



Visit Finland

# State of Sustainable Tourism

2022



**SUSTAINABLE  
TRAVEL  
FINLAND™**



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Visit Finland



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# FOREWORD

## Is ignorance bliss?

Finland aims to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development both domestically and internationally. In addition, Finland has the ambitious goal of being a carbon-neutral country by 2035 and the first fossil-free welfare state. This requires strengthening carbon sinks and accelerated emission reductions in all sectors.

Finland's national Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme was created for the tourism industry as a tool for achieving the sustainable development goals and climate goals. An essential element of the programme is the commitment of the travel sector to national sustainable tourism indicators and related data collection.

Finland wants to make decisions that support national and global sustainable development

goals. Finland has created a national sustainable development monitoring system to support decision-making. It includes indicators and expert analyses of the state of sustainable development in Finland. The State of Sustainable Development Report, published every four years, describes the state of sustainable development in Finland. It is largely based on data from national sustainability monitoring indicators.

Inspired by the State of Sustainable Development report, we have compiled this State of Sustainable Tourism report. It consists of data from the national sustainable tourism monitoring indicators for 2022, when the sustainable tourism indicator system was launched as a pilot. The aim is to produce information to support sustainable tourism.

Without measurement, it is difficult to monitor progress. For this reason, various indicators are

commonly used in reporting and in support of decision-making. The national sustainable tourism indicators are no exception to this: the indicator system provides a model for monitoring progress and also new ways of measuring the success rate of tourism.

The usability and comparability of data are important. According to the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, megatrends show that knowledge is becoming the most important tool for the management and development of society and services. The comparability of the data requires that the contents and calculation principles are consistent. The system of indicators aims precisely at comparability. The indicator system provides three levels of reporting: a comparative view of a company's own and national data, comparability between different destinations, and a national compilation that produces an overall picture.

At the moment, the monitoring of the state of sustainable development in Finland is being updated. In addition, the sustainable tourism indicator system will not be completed all at once, but it will be further developed. As this is only the first time that data has been collected, we still lack direct follow-up data from the previous year. The accumulation of monitoring data will facilitate comparability. It will also assist in setting indicators and limit and reference values. Comparison makes it easier to identify strengths and weaknesses. Various data sources have been used in this report in order to make the best comparisons and analysis of indicator data.

When considering the differences and similarities between the indicators, it is worth remembering that different indicators have different purposes: an overview of the state of sustainable tourism in Finland is necessary, but the same applies to information on the measures taken by tourism companies in the individual sustainability dimension. Thus weaknesses and strengths, for example, can be

identified. On the basis of the STF report, it can be concluded, for example, that tourism companies in Finland are actively working to slow down climate change. Climate-friendly choices are particularly visible in tourism companies' waste management and procurement, as well as in optimizing the usage of water and indoor temperatures. Tourism companies have also excelled in collecting litter from nature. Active consideration of environmental impacts is important for the business as a whole. Pollution in nature quickly takes away opportunities from the tourism industry.

On the other hand, the diversity of people is not particularly well taken into account in tourism companies. Less than a third of companies offer services to people with reduced mobility or consider their listings to be LGBTQ+ friendly. In addition, only about half of the local residents are satisfied with their own opportunities to influence tourism development. Is there a culture of equality and hospitality in tourism? Could better

consideration and inclusion of diversity in decision-making also lead to greater attractiveness of the sector as an employer? Tourists represent a whole spectrum of people, and a more diverse workforce could support inclusivity.

The sustainable tourism indicators provide us with information on tourism activity that has not existed before. Next year, we will already have comparative data, but it can already be said that ignorance is not bliss, and data helps us understand the strengths and development opportunities of our business. Next, we will update the training package with information on how the indicator data can be utilized at the company and destination level. Together, we are building an increasingly sustainable tourism country in Finland.

**Liisa Kokkarinen**

Head of Sustainable Development  
Visit Finland



Visit Finland



SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND™

942

COMPANIES INVOLVED IN STF-PROGRAM<sup>1</sup>

219

COMPANIES THAT HAVE RECEIVED THE STF LABEL<sup>1</sup>

72%

TOURISM COMPANIES OPERATE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR<sup>2</sup>

4.9%

DIRECT IMPACT OF TOURISM ON EMPLOYMENT<sup>3</sup>

### The STF Programme for Corporate Environmental Actions

99%



actively participate in actions to mitigate climate change<sup>2</sup>

27%



measure carbon footprint<sup>2</sup>

67%



participate in actions to protect biodiversity<sup>2</sup>

60%



make sustainable choices in catering<sup>2</sup>

83%



work to reduce water consumption<sup>2</sup>

68%

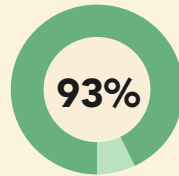


share of renewable energy in total energy consumption<sup>2</sup>

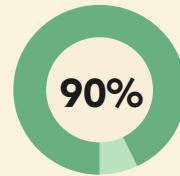
9%

OF AREA COVERED BY NATURE RESERVES AND NATIONAL PARKS<sup>6</sup>

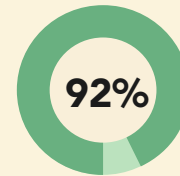
### Stakeholder satisfaction



93% tourists are satisfied with their travel experience<sup>4</sup>



90% of tourists consider the destination sustainable<sup>4</sup>



92% of residents are satisfied with the impact of tourism in their locality<sup>5</sup>

1471

NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILT CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT<sup>7</sup>

1. STF Online Platform
2. STF indicators 2022
3. Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland
4. STF Visitor Survey 2022
5. STF Resident Survey 2022
6. Metsähallitus, Statistics Finland
7. National Board of Antiquities

# Sustainable Tourism in Finland 2022

# Abstract

The *State of Sustainable Tourism 2022* report published by Visit Finland brings together data from the Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme. National sustainable tourism indicators are used to measure the sustainability of tourism. The project partner is Positive Impact.

Finland is committed to promoting sustainable tourism. Finland's national tourism strategy (2022–2028) aims to make Finland the most sustainable tourism destination in the Nordic countries. Visit Finland's strategy for 2021–2025 focuses on economic growth, sustainable development and competitiveness.

Sustainable tourism takes into account its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts. Sustainable tourism seeks to achieve overall benefits and a balance between the needs of tourists, businesses, tourist destinations, the environment and the

local population. The aim is to create a balance between the needs of tourists, businesses, tourist destinations, the environment and the local population.

Sustainable tourism can be roughly divided into three dimensions: economic sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability and ecological sustainability. The Finnish tourism industry is growing. Promoting sustainability ensures that the disadvantages of growth do not outweigh the benefits.

The STF programme was launched in 2020. Its aim is to support the tourism industry to operate in a sustainable manner. The STF programme has a development path for destinations and companies. In 2022, the STF programme already involved 942 companies and practically all of Finland's tourist areas, i.e., destinations. Once a company has completed the full development path and meets the programme criteria, the

company can receive the SFT label. The STF label has been awarded to 219 companies in 2022. The Finnish STF programme includes 67 destinations, and there are also two STF-labeled destinations in Finland: Posio and Kristinestad.

## ECONOMIC VALUE

Tourism creates jobs and economic value. Tourism is of particular economic importance for the viability and job opportunities of peripheral regions. Tourism creates demand especially for the hospitality industry, but also for other service industries and culture.

*90% of tourists consider Finland a sustainable travel destination.<sup>1</sup>*

In 2021, the number of overnight stays in Finland was 17 million and the average length of stays at STF accommodation establishments was 2.2 nights. 16% of all tourists were foreigners. The tourism industry employs a lot of young people and also people with foreign backgrounds. The direct impact of tourism on employment was 4.9%. 65% of the staff were in full-time employment. 72% of tourism enterprises operated year-round. On average, companies were open for 10.4 months of the year, although the year-round period varied greatly from region to region.

Customer satisfaction in the tourism sector in Finland is high. As many as 93% of tourists were satisfied with the overall experience at the destination.

### **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT**

Tourism can only be sustainable if it is developed and managed in a way that takes into account both visitors and local communities. Tourism should create added social and cultural value for local people. In the resident survey conducted in

the STF programme, as many as 92% of the respondents were satisfied with the impact of tourism in their place of residence, but only 52% were satisfied with their own opportunities to influence the development of tourism.

Finland has seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites and 95 other culturally significant sites and geoparks. In addition, we have 1,417 significant built cultural environments.

Improving social sustainability is strongly linked to promoting accessibility and inclusivity. STF companies communicate on average in three languages (Finnish, Swedish and English). 27% of the companies in the STF programme said they separately cater to tourists with reduced mobility and 32% said they take the LGBTQ+ target group into account.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The environmental impacts of tourism are caused by transport, energy consumption in buildings, procurement, waste and noise. Nature tourism must take account of environmental

degradation and the preservation of nature.

The energy intensity of the Finnish tourism sector is significantly higher than the EU average. 89% of the companies in the STF programme take measures to improve energy efficiency, and 68% of the energy they use comes from renewable sources.

Tourism is responsible for about 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. On average, transport is responsible for 75% of tourism-related emissions of which 40% is attributable to flights. Due to our location, the emission intensity of air travel in Finland is almost double the EU average. Similarly, the emission intensity of the Finnish tourism sector is 80% higher than the EU average. Train travel accounts for about 11% of all modes of travel.

27% of the companies in the STF programme are already calculating their own carbon footprint with a calculator aimed at the industry. In addition, almost all (99%) STF companies say they are actively involved in climate change mitigation efforts. The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism was launched in November 2021, and some 60 Finnish tourism operators are committed to the declaration.

