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# FINNISH NATIONAL URBAN PARKS – FROM VISION TO PRACTICE

EUROPARC Federation – 2019 Conference  
24 – 27 September, Kemer National Park, Latvia  
Workshop 3.1 – Nature on your doorstep

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## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: I Background: Why NUP Concept?

Because an architectural view and current fashion are dominating in city planning.



**Ecologist's view:** a shoreline is a zone with interesting geomofological features and high biodiversity values.



Photos J-P. Flander

**Architect's view:** a shoreline is man made waterfront, an architectural element with straight lines and strict forms.



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## Finnish NUP Concept - from vision to practice:

**I Background: Why NUP Concept?** Because cities and towns are today mainly built in huge projects with underground constructions and steel/concrete plates causing irreversible changes in urban natural- and cultural heritage and identity of cities or towns.





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## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice:

### I Background: Why NUP Concept?

Because urban sea and lake bays and wetlands are being filled and billions of years old cliffs are being blown up for to form foundations for new commercial towers and residential quarters with sea or lake views.





Photo J-P. Flander

## Finnish NUP Concept - from vision to practice:

### I Background: Why NUP Concept?

Because urbanization is the trend in all over the world - also in Finland. Today over 70 % of population in Finland is living in urban areas. Most want to live in an urban environment that has easy access to a green area or nearby forest. Finnish urban young people are true forest lovers.



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## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: **III** Legislation

*68 § A National urban park (Land Use and Building Act 132/1999)*

A national urban park may be established to protect and maintain the *biodiversity* (2009) and beauty of the cultural and natural landscape, historical characteristics or related values concerning the townscaping, social, recreational or other special values of an area in an urban environment.

### The main principles of the Law:

#### Ownership

Municipality, State, Public entiresities, private.

#### Preparation/decision making

The municipality applies and the Ministry of the Environment decides.

#### Protection

By land use plans and different Acts.

#### Management

By managementplan.



# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: IV Technical criteria

Each site must meet four technical criteria (I-IV)

## I BREATH AND CONTENT



## II URBAN CENTRALITY



## III EXTENT AND CONTIGUOUSNESS



## IV ECOLOGY AND CONTINUITY



“The National Urban Park must be an integrated urban space with a high cultural and natural environment and part of a wider ecological whole.”





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# Finnish NUP Concept - from vision to practice:

## II The first vision

The first Finnish National Urban Park was established in 2001 in Hämeenlinna on the basis of the 1997 vision. At the time, we had no legislation for national urban parks.

### Vision of 1997

#### *The National Urban Park in Hämeenlinna*



The City of Hämeenlinna 1997

### Outline of the 2001 Decision of the NUP





## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice:

