 sq km)

ORGANISATION OF NATURAL HERITAGE SERVICES



NATIONAL PARKS BRING VISITORS AND INCOME TO RURAL AREAS

Investments made by the government in the provision of facilities for recreation in national parks and hiking areas are paid back to society many times over through the opportunities they create for enterprise and employment.

In 2010 Finland's national parks welcomed around 1.96 million visitors, whose spending brought in income to the surrounding areas worth an estimated 108.9 million euros. Considering the costs of running their facilities, this corresponds to an overall 7-time payback.

These economic impacts are calculated using methodology devised by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services and the Finnish Forest Research Institute on the basis of data on visitor numbers compiled by Natural Heritage Services, survey findings on visitors' spending levels, and factoring figures that account for the cumulative impacts of visitors' spending in local economies.

PROTECTED AREAS WELCOME MANY VISITORS

During 2010 Finland's national parks welcomed about 1.96 million visitors, and national hiking areas received some 364,000 visitors.

These total visitor numbers for each area type were 15,000–20,000 higher than in 2009.

The most popular national park was Pallas–Yllästunturi, with 436,000 visits. Ruunaa was the most visited national hiking area, with 88,000 visits.

Estimated numbers of visits to national parks, hiking areas and customer service points in 2010 →

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF VISITS TO VISITOR CENTRES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE POINTS IN 2010

(total: 849,400 visits)

Service point	Visits
Blåmusslan	16 400
Ekenäs	19 600
Etiäinen	8 000
Fell-Lapland	24 800
Hailuoto	16 900
Hautajärvi	7 500
Hossa	40 400
Häme	14 500
Ivalo	11 000
Kalajoki	31 800
Karhuntassu	34 700
Kellokas	70 100
Kiehinen	47 200
Kilpisjärvi	9 800
Koilliskaira	13 300
Korpoström	21 000
Korvatunturi	7 100
Nestori – Saimaa Nature Exhibition	24 000
Oskari	11 000
Oulanka	73 000
Pallastunturi	34 200
Petola	15 200
Pyhätunturi	24 400
Ruunaa	7 500
Seitseminen	30 900
Siida	108 000
Syöte	28 200
Teijo	25 300
Terranova	21 800
Ukko	51 800

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF VISITS TO NATIONAL PARKS IN 2010

(total: 1.958,500 visits)

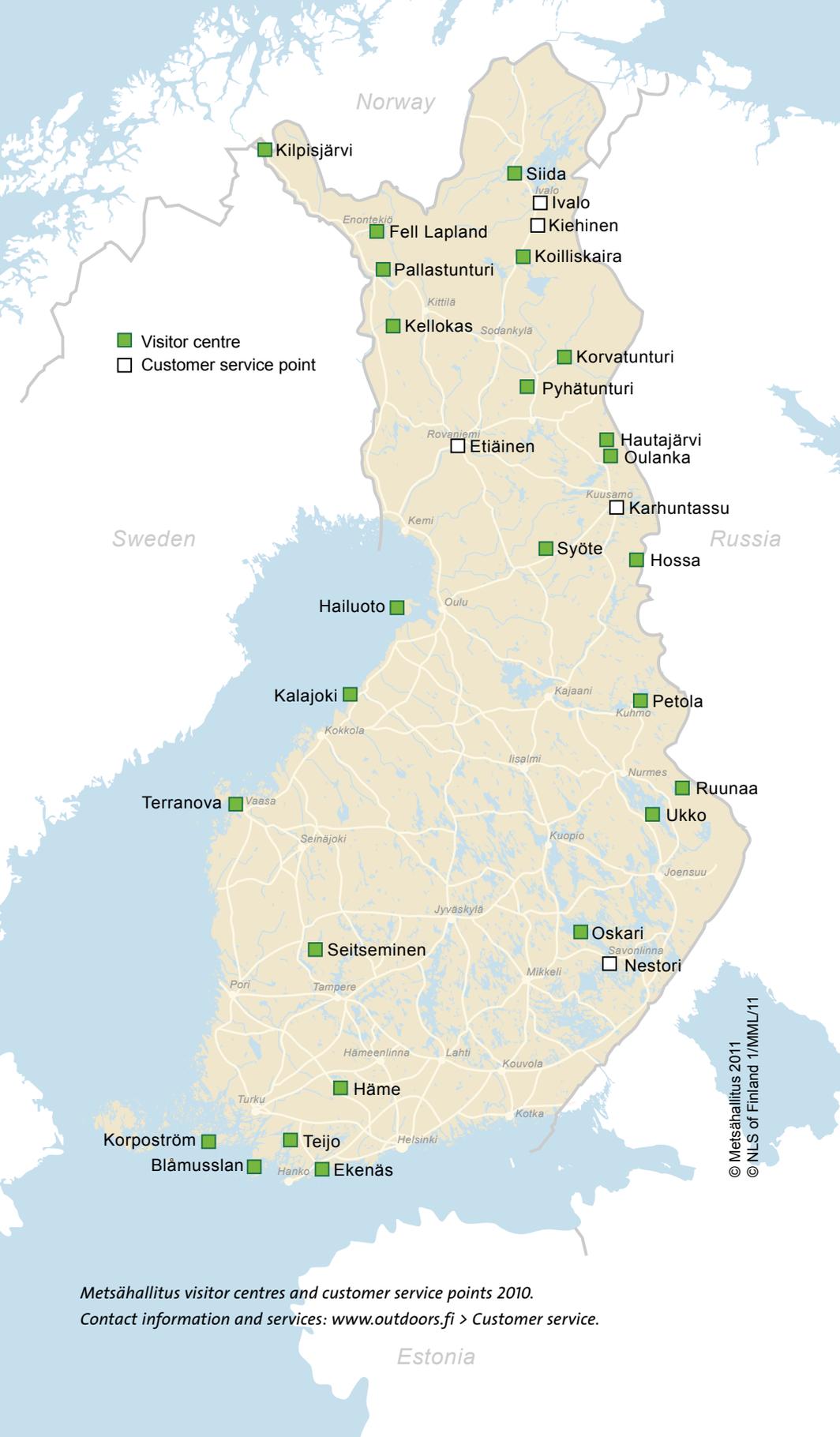
National park	Visits
Archipelago	59 000
Eastern Gulf of Finland	19 000
Ekenäs Archipelago	54 000
Helvetinjärvi	23 000
Hiidenportti	11 000
Isojärvi	10 500