9% of Finland is protected nature reserves or national parks (41 parks). Clean nature and four seasons are the strengths of Finnish tourism. This is in the interest of the entire industry.



PHOTO: AAPO LAIHO



# Introduction

You are reading the first *State of Sustainable Tourism* report. The report is published by Visit Finland and its implementing partner is Positive Impact. This is an annual report that describes where Finland is going in terms of sustainable tourism in 2022. The report discusses the sustainable tourism indicator data of Visit Finland's Sustainable Travel Finland programme. These are now in use for the first time. The report combines indicator data with other statistics, research sources and expert opinions, as well as concrete examples from the Finnish tourism sector. The aim of the report is to support the development of sustainable tourism in Finland.

Why should tourism be sustainable? Because the tourism industry is totally dependent on global and local phenomena. Sustainability challenges such as climate change, loss of natural resources, overconsumption of natural resources and growing inequality affect the tourism sector. To function, the tourism sector needs a stable society,

a skilled workforce, high-quality raw materials, reliable supply chains and well-functioning transport connections. Sustainable development will ensure that there is a framework for action in the sector now and in the future.

A sustainable social structure, good education and high technological competence provide Finland with good opportunities to become a model country for sustainable tourism. We are also motivated as a country.

According to the National Tourism Strategy 2022–2028, Finland aims to be the most sustainable growing tourism destination in the Nordic countries. Finland's national tourism strategy (2022–2028) focuses on sustainability, digitalization, accessibility and an operating environment that support competitiveness. These are Finland's strengths as an attractive travel destination – for domestic and foreign tourists.

The priorities of Visit Finland's strategy 2021–2025 are:

- Economic growth
- Sustainable development
- Competitiveness

Our strategic mission: *Visit Finland promotes Finland's international appeal as a desirable destination and helps businesses, enterprise groups and travel regions grow sustainably on the global marketplace.*

***Finland's national tourism strategy (2022–2028) aims to make Finland the most sustainable tourism destination in the Nordic countries.***

FCG Finnish Consulting Group's report *on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism* (2018), commissioned by Visit Finland, charted the responsibility of tourism companies in Finland and their sustainable development activities, attitudes, will and readiness for responsible tourism activities.

According to the survey, the main reasons for tourism companies to promote responsibility and sustainable development are the company's values or personal values and ideology (79%) and the appreciation of nature and the desire to protect it (73%). Customers' demands and appreciation for responsible actions were also considered important (54%). According to the survey, our companies were therefore motivated to develop their operations more responsibly.

Traditionally, the development of the tourism industry has been assessed by the number of tourists, overnight stays and other indicators of tourism volumes. The weakness of the volume indicators is that the growing figures do not adequately reflect the quality of tourism and its impact on destination.

National sustainable tourism indicators are used to measure the sustainability of tourism. The systematic monitoring model ensures the preconditions for a multidimensional approach to tourism sustainability. The indicator system supports the responsible management of sites and companies by providing easy and useful tools for measuring and monitoring, as well as enabling comparisons of progress in the regions.

The STF programme collected data on sustainable tourism indicators from tourism companies and destinations for the first time in spring 2022, and in the future, indicator data will be collected on an annual basis. The data collection takes place on the STF online platform, which has its own indicator forms for companies and destinations.

The key figures in this annual report have been gathered from the national STF report and compiled on the basis of the 2022 indicator forms and data from other data sources. In addition to indicator forms for companies and destinations, data is collected through interfaces, e.g., statistical database Rudolf and Statistics Finland,

and data have also been collected with the help of resident and visitor surveys piloted in 2022.

In 2022, there were 279 corporate respondents and 36 destination respondents on indicator forms on the STF online platform. Companies and destinations that have filled in the forms are included in the STF programme, and some have already received the STF label. The resident survey was answered by 2,872 people and the visitor survey by 2,630 people from all over Finland.

***Taking sustainable development into account is increasingly important, even essential, for the continued growth of our tourism and for maintaining our competitiveness.<sup>2</sup>***

National sustainable tourism indicators are based in particular on the European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management (ETIS). In addition, the indicator system is linked to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's (GSTC) criteria for sustainable tourism and to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sustainability indicators reported to the European Tourism Commission (ETC).

The report compiles for the first time in a single publication the current indicators of the STF programme, which describe the state of sustainable tourism in Finland in 2022. The report also draws on EU tourism statistics and research sources. The report also includes eight inspiring company examples and two comments from industry experts.



PHOTO: HAMMARBERG / KRISTINESTAD

# Sustainability in a nutshell

The economy is based on natural resources and their processing, as well as the provision of services to other people. The traditional linear economy has meant turning natural raw material into waste – in between, the raw material generates value and economic profit. The industrial era of the last 200 years has produced significant material wealth and new opportunities for about one-fifth of humanity.<sup>3</sup>

The downside of economic development is that the natural ecosystems that sustain life continue to deteriorate and are even at risk of collapse.

A sustainable economy recognizes that the use of non-renewable natural resources as raw material or an energy source is unsustainable. Productivity growth and added value are increasingly based on knowledge, services and experiences, and not on raw materials and consumption. The products of the future will be durable, modifiable and repairable.

More and more products are made from locally recycled and renewable materials.

We are moving from an economy based on production to a service economy that creates new demand for innovative solutions. A sustainable economy also contributes to a fairer society, where the benefits of economic growth are more evenly distributed.<sup>4</sup>

Social sustainability means equality, equity and fairness between people. The goal of social sustainability is to provide the conditions for well-being for present and future generations. Global social sustainability themes include population growth, poverty, food and health care, gender equality and providing education opportunities.<sup>5</sup>

A key objective of social sustainability is equality. At the moment, inequality prevents the equal right to a good life. Some people can go to

school and get a living wage and others cannot. Globally, economic growth is welcome and necessary for other societal development. However, growth should be based on equality, create humane jobs and respect the environment.<sup>6</sup>

*We are moving from an economy based on production to a service economy. A sustainable economy is a great opportunity for service sectors such as tourism.*

One aspect of social sustainability is a person's emotional needs, such as belonging to a community<sup>7</sup>. At its best, tourism promotes community and cohesion.

Climate change is one of the greatest crises of our time. The most important global agreements in the fight against climate change have been the United Nations Climate Convention (1992), the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and, most recently, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015) in which the majority of the world's countries commit to keeping the increase in global average temperature well below two degrees Celsius<sup>8</sup>.

Biodiversity refers to the genetic variation within species, the abundance of species and the diversity of their habitats. Biodiversity is undermined and threatened by habitat loss and their disappearance. The most common causes are agriculture, deforestation, transport, construction, energy production, mining, river damming, water abstraction and pollution. In

addition, biodiversity is threatened by climate change and invasive species.<sup>9</sup>

Human activity is undermining ecosystems supporting life and biodiversity. Of the world's 24 most important life-sustaining ecosystems, 15 were degraded or used unsustainably, according to the largest *Ecosystem Assessment* to date, published in 2005<sup>10</sup>. At the same time, the deterioration of natural ecosystems threatens human activity. International cooperation is being carried out to safeguard and restore biodiversity. Most recently, in December 2022, the parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity decided on international targets for nature conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources by 2030, among other things.<sup>11</sup>

Most people in the world are positive, but passive, about sustainable development. Typically, the citizens of welfare states prioritize economy, health care and safety in their decisions<sup>12</sup>.

The report *Our Common Future*, also known as the Brundtland Report, was published in 1987. It defined **sustainable development as development that** *“meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*<sup>13</sup> The main message of the report was that economic growth must not come at the expense of future generations<sup>14</sup>.

Sustainable development strives for a balance in which the environment, people and the economy are taken into account equally in decision-making and actions. Sustainable development is seen as determined and continuous societal change that takes place simultaneously locally and globally<sup>15</sup>.

The current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Agenda 2030, were adopted in 2015. It was the first time that the targets were extended to all countries in the world in general, and not just to developing countries, and more targets were set for ecological sustainability.

The 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) all of which are equally important and often interrelated. In sub-objectives 8.9. and 12.B. the tourism industry is mentioned separately. Achieving the goals can only be achieved through extensive cooperation, which is why the implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a commitment not only from the state and governments, but also from research institutes, NGOs and businesses<sup>16</sup>.

Each member state of the United Nations has formally committed to the goals of the 2030 Agenda. 169 sub-objectives have been identified for the 17 headline targets and a number of indicators for monitoring. The reporting countries and Finland have been among the first to implement voluntary monitoring of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>17</sup>

The National Commission on Sustainable Development, which currently operates under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office, was established in 1992. The task of the Committee is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Finland. The comprehensive assessment conducted every four years examines how the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is progressing in Finland. The first *State of Sustainable Development* report was published in 2020.

To achieve the 2030 Agenda goals, other social actors, and even individuals, have been engaged and encouraged to make action commitments under the title Commitment 2050. All commitments are available in the Commitment2050.fi online platform.



PHOTO: THOMAS KAST

# Towards sustainable tourism

Sustainable development affects all sectors. The tourism industry is involved in the change, which means that services are being produced in a sustainable manner. Thus, tourism can be a sustainable choice for people. The aim is that, in a sustainable society, consumption is focused on sustainable goods, services and culture and nature activities<sup>18</sup>. The tourism industry plays a key role in the development and implementation of many new service concepts that promote sustainable development<sup>19</sup>.

Leisure tourism has social and economic benefits, such as increased tolerance, quality of life and social well-being<sup>20</sup>. Getting to know the destination's customs and culture and interacting respectfully with the locals increases understanding between different groups of people and can be a significant source of income for the local community<sup>21</sup>.

