

The Finland we want by 2050

– Society's commitment to sustainable development

Vision: A prosperous Finland within the limits of the carrying capacity of nature

"In 2050, every person in Finland will be a valuable member of society. Finland will be an affluent society that lays the foundation for sustainability and provides its citizens, communities and companies with the conditions they need to operate sustainably. The carrying capacity of nature is not exceeded and natural resources are used in a sustainable manner. Finland will promote peace, equality and justice and offer practical and sustainable solutions to the world's problems."

We are living during a time of a great global change, the management of which will require determined shared efforts in the coming decades. From a global perspective, we have already exceeded ecological risk limits when it comes to biodiversity, climate change and the nitrogen cycle. At the same time, over a billion people are living in poverty and even greater numbers live without adequate income, electricity or food. In Finland, national challenges regarding sustainable development include high material consumption, carbon dioxide emissions, the fact that half of our natural habitats are endangered, the sustainability gap and value creation, and the safeguarding of our welfare state.

Sustainable development is an absolute necessity, and achieving it will require cooperation between administration, non-profit organisations, companies, researchers and citizens. To this end, we need mutually agreed-upon goals and objectives and the commitment to see them through, based on our own individual expertise and potential. Only then can we embrace the opportunities this change will introduce.

We must take responsibility for the national implementation of global sustainable development commitments and, at the same time, create local and innovative solutions. The concrete promotion of sustainable development requires:

- a shared desire to solve problems,
- understanding and expertise,
- people who shoulder responsibilities, leaders and pioneers,
- more efficient cooperation and societal guidance and
- more effective ways of operation.

To fulfil these requirements, we, the members of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, commit ourselves to promoting sustainable development and invite all operators and citizens to take part in the work on society's commitment.

Our shared objectives

In order to make our vision for 2050 a reality, Finland must focus on achieving the following objectives. These objectives look at sustainable development from the perspectives of the well-being of people and the environment, a healthy and sustainable economy and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles. In formulating these objectives, we have strived to consider the principles of sustainable development: global responsibility, cross-generational thinking, the limited carrying capacity of nature, cooperation and the creative utilisation of knowledge and expertise. More detailed descriptions of these principles are included below.

PLEASE NOTE! The indicators presented here are only ideas. An actual proposal on indicators will be made by the general secretariat of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, with the support of the national network of indicator experts.

Objective	Indicators
<p>1. Equal prospects for well-being</p> <p>All members of society will be guaranteed equal prospects for health, education and employment. We will hold to a high standard of education and general knowledge. We will reduce inequality by ensuring an adequate livelihood and basic social security. We will pay special attention to the well-being of children and young people. We will ensure equivalent welfare services and equal access to all to welfare services. We will do what we can to eliminate extreme poverty from the world.</p>	<p><i>Number of households that are struggling to secure an adequate livelihood in Finland.</i></p> <p><i>Number of Healthy Life Years</i></p> <p><i>Youth Barometer: Number of socially excluded people;</i> <i>Number of people who finish basic education</i></p> <p><i>Families with children living in poverty in Finland</i></p> <p><i>Share of official development assistance from Finland's GDP</i></p> <p><i>Distribution of family income – Gini index</i></p>
<p>2. A participatory society for citizens</p> <p>We will strengthen democracy and promote equal opportunities for all persons to influence their own lives and common issues. We will especially support the participation of young people in the society. We will make administration more transparent: open and public information increases</p>	<p><i>Trust in institutions</i></p> <p><i>Segregation of city districts</i></p>

