



# STRENGTHENING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF NATURAL VALUES AND ASSETS IN THE REGIONAL PLAN

## 1. Challenge/problem addressed

Strengthening the acceptability of natural values and assets in the context of the phased regional land use plan among stakeholders and decision-makers.

## 2. Main scale of governance involved: local / regional / national / international

Regional and local

## 3. Description of what and where was done

In accordance with MRL 62 §, MRA 30 §, the materials for the preparatory phase of the Regional Natural Values and Resources Phase Plan were open for public inspection from 26.3.-27.4.2018. A total of 53 responses were received during the public consultation, of which 31 were comments and 10 opinions.

In general, the simultaneous treatment of the objectives of the plan and the themes were considered to be good and that the background material was comprehensive. In contrast to the public consultation process for previous regional plans was the absence of a traditional draft plan with its designations and provisions.

### PREPARATION OF THE PROPOSAL PHASE

Interactions and related events during the preparation phase of the proposal have been carried out in close cooperation with the Natural Resources Institute of Finland (LUKE) PALO project (Participation in Long-Term Decision-Making). PALO is a multidisciplinary research project which aims to strengthen democracy in Finland and developing and researching more effective methods for civil participation and public decision-making. Natural Resources Institute Finland the Universities of Turku and Tampere were involved in the project and Åbo Akademi University.

### Participation events in spring 2018

Following the consultation during the preparatory phase, five public consultation events were held in spring 2018, a total of eight Natural Resources Forum events on five separate days. The forums were attended by around 100 participants from different backgrounds. These events discussed the needs for future designations in the plan and the challenges of coordinating the different activities. Discussions

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varied and provided a rich source of ideas for the future draft plan. The forums deepened the understanding of all participants also to the feedback received during the preparatory phase.

#### Spring 2018 survey

The Spring 2018 Natural Resources Forums included a survey of participants in the framework of the PALO project. The method used was the so-called Q-sorting, where people are asked to rate their attitudes towards a series of statements. For each statement, the respondent indicate how much they agree with the statement. The purpose of the Q-sorting was to determine the perceptions of the plan and its preparation.

#### Autumn 2018 map participation

In autumn, a geospatial survey and discussion platform was launched, a map scoreboard where stakeholders had the opportunity to comment and discuss on issues raised in the natural resource forums. The aim was to make it possible to use the map as a basis and comment on it. This feedback channel received around one hundred entries on the map sheet from less than a dozen parties. Feedback was mainly received from the environmental protection and planning sectors people working in the field of environmental planning and design. Turku Environmental Protection feedback was used as a basis for separate meetings with them and the content of the comments received was put together in separate working meetings and were taken into account in the planning documents.

#### Spring 2019 Natural Resources Forum

In May 2019, in cooperation with the PALO project, discussions focused on the new elements of the plan, including development principle designations in the plan. The event had a general presentation on the strategic designations and their effectiveness were discussed in small groups. The event was attended by around 50 people from municipalities, public authorities and advocacy organisations. In addition to the above-mentioned events, the preparatory phase includes and its progress have been presented at a number of events since the public consultation and meetings with various stakeholders.

### **4. What sectors were involved?**

### **5. Which target/interest groups / stakeholders were reached?**

Nature conservation, business, tourism and recreation, land-use planners, researchers, decision makers

## 6. What methods were applied?

PGIS, workshops

## 7. Lessons learned

Very time-consuming process, very extensive stakeholder involving process. Decisionmakers were hard to reach, those came to the workshops are the ones who usually also are active in similar processes. Although the dialogues and preparations were joint and extensive, certain things fell through at the very end with the decision-makers, for example when the strategic designation of large areas of contiguous forest was not approved.

Even though a process is planned very carefully, and stakeholders involved, the suggested planning result can suffer changes when politicians make the final decisions.

## 8. To which Multi-level Governance steps this valuable practice contributes?

- 1 – Scoping and setting up governance structures
- 2 – Stakeholder involvement
- 3 – Solutions and implementation
- 4 – Evaluation and learning

## 9: Links to further information about the practice/case

[PALO \(palo.research.fi\)](http://palo.research.fi)

[PALO | Varsinais-Suomen luonnonarvojen ja -varojen vaihemaakuntakaavan valmistelu \(palo.research.fi\)](http://palo.research.fi)

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337021727> 2019 Hiedanpaa et al 2019 Futura

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