



Lahti

Lahti: Leading the Way in Planetary Health

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Business and environmental development unit

2.6.2026

Integrating nature and health in urban planning

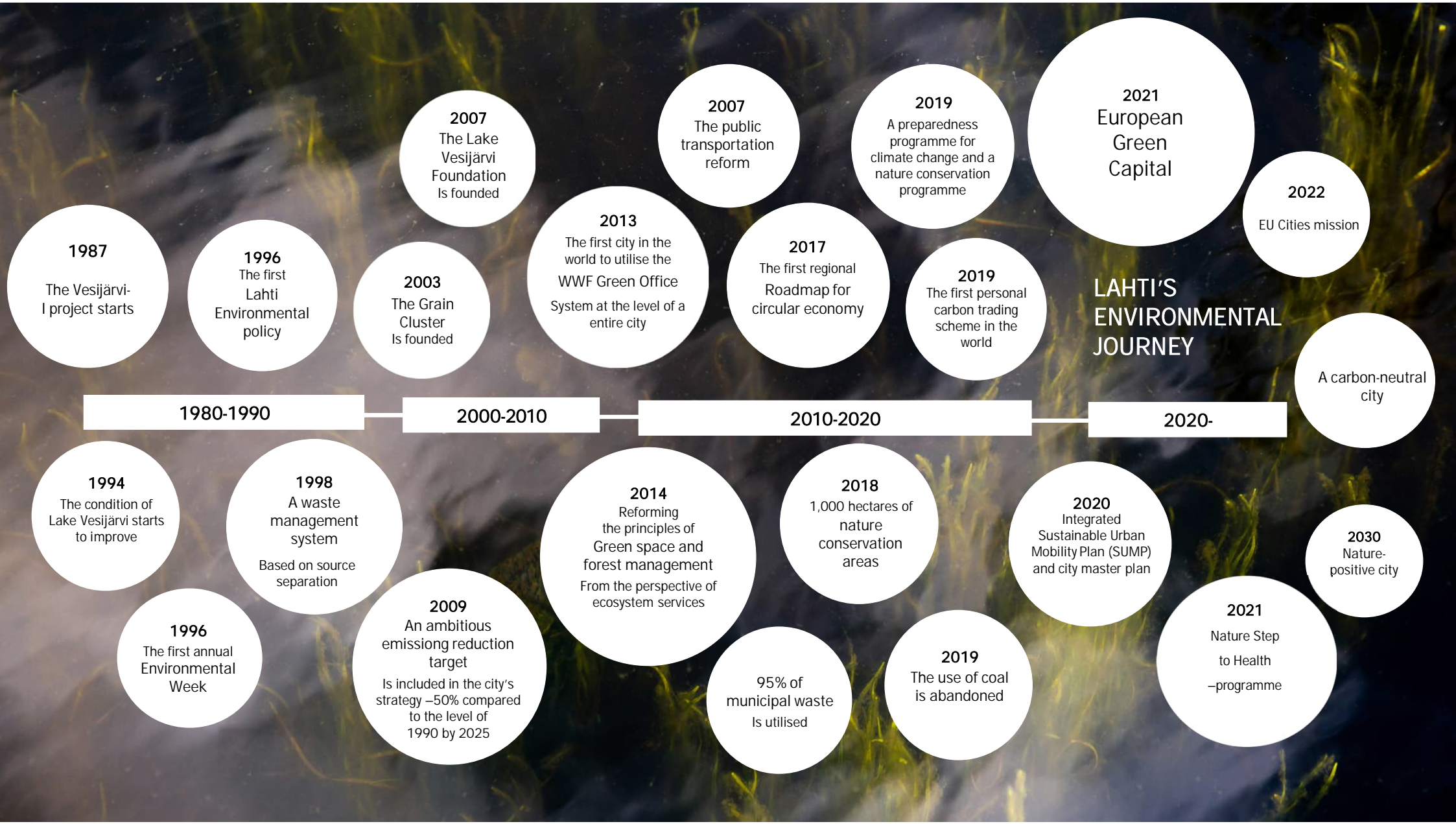
Agenda

- Background of Lahti´s environmental work
- Urban policy tools for preserving natural environments
- The Nature Step to Health programme
- Examples of actions integrating nature and health

City of Lahti

- Finland's 9th largest city
- 122,000 residents in Lahti
- Central logistical location
- One hour to Helsinki





