



**Model of cooperation between the city of Lahti
in southern Finland and the surrounding
countryside**

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Lake Vesijärvi



- 44th largest lake in Finland
- Surface area of 109 km²
- Average depth of 6.0 metres
- Maximum depth of 42 metres
- Oldest large lake in Finland
- Born soon after the latest glacial period 10 600 years ago

Planning system in WFD

RBMP:s

PoM:s

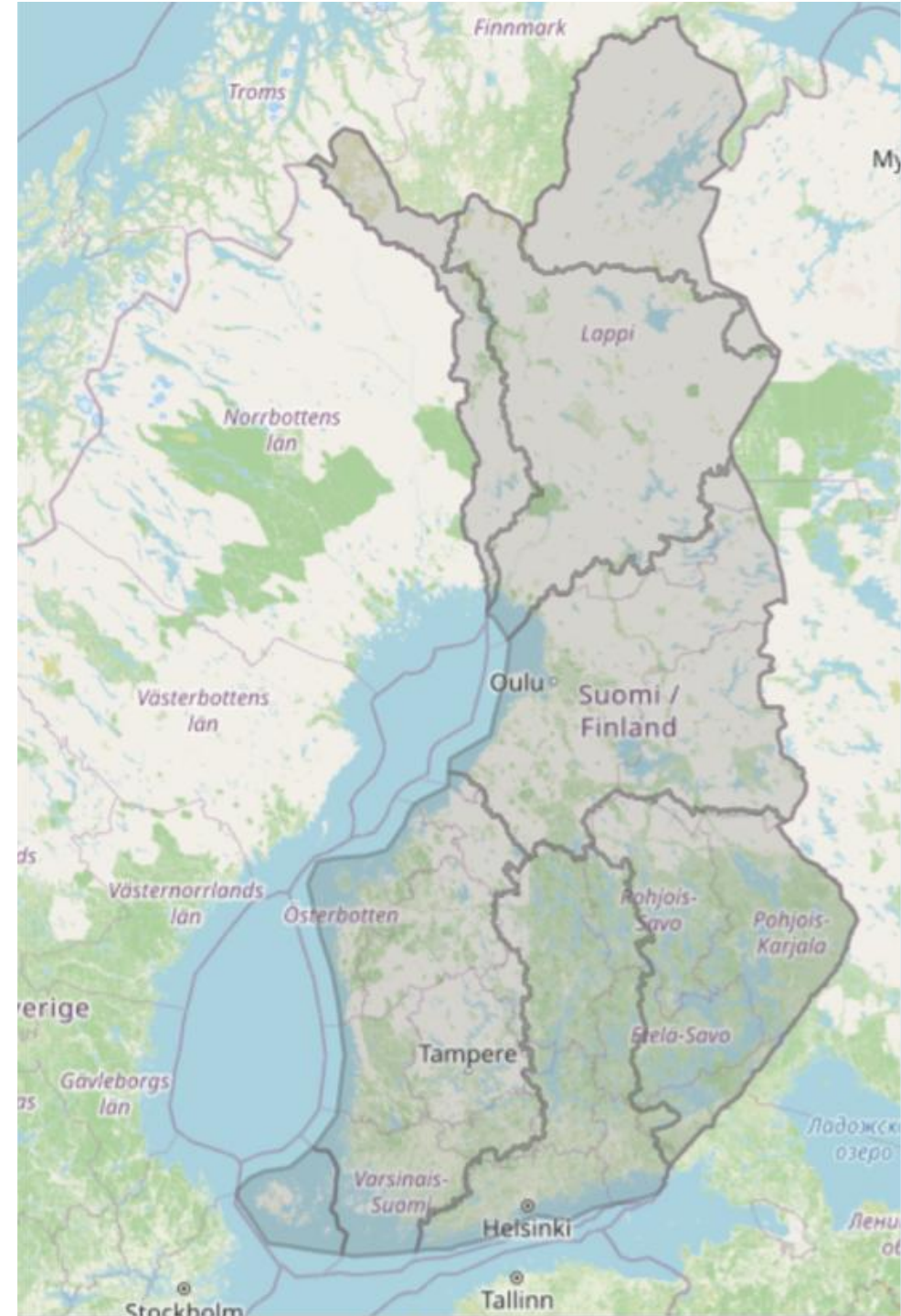
water management resources are limited -> all stakeholders need to be involved

fifth largest country in EU

too large areas for engagement

in lake and river restoration, motivation for commitment arises in practice in the area that belongs to daily living/ operating environment

If it is felt necessary that the planning system is interactive, WFD is not sufficient, not even close.



Unique Finnish example: Lake Vesijärvi Foundation



ETELÄ-SUOMEN SANOMAT



Founded by the city, municipalities and private enterprises.

The foundation coordinates the planning of the entire catchment area.

Our mission is to enable the preservation and strengthening of the scientific, economic, and social environment of water management that is needed to bring the waters of the region into good condition.



A lake which turned from a clear water paradise to an eutrophicated waste water pool



Photos:
Matti Mäkinen
1960`s





First steps towards governance

1971, Finland's first **municipal environmental protection committee established in Lahti.**

It drew up the city's environmental protection programme, – together with several interest groups - the core of which was the protection of Lake Vesijärvi Intensive management started in 1989 as a joint effort by municipalities, academia and local fishermen.

As a result more than one million kilograms of fish (about 500 kg/ha) were removed between 1989 and 1993.

Nothing like this had been done in Finland, nor in a lake of the same size anywhere in the world.

Social capital: mutual trust and ability to work together grew up.

Municipal
environmental
protection
committee
1971

Intensive
management
fishing
1989-1993

Main Elements of Governance

Communication

Board of the Foundation

Council of the Foundation

Media

Meetings with partners and stakeholders (115/ 2025)

Planning and implementation

Funding

Monitoring



Lake Vesijärvi programme

Local interpretation of RBMP and PoM, the overall goal comes from European water legislation, but here we set sub-goals, interpret what the concrete measures are and define who is responsible for them.

Combination of legal obligations and a grassroots need to take care of local waters.

Prepared by LVF together with municipalities and with more than 60 organizations involved in implementation.

The plan combines urban stormwater management with nutrient load management in agricultural areas, management of old sins caused by the city and industry (internal load) and management of external diffuse load.



Lake Vesijärvi Today











A wide, calm lake under a clear blue sky. In the distance, a line of trees is partially obscured by a light mist. On the right side, a small island or peninsula is covered with dense green trees, which are clearly reflected in the still water. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Thank you!