Responsible travelers also make use of local activities, such as guides, farms, nature tourism and culture services. Tourism can improve the diversity and vitality of rural economies. Sustainable development promotes the responsible use of everyman's rights, such as picking berries, mushrooms and fishing. This goal will be achieved by preserving sufficient diverse local nature and by guiding the sustainable utilization of local nature.<sup>22</sup>

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN A NUTSHELL

Sustainable tourism takes into account the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism now and in the future. Sustainable tourism takes equally into account the needs of tourists, tourism companies, tourist destinations, the environment and the local population. The aim is to find a balance and achieve overall positive effects.

## VISION 2025

Visit Finland's vision is that **Finland becomes a leading destination for sustainable tourism**. We create added value for society and our customers while nurturing our unique nature and culture. Finland is the first choice of a conscientious traveler.

Our goal is for the Finnish tourism industry to operate in a responsible and sustainable manner.

We want the tourism industry to be a proud messenger of sustainability.

Source: Visit Finland's strategy 2021–2025

Sustainable tourism can be roughly divided into three dimensions:

- Economic sustainability
- Socio-cultural sustainability
- Ecological sustainability.

Financial sustainability ensures that the industry has vitality for a long time to come. The tourism sector intends to provide jobs and economic benefits in a diversified, equitable way and to local communities. Sustainable socio-cultural tourism involves the preservation of local cultural heritage and respect for the principles and values of the local community<sup>23</sup>. Ecological sustainability means the reduction of emissions, the optimal use of natural resources, the promotion of biodiversity, the preservation of natural heritage and the preservation of the purity of nature.

Globally, the tourism industry is expected to grow. The sustainability of tourism can also be examined through its carrying capacity, i.e., when the number of tourists and tourism activities exceed the regional carrying capacity.

The UNWTO defines tourism as "*the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic and sociocultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction*<sup>24</sup>." Therefore, the carrying capacity of tourism also means taking into account local resilience and the viability of nature.

From an environmental point of view, carrying capacity refers to the extent to which a given area can withstand users or use in the long term without causing significant damage<sup>25</sup>. Social carrying capacity, on the other hand, takes into account how many tourists can visit at the same time without the well-being of the local population starting to decline<sup>26</sup>.

One of the themes of sustainable tourism is to reduce emissions-intensive tourism, i.e., tourism that generates more greenhouse gas emissions. Focusing on neighboring markets, developing low-carbon travel chains and extending visits will reduce emissions-intensive tourism.

## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM COMPANY

A responsible tourism company takes into account the social, cultural, economic and ecological impacts of its operations. A responsible company recognizes its wider impact on society and seeks to maximize its usefulness. The importance of responsibility is emphasized when activities become more international and the target group is international tourists. Responsibility is also increasingly important in applying for funding and creating partnerships.

*Business responsibility and profitability are not mutually exclusive, but mutually supportive.*



*Promoting responsibility requires knowledge and skill. In 2021, domestic destinations reported that they had organized 184 responsibility training sessions.* <sup>27</sup>

The EU has passed a new Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) that replaces the existing Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD). The CSRD significantly changes the responsibility reporting obligations, as it affects a much wider range of companies than the previous NFRD. In Finland, up to 700 new companies are covered by the directive, including companies in the tourism sector. The CSRD also introduces more requirements regarding the content of the responsibility report and the verification of data.<sup>28</sup>

#### THE STORY OF SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND

The objective of the report on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism (2018) by FCG commissioned by Visit Finland was to map the responsibility and sustainability of tourism companies located in Finland. At the same time, the report investigated what challenges companies faced in implementing responsible tourism and what training needs and skills shortages the companies had in this area. The report also investigated how companies would view the new Sustainable Travel Finland label. A clear majority of the companies that responded to the survey thought the label was a good idea.<sup>29</sup>

The Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme was developed in 2018–2019 and piloted in 2019–2020. One of the basic ideas of the STF programme is to support tourism operators in Finland in adopting sustainable development measures. The STF programme aims to promote sustainable economic growth for all, full and productive employment and decent tourism jobs.

The aim of the programme is to ensure the sustainability of consumption and production methods in tourism and to stimulate the tourism industry to take action against climate change and its impacts.

In other words, the STF programme supports, in particular, SDGs 8 (decent work and economic growth), 12 (responsible consumption) and 13 (climate action).

The programme also solves the challenges that the FCG report (2018) identified, for example, in terms of monitoring responsibility, training needs, lack of information and communication.

The STF programme offers a development path through which tourism companies and destinations can be promoted in accordance with sustainable development, step by step. When the company or destination has followed the entire development path and meets the criteria set by the programme, the company or destination will be awarded the STF label.

This is not a certification, but a label of sustainable tourism: a label that provides companies and regions with a model for continuous development, the latest information on the sustainability of tourism, as well as marketing support and additional visibility on Visit Finland's channels.

The goal of the Destination Development Path is to make the regional development of sustainable tourism systematic and long-term. All companies in the region that have received the STF label can be gathered under the same label. The programme will enable the region to better profile itself as a sustainable tourist destination.

***By the end of 2022, 942<sup>30</sup> companies were already participating in the STF programme of which 219<sup>31</sup> had received the STF label.***

The STF label for destinations and companies aims to:

- promote sustainable tourism in Finland
- facilitate and harmonize communication
- facilitate sustainable choices for tourists
- promote cooperation between the various operators in the field of sustainable tourism.

Participation in the STF programme and applying for the label became possible in the summer of 2020, when the STF programme was launched at the end of the pilot year. The first STF labels were awarded already in the summer of 2020. In 2022, an open and free CO2 calculator for the tourism sector was launched for all companies in the STF programme. The Lapland-based tourism companies were the first pilot users of the calculator, coordinated by the Lapland Association's Väkky project.

By the end of 2022, the STF programme included 67 destinations, of which two had received the STF label<sup>32</sup>. The first STF-

destination status was granted to Posio in 2020. The next city to receive the status was Kristinestad in 2022.

Promoting sustainable tourism in Finland is nothing new; it has been promoted in Finland since the 1990s. The results are reflected in the opinions of tourists:

***90% of travelers consider Finland to be a sustainable destination.<sup>33</sup>***

Of the domestic tourists who responded to the STF visitor survey, 74% said that they considered their destination responsible, and 24% of them said that the responsibility of their destination influenced the decision to visit the destination. Of the respondents who arrived from abroad, 73% considered their travel destination to be responsible, and as many as 39% of them said that responsibility issues had influenced their decision to travel to the destination.<sup>34</sup>

## HANDPRINT OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Simply minimizing the impact of tourism is no longer enough. “Handprint” refers to the positive impact an organization makes through its services and products. Customers and society as a whole will benefit from the handprint.

The travel industry takes people out of their everyday lives to stop, listen and see the world around them. The tourism sector has great potential to contribute to sustainable development.

It has been discovered that tourism can, for example, contribute to nature conservation, as nature as such is a valuable attraction and the destruction of nature, for example, as a result of a construction project or deforestation, would be a significant loss for tourism.

In recent years, there has also been talk of regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism means revitalizing or updating local conditions. Regenerative tourism makes tourism much more attractive to locals, as it improves the

socioeconomic, cultural and ecological conditions of the destination, rather than undermining them. In concrete terms, regenerative tourism can mean, for example, that tourists participate in a regional restoration project or directly support the vitality of local culture, for example, by buying local traditional products or participating in cultural events.

Popular shepherd holidays are a good example of regenerative tourism. During Shepherd's Weeks, visitors can enjoy nature and relaxation, and take care of sheep, cows or horses. At the same time, they participate in valuable nature conservation work and receive well-being from nature.<sup>35</sup> Shepherd holidays are organized by private operators and Metsähallitus, among others.

## Sustainable development themes at the heart of the visitor experience

### FAZER VISITOR CENTRE

For Fazer, sustainability is a journey towards a better tomorrow. Sustainability was at the core of our design when the Fazer Experience Visitor Centre was opened in 2016. While updating the exhibition in 2022, especially the themes of responsibility and innovation were supplemented.

With the help of an expert guide, visitors learn about, for example, the utilization of side streams, responsible sourcing, regenerative farming and taking care of the well-being of people and the environment. The exhibition offers an opportunity to learn with all the senses, interactively. Immersive works, stories and living plants are an important part of the visitor experience, where sweets and delicacies still have their place. According to the feedback, “Fazer is more than I expected” and “the exhibition was thought-provoking.”

The supply of Fazer Café's plant-based products has increased and food waste is avoided in many ways, for example, by utilizing the ResQ service.

# Economic value

Globally, the tourism industry has been growing rapidly. In 2019, the number of international tourists increased to 1.5 billion per year. Arrivals increased by an average of 5% per year from 2009 to 2019, totaling 63%. With growth, tourism has become one of the largest industries in the world.<sup>36</sup>

*From the perspective of sustainable development, the key challenge for economic growth will be the preservation of the vitality of ecosystems and the relentless consideration of human dignity in products and services.<sup>37</sup>*

Economic sustainability means that economic profit is not gained at the expense of social welfare, cultural value or the natural environment. Tourism should create well-being through work and the economy – sustainably and in the long term.

Tourism is of particular economic importance for the viability and job opportunities of remote areas in Finland and abroad<sup>38</sup>. Tourism demand is particularly focused on the hospitality sector, but also on other service sectors and culture.<sup>39</sup>

The tourism sector often aims at growth in terms of the economy and number of tourists. It is important to examine the quality and dispersion of growth and whether the growth is in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Excessive and uncontrollable growth can lead to a situation where the disadvantages of tourism outweigh the benefits.