LAHTI'S ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNEY



1987
The Vesijärvi-
I project starts

1996
The first
Lahti
Environmental
policy

2003
The Grain
Cluster
Is founded

2007
The Lake
Vesijärvi
Foundation
Is founded

2013
The first city in the
world to utilise the
WWF Green Office
System at the level of a
entire city

2007
The public
transportation
reform

2017
The first regional
Roadmap for
circular economy

2019
A preparedness
programme for
climate change and a
nature conservation
programme

2019
The first personal
carbon trading
scheme in the
world

2021
European
Green
Capital

2022
EU Cities mission

A carbon-neutral
city

1994
The condition of
Lake Vesijärvi starts
to improve

1998
A waste
management
system
Based on source
separation

1996
The first annual
Environmental
Week

2009
An ambitious
emission reduction
target
Is included in the city's
strategy –50% compared
to the level of
1990 by 2025

2014
Reforming
the principles of
Green space and
forest management
From the perspective of
ecosystem services

2018
1,000 hectares of
nature
conservation
areas

95% of
municipal waste
Is utilised

2020
Integrated
Sustainable Urban
Mobility Plan (SUMP)
and city master plan

2019
The use of coal
is abandoned

2021
Nature Step
to Health
–programme

2030
Nature-
positive city

*It all started
with cleaning
up Lake
Vesijärvi*



The European Green Capital 2021



*The city's
strategy sets
the direction*

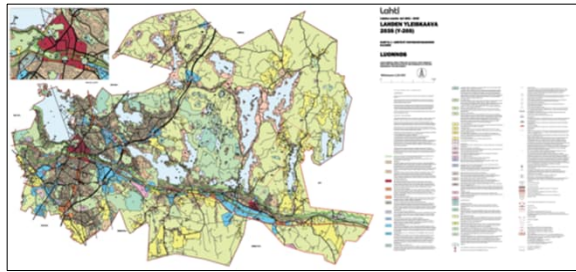




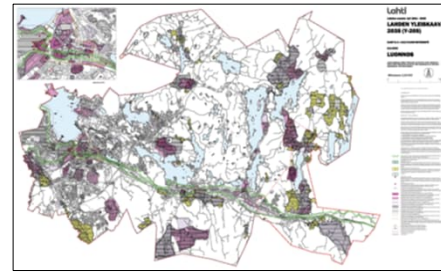
Strategy 2030 Lahti – Enduring change

Lahti´s Master Plan: The set of six legal-influenced plan maps

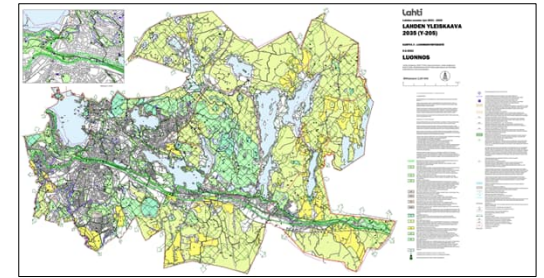
① Sustainable urban structure



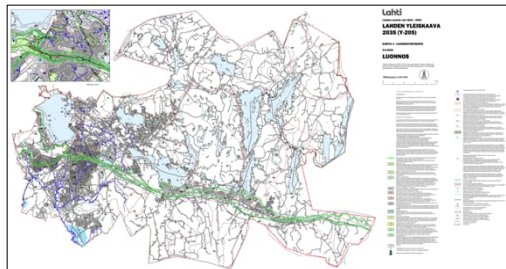
② Cultural Environment



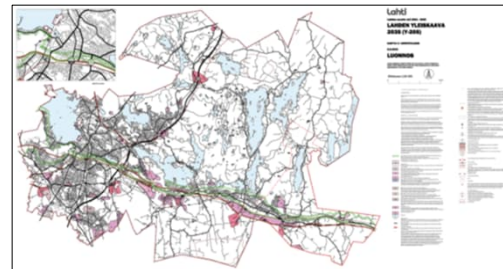
③ Green Structure



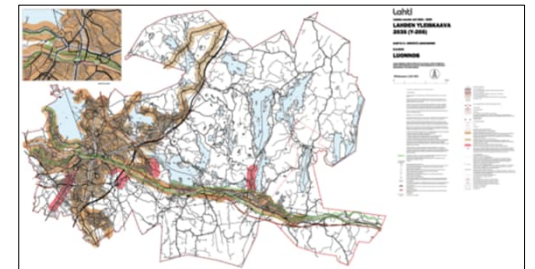
④ Blue Structure



⑤ Circular Economy



⑥ Sustainable Urban Mobility



Local forests used by daycare centres and schools



Nature positive Lahti 2030

- The goal is aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (COP15)





