



**Helsinki
Partners**

Toolkit for communicating Sustainable Helsinki

Helsinki

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Our goal is that our stakeholders are committed to Helsinki's sustainability work and are taking concrete actions towards more sustainable solutions and choices.

We want to support local businesses in growing their competitive advantage through sustainability, and better communicate their sustainability work.



How to use: Sustainability Toolkit

1. **A useful tool for your everyday sales work** or communication with your customers and stakeholders.
2. **A quick way to find:**
 - what is Helsinki's sustainability work about – actions & goals
 - facts and figures
 - rankings.
3. **Get examples on:**
 - how to use the information in your own social media channels
 - quick links to useful material.

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(c) Jules Hatfield & Christine Williams /
Helsinki Partners



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Sustainable Helsinki:



In a nutshell

City Strategy 2021–2025

Sustainable growth is in balance with the prevailing ecological limitations, creating benefits that are socially, financially and culturally sustainable. We are proud to continue to evaluate and guide the development of Helsinki in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

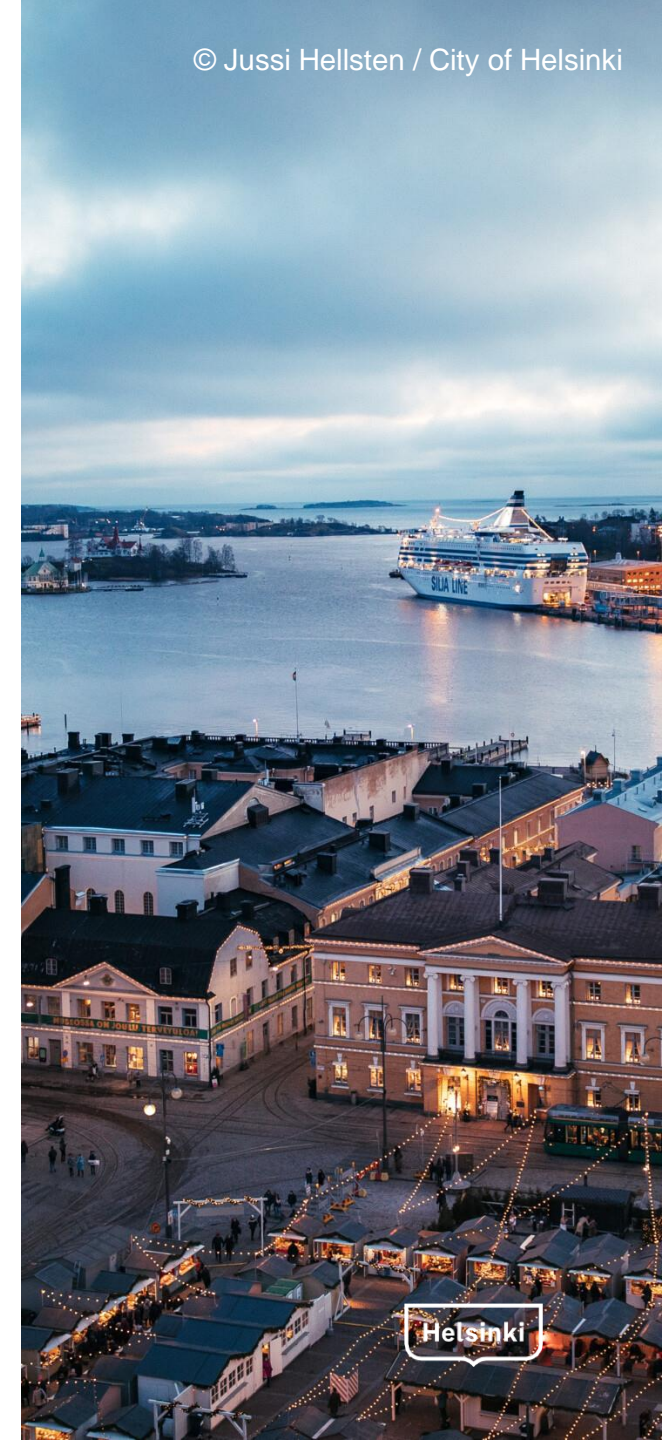
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We will all have to adapt to the consequences of our planet's climate crisis. The health, property and way of life of Helsinki's inhabitants must be protected. The goal is to prepare Helsinki well for extreme weather phenomena and their indirect effects.

Helsinki actively protects and nurtures its diverse natural environment. We will expand our networks of forests and fields and ensure that every city resident lives in close proximity to nature.

An appealing city also attracts travellers. We will develop Helsinki into the smartest and most sustainable travel destination.

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Climate change is one of the central drivers of change affecting quality of life globally. Ecological thinking is strongly present in everyday life in Helsinki, and the city places great emphasis on encouraging environmentally-friendly lifestyles.

The air quality is superb, clean water is abundant, and there are quiet spots everywhere, even in the city centre. The city is designed to be walked or biked in – so no need to sit in traffic jams breathing in fumes.



Helsinki is also one of the few capital cities in the world where real nature is so close to its inhabitants. With 40 % of the city consisting of green areas, along with 130 km of seashore open to all, this means you always have the option of taking some time out and reconnecting with nature.

