



How are Finnish forest owners motivated to protect nature?

the 10th of October 2024

Anna-Rosa Asikainen
lawyer (nature conservation and biodiversity policy)

A puzzle with many pieces

Biodiversity
Road Maps

Voluntary forest
protection in the
METSO Programme

Forest
certification

Voluntary protection,
restoration and nature
management in the
Helmi Programme

Nature value
markets

Legislation, e.g. Nature
Conservation Act, Forest
Act and Water Act

Advisory
services

State aids, e.g.
forestry incentive
scheme METKA

National Biodiversity
Strategy and Action Plan

Projects

Legislation as a starting point

- **Constitution of Finland**
 - protection of property
 - full compensation in the case of the expropriation of property, and compensation as a balancing element in other situations
- **Nature Conservation Act**
 - protected areas and Natura 2000 sites
 - protected habitat types
 - protected species
 - voluntary ecological compensation / ecological off-setting
 - duty of the state to pay full compensation if the landowner incurs significant financial loss
 - state aids for nature management and restoration
- **Forest Act**
 - protection of habitats of special importance
 - the state does not pay compensation; however, the protection cannot cause financial loss that is not minimal to the landowner (derogations), and in addition there is a possibility to agree on an environmental aid agreement with compensation
- **Water Act**
 - protection of aquatic habitat types
 - the state does not pay compensation
- **Act on forestry incentive scheme METKA**
 - environmental aid agreements
 - aid for forest nature management
 - aid for prescribed burning

METSO Programme 2014–2025 (–2030)

The goals of METSO by 2025:

- 96 000 hectares of forest established as permanent or temporary protected areas (97% of the target achieved)
- 82 000 hectares of valuable forest habitats in private, commercial forests protected by fixed-term environmental forestry subsidy agreements or managed or restored in nature management projects (79% of the target reached)

**METSO – The Forest
Biodiversity Programme for
Southern Finland**



- Based on a Finnish government resolution
- A package of measures, e.g. voluntary-based protection and nature management, knowledge and awareness, education and training, collaboration, communication
- Financial compensation equivalent to the value of timber (and the value of the land when selling to the state)
- Contracts with landowners
 - permanent protection
 - average 10 hectares and EUR ~7 000 per hectare
 - temporary protection
 - 20 years, protected area
 - 10 years, environmental aid agreement, average 3 hectares and EUR 2 400 per hectare
 - nature management projects
- Ecological site selection criteria

METSO Programme 2014–2025 (–2030)

News item

8.2.2024 9:08

Voluntary forest protection popular among forest owners – record numbers of environmental aid agreements and nature management measures under METSO Programme

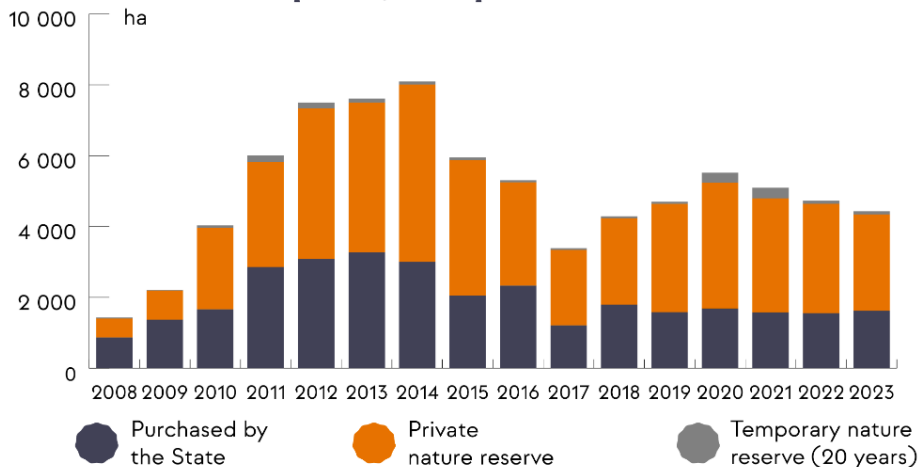
Last year, almost 10,000 hectares of forest habitats were protected under the Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland METSO. The ten-year environmental aid agreements concluded by Finnish forest owners covered more than 5,100 hectares of forest and about 4,300 hectares were protected permanently. Besides these, about 90 hectares were protected for 20 years and nature management work was carried out in an area of about 160 hectares.

The value of the sites protected permanently or for 20 years under the METSO Programme in 2023 totalled about EUR 33.5 million. About EUR 12.7 million were used for compensations under the environmental aid agreements and EUR 1.3 million for nature management projects. Last year more money was used for environmental aid and nature management than ever before under the METSO Programme.