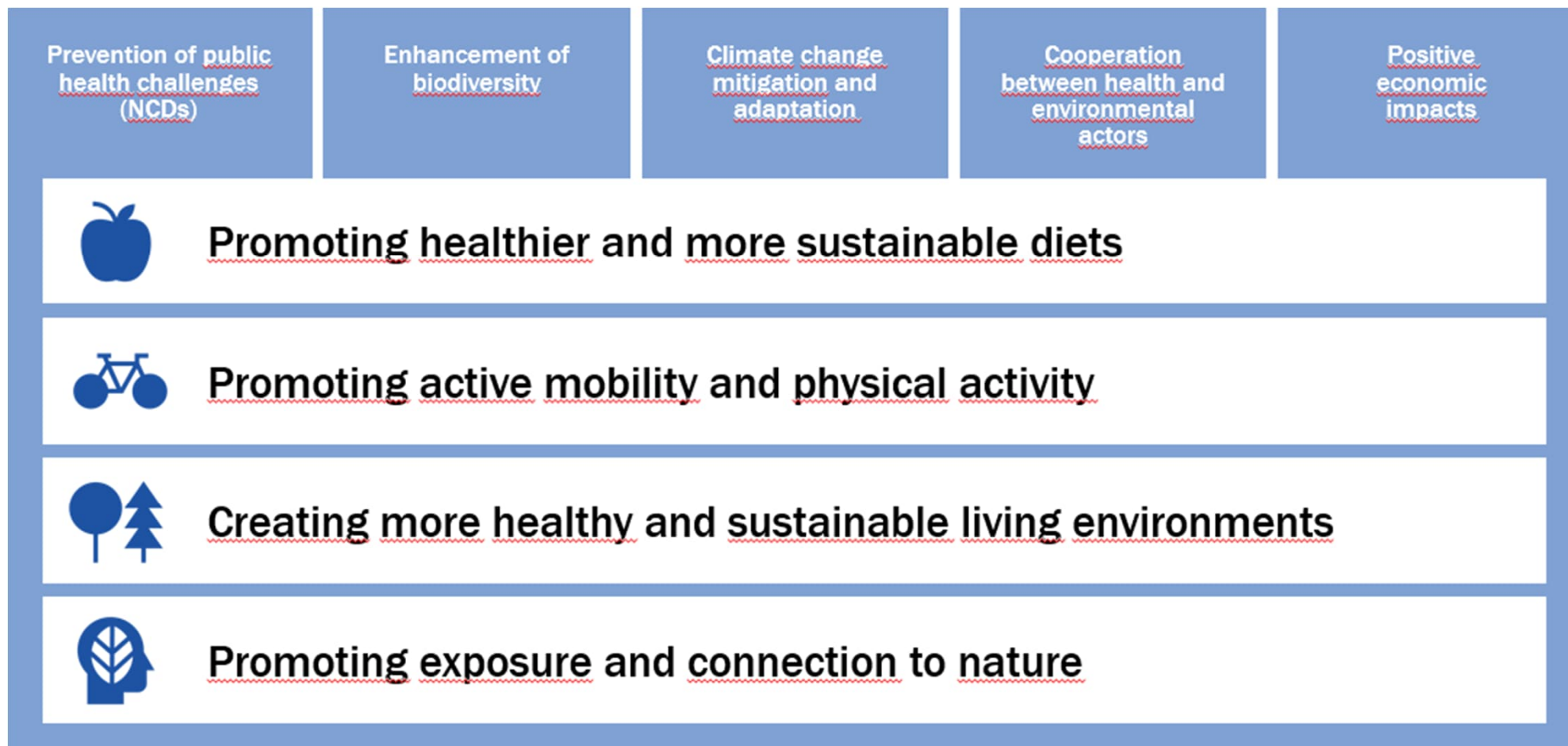
*Creating the nature-
positive future*

Nature step to health

- An ten-year program until 2032 integrates health and environmental goals
- Coordination is done at the local level, cooperation regionally and nationally
- Finland's first Planetary health physician