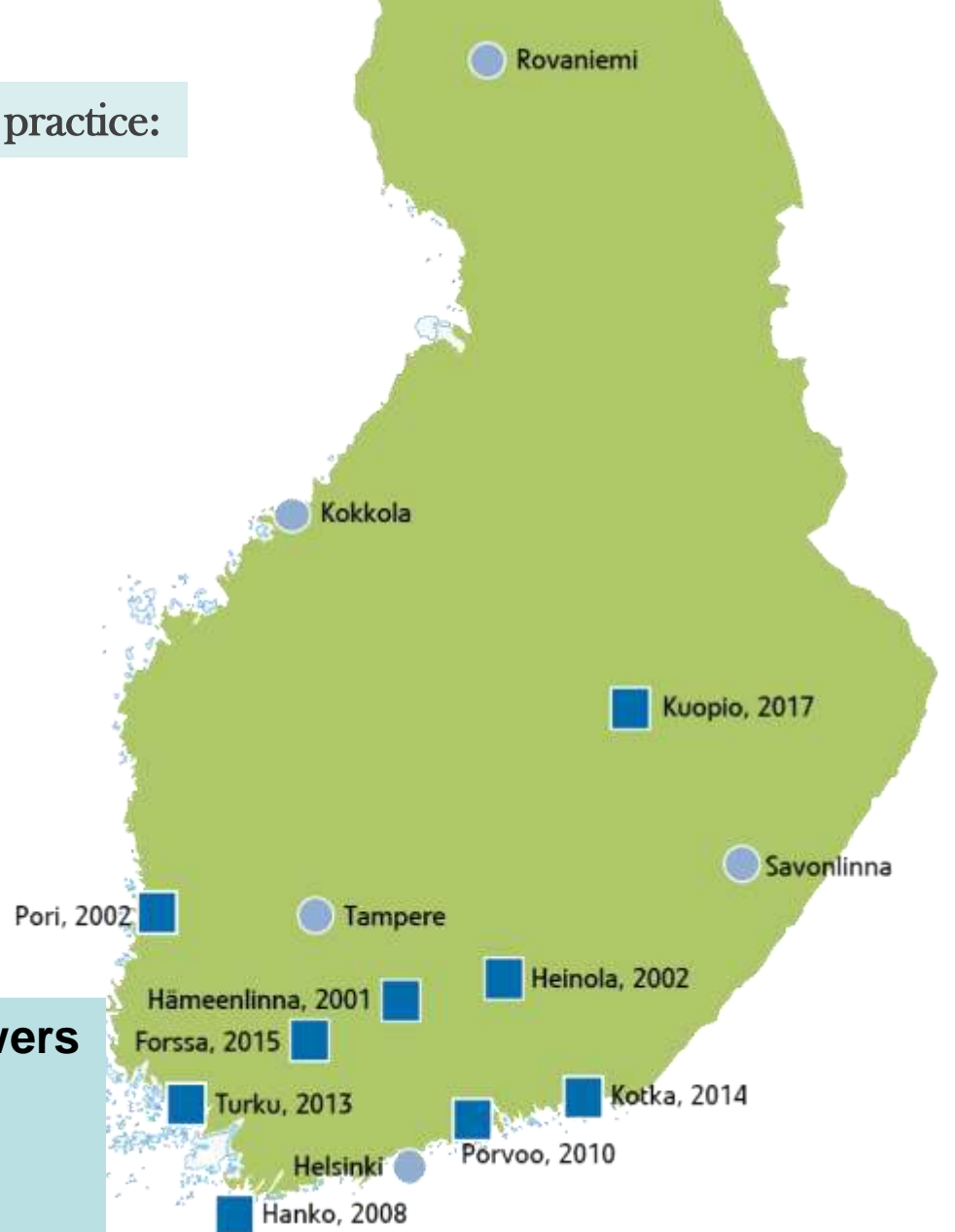
# The growing network of NUPs in Finland 2019



Source: Ministry of the Environment Finland

**Our strategy: "Let all the flowers flourish".**

Each of 9 NUP sites has a specific role in the network.



Source: Ympäristöministeriö/Ministry of the Environment



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# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VI Implementation of the management plan.

## Case study NUP of Hämeenlinna 2001 An aerial view towards downtown



Photo J-P. Flander



Photo City of Hämeenlinna



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**Finnish NUP Concept – from vision  
to practice: VI a management plan**

**NUP in Land Use and Building Act  
(132/1999) 70 §**

**THE VALUES OF A NUP ARE  
MANAGED BY A  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A Management Plan is drawn up  
by the municipality and approved by  
Ministry of the Environment.