An atmosphere that motivates less consumption, construction efforts that consider sustainable development, and ambitious climate aims make Helsinki a model city of sustainable development and a European pioneer in sustainable urban development.

Achievements, rankings & PR



Helsinki facts & figures: climate and environment

40 % of the city consists of green areas.	34 quiet areas in the midst of the city.	All rail traffic runs on sustainably produced electricity.	The highest quality of water among European capitals (Treated.com)	Helsinki – part of the A List of the world's leading climate cities (CDP, Carbon Disclosure Project, 2020)
130 km seashore for everybody to use.	Every local lives 10 km from sea shore.	99 % of public transport departures take place on time.	5th best air quality in global comparison of capitals (IQAir 2019)	Helsinki ranks 16th in sustainability among destinations. (GDS Index, 2021)
Intact forest 3km from the city centre.	Easy access to islands by public transport.	The average Helsinki local commutes for just 26 minutes a day.	The 4 th best public transport in Europe (BEST 2021)	Helsinki 3 rd in Europe in achievement of sustainable development goals (2019 SDG Index European Cities)
Over 100 parks open to all 24/7.	1200 km of maintained cycle lanes.	70% of the hotel rooms in Helsinki are certified as environmentally friendly.	Helsinki #1 in the Expat Insider, Environment & Sustainability report. (InterNations, 2020)	Finland #1 in the total progress towards achieving all 17 SDGs (SDG Index 2021)
Over 60 nature reserves in the city area.	One of the most popular city bike systems in the world.	100 % of major congress venues environmentally certified.	Finland #2 in the Sustainable Travel Index. (Euromonitor, 2021)	Finland 7 th in the world when measured by environmental health. (Environmental Performance Index 2020)

Sources: Helsinki Facts & Figures 2021, HSL

How to use: Facts & figures for social media

1. Pick a fact/ranking and embed it with your own message or use it as such to tell your stakeholders about sustainable Helsinki.
2. Choose a photo of your liking from the Helsinki Material Bank. You can also use the pre-selected photo collections on different themes, such as sustainability.
3. Add a link to sustainability related content from MyHelsinki.fi or to one of your own choosing.



Example: Helsinki related content



My Helsinki

39m · 🌐



"Sustainability isn't just a buzz word in Helsinki." In 2020, Helsinki was chosen on National Geographic's Best of the World shortlist of Sustainable Destinations.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/.../best-of-the...>



My Helsinki

2m · 🌐



Did you know 40% of Helsinki consists of green areas? Although Helsinki is a lively city, you always have the option of taking some time out and reconnecting with nature.

<https://www.myhelsinki.fi/en/see-and-do/nature-in-helsinki>



Example: Helsinki related content + your own sustainability message



My Helsinki

5m · 🌐



Helsinki is home to one of the most popular city bike systems in the world. Cycling is a fast, easy and sustainable way of getting around the city. To see the sights, why don't you lend a bike from our lobby, and be sure to ask our personnel for local tips on your route!

<https://www.myhelsinki.fi/.../getting-around-helsinki-in...>



My Helsinki

1m · 🌐



In Helsinki 75 % of hotels are environmentally certified. At XX we have paid attention to sustainability efforts in different areas of our operations for a long time now. Read more about it here or ask us, we'd be happy to tell you more!

[https://www.myhelsinki.fi/search?](https://www.myhelsinki.fi/search?tags=Think%20Sustainably&category=accommodation)

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How to use: Helsinki Material Bank

- 1. Browse, pick and use.** The [Helsinki Material Bank](#) offers high quality images, raw video material, press releases, statistics and brochures about Helsinki. No log-in is required, so you can download and share content immediately and with ease.
- 2. Collect and save for later.** You can collect also your favorite sustainability themed photos and save them in the [My Selection basket](#). Every selection gets a unique url. In order to access your selection later, save this url. Instead of downloading media one-by-one, do a quick and easy mass download here.
- 3. Choose from a pre-selected image collection.** We have collected sets of images for you according to different themes. If you're in a hurry or can't find a suitable image, try our photo selections for [Sustainability](#), [Nature, space and silence](#) and [Smart city](#).

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Helsinki has the highest quality of water among European capitals.

[Treated.com](https://www.treated.com)

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© Julia Kivelä / Visit Finland

Helsinki

5th best air quality in global comparison of capitals.

[IQAir \(2019\)](#)

Helsinki has the 4th best public transport in Europe.

[BEST 2021](#)

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Helsinki 3rd in Europe in achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals.

[2019 SDG Index European Cities](#)

Finland is the
happiest country
in the world (5th
year in a row).

[World Happiness Report 2022](#)

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Finland #1 in SDG 2021

[SDG Index 2021](#)

“Helsinki makes sustainability a guiding principle in development.”

