

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN COASTAL AND MARITIME TOURISM IN FINLAND

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CONTEXT

- **46,000 km of coastline**, of which up to **85 % is made of islands**
- Finland's coast boasts **one of the world's largest archipelago** with the tiny, pristine islands.
- Finnish Archipelago Sea: the **world's highest density of islands** with its **around 50,000 islands**.
- New islets and islands still emerging slowly due to the steady **uplift of the Scandinavian shield at 1 cm/year** results – 1 000 new football fields each year.
- International tourism is growing - about **1 million foreign tourists** in 2017.



Photo: Jaakko Kivelä, Visit Finland

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

- Sustainable tourism development requires **informed participation by all the relevant stakeholders.**
 - Diverse views, conflicting interests as well as shared goals must be considered.
- The aim was to **increase understanding of sustainable tourism development in the coast of Finland.**
- Perceptions of different stakeholders were studied – data collected by **interviewing 18 stakeholders.**

HOW DO STAKEHOLDERS PERCEIVE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON THE FINNISH COAST?

Sustainable tourism development

Economic sustainability:
the most important sustainability dimension

Socio-cultural sustainability:
the weakest sustainability dimension

Political sustainability:
strongly interconnected to all the other sustainability dimensions

Environmental sustainability:
strongly present, but no major issues attached with it

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IS ABOUT OPERATING A PROFITABLE MICRO ENTERPRISE.

Tourism is an opportunity
**to preserve the
vitality of the area
and to gain income**
by establishing and
running a micro size,
family enterprise.

Challenges

Seasonality:

economic investments,
optimising operations
and offerings

Accessibility:

causes significant costs

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Theme	Issue
Nature of demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volume of demand, visitor numbers• Length of stay• Seasonality of tourism demand
Business profitability SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of SMEs, accommodation capacity, capacity of guest marinas• SME growth• Generated revenue and profit• Logistics, operational costs
Employment in SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Income opportunities and level (part-time/full-time)• Capacity to employ• Seasonality of tourism employment



Photo: Visit Finland

SOCIO-CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY IS ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND INCLUSION.

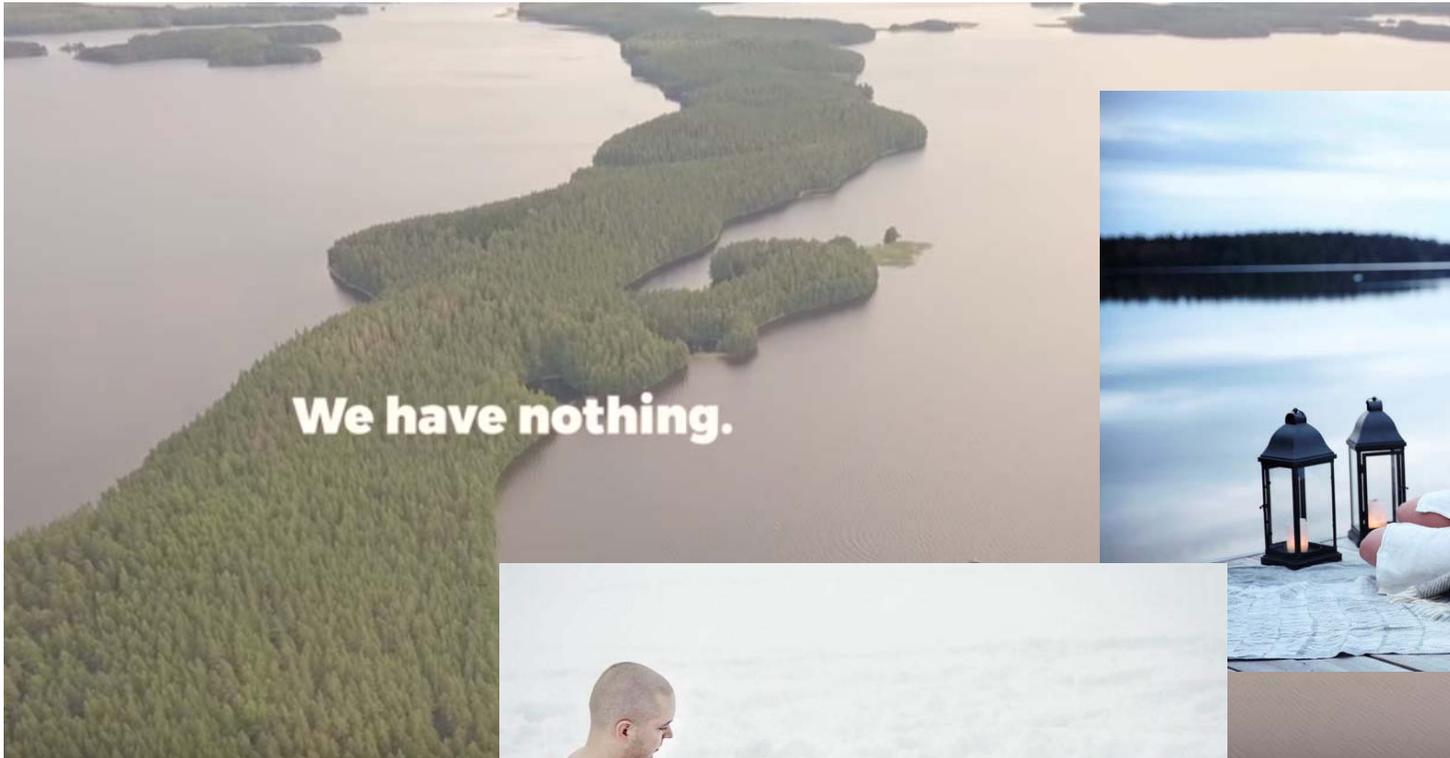
Sustainable tourism development is about **including local residents and second-home owners in the decision-making process.**