Hämeenlinnan kansallinen kaupunkipuisto  
**HOITO- JA KÄYTTÖSUUNNITELMA**



**Management Plan for NUP  
of Hämeenlinna 2002/2003**



**KANSALLINEN  
KAUPUNKIPUISTO**

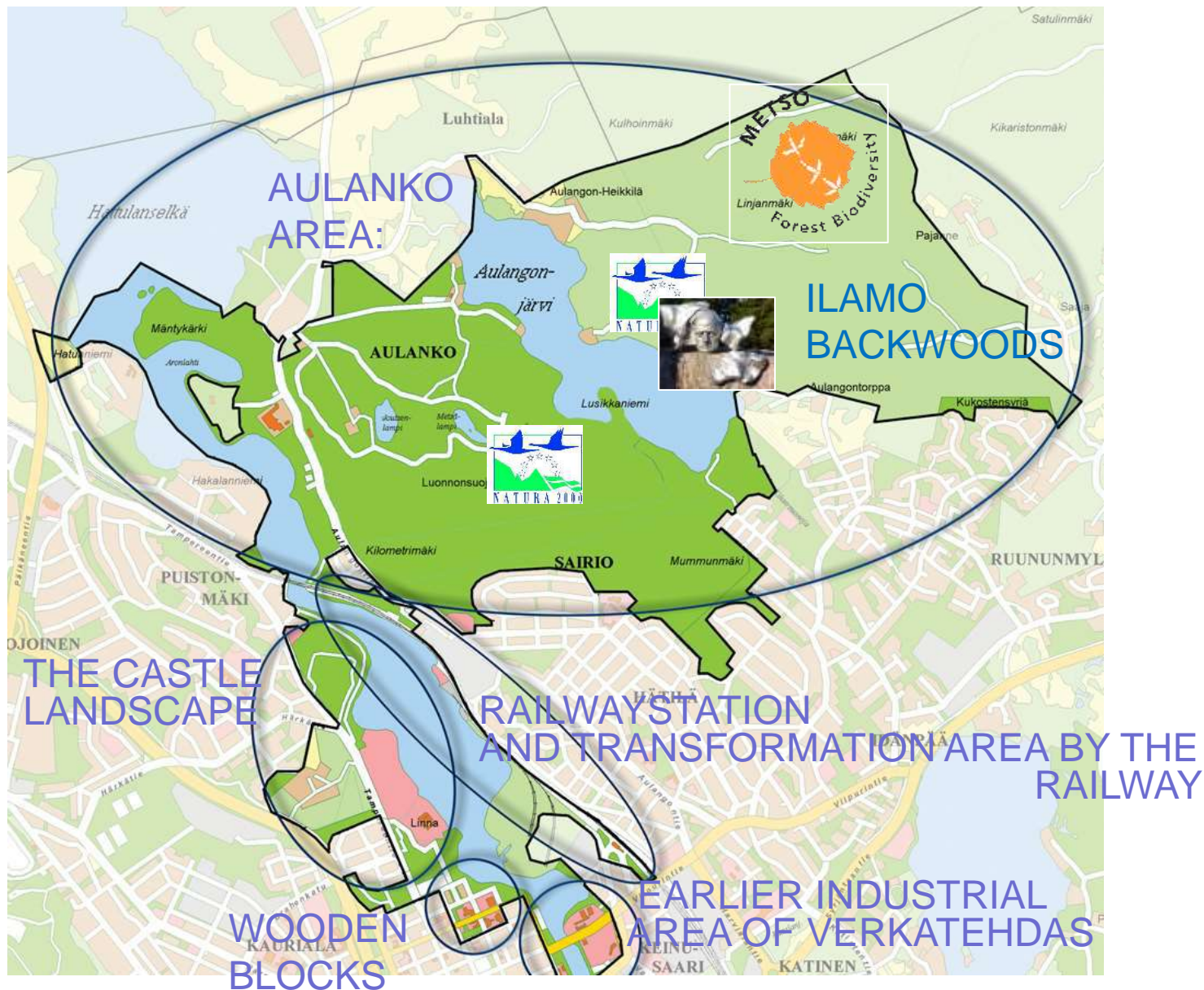
Hämeenlinnan kansallinen kaupunkipuisto • National Urban Park



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# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VI Implementation of the management plan.

