





Nature dose for physical and mental health

(in the case of protected areas)

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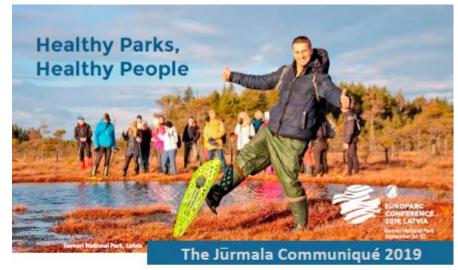
Health benefits from nature



- Nature brings us wide range of benefits. It provides us with food, medicines, business opportunities, and at the same time it is our natural shield from air, water and noise pollution. Access to nature is also essential for health.
- > During the Covid-19 lockdowns across Europe, we had a chance to realise how important green areas are for our mental and physical well-being.
- > To build a healthier and more resilient society we thus need to value our nature protected areas and invest more into green infrastructures, including in urban areas and public spaces.
 - > This is one of the aims of the 2030
 - > EU Biodiversity Strategy.



Building the HPHP Europe programme



Our Parks and Protected Areas are a health promoting asset. They have a crucial role in nurturing healthy ecosystems which sustain our societies. In providing opportunities for people to experience and enjoy nature, they also support the, mental, physical, social and spiritual health and well-being of people and communities across Europe.

We consider that the Healthy Parks Healthy People approach offers great potential to:

deliver better health outcomes for people and to make parks and protected areas more relevant to an increasingly urbanised

support the case for further investment and a strategic approach to Parks, protected areas and associated green infrastructure which can deliver better outcomes for both people and nature.

Developing a European approach

initiative of EUROPARC, created in response to the need platform for the exchange of ideas and good practice for parks and protected areas to become active actors in between the health, environment and other sectors. delivering health and well-being for Europe's citizens.

outcomes, but importantly it will also enable them to treatments, and as a locus for human well-being. seek ereater resources to fulfil this vital role.

Healthy Parks, Healthy People (HPHP) Europe is an At the heart of HPHP Europe will be an exciting new Through a range of advocacy, communications and events, it will seek a shift in policy toward the This work will enable Parks and protected areas to recognition of the value of nature-rich parks and make a clearer and more valued contribution to protected areas as resources not just for healthy the delivery of good national and European health biodiversity but as the source of future medicines and

EUROPARC Federation

A **European network** of parks and protected areas established to improve cooperation, the exchange of ideas and experience and the development of better policy and practice.

Our vision is for "sustainable nature, valued by people", and we see the sustainable nature of Europe's parks and protected areas as a key asset for health and well-being.

To help realise this vision, the Jūrmala Communiqué agreed by the EUROPARC Federation in Latvia 2019, calls for the Federation to help create a **Healthy Parks**, **Healthy People Europe Programme**.





Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe

OUR STRATEGY

Support parks and protected areas at the national/regional and local level to deliver better outcomes for the health of people and nature.

OUR FOCUS

We want to maximise the contribution of Europe's parks and protected areas to key policy priorities on

- > Improving public health and well-being for all and reducing health inequalities
- Protecting, restoring and investing in biodiversity
- Responding to the climate emergency

TO DO THIS, WE WANT TO SEE

- More of Europe's parks and protected areas providing well managed, accessible facilities and engaging target groups in health-promoting activities
- More policy, practice and partnership working to maximise the potential of Europe's parks and protected areas as key assets for improving public health and well-being and reducing health inequalities.
- More people from all backgrounds enjoying the health benefits of connecting with nature and supporting the case for better protection, restoration and further investment in Europe's parks and protected areas

HPHPe is born out of tried and tested experience from across Europe and has been developed as a tool to enable partnerships between Parks and the health sector. Launched in June 2020 - An essential part of the green recovery from COVID-19.



HPHP Europe pilars

Healthy Parks, Healthy People Europe

Happier and healthier people more connected to nature-rich parks and protected areas

MAKING THE CASE

Our aim is to increase awareness and understanding of naturebased health interventions in parks and protected areas through the development of key messages, information and case studies.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Our aim is to establish broad based platforms at the European, national and regional level that bring together health, environmental and other sectors to discuss, develop and champion green health policy and practice.

DEVELOPING CAPACITY AND PRACTICE

Our aim is to link and develop Europe-wide projects to demonstrate best practice, build capacity and develop the evidence on nature-based health interventions in parks and protected areas.

HPHPe toolkit

ENGAGING PEOPLE

Our aim is to share tools and good practice in developing stronger pro-nature attitudes and behaviors as a result of more people using parks and protected areas to improve their health.

5 Ways to Well-being through Nature as a theme, Nature For

Read more about the <u>HPHPe programme</u>



5 Ways to Well-being concept

Naturally Healthy

The Five Ways to Well-being through nature.

The Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe programme seek to ensure healthy, nature-rich parks, that have safe and accessible infrastructure and collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships between the Park and health sectors. Ultimately, we want to reconnect people to nature and to their own well-being. One consideration of how to do this, is the 5 Ways to Well-Being.

By designing programmes or inviting people to consider actions around the themes of social relationships - Connect, physical activity - Be active, awareness - Take notice, learning - Keep learning, and giving - Give, it has been shown to increase their health outcomes.

Doing this in a nature setting can also help generate stronger connections with nature and commitment to caring for it. Providing opportunities for people to use Parks and Protected Areas as a setting in which to be active, connect, take notice, give and keep learning offers a better chance for people to be healthier and happier.