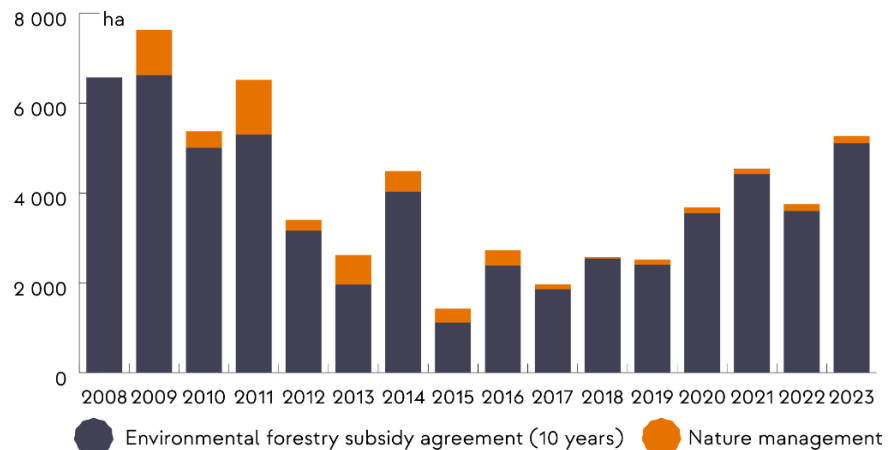
- Securing stable and adequate funding from the state budget has been a challenge, but METSO is supported widely among politicians too.
- METSO has been ecologically influential!
- METSO has greatly improved the image and acceptability of nature protection among private landowners.
- A process of updating the METSO targets is ongoing. It has already been decided that METSO will continue at least until 2030, and some overall targets have also been defined as a part of the Helmi Programme.

Implementation of the METSO Programme in the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment



Figures: Implementation of the METSO Programme in the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and the Finnish Forest Centre 2008–2023. The figures of the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment do not include 13,000 hectares of forest protected by Metsähallitus under the METSO Programme in 2014, but this is also included in the results of the programme.

Implementation of the METSO Programme in the Finnish Forest Centre



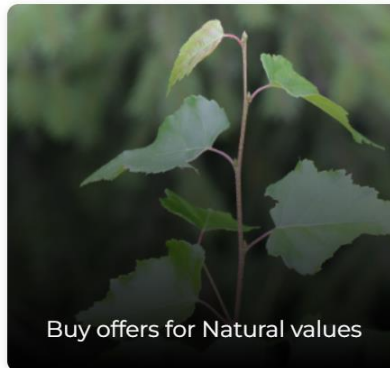
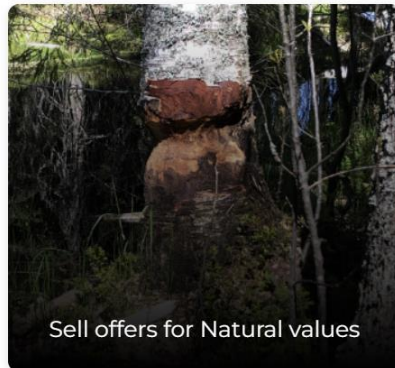
Helmi Habitats Programme 2021–2030

- Based on a Finnish government resolution
- Voluntary-based actions (protection, nature management, restoration) are done in many different ecosystems
- Some examples of the Helmi targets:
 - mires protected on the basis of negotiations and voluntary action by landowners: 60 000 hectares (~23 000 hectares achieved)
 - mires restored in total: 59 300 hectares (around ~11 500 hectares achieved)
 - managed semi-natural grasslands: 52 000 hectares
 - A good starting point for the Finland's National Restoration Plan!



Voluntary ecological compensation in the Nature Conservation Act

- The Finnish Ministry of the Environment: “*Through ecological compensation, adverse impacts on biodiversity caused by human action in a certain area are offset by enhancing biodiversity in another area.*”
- Preventing harm – mitigating harm – compensating harm
- Some basic elements of the Finnish ecological compensation system:
 - two possibilities: creating nature values or permanently protecting an area
 - comparability between harm and improvement: type of nature value, amount, quality, location...
 - timing: before, not after causing harm
 - compensation register
 - process controlled by the authority
- Ecological compensation is one part of the wider concept of nature value markets!



Monimetsä project

- Practical tools for enhancing nature management and supporting advisory services
 - check list regarding nature management actions → discussions with landowners
 - best practices in different nature management actions
 - training for experts working with landowners

Metsäkeskus

Lomake 1 (3)
LH 5, 3/2021
Tallenna Tulosta

Luonnonhoitotoimenpiteiden tarkistuslista

Metsänomistaja	
Kiinteistötunnus numeroina, kunta-kylä-talo-tila	
Toimija	

Metsänomistaja antaa hoito- ja hakkuutöiden toteuttajalle luvan ottaa luontoarvot erityisesti huomioon. Sovitut toimenpiteet välitetään töiden toteuttajan tietoon.