## Boundaries and the main objects of management in Hämeenlinna NUP





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## VI Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: Implementation of the management plan.

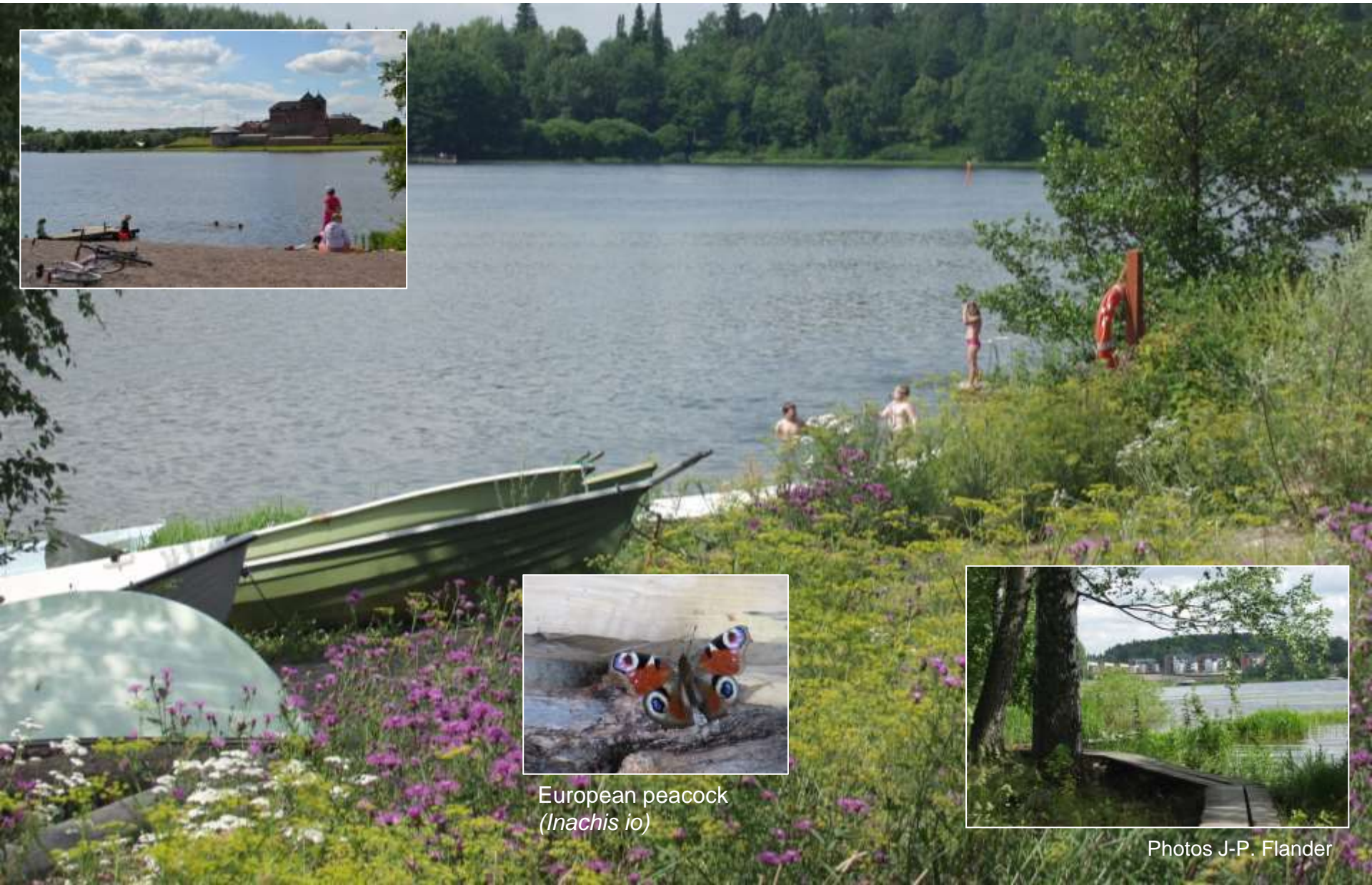
The transformation of the former industrial lake shore into a connective trail/ecological corridor between railwaystation and Aulanko area.