[New York Times 2020](#)

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“Helsinki is among the 20 Best Green Capitals in Europe”

[Forbes 2021](#)



“Sustainability
is not just a
buzz word in
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[National Geographic 2020](#)



Actions:



UN's Sustainable Development Goals

City Strategy 2021–2025

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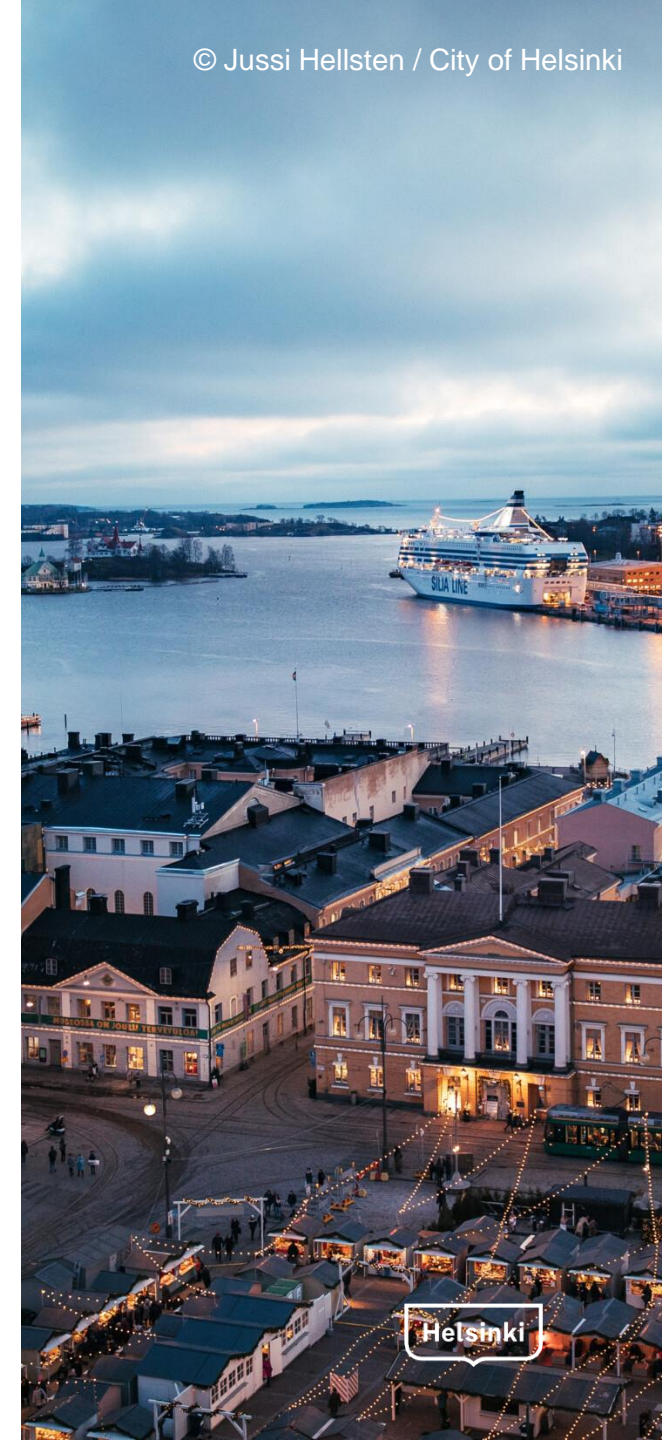
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SDGs – global leader, European pioneer

Helsinki was the 1st in Europe and the 2nd city in the world to commit to the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) model created by the City of New York. So far, more than 100 cities from all over the world have joined these efforts. Helsinki completed its second report in 2021.

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SDGs – global leader, European pioneer

Sustainable urban development is not an empty promise in Helsinki. Sustainable solutions are not only environmentally friendly and energy-efficient in Helsinki, but they are also made of citizen wellbeing, equality and functional everyday life.

SDGs – global leader, European pioneer

On a global scale, Helsinki is at a relatively good level when it comes to sustainable development, and the implementation of the SDGs is well underway. The cross-cutting themes for Helsinki's report are **fairness** and **openness, digitalisation, recovery from the COVID-19 crisis** as well as **cooperation** and **partnerships**.

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SDGs – global leader, European pioneer

- [Sustainable.Helsinki](https://sustainable.helsinki.fi) – compiles all sustainability actions taken by the City of Helsinki
- [Kestavakehitys.fi](https://kestavakehitys.fi) – information on Agenda 2030 (national level)
- [Information on SDGs](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/) (UN website)



Actions:



Carbon Neutral Helsinki 2030

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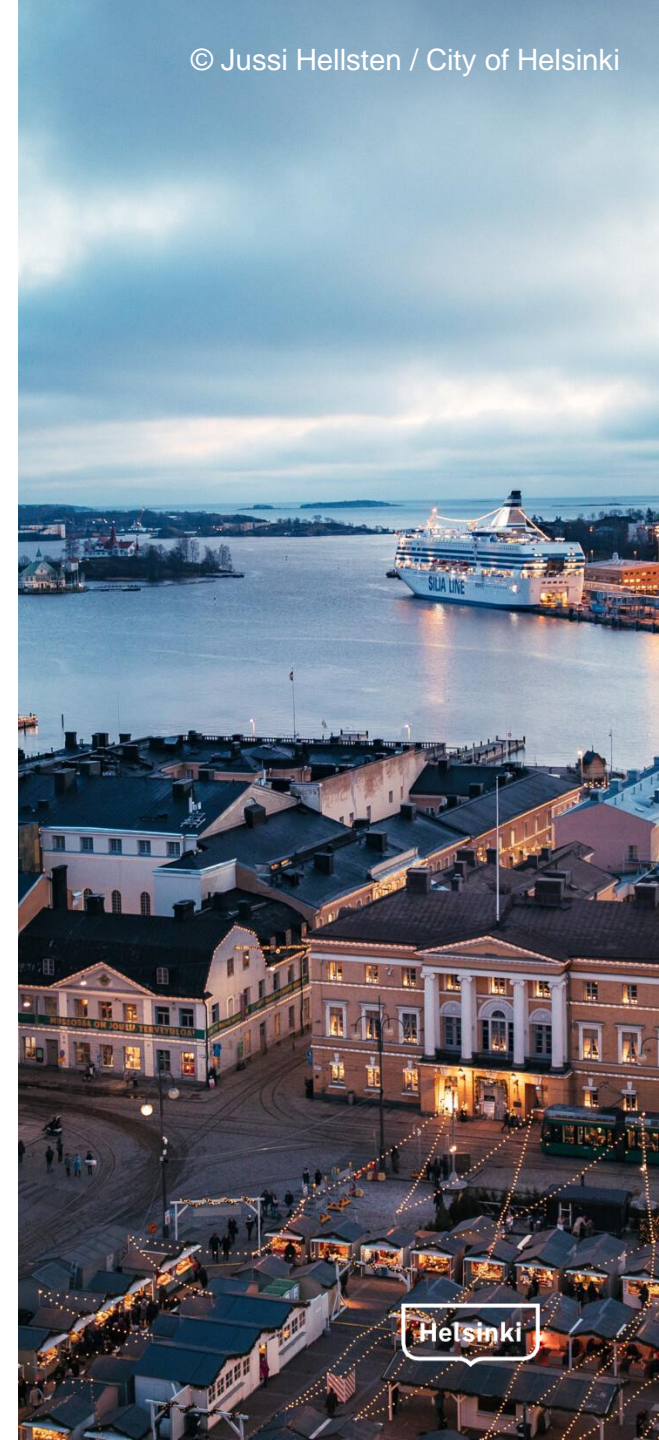
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Carbon Neutral Helsinki 2030

Helsinki is committed to doing its part in mitigating climate change. The goal of Helsinki's City Strategy 2021–2025 is to create a carbon-neutral Helsinki by 2030. When this goal is reached, operations taking place in Helsinki will no longer warm up the climate.

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Examples of commitments

Helsinki has been selected as one of the 100 climate-neutral and smart cities of the European Commission. The 100 cities represent all 27 member states of the European Union and are committed to achieving climate-neutrality by 2030. [Helsinki selected for EU Mission: Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities | City of Helsinki](#)

Helsinki has signed the Glasgow Declaration to support the global commitment to halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050. [Glasgow Declaration | One Planet network](#)

Helsinki is among the first cities to sign the European Circular Cities Declaration to support and act on the transition to a circular economy. [Helsingin Ilmasto \(helsinginilmastoteot.fi\)](#)

Helsinki is part of the international Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA), whose member cities are all striving to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 80–100 per cent by 2050 or sooner. [CNCA \(carbonneutralcities.org\)](#)

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Carbon Neutral Helsinki 2030

The carbon-neutral Helsinki Action Plan focuses especially on **transport, energy solutions and construction**, of which the most significant part of Helsinki's emissions are generated.

[Helsinki's climate actions, objectives and monitoring](#)

Actions for Circular and Sharing Economy

The City of Helsinki's actions for the circular and sharing economy are one of the ways in achieving carbon-neutrality in Helsinki.

The focus areas are construction, procurements, environmental awareness and sustainable consumption. Environmentally friendly options will be made more readily available to residents.

A key idea in circular economy is keeping products and materials in circulation for as long as possible by reusing products and recycling materials. Sharing economy focuses on using products efficiently instead of owning them, e.g. through renting and sharing.



Helsinki is also adapting to climate change

Effective green solutions can help manage storm water, minimise flood risk and limit the heat island effect of hotter temperatures in urban areas. In Helsinki, part of preparing for these changes will include **planting more trees and adding more green spaces to the city**. Drought-resistant greenery will be added to Helsinki parks and green walls and roofs will assist with drainage.

