



Health & Wellbeing in Finnish National Parks: benefits perceived by visitors

Parks and Protected Areas as
“Natural Health Centres”

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A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground that perfectly reflects the surrounding environment. A dense forest of tall, thin trees with golden-brown foliage lines the shore. In the background, two large, rounded mountains are covered in patches of snow, set against a sky with soft, wispy clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

**We manage and protect
Finland's most valuable natural
treasures in a responsible manner**

- **For the benefit of people and
nature**

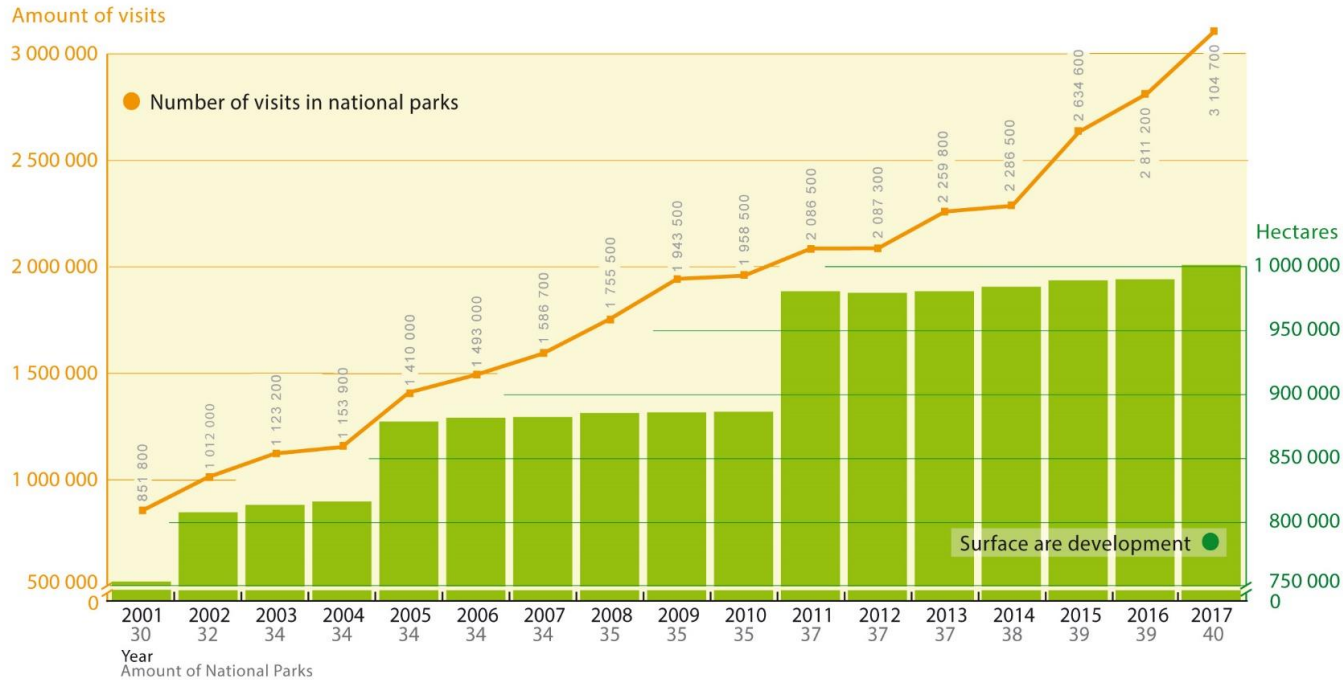
Parks & Wildlife Finland

- Manages all state-owned protected areas, i.e. 18% of Finland's surface area:
 - 40 national parks
 - 19 strict nature reserves
 - 6 national hiking areas
 - 12 wilderness areas in Lapland
 - almost 3,000 other protected areas
 - and cultural heritage sites:
 - ca. 350 protected buildings,
 - ca. 2,000 ancient sites.

Pallas-Yllästunturi NP



Development of visitation numbers and surface area of Finland's national parks



Healthy Parks
HEALTHY PEOPLE
FINLAND

PARKS & WILDLIFE FINLAND
Health and Wellbeing 2025 programme



METSÄHALLITUS

THE GOAL

Healthy Parks **HEALTHY PEOPLE**

Finland's diverse natural environment improves the health and well-being of its people.

The Finns are an active, outdoor people, for whom nature is an essential part of everyday life and leisure time. Their social, physical and mental well-being has improved due to the varied Finnish wilderness and their active relationship with nature.