Nature Step to Health – Integrates health and environmental goals



Lahti



Lahti Health Forest

A nature based solution for planetary health

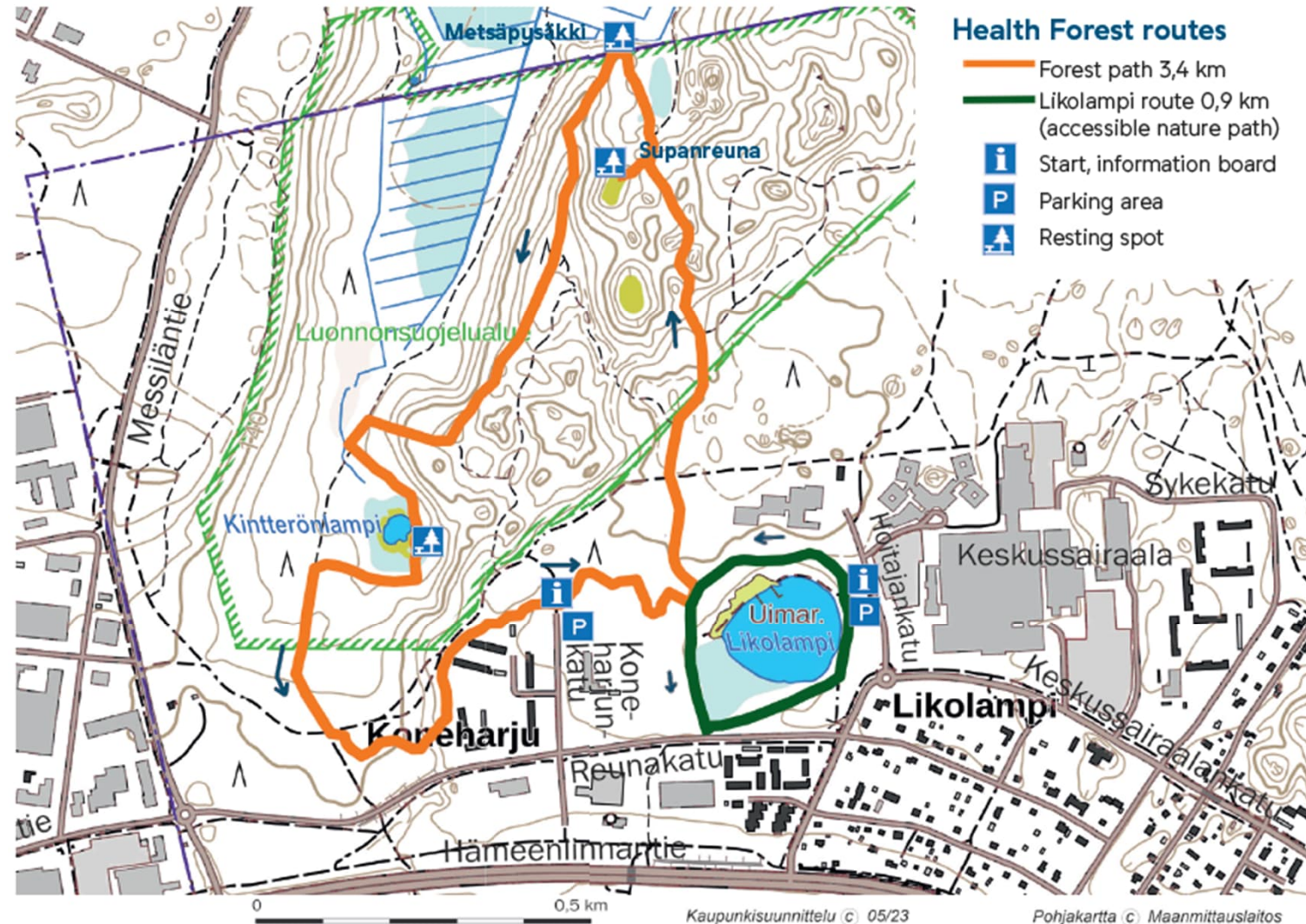
Health forest is both a place and a concept