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Actions:



Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2028

City Strategy 2021–2025

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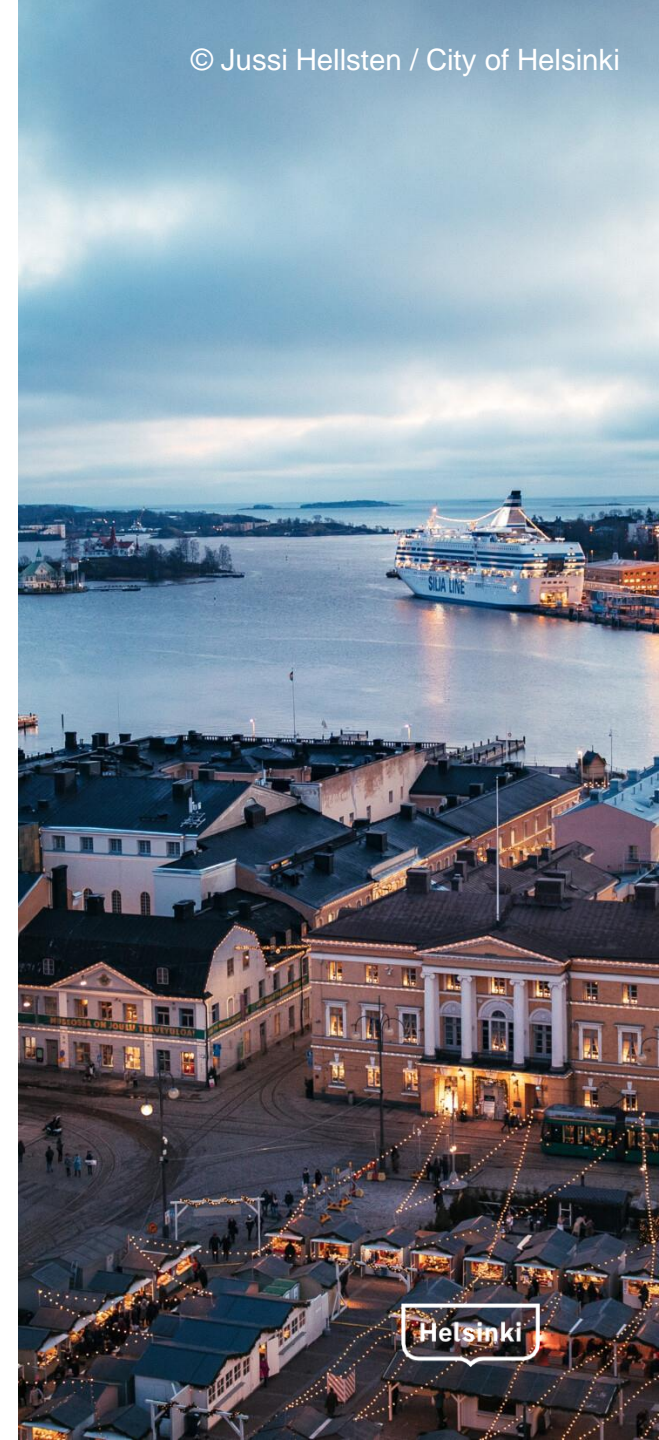
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Biodiversity Action Plan

Helsinki's ambitious Biodiversity Action Plan (LUMO programme) lists more than 90 measures to **preserve and improve green connections, habitat types and the habitats of the species** in the city. During the city's strategy term 2021–2025, a minimum of **five new protected areas will be established each year.**

Examples of initiatives

The City of Helsinki has joined the European Commission's Green City Accord initiative by which it commits to achieving five different goals related to a healthier, cleaner and greener city by 2030. [Green City Accord \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/city-accord/)

The City of Helsinki is involved in the Baltic Sea Challenge, a network initiative of 270 organisations from Finland and the other Baltic Sea countries that have committed to the protection of the Baltic Sea. [The Baltic Sea Challenge \(itamerihaaste.net\)](https://itamerihaaste.net/)

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Biodiversity Action Plan

The central goal of the Action Plan is that the diversity of nature in Helsinki will be increased and utilized better than before in all of the City's operations. The action plan involves the entire Helsinki region on the mainland, at sea and in the archipelago, as well as in the recreation and outdoor activity areas located outside the city limits and owned by the City.

[LUMO programme. City of Helsinki Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2028](#)

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Actions for businesses:



- *Think Sustainably
- *Sustainable Travel Finland
- *Sustainable Meeting Model

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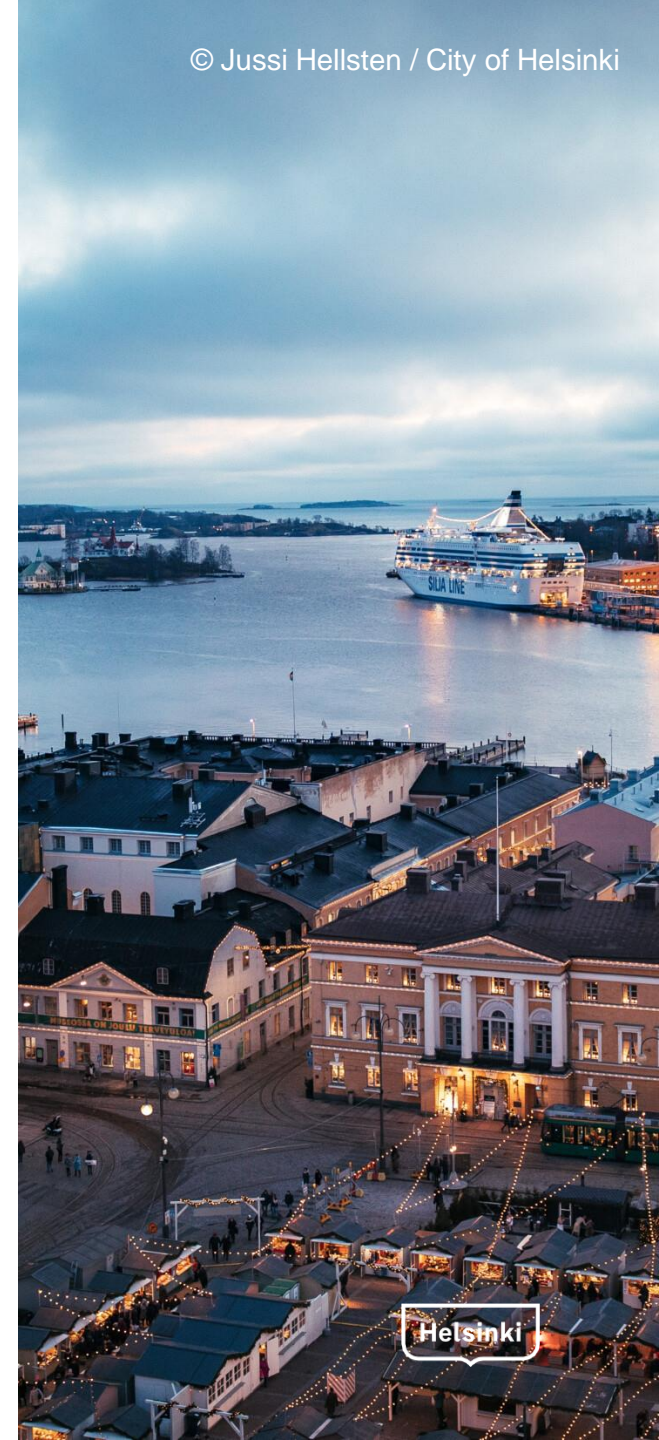
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How to use: Think Sustainably

1. **New to sustainability:** The criteria is a convenient way to review and gain additional perspective in your daily operations in terms of sustainability.
2. **Already on the path to sustainability:** It's easier to see the big picture and identify any areas of development. Get new views and understanding in regard to different dimensions of sustainability.
3. **Both:** It supports more active communication about your sustainability actions to your customers and stakeholders, and gives you more visibility.



Think Sustainably

In a nutshell:

[Think Sustainably](#) combines sustainable services, experiences, and transportation in Helsinki into one easy-to-use digital service on MyHelsinki.fi. The base of the service is on sustainability criteria that have been tailor-made for Helsinki. Based on three principles: criteria, actions made by service providers, and the activity of service users.

To whom:

Works as a good marketing and communication tool for businesses included in the service. Accessible to different types of service providers: restaurants, cafés and bars, shops, attractions, accommodation, events and venues.

Focus in regard to sustainability:

The criteria highlight ecological and social sustainability, yet also consider different aspects of environmental sustainability.

Cost:

Free of charge.