THE ROLE OF PARKS & WILDLIFE FINLAND

- Guardian of the diverse natural environment and a provider of high-quality services that meet the needs of local recreation, tourism, hiking, hunting and fishing
- Inspiring people to go out into the natural environment and strengthen their relationship with nature
- An active developer, partner and coordinator in collaboration





T H E M E

**From nearby nature
to national parks**



- 6 Tuhaansien perhos
- 7 Aleksanterinpatteri • Alexandersbatteriet • Alexander's battery
- 8 Sotilaiden jäljet • Soldaternas fotspår • Military mementos
- 9 Kuolemanlaakso • Dödens dal • Valley of death
- 10 Torpedolahti • Torpedviken • Torpedolahti Bay
- 11 Kuninkaansaari • Kungsholmen • Kuninkaansaari Island
- 12 Hiekkapoukama • Sandviken • Sandy cove





T H E M E

**Results based on
communications and
cooperation**

Visitor monitoring

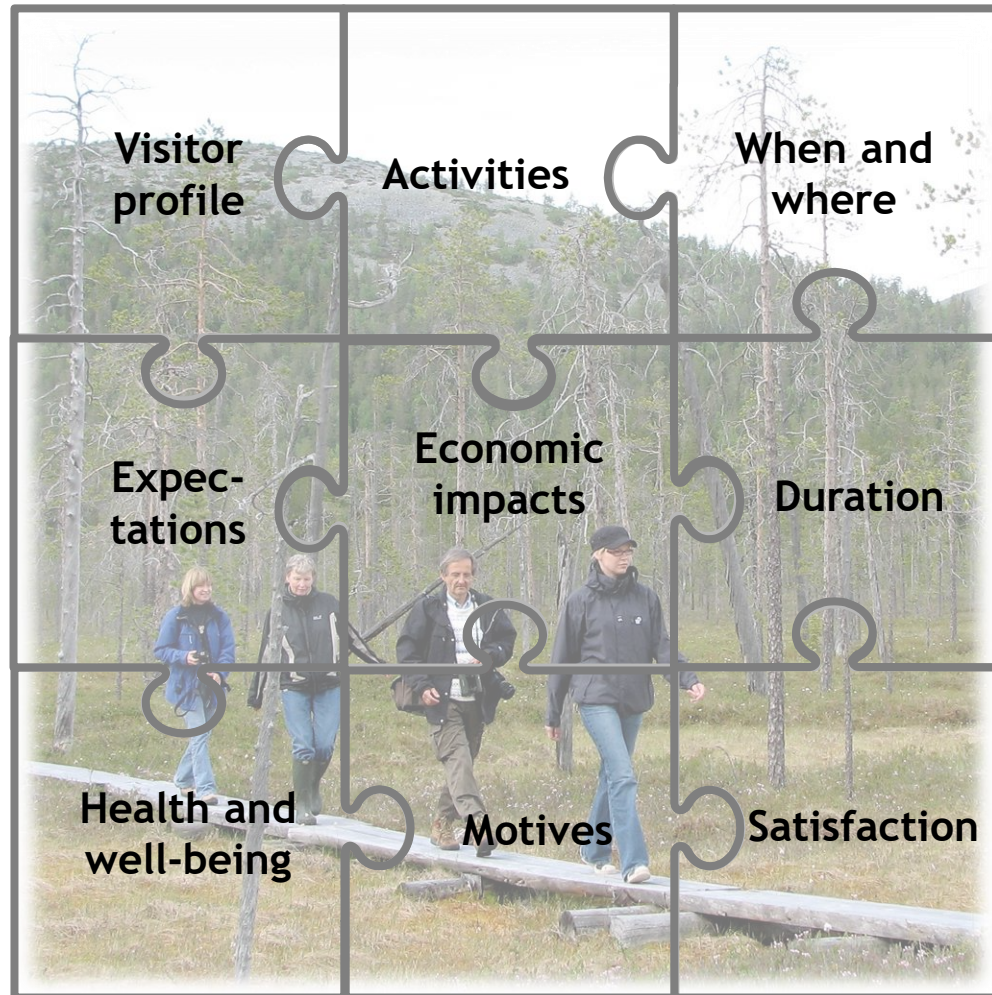
Visitor Surveys

Visitor Counting

Visitor Information



Visitor surveys



Wellbeing benefits perceived by visitors

Pallas-Yllästunturi NP 2016 (n=1879)	Evaluation, %					Average
	Totally disagree	Some- what disagree	No opinion	Some- what agree	Totally agree	
Increased social wellbeing	1	1	14	37	47	4,28
Increased psychological wellbeing	0	0	8	34	58	4,50
Increased physical wellbeing	0	0	6	29	64	4,56