Taimikon varhaishoito ja taimikonharvennus

Sovitut täydentävät luonnonhoitotoimet	Kuviot	Tarkentava tieto
Säästetään riistatiheikköjä		
Säilytetään sekapuustoisuus		
Ylläpidetään puulajimäärä		

Taking the next step with our own Biodiversity Road Map




MTK

**MTK's
Biodiversity
Programme**

Safeguarding
and enhancing
biodiversity

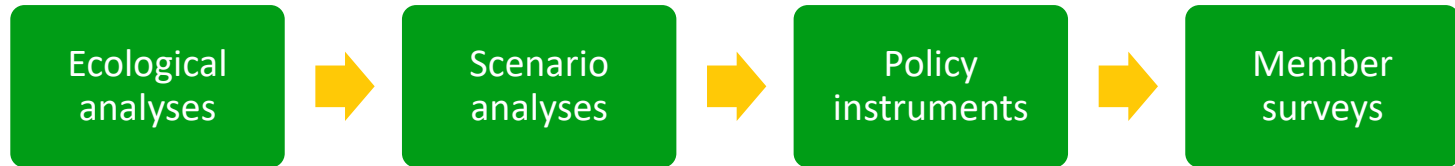
**WE SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE
BIODIVERSITY**

- › with best practices in agriculture and forest management
- › with well-targeted nature management and restoration
- › with landowner-based voluntary nature conservation

The Biodiversity Road Map shows the direction for development of agriculture and forestry in a constantly changing operating environment.

Sustainability and the green transition are changing our society in profound ways, and in this transformation agriculture and forestry are sectors that are necessary, and their importance as a provider of solutions is even greater than before.

Science and research as a foundation



Pellervo economic research PTT



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI





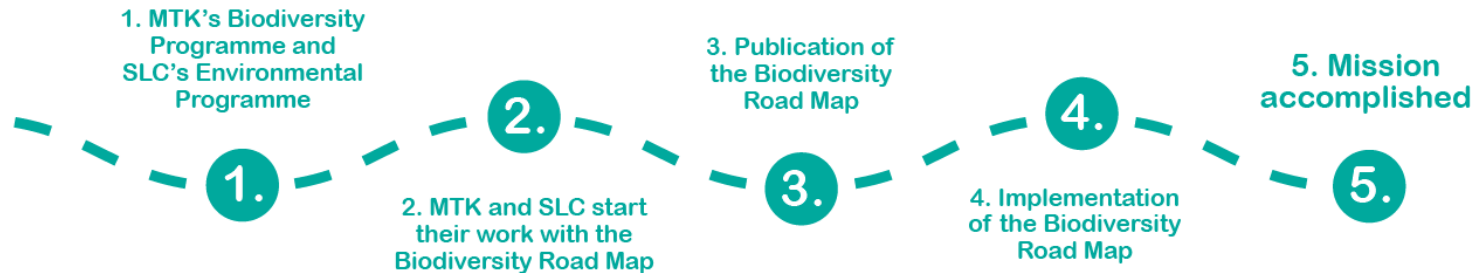
For MTK and SLC as well as for agriculture and forestry, biodiversity is a matter of **responsibility, preparedness and prosperity.**

Determined action to strengthen biodiversity is needed to improve **the acceptance of agriculture and forestry**, to secure **the environmental prerequisites of production** and to **access the market.**

Mission

MTK and SLC together with their members work to **protect and promote biodiversity** in a way that halts the loss of biodiversity linked to agriculture and forestry, and puts it on a path to recovery.

Together with other actors, the organisations will build a **stable, predictable and enabling environment**, where promoting biodiversity is an inseparable part of **sustainable, responsible and profitable rural livelihoods**.



voluntary actions

**overall
sustainability**

**respecting
ownership rights**

**improving
economic viability**

The themes of the Biodiversity Road Map

1. Biodiversity in a stronger role in the activities of the organisations
2. An enabling operating environment and cooperation as a basis
3. Safeguarding valuable habitats in commercial forests
4. Strengthening structural features valuable for biodiversity in commercial forests
5. More diverse arable areas
6. Special attention to field margins and borders
7. Adequate and high-quality management of traditional rural biotopes and natural pastures
8. A leap forward in voluntary establishment of protected areas and restoration

acceptability

**targeting and
prioritisation of
measures**

**awareness and involvement
of farmers
and forest owners**

Examples of the goals:

- Policy instruments used to protect and promote biodiversity are enabling, encouraging and fair.
- The market economy is the most significant source of funding when maintaining and improving biodiversity. Acts benefitting nature, ecological compensation and ecosystem services have a well-functioning market system for selling and buying nature values.
- Choosing the protection and restoration option is at least as profitable for landowners as other forms of economic use of the site.

Examples of the measures of the organisations (partly together with others):

- developing the Luontoarvot.fi service
- organizing adequate and long-term state funding for the implementation of the METSO and Helmi Programmes, the implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation, and nature management included in the forestry incentive scheme
- expanding the role of forest management associations in preparing sites compatible with the METSO and Helmi Programmes for protection and restoration
- developing and implementing policy instruments to improve the economic attractiveness of voluntary protection and restoration both for landowners and actors providing services to them.



BIO DIVERSITY SITY

ROAD MAP



www.mtk.fi/luonnon-monimuotoisuus



slc.fi/bdfardplan