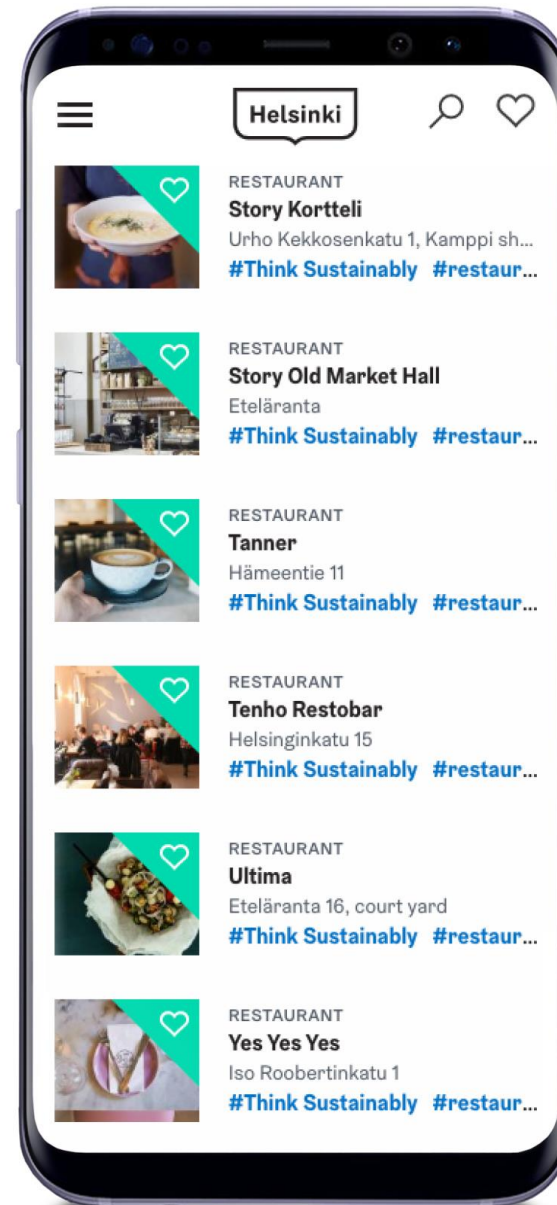
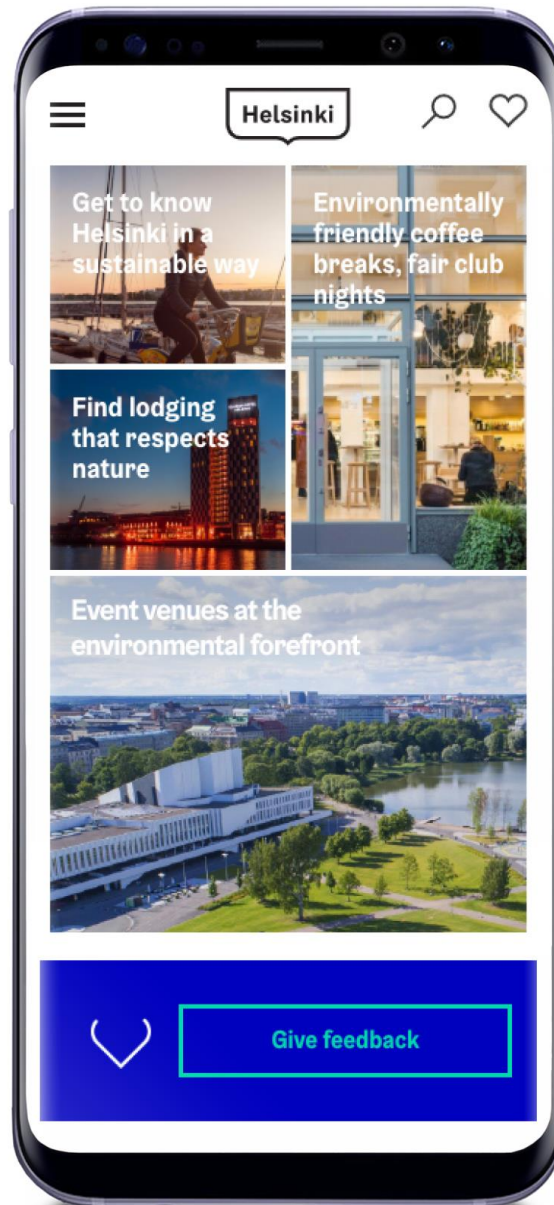
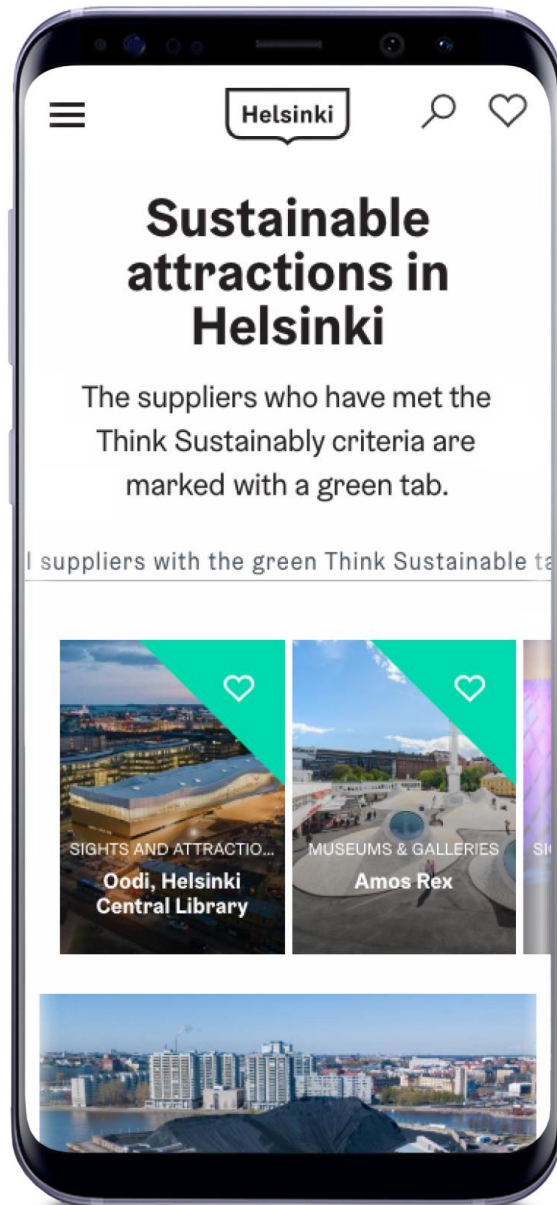
How to be included:

Open to all service providers that fulfil the minimum requirements for the criteria. The businesses and service providers review their operations themselves through the criteria of their own service category. The service provider fills in the form corresponding to their service category and chooses the criteria it fulfills, and sends it to Helsinki Partners. If a minimum number of requirements is fulfilled the actor can be recognised as a sustainable choice in the MyHelsinki.fi service, and marked with a green tab.

Auditing:

Not an official sustainability label or certificate, and therefore the fulfillment of the criteria is not evaluated by a third party.. The service provider is expected to regularly brief its own employees on the company's values and visions of sustainability.





