



All buildings and other structures are included in PAVE



THEMATIC SEMINAR

STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING 3

TUESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER  
2017

HOSSA REGION

FINLAND

## Two Steps Forwards

*In connection with the Steering Committee Meeting 3 in Kuusamo, Hossa region in September 2017, a thematic seminar was organized with special attention on how modern GIS and ICT tools can be used for the benefit of sustainability in recreational planning. Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland (PWF) has focused on increasing GIS skills of the staff through an upskilling programme targeting mostly planning officers and rangers. The LAC (Limits of Acceptable Change) system has been launched and piloted in 2018 in Hossa National Park as part of management planning of the newly established national park. The seminar talks aimed to introduce these tools to ASCENT partners and associates.*

Two presentations were given at the thematic seminar on Tuesday 12th September. Field Work Manager Leena Jartti and Planning Officer Vesa Simonen introduced the implementation planning in PWF, with the emphasis on a newly launched GIS System "PAVE". This system contains all information on buildings, trails and archaeological sites on state owned protected land in the whole of Finland. It's connected to other IT systems within Metsähallitus and can therefore be used for several purposes. Every

construction, path section and other sites on PAVE have an information sheet including details on e.g. materials, condition, previous works etc. depending on what kind of a site is in question. An implementation plan can be drawn using the data available on PAVE; with the option to follow the progress and the state of the plan.

Regional Manager Matti Tapaninen introduced the theory and practice of the LAC system (Limits of Acceptable Change). LAC is a tool to monitor the impact of recreation and nature

tourism in a given area. PWF has decided on six principles of nature tourism. From those principles, numerous measurable indicators can be derived. Indicators can be connected to e.g. visitor experience, use of firewood, state of endangered species etc. The limits of acceptable change are managerial decisions and a tool for the management of an area. The ultimate aim is to secure the economical, ecological and social sustainability of Finland's protected areas.

# Outcome

The LAC ICT tool is merged with an existing IT system in Metsähallitus. Final indicators for Hossa National Park were agreed on and the first results based on i.e. data from the visitor survey in 2017-2018, PAVE and nature conservation databases are available. Monitoring is of course an ongoing process that will produce valuable information in the years to come and no doubt some adjustments to the current LAC tool and indicators will be done as and when required. A lot of the indicators used in LAC are derived from PAVE. LAC in turn supports management planning and thus, these two systems are in the core of increasing our capacity to enhance the sustainable use of our national parks and other protected areas.

The importance of the LAC ICT tool in monitoring the sustainability of

nature tourism and hence the state of our protected areas, mainly national parks for the moment, is immense. LAC gives PWF a tool for a coherent monitoring system throughout Finland. In 2019, it will be launched in 15 more national parks. Metsähallitus has to report on the state of Finnish protected areas to the Ministry of the Environment and bound by the performance agreement for 2019, Metsähallitus is to develop further the monitoring of sustainability using the LAC method. The ministry has acknowledged the importance of the LAC method in the current situation of growing visitor numbers, as well as the impact PAVE has had, and will have, in supporting the sustainable management of Finnish protected areas.



## Key Findings & Learning Points

A PAVE upskilling programme has been executed within PWF in connection with the launch of the system. Hundreds of PWF staff attended the programme. It will take some time for all users to get familiar with the system but PAVE is now in use across the whole of Finland. Implementation plans are being drafted in a more structured and uniform way than before.

It has become clear that thorough training and attention to detail are of utmost importance in launching such an extensive GIS system within an organization. Both PAVE and LAC will require hands-on user experience to get the most out of them. They are key tools in advancing the sustainable use and management of protected areas in Finland.



**The state of all structures is monitored through PAVE**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

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