

Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Information Module

Methodology Description

Management Effectiveness Study - Finland

This information is extracted from Heinonen (2006) and Gilligan et al (2005)

1.1 Organisation

Metsähallitus

1.2 Primary methodology reference

Gilligan, B., Dudley, N., Fernandez de Tejada, A. and Toivonen, H. (2005) Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Finland's Protected Areas. Nature Protection Publications of Metsähallitus. Series A 147. (www.metsa.fi/mee)

1.3 Brief description of methodology

In 2004 a management effectiveness evaluation of the Finnish protected area system was commissioned by the Finnish Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services (NHS) and organized in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and stakeholders in 2004. The evaluation report was published in 2005. The evaluation was one of the most comprehensive and transparent evaluations of a protected area system undertaken so far, with external experts from several countries involved.

The evaluation results indicate substantial progress that has taken place since the first evaluation was carried out on Finnish protected areas by Harold Eidsvik of Canada and Hans Bibelriether of Germany in 1994. The report provides insight into the management of Finland's most valuable natural sites and how effectively the financial and other means granted to the NHS are used. It also shows how successful the result-oriented guidance and creation of operating conditions for protected areas have been.

1.4 Purposes

- ✓ to improve management (adaptive management) primarily at system level
- ✓ for accountability/ audit
- ✓ for prioritisation and resource allocation
- ✓ to raise awareness and support

1.5 Objectives and application

It was designed to assess a national network of protected areas.

The assessment included 70 of the nearly 500 statutory protected areas, including the national parks, strict nature reserves, wilderness reserves and national hiking areas.

Drawing on these, the team developed a series of specific questions based on the IUCN-WCPA Framework.

1.6 Origins

The management effectiveness evaluation of the Finnish protected areas was conducted using the IUCN-WCPA Framework adapted to the conditions of Finland – for example, considering the large amounts of information and staff expertise available. In accordance to the Framework, the elements of the management cycle considered were context, planning, resources, process, outputs and outcomes.

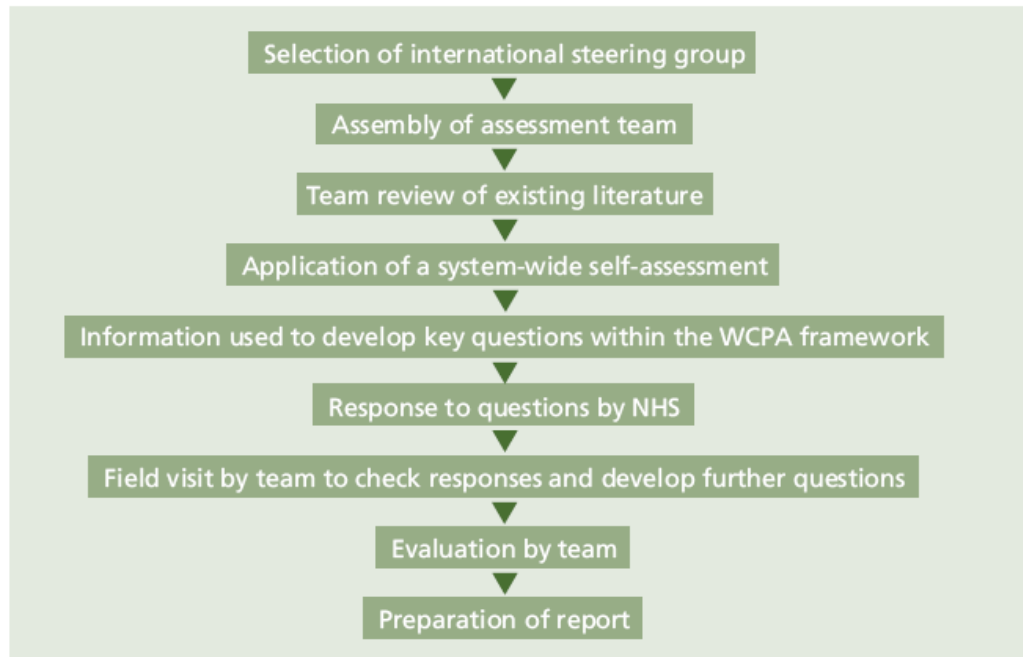
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An international steering group was identified to help to develop and comment on the assessment. The aim was to represent key institutions with an interest in Finland's

1.7 How the methodology is implemented

The management effectiveness evaluation assessment process is shown in Figure 12. The evaluation team first reviewed a large amount of literature. Park managers in Finland also completed a self-assessment questionnaire, modified from the RAPPAM methodology.