How to use: Sustainable Travel Finland

1. Apply for the programme and begin the 7-step sustainable tourism development path that is available on an online platform specifically built for the purpose, with support from an e-learning environment facilitated by Visit Finland.
2. Although the label is awarded only for those tourism companies that have undergone the entire programme and fulfilled the criteria, by applying to the programme you get access to useful tools and materials that help you on your path to sustainability.
3. The Sustainable Travel Finland label is a guarantee to your customers, the travel trade and travellers, that you take sustainability seriously.

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Sustainable Travel Finland

In a nutshell:

The [Sustainable Travel Finland](#) programme provides companies and destinations a 7-step sustainable tourism development path that makes it easier to adopt sustainable practices in everyday business. Companies and destinations that undergo the entire programme are recognised with the STF label.

To whom:

Accessible to all Finnish tourism companies and destinations who wish to develop their operations towards a more sustainable direction, including restaurants, accommodation, travel agencies, activity providers, attractions, transportation companies, events and resorts.

Focus in regard to sustainability:

Ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability.

Cost:

Free of charge but requires obtaining a certificate, accepted under Sustainable Travel Finland label, that supports sustainable development. Frontrunner companies can replace certification (Step 5) by fulfilling specific criteria set for the programme. Further information on frontrunner qualification from STF team at Visit Finland.

How to be included:

Any tourism company or destination can apply to the programme:

<https://auth.sustainabletravel.businessfinland.fi/login>. When the application to the programme is approved, the participant will receive access to an online platform, including the development path, and can apply for the label.

Auditing:

Commitment to regularly renewing Sustainable Travel Finland label, including a valid audited certificate/updated frontrunner company documentation, and updated self-assessment, development plan and sustainable tourism indicators.



The 7-steps approach to sustainable tourism development

Step 1.
Commitment



Step 2.
Increasing know-how



Step 3.
Development & action plan



Step 5.
Certification and auditing



Step 4.
Responsible communication



Step 6.
Verification and measurability



Step 7.
Agreement and continuous development

How to use: Sustainable Meeting Model

1. **What to consider when organising a sustainable event?** The Sustainable Meeting Guidelines provide you with a ready check list on what to consider before, during and after the event.
2. **Is my event too small / too big to be sustainable?** The model fits all kinds of events, small or big – even small events can have a big impact!
3. **Where to start?** Download the guide, free of charge, from the Helsinki Material Bank, and familiarise yourself with the concrete measures you can take into practice directly.



Sustainable Meeting Model

In a nutshell:

A toolbox that helps event organisers make more sustainable choices when organising conferences and meetings as well as to set clear objectives for the event right from the outset. The model provides a comprehensive and easy-to-follow check list for:

- Travel & transportation
- Accommodation & venues
- Food & beverages
- AV & material production
- Experience design & communication
- Performance documentation.

To whom:

Event organisers who plan to organise a conference or meeting in Helsinki.

Focus in regard to sustainability:

Comprises of a sustainability criteria that includes i.a. material use, waste management, diversity and inclusion, good governance and communication. Aligned with SDGs, supports the city's carbon-neutrality goals.

Cost:

Free of charge.

Where can I find it:

Just go to the Helsinki Material Bank (materialbank.myhelsinki.fi) and search for [Sustainable Meeting](#). Or find it among materials: materialbank.myhelsinki.fi/publications.



Sustainable Meeting Model



Electronic signage



Zero printing or handouts



Easy to get to by public transport



World's best tap water



Accessible event



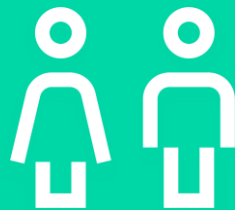
Event minimizes energy consumption



Reduced waste and recycling



Event's carbon footprint is compensated



Social responsibility



Organic vegetarian food and food waste minimized



Organic and fair trade coffee and tea

Photos & videos

Helsinki Material Bank:

- [Sustainability](#)
- [Nature, space and silence](#)
- [Smart city](#)

MyHelsinki YouTube:

- [Sustainable Helsinki playlist](#)

Websites

MyHelsinki.fi:

- [Think Sustainably](#)
- [Nature in Helsinki](#)

Sustainable.Helsinki:

- [Sustainable Helsinki](#)

Helsinginilmastoteot.fi

- [Helsinki's climate actions](#)

Relevant documents

City of Helsinki:

- [City Strategy 2021-2025](#)
- [LUMO programme. City of Helsinki Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2028](#)
- [A Handbook for Safety in Tourism in Helsinki](#)
- [Helsinki Facts & Figures 2021](#) (PDF)

Sustainable Meeting Guidelines:

- [Sustainable Meeting Model](#) (e-publication)

Other useful information

Finland Toolbox:

- [Nature & sustainable development](#)

Visitfinland.com:

- [Travel Sustainably](#)
- [Sustainable Travel Finland Label](#)

Business Finland:

- [Guide to Inclusive Travel](#)
- [Tips for sustainability communication](#)



Feedback and comments on the toolkit can be sent to: helsinki.partners@helsinkipartners.com.