



# Europarc conference 2018

Cairngorms National Park

Nature education / Lake Saimaa, Finland

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# Riihisaari, Lake Saimaa Nature and Culture Centre

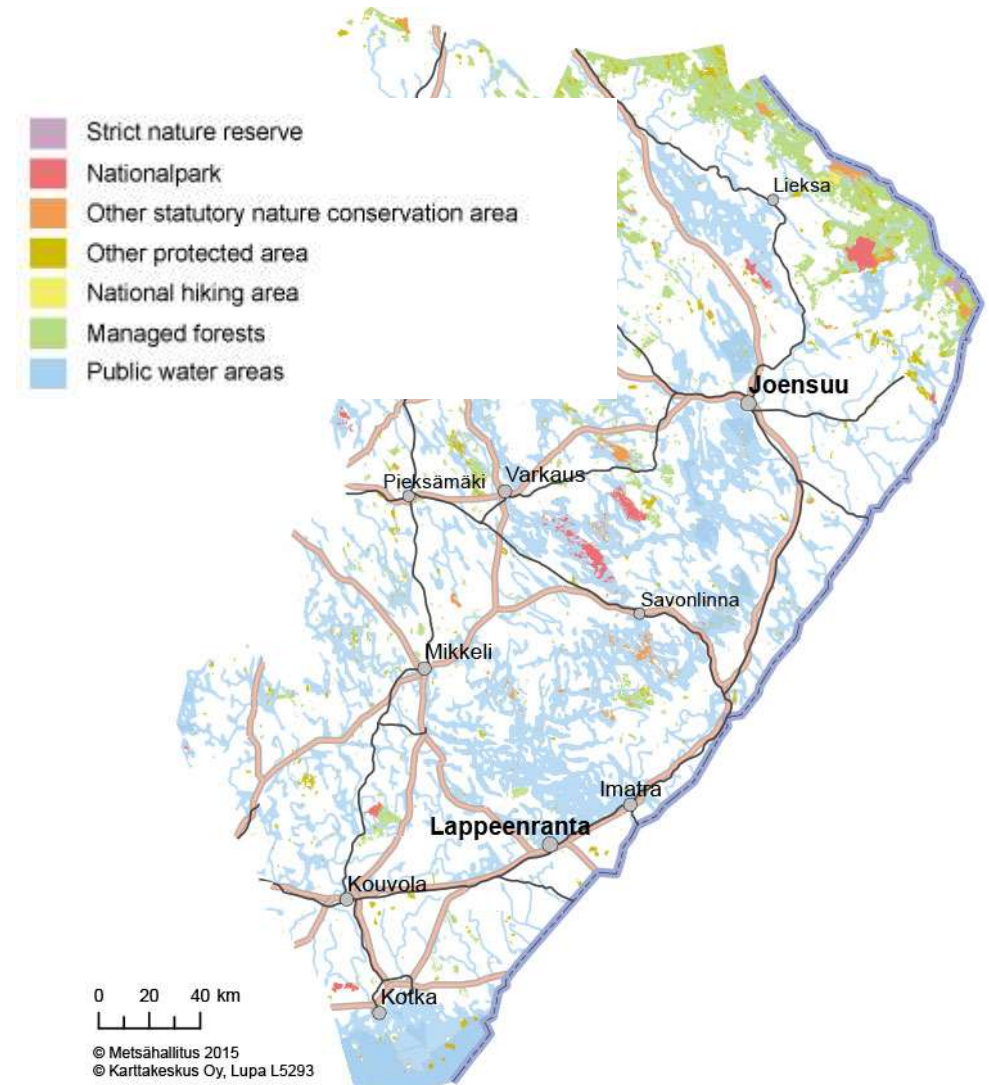
- **Savonlinna** in the middle of The Lake Saimaa.
- Formed by Savonlinna Provincial Museum and Saimaa Nature Centre, Metsähallitus
- Riihisaari is a meeting place and exhibition centre, providing experiences and information on the region's cultural history and natural landscape year-round.
- New common exhibition **"In the heart of Saimaa"** was opened in June 2018. It tells the story of man and nature and how this relationship has evolved since the last ice age.





# Nature education: Where?

- In the Nature Centre
- In the Museumship
- In schools
- In the Nationalpark or other areas
- In events and themedays