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Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Implementation of the management plan. The end result is a species rich ecological corridor with beautiful historical landscape views.



European peacock  
(*Inachis io*)



Photos J-P. Flander



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**Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Impelementation of the management plan.** Unbuilt public shores of NUP site serves intersting activies and a touch of nature all year round. We are lucy we still have four seasons! Icecover enlargen recreational area in the Lake Aulanko: People use to go on ice just from free public shores.



Photos J-P. Flander



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# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Implementation of the management plan. Aulanko Nature Reserve in Hämeenlinna NUP offers a variety of ecosystem services.



Photos J-P. Flander





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## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Implementation of the management plan.

Coexistence between nature conservation and intangible heritage:  
Natura 2000 Site/Sibelius Forest Nature Reserve 2018.



Jean Sibelius is an internationally known Finnish composer. He spent his youth in Hämeenlinna. He fell in love with nature and used to hike and examine species on Kärmeskalliot (the Snake Rocks). A highway and two apartment blocks were planned for the landscape of the picture. But the city of Hämeenlinna wisely chose a national urban park!





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# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Impelementation of the management plan

## View from Sibelius Forest Nature Reserve to the Aulanko ancient castle mountain / Aulanko Nature Reserve

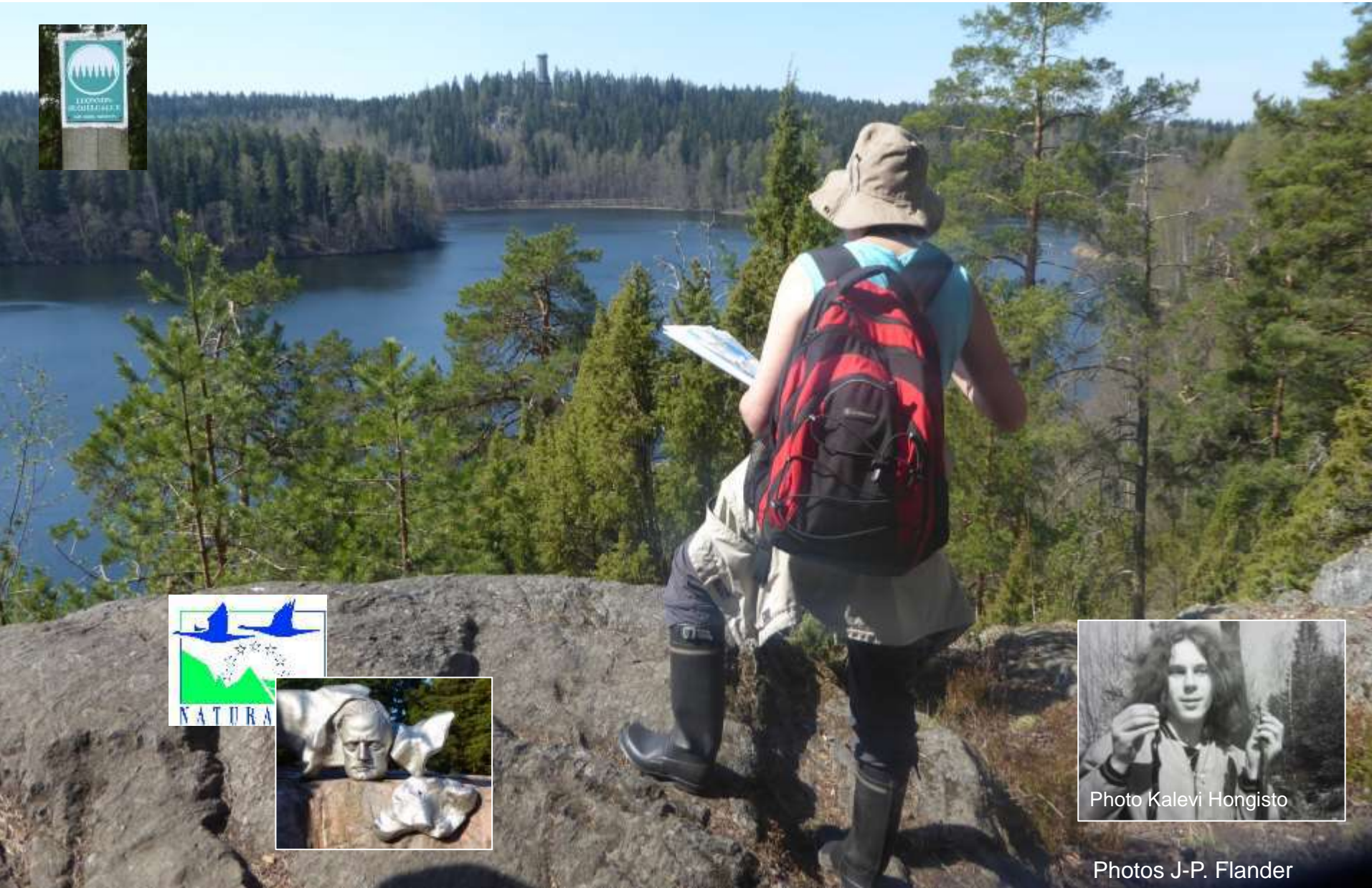


Photo Kalevi Hongisto

Photos J-P. Flander



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# Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Implementation of the management plan: Coexistence of recreational use and nature conservation in the backwoods of Ilamo.



Flying squirrel  
(*Pteromys volans*)



NUP Concept is a part of National Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Finland.

Photos J-P. Falnder



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## Finnish NUP Concept – from vision to practice: VII Implementation of the management plan:

It is permissible for berries and mushrooms to be picked up throughout the national urban park on the basis of everyone's rights.





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**VIII Contact to healthy soil:** In Finnish National Urban Parks, nature is accessible to all residents, regardless of the age and gender. Besides you can reach it on your own feet. We know that **early contact with soil, plants and animals promotes our defense mechanisms and enhances also our mental well-being.**