Adapted from: Five Ways to Well Being, Jody Aked, Nic Marks, Corrina Cordon, Sam Thompson centre for well-being, nef (the new economics foundation), 2008



Connect

With people around you

Be Active

Move your body and breathe in the fresh air

Keep Learning

Be curious about nature and discover something new

Take Notice

Find a moment to take in the beauty of nature – be curious & aware

Keep learning

Try something new, rediscover

Give

Do something nice for someone, do something nice for the environment

Read more here. From this research, we know that providing opportunities for people to use parks and protected areas as a setting in which to **be active**, **connect**, **take notice**, **give and keep learning** can increase health outcomes. These 5 Ways to Well-being can also help generate stronger connection with nature and commitment to its care.





Championing HPHP Europe in regional, national and European policy and Promoting a "nature for all" approach to help attract new audiences to Parks and Protected Areas and help reduce health inequalities

Within the programme, a toolkit was launched to give practical examples and guidance on how to successfully start the HPHPe Programme in your Park or Protected Area.

Investing in programmes and projects in Parks and Protected Areas that support public health outcomes

What can you do?

Staying in touch and working together

EUROPARC network of Sustainable Tourism Destinations alone have nearly 60 million people who either live in or within one hour of them (over 10% of Europe's population of 508 million people) while a further 74 million people visit them each year.



Example from Finland

Goal: Finnish health and wellbeing is improved by diverse nature – Healthy nature, healthy people

Finns are active outdoors people who enjoy nature as an essential part of life. Social, physical and mental wellbeing has improved as a result of diverse nature and active connection to nature.

Read more <u>here</u>.





THEMES



From nearby nature to national parks

- The opportunity to experience nature forms the basis for building a relationship with it.
- Both easily accessible, nearby nature and attractive natural areas that provide an escape from the grind of daily life are necessary for outdoor recreation.
- Natural areas and historical and wilderness sites form part of nature destinations offered by municipalities and cities; they create a well-functioning, continuous green space serving the outdoor recreation requirements of local residents and tourists.
- The high-quality, attractive destinations with a range of natural attractions and the services offered by Parks & Wildlife Finland provide health and well-being benefits for local residents and tourists.
- > Nature areas and services



Everyone outdoors

- Everyone has equal opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors. Our services create well-being, prevent public health problems and promote an active lifestyle.
- The threshold for outdoor recreation becomes lower, making it an easy and fun activity throughout the year. Experiences in nature motivate people to exercise.
- Finns learn to love outdoor recreation at an early age and make active use of various natural sites and nature's riches.
- People are encouraged to engage in and are inspired by outdoor recreation; this counteracts sedentary lifestyles and their detrimental effects.

> Customer relations



Results based on communications and cooperation

- Good communications in cooperation with the other actors encourage Finnish people to get out and about in the natural environment, in everyday life and during their leisure time.
- We reach a broad population base in cooperation with our partners.
- Parks & Wildlife Finland produces and compiles easily understandable, entertaining and reliable information on the health benefits of nature for in-house use, customers and decision-makers.
- The importance to public health and the economy of a diverse and healthy natural environment has been acknowledged.
- Nature's effects on well-being are important to the development and productisation of nature tourism.
- Parks & Wildlife Finland engages in active international cooperation in the production and sharing of knowledge and best practices.
- An increasing number of partners communicate about nature and outdoor recreation via their forums.

> Everyone outdoors

Examples from Finland

- Videos to encourage people to go out and enjoy the health benefits of nature:
 - Nature revives: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrj8DSrlweg
 - Nature moves: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jn563BiBJ9s
 - Nature brings us together: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ3aewrwl0k
- "Nature Access to All" project.
- Training personnel on how to improve accessibility in our nature areas with the help of the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities and the Finnish Paralympic Committee.
- "Nature to Action" project (Luontoa toimintaan: https://www.metsa.ff/projekti/luontoa-toimintaan/) ended Dec 2020.
- In general, regions have been very busy in improving the recreational infrastructure across the country and the same positive hurry continues next year. This is due to the Finnish government allocating significant amount of additional funds for repairing and improving trails and facilities in protected and recreational areas. This is currently the most significant work task in implementing HPHP Finland improving access to nature destinations all across the green continuum.

Examples from Scotland

"Green prescription" is a concept originally developed in New Zealand in the late 1990s by health practitioners and was used to describe the colour of the prescription pads used to prescribe physical activity.

It draws parallels to the usual prescriptions given to patients for medications but emphasises the importance of exercise in improving their condition, rather than relying on drugs alone. Previously the focus was mainly on walking and home based exercise rather that physical activity in the outdoor environment.

Why Green Health Prescriptions?

An ageing population, more people with multiple conditions, widespread chronic illness and medical advances – all put increasing pressure on the health sector.

First it begain in 2017 in Shetland as Nature Prescption.

Four pilot Green Health Partnerships have been established (during 2018/2019) to demonstrate how better cross-sectoral co-ordination can mainstream approaches to increasing physical activity and improving mental health through engagement with the natural environment. Led by local health boards and local authorities, these partnerships bring together the health, social care, environment, leisure, sport and active travel sectors in order to make more use of local green space as a health-promoting resource.

Read more **here** and **here**.

Examples: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/contributing-healthier-scotland/green-exercise-and-its-benefits
gymns), https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/contributing-healthier-scotland/green-exercise-and-its-benefits

Example from Scotland





Scotland: £1 invested in health or social needs projects that connect people to nature, there is a £6.88 social return

November

Note three good things in nature every day for five days. How does your body feel as you notice them?

Watch a spider make a web.

Really look at a rainbow. Can you see all seven colours? Where does it begin and end? Remember: "no rain, no rainbows"!

Listen and look for v-shaped skeins of geese flying high above the city in the early morning.

Plant some spring bulbs.

New Zealand: 6-8 months after receiving their green prescription, 63% of patients are more active than they were before and 46% have lost weight.



People who spend at least two hours a week in nature experience better health and higher psychological wellbeing!

Thank you for your attention!