## Nature education: "Main themes"

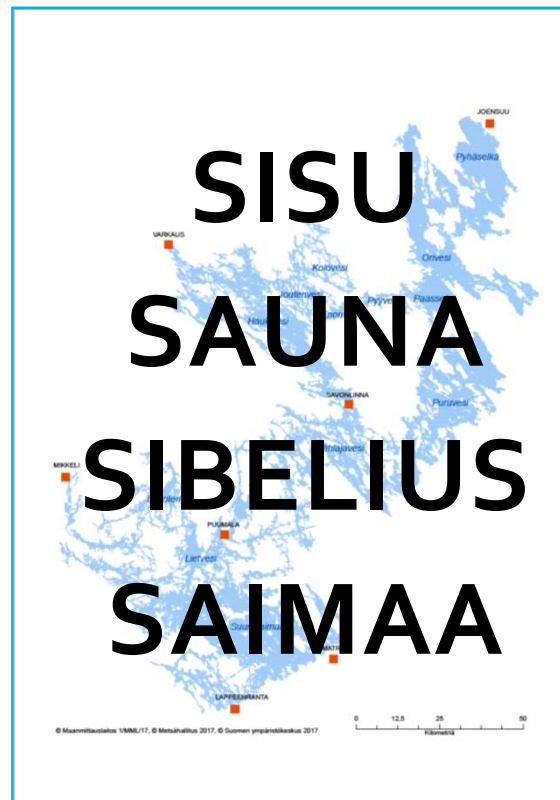


Photo: Metsähallitus/Harri Ekholm



Photo: Metsähallitus/Lentokuva Vallas

# Saimaa seal LIFE -project and Saimaa ringed seal

- **The Saimaa Seal LIFE** project promotes the protection of the Saimaa ringed seal in many ways
- Environmental education in a significant role, as one of the actions in the project
- **1600 participants in workshops in 4 years**, during the project period.
- Workshops / lectures in different ways and places – **active learning**
- Saimaa seal is one of the most endangered and rarest seals in the world.  
**370-380 Saimaa seals** which all live in Lake Saimaa.
- Became isolated from other ringed seal subspecies more than 9,000 years ago.
- Was protected in 1955.
- Metsähallitus has extended responsibility in protecting the Saimaa seal.







Day at Linnansaari National  
Park, by boat



Cruising on an old tar steam  
"Mikko" at Lake Pihlajavesi



## Programme produced: *Saimaa as a homelake of the Saimaa ringed seal*

- **Saimaa** is Finland's largest lake and is a quite unique one
- Living right in the middle, we need to know what kind of lake it is
- The most known inhabitant is the **Saimaa ringed seal**
- In the game we'll learn about many kinds of incidents the seals encounter during their life





# Freshabit LIFE IP project and Nature education

- The aim of the project is to improve the ecological status and biodiversity of water bodies in the Natura 2000 network.
- **Action E7: Nature education**
- Freshwater habitats are among the most threatened habitat types globally
- Freshabit operates in eight, large target sites including rivers, watercourses, waterfowl habitats and other lake systems with catchment areas
- Our area is **Puruvesi – Punkaharju combination**



Photo: Metsähallitus / Tiina Linsén



Photo: Metsähallitus / Miia Tolvanen



## Programme produced: *”An ancient vagabond and the Ice giant`s sand castle”*



Photo: Metsähallitus / Jari Ilmonen

- The educational programme tells how Puruvesi and Punkaharju were formed by the Ice-Age, what kind of habitats they are and what is the role of an esker in the water cycle.
- It is a tool for teachers giving **ideas** what to do when walking on Punkaharju trails
- Gives examples of the gear, stories, exercises...
- **Stories** of the ice giant and the water drop bring these quite difficult topics closer and make them easier to understand.

## *"Hiker`s talisman"*

Produced by the support of European Regional Development Fund.

Every item in the "talisman" symbolizing things that you have just learned.

1. Learning about **National Parks**
2. What`s in your **backpack**?
3. **Everyman`s rights** vs. park`s special regulations
4. **Trails and structures** are free and make hiking easy







## Themedays: *"The Day of the mushrooms"*

- *Dyeing yarns*
- *Papermaking*
- *Foodtasting*
- *Identification*
- *Exhibition*
- *Lectures*



# Themedays: *"The Day of the birdhouses"*

- National campaign  
*"A Million birdhouses"*
- Voluntary work for birds
- Over 1,3 million birdhouses in a year



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## Themedays: *"The Birthday of the seal pups"*

- *Masks and reflectors  
in a hobby workshop*
- *Celebrating the "birthday"  
of the pups in  
February - March*
- *Latest news of the  
Saimaa seals*

# The Game of the seals!

- The idea of this game is to follow the growth of the seal population and to give examples of the situations seals encounter during their lifespan.
- The situations in the event cards can be used to start a conversation about the meaning of
  - The sex ratio
  - The age structure
  - The random effects In a small seal population living in a small area
  - The effects of climate change