Photos J-P. Flander



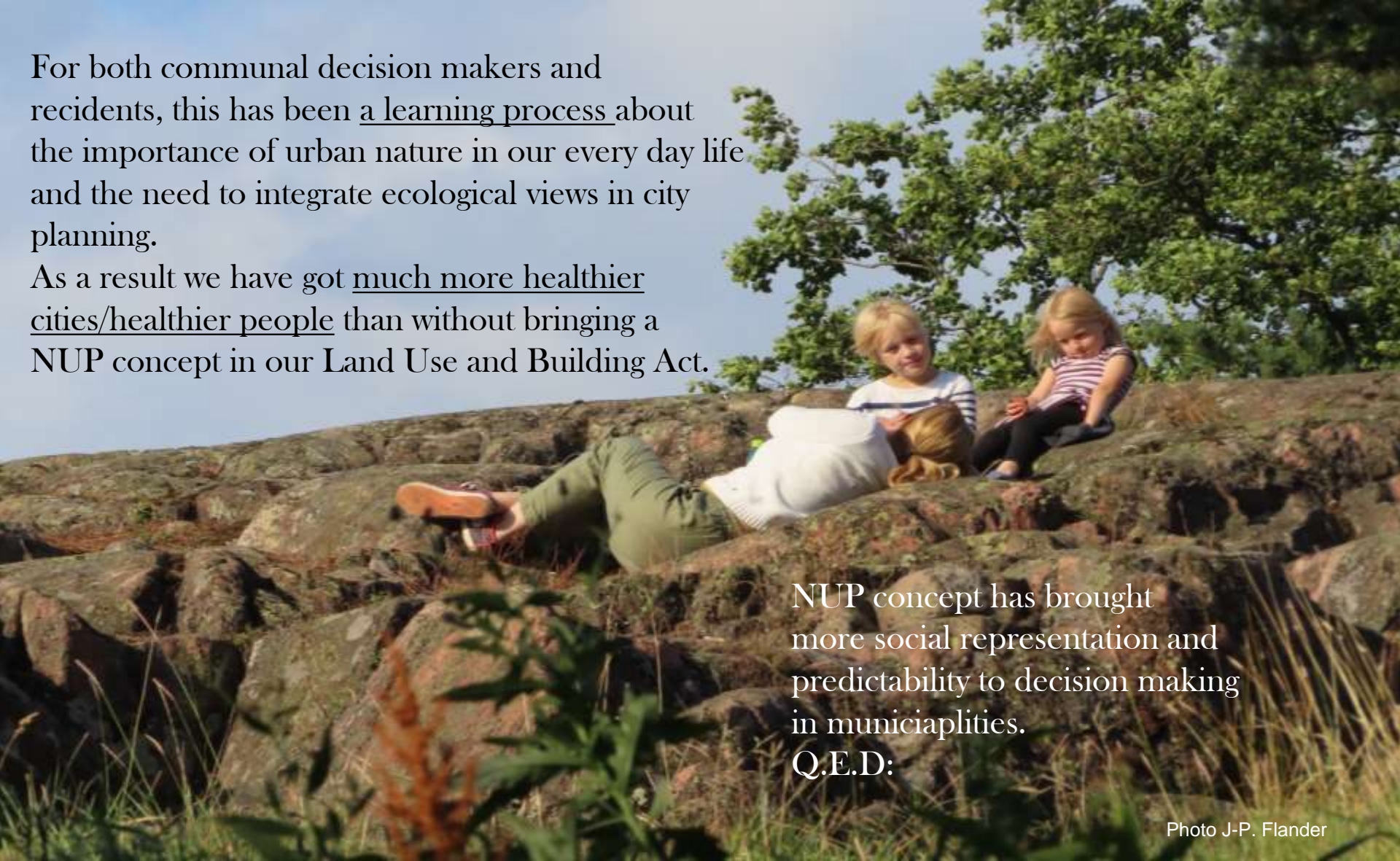
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## IX What we can learn from Finnish NUP concept?

”From bottom to up” preparation and decision process and ”let all the flowers flourish” strategy have been good choices. Not only 9 ”star cities”, but also many other cities have been competing for to get NUP status.

For both communal decision makers and residents, this has been a learning process about the importance of urban nature in our every day life and the need to integrate ecological views in city planning.

As a result we have got much more healthier cities/healthier people than without bringing a NUP concept in our Land Use and Building Act.

A photograph showing a woman and two children sitting on a rocky, grassy hillside. The woman is lying on her back, wearing a white top and green pants, with her feet propped up. Two young children are sitting next to her, one in a striped shirt and the other in a white shirt. They are surrounded by large, dark rocks and green foliage. In the background, there is a large, leafy tree under a clear blue sky.

NUP concept has brought more social representation and predictability to decision making in municipalities.

Q.E.D:



# X WELCOME!

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Wellcome to visit Finnish “Star Cities”for to experience and refresh safely in urban/preurban nature, in green areas and in beautiful, historic environments. I am sure that you will return home healthier – both mentally and physically.





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Here you can get some more information  
about the network of Finnish NUPs:

<https://www.hameenlinna.fi/nationalurbanpak>

<https://www.visitfinland.com/mystay/search/?text=national+urban+park>

[http://www.ejulkaisu.fi/hameenlinnan\\_kaupunki/national-urban-parks](http://www.ejulkaisu.fi/hameenlinnan_kaupunki/national-urban-parks)

*Thank you!*

Photo J-P. Flander