Challenges

Coast consist mainly of **private property** – conflicts between local groups of stakeholders.

People have **personal and emotional relationship with nature.**

Emotions arise: people feel they **own nature**, it is their own personal space.



Visit Padasjoki



Photo: Visit Finland, Harri Tarvainen



Photo: Visit Finland, Lauri Rotko



SOCIO-CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Theme	Issue
Host community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Value-system of the host community• Host community attitude towards tourism development• Ownership of second homes
Community participation in tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committing locals to the operations and concrete actions to develop tourism in the area• Informing locals of tourism development in the area• Including the host community and local characteristics in experience and product development

More tools needed!

POLITICAL SUSTAINABILITY IS RELATED TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES' DECISION-MAKING.

Sustainable tourism development is based on **the instruments and actions of the local public authorities**, in particular, municipalities.

Challenges

There exists a lot of **conflicts**, in particular, between the entrepreneurs and local public authorities.

Communication is needed to ensure joint understanding.

POLITICAL SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Theme	Issue
Land use planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability and level of land zoning policy• Building permits• Participation of local residents in the planning process• Management plans of the nature reserves
Legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of ethics (everyman's right)
Development of tourism infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of infrastructure• Location of infrastructure• Access to destinations by public transportation• Economic support for enterprises by the local government



Photo: Visit Finland, Julia Kivelä

Sustainable tourism development is about **minimising environmental impacts and protecting nature.**

Challenges
Climate change:
business viability, safety of tourists

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Theme	Issue
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adaptation management• Impacts on destinations• Identification, assessment and prevention of risks
Environmental impacts and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solid waste management• Recycling systems• Reduction of the use of plastic• Decreasing eutrophication• Establishment of protected areas
Low-impact transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion of ways of transportation with low carbon footprints and development of e.g. cycling routes



Photo: Visit Finland, Juho Kuva

CONCLUSIONS

- The findings have important practical implications for the destination stakeholders, and **provide the basis for developing tourism policies with objectives and a set of indicators.**
- All sustainability dimensions form **a collection of interconnected systems.**
- In order to ensure sustainable tourism development in the Finnish coast and archipelago, **more attention and tools are needed to address, in particular, socio-cultural and political sustainability** – these involve a lot of conflicting interests.

A person is seen from behind, performing a yoga tree pose on a large, light-colored rock. They are wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and blue shorts. The rock is situated on a rocky shore next to a large body of water. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

THANK YOU!

Photo: Visit Finland, Harri Tarvainen