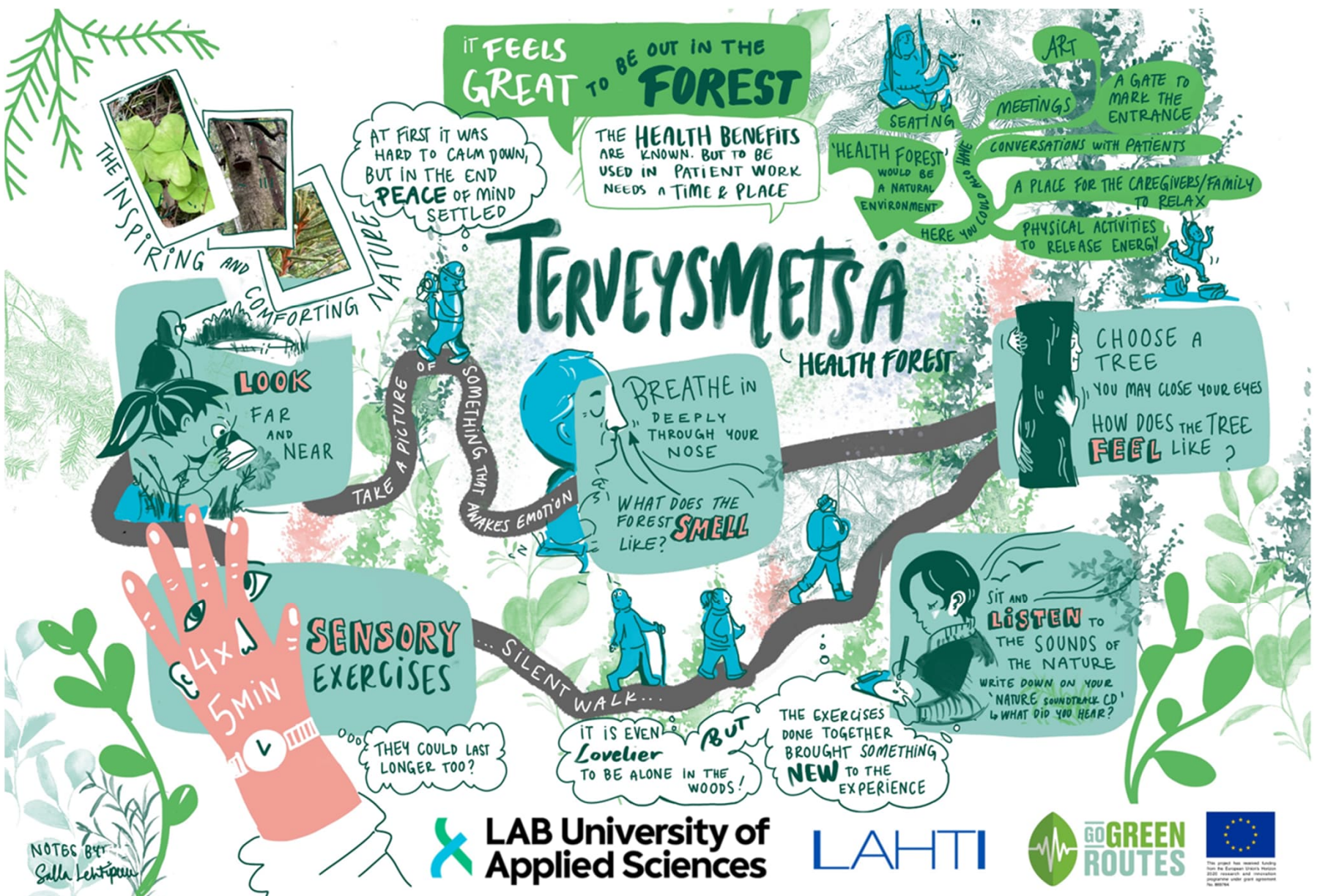
a way to make the wellbeing benefits of nature visible and to provide methods for using them



Lahti Health forest was opened in 2023

- Health Forest is located right next to the Päijät-Häme Central Hospital
- Health forest supports the well-being and recovery of the hospital staff, patients and visitors, and is open to all Lahti citizens.





Increasing knowledge

- Training of health forest guides
- Health forest excursions for employees of the wellbeing services county
- Environmental education programme for schools: all 8th grade children will visit health forest
- Events in the health forest
- Regular communication on the topics and collaboration between the city and the wellbeing services county



Mini health forest greening the city centre



Lahti

*Nature
prescription*



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Lahti



Planetary health training for city staff

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Environmental education programme as part of the “Lahti as a learning environment” concept



Illustrations: Anna Polkurie

Promotes children's connection with nature

Teaches skills for a sustainable lifestyle

Strengthens local knowledge and identity

URBACT
Lahti



Co-funded by
the European Union
Interreg

One Health 4 Cities

Promoting planetary health



Lahti

Thank you!

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