

FINLAND

Fostering lifelong learning
and vocational training in
the agricultural and forestry
sectors

Location

Sysmä

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P1 – Knowledge Transfer
and Innovation

Measure

M7 – Basic services
& village renewal

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 207 831
EAFRD 87 289
National/Regional 120 542

Project duration

2016 – 2018

Project promoter

Päijät-Häme Forest Owners'
Association

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Using digital technologies to re-establish the connection between young people and forests.

Summary

Forestry is one of the most important industries in Finland. At the same time, also due to urbanisation, people and especially young onw are losing their relationship with the forests. In order to re-establish the connection between people and the forests a forest owners' association planned and launched eight forest game tracks in eight municipalities in two years.



Project activities included both field work as well as the development of digital applications, including a GPS-based game application, air footage of the game tracks, track guidance on video clips etc.

Results

Six forest game tracks have already been completed and two more will be finished soon.

2 700 pupils participated and their feedback has been very encouraging.

Some 200 adults have also been testing the service with positive feedback.

The project owner, Päijät-Häme Forest Owners' Association extend its networks to youth work, in good cooperation with other local associations.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Enough time must be taken to match and to build trust between the key individuals like forest management advisors and teachers.
- ❑ Being successful is very much about finding enthusiastic and inspiring forest guides who are able to light the spark even in less motivated pupils.
- ❑ An important component in the project has been the digitalisation services. Finding the right commercial service provider through public call of tenders was a crucial success factor too.

Context

Forestry is one of the most important industries in Finland. New bio-product factories are being built around the country. These investments are worth multi-billion Euros and they create thousands of new jobs throughout the production chain from the forest to the end user. The Finnish economy is strongly dependent on export revenue, and in our top 4 exports based on value, three come from forestry: paper, cellulose and lumber. At the same time, also due to urbanisation, people are however losing their relationship with the forests. We need to find new ways to get people, especially youngsters interested in the sustainable use of our “green gold” reserves, both for fun and for money.

Objectives

Forest games project aims at:

- re-establishing the recreational and economic relationship between youngsters and forests;
- using modern technologies in making traditional forestry business sexy again;
- finding recreational and nature tourism uses for the forest games tracks too.

Activities

Päijät-Häme Forest Owners’ Association planned and launched eight forest game tracks in eight municipalities in two years. This has included both field work and digital applications like the online, GPS-based game application, air footage of the game tracks, track guidance on video clips etc.

On these tracks pupils and other visitors learn by doing about forest resources inventory, forest management, multiple use of forests, sustainability issues and forest industry. In addition the project has organized 115 forest game track days for the local primary and secondary elementary schools. These services have been also collected in a nature tourism package available for adult groups.



Main results

Six forest game tracks have already been completed and two more will be finished soon.

Forest game track days have reached 2 700 pupils, whose feedback has been very encouraging.

Some 200 adults, including asylum seekers from Syria and elsewhere, have also been testing the service with positive feedback.

The project has also helped the project owner, Päijät-Häme Forest Owners’ Association extend its networks to youth work, in good cooperation with other local associations.

Key lessons

Forestry and schools/ youth work are two different worlds and cultures. Enough time must be taken to match them together and to build trust between the key individuals like forest management advisors and teachers.

Being successful is very much about finding the right guides to the forest game tracks: enthusiastic and inspiring guides are able to light the spark even in less motivated pupils.

An important component in the project has been the digitalisation services. Finding the right commercial service provider through public call of tenders was a crucial success factor too.

Additional sources of information

n/a