

North Karelia UNESCO Biosphere

- collaboration and learning
site of sustainable
development



- The landscape consists of forested moraine hills, glacio-fluvial formations, mires, peat lands, rivers and lakes. The mire ecosystems of the biosphere are of global conservation significance.
- **Human intervention is obvious:** fields, managed forest, mining, ditched swamps, and infrastructure. Long history of slash-and-burn agriculture. The forests have undergone rapid changes as largescale logging has reduced the amount of old growth forest.
- Historically, there has been **a lot of cultural ex-change** over the Russian border and Karelian culture is still visible.
- **The strengths** of the area are the nature, the Karelian culture, diverse educational and research organisation structure and an attitude for actions and collaboration.
- **The challenges** of the area include demographic change, long distances within and situated far from everything, loss of biodiversity and pressure to increase the use of natural resources

**North Karelia
UNESCO
Biosphere** was
founded 1992

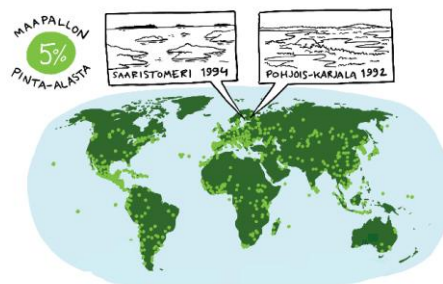
Geographical area
consists of two
municipalities – Lieksa
and Ilomantsi, as well as
a part of a third
municipality - Tuupovaara
of Joensuu

Area 8000 km²

Sparcely populated, **about 16 000 inhabitants**,
most of who live in the centres of the area

Border area – whole eastern border is shared
with Russia – part of the Fennoscandian
Greenbelt

Three National Parks within the area (Koli,
Patvisuo and Petkeljärvi NPs) are some of the
most valuable nature sites in the area.



There are two Unesco biospheres in Finland.





Focus areas of actions

- Promoting **sustainable** nature, food and culture **tourism** and products from nature
- Capacity building of the actors in sustainability and **Sustainable Development Partnership network**
- Promoting environmental actions of **village communities**
- **Fostering dialogue**
- Increasing visibility and **local pride** of the area
- Collaboration on restoration actions
- Developing **Youth, Ambassador** and “**restoration site**” programme

Concrete actions are based on local collaboration and project work. Currently the biosphere is stakeholder in e.g. the following projects coordinated by collaborators:

Communities and environmental actions:

- Sustainable villages of North Karelia
- Ambassador programme for the North Karelia biosphere

Restoration and forests:

- Koitajoki: Land of Epic Poetry
- Forests in systemic transition (ForTran)
- Bog 2.0. Vitality to Ilomantsi with comprehensive sustainability

Tourism:

- Regenerate tourism
- The Potential of Regenerative Tourism in North Karelia – From Knowledge to Practice (USMA)

Art:

- Eyes as Big as Plates - collaboration

Read more on our website!



www.kareliabiosphere.fi

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