Kauhaneva–Pohjankangas	5 500
Koli	138 500
Kolovesi	7 500
Kurjenrahka	26 500
Lauhanvuori	9 500
Leivonmäki	12 500
Lemmenjoki	10 000
Liesjärvi	31 000
Linnansaari	31 000
Nuuskio	178 000
Oulanka	169 000
Pallas–Yllästunturi	436 000
Patvinsuo	12 000
Perämeri	9 500
Petkeljärvi	20 500
Puurijärvi–Isosuo	7 000
Pyhä–Häkki	16 500
Pyhä–Luosto	119 000
Päijänne	13 500
Repovesi	76 500
Riisitunturi	23 500
Rokua	23 500
Salamajärvi	12 500
Seitseminen	40 500
Syöte	31 000
Tiilikajärvi	8 500
Torransuo	17 000
Urho Kekkonen	287 500
Valkmusa	8 500

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF VISITS TO NATIONAL HIKING AREAS IN 2010

(total: 364,000 visits)

Hiking area	Visits
Evo	84 500
Hossa	48 000
Iso-Syöte	22 000
Kylmäluoma	25 500
Oulujärvi	24 000
Ruunaa	88 000
Teijo	72 000



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Metsähallitus visitor centres and customer service points 2010.
Contact information and services: www.outdoors.fi > Customer service.

Estonia



Finland's national parks, strict nature reserves, wilderness areas, national hiking areas and public waters under Metsähallitus's management as of 31.12.2010. For information on the management of these areas: www.metsa.fi > Natural Heritage. For information on these areas and their facilities: www.outdoors.fi, www.excursionmap.fi.

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Examples of coverage of our areas in English-language media during 2010:

An earth-friendly holiday: Finland's national parks attract travellers who want to minimise their holiday footprint

– Blue Wings, May–June 2010

Winter hiking in Repovesi National Park – a different view of nature.

– Helsinki Times, 25.3.2010

Night hiking in the midnight sun in Pyhä–Luosto National Park

– This is Finland, June 2010

Into the wild: Finland's national parks contain spectacular scenery and a wealth of wildlife

– Blue1 Dream, 3/2010

See fall colours explode in the Urho Kekkonen National Park

– VisitFinland.com, September 2010

Finland's most uplifting scenery – the Kvarken Archipelago World Heritage Site

– This is Finland, September 2010

Wild woods within easy reach in the Nuuksio National Park

– Helsinki Times, 16.9.2010

Find out more about the work of Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services in this annual report for 2010.