## 11 generations as hostesses

### NATURE HOTEL & SPA RESORT JÄRVISYDÄN

For Nature Hotel & Spa Resort Järvisydän, located near Linnansaari National Park, it is important to act responsibly and protect the environment. At Porosalmi in Rantasalmi, tourism began already in 1658. It is run by the 11th and 12th generations of the Heiskanen family, who cherish traditions and history.

Järvisydän invests in year-round activities. This avoids the under-utilization of infrastructure on a part-time basis and creates year-round employment.

Järvisydän is a family-owned company whose operations take economic profitability into account through continuous monitoring, long-term operations and long-term, high-quality investments. The company has grown rapidly over the past few years, and all procurements aim to take into account ecology, quality and long service life.

Järvisydän works responsibly for the recognition and attractiveness of the entire region.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines overtourism as "*the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors experiences in a negative way*".<sup>40</sup>

### THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF TOURISM

Several indicators can be used to monitor the economic viability of the tourism sector. The economic value of Finnish tourism has traditionally been measured using tourism accounts that describe the economic and employment impacts of tourism in a broad manner, nationally and regionally. Key data include tourism demand, tourism value added as a share of GDP, and employment in tourism industries.

*In 2021, the number of domestic overnight stays was 17 million<sup>41</sup> and the average length of stay at one accommodation*

*establishment was 2.2 nights.*

The number of overnight stays increased steadily until 2019. In 2019, the total number of overnight stays was 23 million. After the dip in the Covid years (14 million in 2020 and 17 million in 2021), the returned to near pre-Covid levels at 22 million in 2022<sup>42</sup>. In 2021, the average length of stay at one STF accommodation was 2.2 nights, but the length of stay varies from region to region: for example, in Lapland, the average length of stay is 2.8 nights, and in the coastal and archipelago area, it is only 1.6 nights<sup>43</sup>.

Tourism consumption in Finland was EUR 16.3 billion in 2019 and EUR 10.1 billion in 2020.<sup>44</sup> Tourists arriving in Finland produced slightly less than the EU average (77.64) in economic value per overnight stay (67.37)<sup>45</sup>. The number of tourists in Finland relative to the area of the region (km<sup>2</sup>) is 44.7,<sup>46</sup> and 0.03 per 100 inhabitants in the whole country.<sup>47</sup>

EU tourism statistics examine the national tourism intensity by dividing overnight stays by the population. The intensity coefficient tells us how dependent the Finnish economy is on tourism; too high a coefficient can tell us about overtourism and too low a coefficient about the low attractiveness of a tourist country. The tourism intensity coefficient in Finland represents an average level of 3.16<sup>48</sup>, which is slightly lower than the EU average of 4.1. The coefficient can be interpreted as showing that the tourism sector in Finland is in a relatively good balance between supply and demand.

*In 2020, 16% of all tourists were foreigners.<sup>49</sup>*

The tourism sector generates significant tax revenue for Finland. Tourism is the only export sector in Finland where VAT is paid domestically.

*The hospitality sector generates EUR 5.2 billion in tax revenue for the state each year.<sup>50</sup>*

The services sector is also at risk from the shadow economy, and its eradication is therefore strongly linked to the construction of a sustainable economy.

### IMPACT OF TOURISM ON EMPLOYMENT

According to the Tourism Accounts, in 2021 the tourism sector will employ 133,400 people across Finland, and in many regions the tourism sector will be a significant source of employment. The sector employs a large number of young people (30% of the workforce is under the age of 26) and, due to its international character, also a large number of people with a foreign background.<sup>51</sup>

*The direct impact of tourism on employment is 4.9%<sup>52</sup>*

*Tourism accounts for 11.3% of employment<sup>53</sup>*

### DIVERSITY AND YEAR-ROUND TOURISM

The most diverse geographical distribution of tourism services is considered to be a good thing, because too much concentration in a few areas makes destinations vulnerable and overburdens them. The dispersion of the tourism sector in cities, coastal areas, rural areas and natural sites increases the resilience of the Finnish tourism sector, and the economic benefits are more evenly distributed geographically, bringing wider regional economic benefits to society. Finland's Biodiversity Index (0.84)<sup>54</sup> is slightly below the EU average (0.92).

Tourism has traditionally been seasonal, and uneven demand can pose challenges to the carrying capacity of destinations.

The economic sustainability of the tourism sector is assessed, among other things, by how dependent the destination is on its few largest target groups. Visit Finland's target market is divided into focus markets (31%: Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom), active markets (24%: France, Spain, Italy and the USA) and subsidized markets (14%: Benelux,

Switzerland, Austria, South Korea, UAE and Southeast Asia)<sup>55</sup>. Finland's coefficient of dependence on the three main markets (7.75<sup>56</sup>) is much lower than the EU average (23.11). According to statistics, we are not too dependent on a few markets, but attract tourists from a wide range of countries of origin.

The aim is to promote the year-round nature of tourism so that tourist flows also arrive evenly outside the main seasons, which means that there are also income flows and work throughout the year, and not just seasonally. Finland's seasonality or Gini coefficient is 0.50/1<sup>57</sup>, which is<sup>58</sup> better than the EU average of 0.83/1. However, the year-round nature varies between regions; for example, 60% of the companies in the coastal and archipelago area of the STF programme and 63% of the companies in the Lapland region operate all year round, while as many as 82% of the companies in the Helsinki metropolitan area and the lake district remain open all year round.

*STF companies are open on average 10.4 months a year<sup>59</sup>, and 72% of the companies are open year-round<sup>60</sup>.*

The tourism sector is very much a service sector where staff turnover and the proportion of fixed-term and shift work may be high. On average, 35% of employees in the sector work on a seasonal basis. There are geographical differences in this phenomenon. Seasonal workers account for as many as 49% in Lapland region, 45% in the Lakeland region, 34% in the Coast and Archipelago region and only 21% in the Helsinki region.

*In 2022, an average of 65% of the employees of STF companies worked full-time<sup>61</sup>.*

### CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Economic sustainability is also linked to tourists' satisfaction with the services and facilities they receive. They should feel like they got their money's worth.

87% of foreign travelers who responded to the STF visitor survey were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience at the destination, and they also wanted to return to the destination again. For domestic passengers, the figure was 94%.<sup>62</sup>

A responsible company responds to the demands and wishes of an informed consumer. Conscious consumers want to consume according to their own values. They value not only price and quality, but also ethics and ecology, and people are willing to pay for these qualities.

*93% of travelers were satisfied with their overall experience of the destination.<sup>63</sup>*

### Sustainability in the long run with a South Ostrobothnian approach

#### HÄRMÄ TRAFFIC

Our quality management system ISO9001 and environmental management system ISO14001 were first certified in 2010. This launched the work towards sustainable and responsible tourism in our region. We are part of the Responsible Partner programme of Vastuu Group, and we are certified by Traficom as a Responsible Carrier.

Our fleet consists of more than 100 cars. They are equipped with environmentally friendly engines with Euro 5 and Euro 6 emission ratings and a lower carbon footprint. We employ over 100 professionals in the field.

Our goal is to provide the best service in the county, safe for customers, financially profitable and as environmentally friendly as possible.

## Digitalization

In addition to sustainable development, digitalization is advancing in all industries. Tourists are increasingly looking for information from digital data sources and making use of digital channels to make reservations and purchases. A company active in digital channels is more accessible to tourists. In Finland, the share of e-commerce sales is 58%<sup>64</sup>, which is better than the EU average (42%). On the other hand, the number of Finnish accommodation providers online is lower than the EU average<sup>65</sup>.

Finnish tourism companies are active in social media. 65% of businesses use one or more social media channels<sup>66</sup>. The EU average is 42%. Internet connection speed in tourist destinations (71 Mbps) is in line with the EU average (75.4 Mbps)<sup>67</sup>.

Digital means can be used to obtain more information about the behavior of tourists (for example, based on the location of mobile devices) and thereby the effects on the destination. Digitalization promotes the discoverability of local services and experiences. It is also possible to better target marketing related to responsible products and services to tourists.<sup>68</sup>



PHOTO: JULIA KIVELÄ



# Social and Cultural Impact

Tourism should create social and cultural added value. Tourism can only be sustainable if it is developed and managed taking into account both visitors and local communities<sup>69</sup>.

Tourism is an opportunity for local communities. In order for local people to have a strong connection with the tourism industry and to benefit from tourism, the community must be provided with means to participate. It would also be important to avoid congestion, reduce seasonality, invest in planning, respect capacity limits and destination specificities, and diversify the supply of tourism services and products<sup>70</sup>.

Measuring social and cultural impacts is often perceived as more difficult than, for example, measuring environmental or economic impacts, as social and cultural impacts always involve more subjectivity and generalization through measurement is more difficult. However, there are many measures to support social and cultural

responsibility. FCG's study commissioned by Visit Finland on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism (2018) revealed that although companies found socio-cultural sustainability difficult to understand, more measures were taken to promote it than those related to ecological sustainability<sup>71</sup>.

*On average, 92% of residents are satisfied with the impact of tourism in their place of residence.<sup>72</sup>*

## Sustainable design in the world's northernmost ceramic factory

### PENTIK-MÄKI

The journey of our family business began in Posio in the early 70s. Since the beginning, our operations have been defined by common sense, which has meant making the most efficient use of materials, caring for people and taking care of Posio's vitality together with others in the region.

All our ceramic products are designed in Finland and manufactured in our own ceramic factory, which is the northernmost in the world. In our own production, Posio strives to recycle and utilize the raw material as efficiently as possible. In our factory, broken glass ceramic objects are collected and turned into recycled works of art. These unique works of recycled ceramic art can be seen, for example, on the Pentik hill in Posio.