<p>the trust of citizens and their chances of affecting societal issues. We will promote cultural diversity and tolerance, so that all minorities can also fully take part in developing our society. We will actively participate in international cooperation that promotes peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.</p>	<p><i>Voter turnout</i></p>
<p>3. Sustainable work</p> <p>The measures we will undertake in order to achieve a more sustainable economy include increasing jobs and raising the productivity and quality of work. Our goal is a high employment rate. We will develop our education and social security systems in accordance with the need for new expertise, the needs of the employment market and the measures needed to secure an adequate livelihood. We will support the employment of young people, harness the expertise of immigrants and provide employment opportunities for those with a reduced capacity to work. We will promote entrepreneurship and innovation and develop the service sector. We will help the industrial sector in its regeneration process, aiming at more value-added and high-productivity jobs. We will improve the quality of employment by increasing the opportunities for employees to have an influence on their work and on developments in their work environments, and by providing opportunities for flexible working methods and schedules. Sustainable development will be integrated into all sectors of education and lifelong learning.</p>	<p><i>Employment rate — from age 15 to 74</i></p> <p><i>Work time + flexitime</i></p> <p><i>Number of young people on disability pension OR Number of people on disability pension vs. Number of people on retirement pension</i></p> <p><i>Number of employed people, who take part in further training</i></p> <p><i>Employment rate of immigrants</i></p>
<p>4. A carbon-neutral society</p> <p>Our objective is a carbon-neutral society. To achieve this objective, we will follow a national roadmap towards a carbon-neutral society by the year 2050¹. The central measures to be undertaken for reaching this objective are improved energy-efficiency and more effective utilisation of renewable energy sources.</p> <p>We will develop intelligent and interconnected structures, such as transport and energy systems, that enable and promote the use of renewable energy sources and energy savings, and we will also encourage households to improve their own energy consumption. We will invest in the</p>	<p><i>Greenhouse gas emissions</i></p> <p><i>Share of renewable energy in total energy production</i></p> <p><i>Total consumption of energy/GDP per capita</i></p> <p><i>Public climate financing offered to developing countries</i></p>

¹ The preparation of the roadmap began in spring 2013; the Ministry of Employment and the Economy leads the preparatory work. http://www.tem.fi/en/energy/press_releases_energy?89521_m=111027

<p>development of innovative energy technologies and new businesses.</p>	
<p>5. Consumption that accounts for the limited carrying capacity of nature</p> <p>We will reduce the consumption of natural resources to a sustainable and globally fair level by the year 2050². To achieve this objective, we will increase resource efficiency and promote the recycling of non-renewable resources and the utilisation of closed material loops. We will focus on encouraging both consumers and companies to reduce their ecological footprints. We will make it as easy and cost-effectively as possible for consumers to make consumption choices that conserve natural resources in housing, transport and food. We will strengthen attitudes that value sustainable choices in our operations. We will support lifestyles based on non-material consumption and services that sustain such lifestyles.</p>	<p><i>Ecological footprint (without the carbon footprint)</i></p> <p><i>Water footprint</i></p> <p><i>Use of tin in Finland (proportional to increases in prices)</i></p> <p><i>Export and import of oil-based products</i></p> <p><i>Recycling rate of metals used in electronics</i></p> <p><i>Food waste</i></p>
<p>6. Sustainable local communities</p> <p>We will create sustainable communities, where jobs, housing, comprehensive services, sustainable transport systems and green areas support economic and social well-being, as well as environmental well-being. We will strengthen local communities by developing operating models and local decision-making, so that citizens can create pleasant and healthy living environments for themselves. We will reduce the need for traffic, increase telecommuting arrangements and strengthen network connections and electronic communications. We will prepare for changes in climate and water levels and promote local adaptation to climate change.</p>	<p><i>Distribution of transport modes</i></p> <p><i>Distances from basic services and green areas</i></p> <p><i>Number of people living in areas exposed to noise</i></p> <p><i>Exceedance of air quality guidelines</i></p> <p><i>Ecological footprint of built-up areas</i></p> <p><i>Number of homeless people, population density</i></p>
<p>7. An economy that is resource wise</p> <p>Finland and Finns will promote and offer sustainable and competitive solutions, both nationally and globally. Our companies will be globally respected for their socially responsible business operations. The wise utilisation of resources will provide a competitive edge to companies and</p>	<p><i>Green business growth per share of GDP</i></p> <p><i>Share of non-material goods and services in production and export</i></p>

² The group did not reach a consensus regarding the wording used in the latter part of this sentence ('globally fair level...'), as some members opposed this wording.