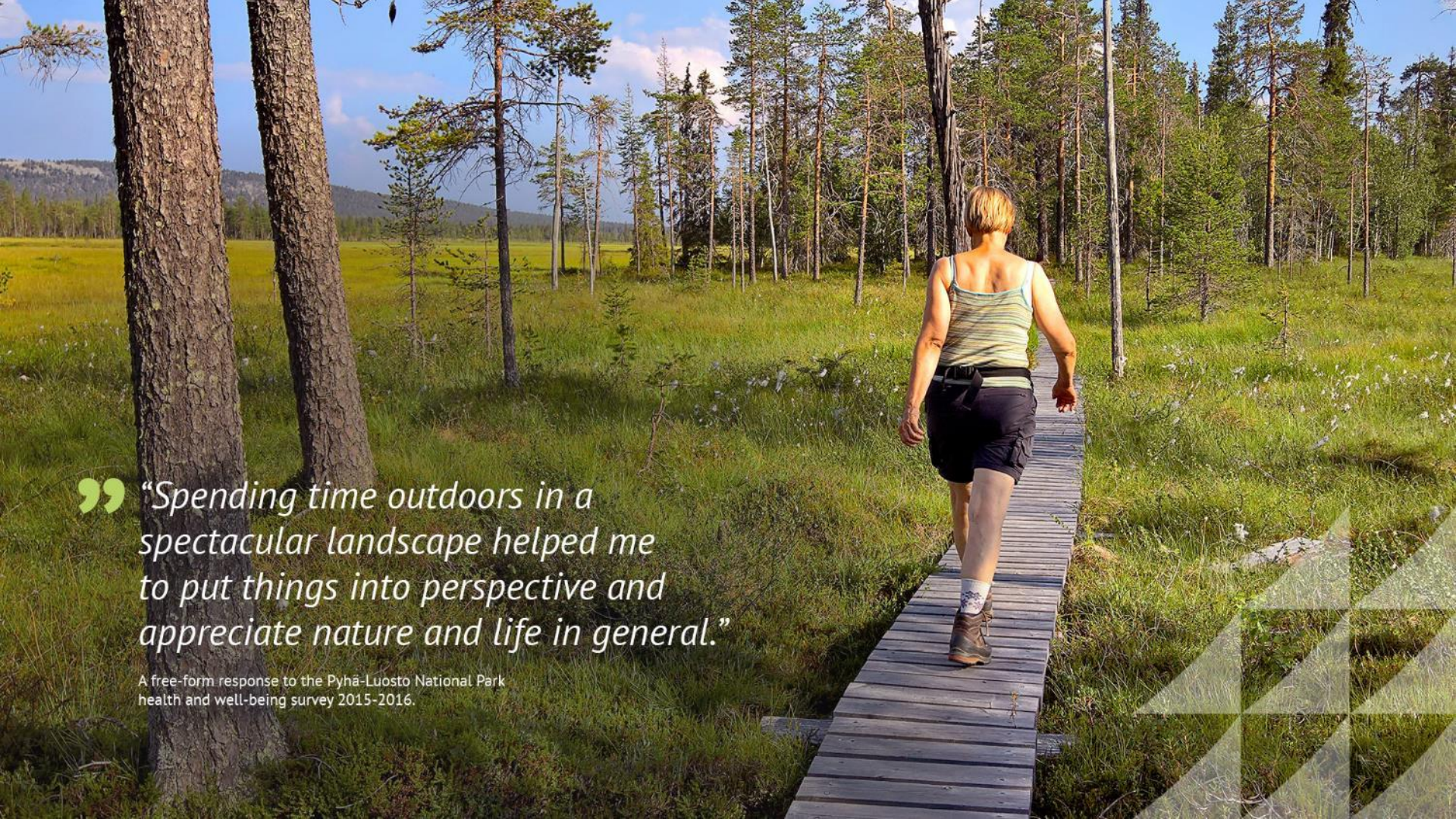
National parks move people

- In Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park, visitors moved a total of about 10.2 million kilometers in 2017 by their own power.
 - Roughly the same distance as 255 laps around the world.



Public health is improving

- According to visitor surveys in 2015-2017, 87% of visitors to nature and history sites experienced that the visit had a fairly or very high impact on their health and wellbeing (n=11 323).
- The average health and well-being effect of the visitors was 4.36 on a scale of 1-5.
- Visitors estimated their health and well-being effects to around 100 euros per visit (median value).

A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a striped tank top, dark shorts, and hiking boots, is walking away from the camera on a wooden boardwalk. The boardwalk is made of dark wooden planks and leads through a lush green landscape. To the left, there are two large, thick tree trunks. The background features a dense forest of tall, thin evergreen trees under a blue sky with light clouds. A grassy field is visible in the distance.

” *“Spending time outdoors in a spectacular landscape helped me to put things into perspective and appreciate nature and life in general.”*

A free-form response to the Pynh -Luosto National Park health and well-being survey 2015-2016.



"A national park like no other!"



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Urho Kekkonen National Park
VISITOR SURVEY
2017 • SUMMARY



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