Over the years, Pentik hill has grown into a comprehensive and culture-filled tourist destination in Posio. Our goal is to offer our visitors experiences that respect the environment and the cultural heritage of the region now and in the future.

## RESPECT FOR LOCAL CULTURE AND INCREASED VITALITY

The tourism industry must not operate at the expense of the well-being of the local population. The starting point for sustainable tourism is that locals are involved in the benefits of tourism and that they have opportunities to influence regional tourism. Empowerment will ensure that local people are more satisfied with the impact of tourism.

On average, Finns are satisfied with the impact of tourism, but satisfaction varies from region to region. This is likely influenced by the fact that doing business in Finland is easy and the basic regulations are clear.

People living in Finland are also quite satisfied with the impact of tourism: on average, 92% of local residents in all destinations were satisfied with the impact of tourism. However, only 52% are satisfied with their own opportunities to influence tourism development<sup>73</sup>.

In Finland, residents could be given more opportunities to participate in the development of tourism.

In Finland, the tourism industry is growing, and we are already experiencing spikes in overtourism in some places, which means that tourist flows exceed the regional carrying capacity. In order to maintain satisfaction and the social acceptability of the tourism industry, more attention needs to be paid to the fact that growth is sustainable and produces more benefits than disadvantages.

## SAFEGUARDING CULTURAL HERITAGE

Sustainable tourism respects the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and contributes to the preservation of built and living cultural heritage<sup>74</sup>.

The UNESCO World Heritage List has been maintained since 1972. The UNESCO Convention aims to protect and preserve the world's cultural and natural heritage for future generations. UNESCO World Heritage Sites are

popular tourist destinations. Finland's World Heritage Sites are:

- Suomenlinna (added to the World Heritage List in 1991)
- Old Rauma (1991)
- Old Church of Petäjävesi (1994)
- Verla grinding and board mill (1996)
- Sarmallaahdenmäki Bronze Age Mound Area (1999)
- Struve Chain (2005)
- Kvarken Archipelago (2006)

In addition, there are numerous other valuable cultural sites in Finland.

*There are 102 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, other culturally significant sites and geoparks in Finland<sup>75</sup>, and 1,471 built cultural environments of national significance<sup>76</sup>.*

The Sámi are the only indigenous people in the EU, and about 10,000 Sámi live in Finland. As an indigenous people, the Sámi have the right to maintain and develop their language and culture and to carry out their traditional livelihoods. In 2018, the Sámi Parliament approved the Code of Conduct for Responsible and Ethically Sustainable Sámi Tourism. The objectives of the Code of Ethics are to eliminate tourism that exploits the Sámi people and false information about the Sámi that spreads through tourism. The aim is also to safeguard the cultural practices and traditions of the people outside tourism.<sup>77</sup>

## CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

Cultural sustainability includes respect for cultural diversity and the promotion of interaction between different cultures<sup>78</sup>. The tourism industry can also play an important role in promoting intercultural encounters by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Meeting people from different cultural backgrounds helps when their partly different

habits and needs are known and taken into account<sup>79</sup>. In the tourism industry, meeting people from different cultures is often taken into account already in the degree programmes of the sector by offering related courses or lectures.

## INCLUSIVITY

Inclusivity refers to an equal and non-discriminatory approach that is inclusive of everyone. Inclusive travel means that every customer, regardless of age, gender, physical characteristics, sexuality or religion, can use the services and enjoy experiences equally<sup>80</sup>.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2011), around 15% of the world's population, such as senior travelers, need accessibility services, and up to 40% when we include people with temporary accessibility needs, such as families with children. In addition, tourists include a large number of people of different religions and from gender and sexual minorities.<sup>81</sup>

## Inclusivity in the tourism industry

### HAWKHILL

We joined the We Speak Gay community that promotes sexual equality in 2019. We participated in several training sessions on the topic and discussed this with several people who were familiar with the topic. We felt that we could not ignore sexual equality or simply say that everyone is welcome.

Inclusivity is part of our activities throughout the year, not just during Pride Week, and we communicate this in a positive way throughout the year. Hawkhill is included in the map and website of the We Speak Gay community in the Helsinki area. There is also a map slipped between our cottage books. The colors of the rainbow can be seen in our staff's key straps and in our customers' laundry bags, for example. On the slope of Haukkamäki sits a piece of earth art in which a leprechaun over two meters tall plays notes of tolerance on a rainbow guitar during the summer season.

The train of inclusivity is on the move, but our journey is just beginning.

Accessibility can be improved through physical facilities and access routes. Taking people's different needs into account also requires situational awareness, communication and flexibility.

The accessibility of communication channels is also important. The accessibility of one's own service can be improved by multilingual communication. On average, STF companies communicate in three different languages (Finnish, Swedish and English)<sup>82</sup>.

Values and attitudes can be obstacles. In inclusive tourism, the company communicates its values openly and strives actively to counter negative and exclusive prejudices. Attitudinal accessibility requires a conscious decision by the company to serve everyone equally<sup>83</sup>.

Social sustainability and inclusion are represented by providing services to minority groups. Only about a third of the companies in the STF programme say that they target people with reduced mobility and the LGBTQ+ target group.

It can be assumed that the companies that responded to the survey are already working to promote responsibility. Taking into account all companies, inclusivity is still in its infancy. The promotion of skills and concrete examples are needed to make inclusiveness mainstream. Promoting inclusion also improves the company's image, customer satisfaction and competitiveness.

Equality must also be ensured among the staff. According to the Non-Discrimination Act of 2017, every company with at least 30 employees must draw up an equality plan.

***27% of STF companies provide services to people with reduced mobility and 32% to LGBTQ+ target groups.<sup>84</sup>***



PHOTO: ALEKSI POUTANEN

# Environmental impact

The negative environmental impact of tourism has been recognized since the 1980s. Ecologically sustainable tourism means that tourism produces as little negative environmental impact as possible and that it creates positive environmental effects, for example, by strengthening tourists' relationship with nature.

Tourism moves and connects people. In their free time, people travel to meet relatives and get to know new places. The majority of the negative environmental impacts of leisure activities are due to travel caused by tourism<sup>85</sup>. There are also significant environmental impacts from business travel. Travel is responsible for up to 29% of the carbon footprint of the average Finn<sup>86</sup>.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) forecasts that demand for air travel will double in the coming decades, with a particular focus on emerging economies.

The growth is also reflected in the Finnish tourism market and increases the number of tourists arriving in Finland from abroad<sup>87</sup>.

From the point of view of ecological sustainability, means should be found to influence both the length of journeys and low emissions of modes of transport<sup>88</sup>. As the tourism industry grows, emissions cannot grow in the same proportion.

The negative environmental impact of tourism is largely caused by the energy consumption of properties, traffic, waste and emissions. Environmental degradation is a challenge, especially where nature is sensitive.<sup>89</sup>

Overtourism and congestion also cause inconvenience. Nature tourism can disturb natural ecosystems if, for example, human activities interfere with the nesting of birds.

## Climate work secures Finnish winters

### LEVI SKI RESORT

At Levi, we provide year-round slope services and various related services while respecting our Arctic environment. As a result of our long-term work, we are the first ISO14001 certified ski resort in the Nordic countries. In our climate work, we are committed to, e.g., the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Change and thus contribute to the climate work in the tourism sector.

We are responding to our common climate challenge with genuine actions: We continuously invest in the development of slope and service infrastructure, for example, by switching to renewable forms of energy and taking care of biodiversity in our fell areas. Our latest investment, the Glacier project, takes our snow preservation technology forward, ensuring energy-efficiency and a long snow season for winter sports enthusiasts.

Communication and learning new things are central to climate work, creating new solutions that make sense for the environment and business. Everyone needs to be involved in solving common challenges; therefore, everyone should start observing their responsibility right now.

## ENERGY AND WATER CONSUMPTION

The energy intensity of the tourism sector is measured in gigajoules per million euros spent on tourism. Finland's northern location means that the premises need to be heated for a large part of the year. In summer, however, it can be very warm, which means that cooling is necessary in many businesses in the tourism sector. This is reflected in a much higher energy intensity value than the EU average (GJ 5.41/million €) (GJ 10.38/million €)<sup>90</sup>.

Energy consumption is often one of the business's most significant environmental impacts, and the tourism industry is no exception. As many as 89% of the companies participating in the STF programme have at least two different means of reducing energy consumption, with an average of six measures per company<sup>91</sup>. Typical measures taken by STF companies to reduce energy consumption include monitoring consumption, temperature control and switching to LED lighting.

On average, 68% of the energy consumed by STF companies is generated from renewable energy sources. In the Lapland region, the share of renewable energy is already 84%, while in the Helsinki region it is only 54%.

### *Renewable energy accounts for 68% of the total annual energy consumption of the companies in the STF programme.<sup>92</sup>*

In FCG's study (2018), tourism companies mentioned the most common energy-saving measures, such as lowering the temperature of accommodation spaces and measures to reduce electricity consumption in saunas and lighting<sup>93</sup>. The Tourism and Hospitality Roadmap 2020, produced by the Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa in cooperation with Gaia, a sustainable

business consultancy, mentions energy efficiency renovations, such as better insulation, the production of solar electricity and the transition from district heating to geothermal heating, as easy-to-implement energy-saving measures<sup>94</sup>.

Water consumption can also be very high in the tourism sector, for example, in businesses providing accommodation or spa services. Of the companies participating in the STF programme, 83% have at least two measures in place to reduce water consumption, and the average number of measures is four per company<sup>95</sup>. Measures to reduce both water and energy consumption include, for example, less frequent washing of towels, taps and nozzles to reduce water consumption, and a more water-saving equipment fleet<sup>96</sup>.