<p>communities and a basis for environmental business. Finland will offer the best test market and operating environment in the world for environmental innovation and sustainable growth. We will invest, in particular, in clean technology, high-quality research, the bioeconomy and renewable energy, as well as in the development and production of non-material goods and services.</p>	<p><i>The environment + green R&D operations</i></p> <p><i>Raw material consumption (RMC) per GDP</i></p> <p><i>Social responsibility reports and annual reports of Finnish companies?</i></p>
<p>8. Decision-making that respects nature</p> <p>Natural values will be considered in decision-making and business operations, so that the decline in biodiversity is stopped by the year 2020. We will raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity, so that administration, municipalities, companies and citizens will consider it in their own actions. We will strengthen economic guidance that promotes biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. We will remove or redirect social incentives that are harmful to the environment, while also considering social, economic and cultural conditions.</p>	<p><i>Number of endangered species in relation to the estimated number of species</i></p> <p><i>Number and development of nature reserves</i></p> <p><i>Citizens' level of awareness</i></p> <p><i>Threat of extinction in other countries caused by Finnish consumption</i></p>

Our principles for sustainable development

Global responsibility

The effects of our actions reach far beyond our national borders. The world's challenges are also Finland's challenges, and we have the potential to assume the role of a pioneer in solving shared global problems. Taking global responsibility requires a sense of fairness: through its actions, Finland must ensure that others also retain their potential for sustainable development and the resulting security and peace.

Cross-generational thinking

The consequences of our actions must be assessed far into the future. Instead of promoting short-term interests, we should contemplate the effects that our decisions will have on future generations. A cross-generational perspective requires us to grasp large-scale issues, understand the interwoven consequences of our solutions and take responsibility for our actions.

The limited carrying capacity of nature

The well-being of the systems that maintain life on Earth is paramount to the well-being of humanity. The fact is that both the number of people and the amount of materials they consume are increasing. As a result, the capacity of nature to produce and sustain the functions that are vital to the well-being of both people and all other species has been exceeded. Our operations must be adapted to the carrying capacity of nature and its natural regeneration, so that we can safeguard humanity's chances for a good life, both now and in the future.

Cooperation

Sustainable development requires people to work together. All persons must be prepared to make sustainable choices and make their voices heard. In Finland, we solve our differences together and have trust in the fact that our society works. Well-being that lasts for one's entire lifespan and social security create the foundation for a sustainable society.

Creative utilisation of knowledge and expertise

Combining skills, knowledge, expertise and creativity is a prerequisite for wise and long-term operations. We need to constantly develop both experience-based knowledge and evidence-based scientific knowledge in an open manner. The search for sustainable solutions requires us to work together to utilise all the knowledge and expertise we possess. To find new solutions, we also need initiative and trial and error.

Establishment of operational commitments and monitoring of objectives

Operational commitments

In order to reach the objectives detailed in this document, operational commitments will be established with administrative branches and other societal operators, such as companies, municipalities, organisations, educational institutions and local operators. By establishing these operational commitments, these societal operators commit themselves to doing their part in attaining our objectives. The operational commitments will include concrete measures, changes in operating procedures and innovative trials that promote our shared goals and that can be carried out in 5 to 10 years' time. Through these concrete commitments, operators can take part in the promotion of all or just some of our shared objectives.

The general secretariat of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development will be responsible for establishing operational commitments. All commitments will be made available on the Commission's website.

Distribution of social commitments

To reach as many operators as possible and to spread the commitment work as far and wide as possible, a plan will be drawn up, detailing how (measures, schedules) the commitments are handled with different operators. The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development and its general secretariat will actively promote the realisation of the social commitments by, for example, bringing different parties together to negotiate required measures and the responsibilities and tasks that different operators are willing to promote.

The commitment process is an expansion of the Lupaus process started by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and Tekes – the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation. The aim of the process is to combine the efforts of the public, private and third sectors in promoting a sustainable economy in Finland. In the future, these two processes will be intertwined through cooperation.

Monitoring of the social commitments

The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development will promote and monitor the realisation of the social commitments. Impact and monitoring indicators will be used for continuous monitoring in real time of how the shared objectives are reached and individual social commitments are carried out. The progress of social commitments will also be monitored at annual events.