Management Effectiveness Assessment process in Finland

The questions were answered by the NHS staff and they formed the core of the assessment and the subsequent report. The management effectiveness evaluation was finalised by a field assessment, which included visits to representative protected area sites as well as meetings with NHS staff and representatives of directing and financing ministries, local stakeholder groups and NGOs.

1.8 Elements and indicators

Drawing on the literature review and the RAPPAM analysis, a series of specific questions were developed.

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Context

- 1.1 Is there a clearly articulated national vision for the on-going development and management of the Finnish PA system?
- 1.2 Does the legislative and administrative framework support the effective functioning of the PA system?
- 1.3 Are personnel and resources well organised and managed with access to adequate resources?
- 1.4 Is there a cohesive and nationally coordinated approach to PA management?
- 1.5 Is transboundary and regional cooperation established and maintained in a manner which supports effective management of Finnish protected areas?
- 1.6 Are the values of the PA system well documented and assessed?
- 1.7 Are the threats to PA system values well documented and assessed?
- 1.8 Do Finnish PA management objectives harmonise with Natura 2000 objectives?
- 1.9 Do Finnish PA management objectives harmonise with wider cultural objectives including those relating to the Sámi?

Planning

- 2.1 Are protected areas identified and categorised in an organised system?
- 2.2 Are individual protected areas designed and established through systematic and scientifically based criteria and process with a clearly articulated vision?
- 2.3 Are established reserves covered by comprehensive management plans?
- 2.4 Are management plans routinely and systematically updated?
- 2.5 Are protected areas located in places with the highest/most threatened biodiversity values?
- 2.6 Are stakeholders given an opportunity to participate in planning?

Resources

- 3.1 What level of overall resource is provided for PA management?
- 3.2 How have resource levels varied with increases in protected areas in recent years?
- 3.3 On what basis are resources allocated to PA for management?
- 3.4 At the park level, are resources linked to priority actions identified in management plans?
- 3.5 What level of resources is provided by partners and/or volunteers?
- 3.6 Do PA managers consider resources to be sufficient?

Process

- 4.1 Is management performance against relevant planning objectives and management standards routinely assessed and systematically audited as part of an on-going 'continuous improvement' process?
- 4.2 Is NHS staff performance management linked to achievement of management objectives?
- 4.3 Is the NHS internal audit function systematic and credible?
- 4.4 Is there external and independent involvement in internal audit?
- 4.5 Is there effective public participation in PA management in Finland?
- 4.6 Is there a responsive system for handling complaints and comments about PA management?

Output

- 5.1 Is adequate information on PA management publicly available?
- 5.2 Are visitor services appropriate for the relevant protected area category?
- 5.3 Are management related trends systematically evaluated and routinely reported?
- 5.4 Do audit reports reveal effective management?
- 5.5 Is there a systematic maintenance schedule in place for built infrastructure/assets?
- 5.6 Does Finland fulfill its monitoring and reporting obligations under European Directives and international conventions?

Outcomes

- 6.1 Are threats to reserve heritage values held in check or reduced?
- 6.2 Are threatened species populations stable or increasing?
- 6.3 Are parks and reserves losing native species?
- 6.4 Are selected indicator species within acceptable ranges?
- 6.5 Are biological communities at a mix of ages and location that will support native biodiversity?
- 6.6 Are ecological processes (in the PA) functioning in a healthy and sustainable manner?
- 6.7 Are the expectations of visitors generally met or exceeded?
- 6.8 Are neighbors and adjacent communities supportive of PA management?
- 6.9 Are cultural heritage assets protected?

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1.9 Scoring and analysis

After some consideration, it was decided not to use numerical scoring for the assessment (though the earlier RAPPAM assessment was scored in the usual way). Instead, an overall evaluation of fair, good or very good was given to each question, and qualitative discussion and examples were given to each.