Energy and water saving measures and investments not only make sense for the environment, but also often lead to significant cost savings for businesses.

## TRANSPORT

When minimizing the environmental impact of tourism, we should consider what is happening at the destination, but also, more broadly, the mobility and transport that tourism generates. Transport is responsible for around 75% of tourism-related emissions, and air travel accounts for 40% of transport. Other areas, such as accommodation and activities, account for about 25% of emissions<sup>97</sup>.

In 2021, the average emissions intensity of Finnish flights per passenger was 193.55 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e, which is 47% higher than the EU average (131.79 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e)<sup>98</sup>. Our dependence on the long-distance tourist market (12%) is in line with the EU average<sup>99</sup>. However, Finland's accessibility from abroad is largely dependent on air traffic, and this was also reflected in the responses of foreign passengers who responded to the STF programme's visitor survey. 44% of them said that the main means of transport to their destination was an airplane. The other most used means of transport were cars (28%) and trains (10%). By far the most used mode of

transport for domestic travelers were cars which make up to an 80% share, and the second most used mode of transport was the train (9%).<sup>100</sup>

Due to the long distances involved, the influence of tourism companies on the emissions of domestic tourists is limited. The best prerequisites for enabling low-emission mobility are those companies that are located at railway hubs<sup>101</sup>.

## *In Finland, train journeys accounted for 10.7% of modes of travel in 2021.*<sup>102</sup>

In Finland, the share of train journeys is close to the EU average (12.0%).

## Environmental education in the middle of the archipelago

### MOOMINWORLD

Moominworld Oy defined the values and operating principles of its business operations already in 1993. From the beginning, it was clear that we want to maintain a strong bond with the world of Moomins created by Tove Jansson and act responsibly following the example set by her.

Respect for nature and the environment was particularly highlighted, as a theme park was built in the delicate archipelago nature by the sea. The second highlighted item was our core target group from which came the desire to take into account the needs of children. Charity that targets children has also been an important part of the company's operations from the very beginning. Thirdly, we understood that we have a great responsibility towards young workers. For many, a job in Moominworld is the first job of their lives and the young person creates their first idea of work based on the experience.

*"There was a long silence. Then Snufkin said slowly: It would be awful if the earth exploded. It is so beautiful."*

(Tove Jansson: Comet in Moominland)

Measures proposed in MaRa's low-carbon roadmap for the tourism and restaurant sector include cooperation campaigns with public transport operators, increasing the number of charging points for electric cars, and offering discounts to customers who choose public transport. In addition, a tourism company can offer or rent, for example, bicycles for customers to use<sup>103</sup>.

### RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

Procurement is an important part of the responsibility of tourism companies also from an environmental perspective. According to the FCG's survey on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism (2018), more than 40% of companies in the tourism sector said that they prefer eco-labeled products in their purchases<sup>104</sup>.

In addition to giving preference to eco-labeled products and services, the company can add low emissions as one of its procurement criteria, for example. Other possible measures include favoring durable products over disposable ones and investing in high-quality and durable

products. Reducing consumption can also reduce the environmental impact of purchases<sup>105</sup>.

In addition to consumer goods and products, food is a significant part of the procurement of many companies in the tourism sector. 60% of the participants in the STF programme have at least two means of promoting the use of sustainably produced food products<sup>106</sup>. On average, companies implement two measures to promote sustainable food choices<sup>107</sup>. The most popular measures taken by STF companies were following WWF's fish guide and utilizing organic and eco-labeled foods.

The climate impacts of food also play an important role from the perspective of environmental responsibility. Customers can be guided to choose lower-emission options by offering plenty of vegan and vegetarian foods and communicating climate-friendly options<sup>108</sup>.

### WASTE AND SORTING

In Finland, waste legislation obliges companies operating in suburbs and station or zoning areas to separately collect bio-waste, glass, metal,

cardboard and plastic packaging waste, in addition to mixed waste, if they generate an average of a certain number of kilograms of waste per week<sup>109</sup>. Many tourism companies operate outside station and zoning areas, but they may also be covered by a certificate that is acceptable as part of the STF programme and this has its own waste criteria, such as the sorting possibilities offered to customers. Companies participating in the STF programme collect an average of 4.29 waste types separately at customer premises and 5.74 waste types in the company's own premises<sup>110</sup>. According to FCG's report on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism, sorting was, however, seen as challenging in companies operating in small and remote locations, unless the area has the possibility of separate collection of bio-waste<sup>111</sup>. Transporting small amounts of waste also causes environmental damage if there is no possibility of collection.

The Decree on Packaging and Packaging Waste (1029/2021)<sup>112</sup> and the<sup>113</sup> reform of waste legislation will also increase the recycling



possibilities of packaging and bio-waste in smaller municipalities.

In 2018–19, the average food waste in catering services was as high as 15.9% of the food produced, and in hotels, for example, the amount of food waste was 101 grams per customer<sup>114</sup>. Reducing food waste and thus the amount of bio-waste is an important part of the ecological sustainability of tourism companies providing catering services, and it is also in line with the priority order of the Waste Act (646/2011)<sup>115</sup>.

Nearly 40% of the companies who participated in FCG's study on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism (2018) stated that their activities support the reduction and utilization of food waste<sup>116</sup>. Concrete measures to reduce food waste include, for example, changes made in the purchasing, preparation and theft phases of food through regular observation of food waste, as well as the<sup>117</sup> utilization of the ResQ application. The leftover raw materials can also be used to some extent in the production of

new food products. For example, leftover fruit from a hotel breakfast can be used to make juice or smoothies<sup>118</sup>.

### **CARBON-NEUTRAL TOURISM SECTOR 2035**

According to the UNWTO/ITF study, carbon dioxide emissions from tourism increased by at least 60% between 2005 and 2016<sup>119</sup>.

*Tourism is responsible for approximately 8% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions – tourism has a significant carbon footprint.*<sup>120</sup>

According to EU tourism statistics, the greenhouse gas intensity of the Finnish tourism sector (671.97 kg/million euros) is 80% higher than the EU average (372.15 kg/million euros)<sup>121</sup>.

*The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism was launched in November 2021.*

Signatories commit to act now and accelerate climate action to reduce global tourism emissions by at least half by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050. Each signatory undertakes to submit a concrete climate action plan or an updated plan within 12 months of signing. Slightly more than 60 Finnish tourism operators have already signed the declaration and are committed to a common climate target for tourism. The Finnish tourism operators that have signed the Climate Declaration will jointly publish a climate action plan during 2023.

The aim of the Climate Act passed in 2022 is that Finland will be carbon neutral by 2035. MaRa's low-carbon roadmap for the tourism and restaurant sector calculates the current carbon footprint of the sector and estimates the development of emissions up to 2035. During the roadmap work, it was determined that the biggest emissions in the industry (93%) are caused by the consumption of district heat and electricity in owned and rented premises.

However, the share of energy consumption in the sector's total emissions will decrease significantly in the coming years due to fuel changes in Finland's district heating and cooling and electricity production<sup>122</sup>.

99% of the companies participating in the STF programme have at least two measures in place to mitigate climate change<sup>123</sup> and on average they have 13 measures in place.<sup>124</sup>

The expertise needed to measure the carbon footprint was mentioned in FCG's report on the current state, challenges and development needs of sustainable tourism (2018) as one of the topics on which companies required more information<sup>125</sup>. On average, 27% of companies in the STF programme measure their carbon footprint. This share is quite high and indicates that the CO2 calculator created for the STF programme has been successfully implemented. Companies in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area STF programme are the most active in determining their carbon footprint (34%).

***99% of companies in the STF***

***programme are actively involved in climate change mitigation activities.***<sup>126</sup>

***27% of companies in the STF programme measure their carbon footprint.***<sup>127</sup>

Due to its northern location, the Finnish tourism sector consumes a lot of energy and produces more greenhouse gas emissions than the EU average. The situation will improve when the transition to renewable energy sources and other green transitions are completed in Finland. The figures show that STF companies are actively involved in climate work. STF companies use more renewable energy (68%) than the national average (40%)<sup>128</sup>. Although wood is considered a renewable energy source, burning wood is actually a form of heating that is harmful to the climate. Since all forms of energy production cause harm to the environment, the use of energy should primarily be reduced.

## **Protecting cultural heritage through energy efficiency and geothermal energy**

### **SERLACHIUS MUSEUMS**

Serlachius Museums is a private museum and tourism operator with a strong commitment to sustainable development. The museum has a wide range of positive environmental impacts from safeguarding cultural heritage based on art and forestry. This tradition is an important part of Finnish cultural heritage.

For us, the preservation of cultural heritage is visible in all the museum's activities: exhibitions, collections and services. However, adverse effects and energy consumption arise when the conditions in the storage and exhibition rooms of works of art must be kept as stable as possible by means of heating and cooling, humidification and drying. This ensures the preservation of works of art and objects for posterity.

In order to reduce the carbon footprint of energy consumption, we have decided to switch to geothermal energy. The museum's Art Sauna is already geothermal. The Serlachius Museum Gustaf in the centre of Mänttä will start using geothermal heat and cooling in 2024, and the Gösta Art Museum a couple of years later.

## CONSERVATION OF NATURE

A vibrant and clean nature is a vital attraction for the Finnish tourism industry. Finland is an ideal destination for nature tourism. We have a lot of forests, lakes and wetlands. Tourism experiences are a way to reinforce people's relationship with nature and thus encourage them to adopt an environmentally friendly lifestyle and to support nature conservation in everyday life as well.