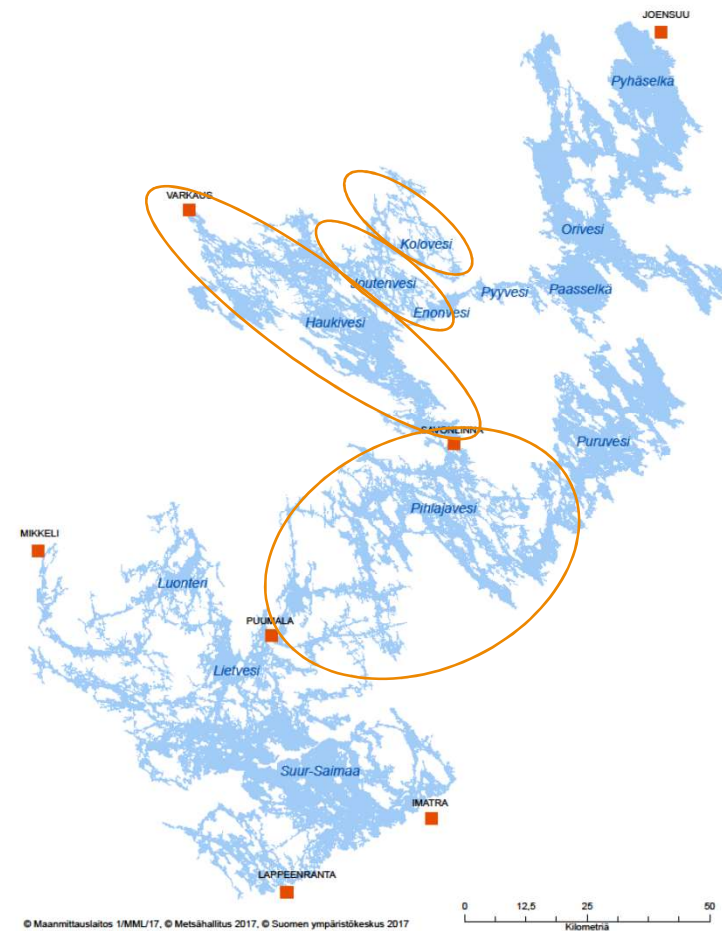


*Photo: Metsähallitus/Timo Seppäläinen*



# Instructions

- 4 groups represent 4 regions of the Lake Saimaa: Pihlajavesi, Haukivesi, Joutenvesi and Kolovesi
- 20 seals/group. Each group chooses 12 seals of different age or sex to play with. 8 extras.
- The game proceeds by throwing the dice and the numbers give an event group (1-6)
- The game leader follows the game and picks an event from the right group.
- One or more lake regions will have consequences..

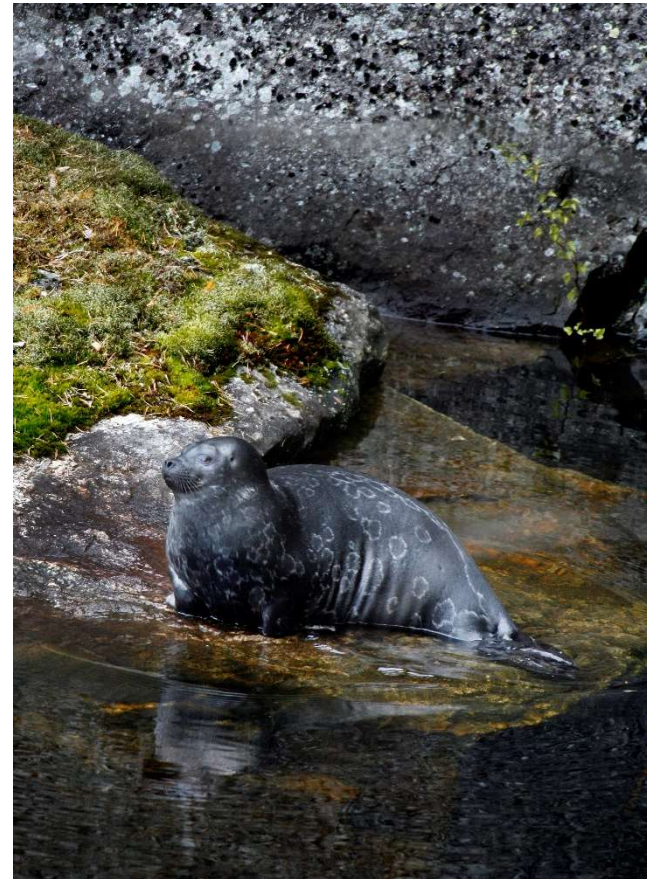


## The goal

The goal of the game is not just to make your water region the best but also try to help keeping the water regions inhabited in a state where there are still possibilities for reproduction.

The game ends if the seals go extinct but otherwise you may continue the game for as long as you wish.

Enjoy the game!



*Photo: Metsähallitus / Timo Seppäläinen*

## Additional information

- Pups can only be born at regions where there is both a **reproductive male and a female**. One male is enough 😊
- **Water regions may change** during the game.
- The seals grow older and the **age structure may change**.
- When the seal population diminishes or grows bigger, seal population size is **always rounded up, i.e. a half of 7 individuals is 4**.
- If the event card doesn't separately mention a specific water area, i.e. the population grows by 2 individuals, **the players may decide** what area the new individuals inhabit
- If the target group doesn't have the mentioned age group or sex, the **effect will be experienced at the closest age group or the other sex**





*Photo: Metsähallitus / Anne Pyykönen*



*Photo: Metsähallitus / Jussi Kirmanen*

*Thank you!*  
*Tiina Linsén*