Tourism is also carried out in very natural environments. In Finland, we have the freedom to roam and this enables the tourism industry to organize activities in nature – nature is our common property to which everyone has a right. When people spend time in nature, it must be ensured that nature is not destroyed and remains untouched. Environmentally friendly nature tourism does not spoil the soil, does not leave debris and does not disturb nature and its inhabitants.

Finland has 41 national parks and numerous nature reserves and other excursion destinations. They account for 9% of the total area of Finland.<sup>129</sup> By far the most protected area is in Lapland (27% of the area) and the number is significantly less elsewhere in Finland (2-3% of the area). A lot of work has been done in Finland to enable nature tourism; we have a comprehensive number of hiking routes and rest areas. Our clean waters invite swimming, and almost 90% of our natural waters are rated as excellent<sup>130</sup>.

Of the companies participating in the STF programme, 67% have at least two means of participation in safeguarding biodiversity<sup>131</sup>, and these companies have an average of five measures to promote it<sup>132</sup>. The most popular measures taken by STF companies to promote biodiversity included collecting litter from nature, improving habitats, combating invasive species, hanging and maintaining birdhouses, and financially supporting nature conservation organizations.



PHOTO: JULIA KIVELÄ

# Further development

It is no longer enough to look at tourism volumes alone. More comprehensive measurement and analysis of the tourism sector are required to ensure that it grows in a sustainable way. The development of sustainable tourism and indicators will ensure that the negative effects of tourism do not outweigh its benefits – economically, ecologically, socially and culturally.

At the moment, Finland seems to be a pioneer in promoting and measuring sustainable tourism according to the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS). The sustainability of tourism is evidenced by a balanced examination of the economic, socio-cultural and ecological impacts. As with sustainability in general, the aim is to achieve a balance between the different impacts of tourism.

In addition to the EU statistics on tourists, many other international statistics, thresholds, averages and target levels have not yet been

developed and published, which would give us a better analysis and picture of the state of various aspects of the sustainable development of Finnish tourism. Hopefully, Finland's STF programme and the work related to the development of the sustainable tourism indicator system will also point the way to other countries. As national measurement develops around the world, it will also provide a basis for better international comparison.

***Sustainable tourism is a balancing act between acceptable limits and the use required for growth. Constant change keeps you on your toes, but requires systematic monitoring, planning and action.***<sup>133</sup>

*“Tourism companies already do a lot of work to promote sustainability at travel destinations. However, the present sustainability transformation means that climate change and loss of biodiversity require more profound changes.*

*Can destinations focus international marketing on nearby areas to reduce air miles, or develop package tours for tourists travelling by land? Businesses that serve mainly domestic tourists already do valuable work, even if they do not contribute to the strong growth of tourism.*

*Socio-cultural sustainability is equally important. What should the tourism industry and its tourism services be like so that local residents would prefer to be employed by it and make use of their know-how?”*

*Outi Kulusjärvi  
tourism geography researcher*

Socio-cultural sustainability as a theme still needs more awareness and tangibility in order to be realized. Ecological sustainability seems to be Finland's strength. We have invested in environmental issues and clean nature is an important attraction for tourism. Our challenge as a travel destination is poor accessibility with low-carbon travel.

Investing in rail transport would provide alternatives to flying and improve the possibilities to arrive in Finland and travel within Finland in a low-carbon manner but in reasonable time. In addition, travel chains combining several sustainable modes of transport should be made easy for tourists. The development of low-carbon and responsible modes of transport and accessibility would also increase the acceptability of tourism.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IS THE NEW STANDARD**

Promoting the sustainability of an entire industry requires boldly challenging unsustainable practices. Changing norms and familiar ways of operating is long-term work. Visit Finland aims

to make Finland the most attractive travel destination in the Nordic countries and the world's leading destination for sustainable tourism.

The future development targets of the STF programme include the development of a CO2 calculation model for destinations, the final implementation model for resident and visitor surveys, and the sustainable tourism indicator system as a whole, including a reporting tool. The STF programme is constantly developing new indicators related to, for example, the well-being of employees at work and the mobility of tourists. In addition, the digital platform of the STF programme will be renewed in 2023, in connection with which the programme's criteria and the content supporting the programme will also be updated.

Promoting sustainable tourism is long-term work, which is carried out on the basis of the principle of continuous development.

*“The attraction of Finnish tourism is its untouched nature, the peace of nature and the four seasons. However, reaching the destinations generates significant emissions, regardless of sustainable practices implemented at the destinations and accommodations.*

*Genuinely sustainable tourism is not yet sufficiently encouraged. At the moment, at many Finnish ski resorts the fastest and cheapest way to travel produces the most emissions. Rail tourism, for example, should be made more attractive and also cost-competitive.*

*It is unsustainable that Finnish tourism is still mainly based on air passengers from abroad. Only when this major structural issue is addressed can tourism become truly sustainable. In addition to year-round tourism, we also need to make sure that travelling to destinations places as little burden on nature as possible.”*

**Heidi Kalmar**  
chairman of the Board, POW FINLAND

## TIPS FROM STF COMPANIES

We asked STF companies that serve as examples in this report to give tips to other companies in the tourism industry on how to succeed in their sustainability work. Here are their tips:

- Get started today!
- Be inventive and fun. Communication doesn't have to be so serious.
- Participate in training and search for information.
- Do not be discouraged by the initial efforts, because they are worthwhile: this will make the various aspects of sustainable development an integral part of everyone's everyday activities. The system and the development projects almost run themselves!
- Invest in systematic operations. It helps to reduce the hassle and takes on all the activities of the entire organization, not only those directly related to environmental issues.
- Involve all staff in the work and ensure that the people responsible for their part can plan and implement measures.
- Communicate responsibility measures boldly and openly and on several channels.
- Apply environmental education in an age-appropriate manner.
- Make responsibility a natural part of the company's operations.
- Make responsibility themes and reporting on responsible actions a natural part of the visitor experience and give visitors the opportunity to discuss and ask about them.
- Take concrete responsibility actions together with the visitors. Customers are very interested in responsibility, which is why it is important to train staff continuously.
- Sign the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Change to demonstrate your commitment to climate action.

**Visit Finland aims to make sustainability the new norm in tourism and Finland one of the most sustainable travel destinations in the world.**

Visit Finland's strategy  
2021–2025

**Thank you to all tourism businesses and tourists for participating!**

# Closing remarks

The *State of Sustainable Tourism* annual report is the first of its kind. The report has already identified the weaknesses and strengths of sustainable tourism. The next report, to be published in 2024, will be enriched with monitoring data, which will enable comparison and the setting of limit and reference values.

One of the basic ideas of the STF programme is to support tourism operators in Finland adopt sustainable development measures. The STF programme aims to contribute to sustainable economic growth for all, full and productive employment and decent jobs in the tourism sector. The aim of the programme is to ensure the sustainability of tourism consumption and production methods and to speed up the tourism industry's action against climate change and its effects. The national sustainable tourism indicator system provides a model for monitoring the achievement of the objectives.

Although progress has been made in a more sustainable direction, and as the requirements for responsibility have grown, our journey seems to be only just beginning. Sustainable tourism is a constant balancing act between site management, economic value, environmental impact and social and cultural impact, but at its best, tourism not only minimizes negative impacts but also improves its operating environment holistically. Finland has excellent potential to act verifiably as a forerunner in this and to lead our business towards a renewable tomorrow.



PHOTO: EMILIA HOISKO

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# APPENDIX

## **Appendix 1:**

“State of sustainable tourism 2022 indicators and statistics”

## **Appendix 2:**

STF indicator form 2022, available online at:  
<https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-indicator-lomake-2022-destinaatit.pdf>

## **Appendix 3:**

Business STF indicator form 2022, available online:  
<https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-indicatoromake-2022-yrietykset.pdf>

## **Appendix 4**

STF programme resident survey form 2022, available online:  
[https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-asukaskysely\\_fi.pdf](https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-asukaskysely_fi.pdf)

## **Appendix 5**

STF travel questionnaire 2022, available online :  
[https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-matkailijakysely\\_fi.pdf](https://www.visitfinland.fi/490a00/globalassets/visitfinland.fi/vf-julkaisut/2023/stf-matkailijakysely_fi.pdf)

## State of Sustainable Tourism 2022 Report

### INDICATORS AND STATISTICS

#### DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

ID	STF Indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016);	GSTC code
	Companies participating in the STF programme (by the end of 2022)	<b>942</b>	Entire tourism sector	STF Online Platform	2022		A.1.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishments in the destination using a voluntary certification/labeling for environmental/quality/sustainability and/or Corporate Social Responsibility measures	A4 Enterprise Engagement and Sustainability Standards
	Destinations included in the STF programme (by the end of 2022)	<b>67</b>		STF Online Platform				
<b>A.1.1</b>	Number of enterprises that have received the STF label (by the end of 2022)	<b>219</b>	The STF Programme	STF Online Platform	2022	12b	A.1.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishments in the destination using a voluntary certification/labeling for environmental/quality/sustainability and/or Corporate Social Responsibility measures	A4 Enterprise Engagement and Sustainability Standards
	Number of STF designated destinations (by the end of 2022)	<b>2</b>		STF Online Platform				
<b>A.1.2a</b>	Percentage of the destination's residents who are satisfied with tourism's impact on their place of residence	<b>92%</b>	All Finland	Resident survey	2022	11, 17	C.5.1 Percentage of residences that are satisfied with the impacts of tourism on the destination's identity	A5 Resident engagement and feedback
<b>A.1.2b</b>	Proportion of residents who are satisfied with their own opportunities to influence tourism	<b>52%</b>	All Finland	Resident survey	2022	11, 17	2013: A.1.1.1 Percentage of residents satisfied with their participation and contribution to tourism planning and development	A5 Resident engagement and feedback
<b>A.2.1a</b>	Percentage of survey respondents who are satisfied with the overall experience of the destination	<b>93%</b>	Entire tourism sector	Visitor survey	2022	11, 12	A.2.1 Percentage of tourists and same day visitors that are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination	A6 Visitor engagement and feedback
<b>A.2.1b</b>	Percentage of surveyed travelers who consider the listing a sustainable destination	<b>90%</b>	Entire tourism sector	Visitor survey	2022	11, 12	A.2.1 Percentage of tourists and same day visitors that are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination	A6 Visitor engagement and feedback

#### ECONOMIC VALUE

ID	STF Indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016);	GSTC code
<b>B.1.1</b>	Number of overnight stays per year	<b>17 million</b>	Entire tourism sector	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2021	11, 12, 8, 9	B.1.1 Number of tourist nights per month	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
<b>B.1.11</b>	Number of months of opening hours	<b>10.4</b>	The STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2021	11, 12	B.2.2 Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation establishments per month and average for the year	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
<b>B.1.12</b>	The proportion of international tourists to all tourists	<b>16 %</b>	All Finland	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2020	8	B.1 Tourism Flow (volume & value) at the Destination	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
<b>B.1.13</b>	Share of year-round tourism businesses	<b>72%</b>	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2021	11, 12	B.1 Tourism Flow (volume & value) at the Destination	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
<b>B.1.6</b>	Market distribution; dependence on a specific target group	<b>Focus markets: 31% Active market: 24% Supported markets: 14%</b>	Entire tourism sector	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2022	8	B.1 Tourism Flow (volume & value) at the Destination	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
<b>B.1.7</b>	Annual tourism consumption in Finland	<b>€10.3 billion</b>	All Finland	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2020	8	B.1 Tourism Flow (volume & value) at the Destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
<b>B.2.1</b>	Average tourist stay at the destination (nights) (2021)	<b>2.2</b>	Entire tourism sector	STF Indicator Form	2021	8	B.2.1 Average length of stay of tourists (nights)	A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
<b>B.3.1</b>	Tourism's direct impact on the destination's total employment (%)	<b>4.90%</b>	Entire tourism sector	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2020	1, 8, 9	B.3.1 Direct tourism employment as percentage of total employment in the destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
<b>B.3.2</b>	Number of seasonal workers as a percentage of tourism employees	<b>35%</b>	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2021	8, 10	B.3.2 Percentage of jobs in tourism that are seasonal	B2 Decent work and career opportunities
<b>B.3.3</b>	Number of education and training related to sustainable tourism (2021)	<b>184</b>	All Finland	STF Indicator Form	2021	4, 8	B.3 Quantity and quality of employment	B2 Decent work and career opportunities

ID	Other indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016);	GSTC code
	Intensity of Tourism (visits nights / per capita)	3.16	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
	Seasonality of tourism (coefficient of variation)	0.5	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
	Dependence on top three origins (%)	7.75	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2019	8	B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
	Diversity in tourism (index)	0.84	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
	Share of tourism in employment (%)	11.26%	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2019	8	B.3 Quantity and quality of employment	B2 Decent work and career opportunities
	Average travel expenses (PPS / overnight stay)	67.27	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2019	8	B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism
	Online Sales Percentage	58%	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B8 Access for all
	Listed properties online (index)	-28	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B8 Access for all
	Attempt to use social media (%)	65%	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B8 Access for all
	Internet connection speed in tourist destinations	71 Mbps	Entire tourism sector	EU Tourism Data	2021	8	B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B8 Access for all
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT								
ID	STF Indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016)	GSTC code
C.1.1a	Number of tourists per 100 residents	0.03	All Finland	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2021	11, 12	C.1.1 Number of tourists/visitors per 100 residents	
C.1.5	Number of tourists in relation to the area of the region (km2)	44.7	All Finland	Statistical database Rudolf, Statistics Finland	2021			A8 Managing visitor volumes and activities
C.4.1a	Percentage of enterprises providing services to people with reduced mobility	27%	Companies awarded the STF label	STF Online Platform	2022	10	C.4.1 Percentage of rooms in commercial accommodation establishments accessible to people with disabilities	B5 Preventing exploitation and discrimination B8 Access for all
C.4.1b	Proportion of companies providing services to an LGBTQ+ target group	32%	Companies awarded the STF label	STF Online Platform	2022	10	C.4 Inclusion/accessibility	B5 Preventing exploitation and discrimination B8 Access for all
C.4.5	Multilingualism in communication	3	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	10		
C.5.2a	Number of destinations with UNESCO World Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Cultural Routes (EC), or Geoparks status.	102	All Finland	Finnish Heritage Agency, UNESCO, Council of Europe	2022	11	C.5.2 Percentage of the destination's events that are focused on traditional/local culture and heritage 2013: C.4.1 Percentage of sites covered by a cultural heritage protection policy or plan	C1 Protection of cultural assets
C.5.2b	Number of built cultural environments of national significance.	1,471	All Finland	Finnish Heritage Agency	2022	11	C.5.2 Percentage of the destination's events that are focused on traditional/local culture and heritage 2013: C.4.1 Percentage of sites covered by a cultural heritage protection policy or plan	C1 Protection of cultural assets
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT								
ID	STF Indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016)	GSTC code
D.2.1	Share of companies actively participating in climate change mitigation activities	99%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	13	D.2.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in climate change mitigation schemes – such as: CO2 offset, low energy systems, etc.– and 'adaptation' responses and actions	D2.1 Greenhouse gas emissions (industry criteria)
	Average number of actions to mitigate climate change	13	Companies in the STF Programme	STF indicator form	2022		D.2.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in climate change mitigation schemes – such as: CO2 offset, low energy systems, etc.– and 'adaptation' responses and actions	D2.1 Greenhouse gas emissions (industry criteria)

ID	STF Indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016)	GSTC code
D.2.1.1	Share of companies that measure their carbon footprint	27%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF indicator form	2022	13	D.2.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in climate change mitigation schemes – such as: CO2 offset, low energy systems, etc.– and 'adaptation' responses and actions	D10 GHG emissions and climate change mitigation
D.3.4	Average number of separately recycled waste types in customer premises	4.29	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	12, 14, 1	D.3.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises separating different types of waste	D2.4 Solid waste (industry criteria)
D.3.4	Average amount of separately recycled waste types in business premises	5.74	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	12, 14, 1	D.3.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises separating different types of waste	D2.4 Solid waste (industry criteria)
D.5.2	Share of enterprises with measures to reduce water consumption	83%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	6	D.5.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises taking actions to reduce water consumption	D1.4 Water conservation (industry criteria)
	Average number of actions to reduce water consumption	4	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022		D.5.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises taking actions to reduce water consumption	D1.4 Water conservation (industry criteria)
D.6.2	Share of enterprises with measures to reduce energy consumption	89%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022	7	D.6.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises that take actions to reduce energy consumption	D1.3 Energy conservation (industry criteria)
	Average number of actions to reduce energy consumption	6	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022		D.6.2 Percentage of tourism enterprises that take actions to reduce energy consumption	D1.3 Energy conservation (industry criteria)
D.6.3	Share of renewable energy consumed annually (Mwh) in total energy consumption	68%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF indicator form	2022	7	D.6.3 Percentage of annual amount of energy consumed from renewable sources (Mwh) compared to overall energy consumption at destination level per year	D1.3 Energy conservation (industry criteria)
D.7.1	Percentage of tourism enterprises actively supporting the protection, conservation and maintenance of local biodiversity.	67%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF indicator form	2022	14, 15	D.7.1 Percentage of local enterprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation and management of local biodiversity and landscapes	D3.1 Biodiversity conservation (industry criteria)
	Average number of actions promoting biodiversity	5	Companies in the STF Programme	STF indicator form	2022		D.7.1 Percentage of local enterprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation and management of local biodiversity and landscapes	D3.1 Biodiversity conservation (industry criteria)
D.7.1.3	Nature reserves and national parks as a percentage of the total area	9%	All Finland	Metsähallitus, Statistics Finland	2022	14, 15	D.7.1 Percentage of designated area (area, km2) from site (2013)	D2 Visitor management at natural sites
D.7.1.1	Percentage of local tourism companies that use sustainable and organic products as part of their food services.	60%	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022			D2.6 Minimize pollution (industry criteria)
	Average number of actions contributing to sustainable food choices	2	Companies in the STF Programme	STF Indicator Form	2022			D2.6 Minimize pollution (industry criteria)
ID	Other indicators	Value	Sample / Share	Source	Year	SDG	ETIS criteria (2016)	GSTC code
	Average emissions intensity of flights (kg CO2 / passenger) (2021)	193.55	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2021	13	D.2 Climate change	D10 GHG emissions and climate change mitigation
	Greenhouse gas intensity of tourism (kg / million EUR) (2019)	671.97	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2019	13	D.2 Climate change	D10 GHG emissions and climate change mitigation
	Energy intensity of tourism (GJ / million EUR)	10.38	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2019	7	D.6 Energy usage	D5 Energy conservation
	Share of train journeys (2019)	10.66%	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2021	9, 13, 11	D.1 Reducing transport impact	D11 Low-impact transportation
	Percentage of excellent swimming waters (%)	89.56%	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2021	6, 14	D.5 Water management	D7 Water quality
	Dependence on long-distance tourist market (%)	12.08%	All Finland	EU Tourism Data	2019	13, 11	D.1 Reducing transport impact	D11 Low-impact transportation