

## PLEDGE TO PROTECT FINLAND

- New Sustainable Travel Finland Label will make it easier for travel trade to recognise a responsible tourism company and destination
  - Visit Finland announces Sustainable Finland pledge for visitors to the country
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) inspiring Finland to encourage innovative business sustainability perspectives

**September, Helsinki, Finland:** Visit Finland has launched a new Sustainable Travel Finland programme for companies and regions across the country.

The new Sustainable Travel Finland initiative will provide companies and destinations with a sustainable development process through ecological, social, economic and cultural dimensions. It also equips them with a comprehensive toolkit for eco-friendly tourism, which makes it easier to adopt responsible, ethical practices and greener choices in their everyday business.



The initiative is designed to nurture, conserve and preserve what is most important; Finland's unspoilt natural environment, as well as the Finnish culture and lifestyle which is rooted in the country's pure and pristine outdoors. This relationship with nature has led to the adoption of integrity, safety, social progression and freedom as the cornerstones of Finnish society.

For the second year in a row, Finland was named the happiest country in the world, according to the World 2019 Happiness Report. Finns mainly attribute their happiness to their close connection with nature. The country's many lakes, rivers and extensive forests provide them with food and a place for relaxation, which contributes to their general wellbeing.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) introduced in 2015 by the UN member states work towards eradicating poverty from the world and securing better livelihoods for all in an environmentally sustainable way. Visit Finland is using the SDGs to inspire companies to evaluate their projects both from a business and sustainability impact point of view.

Liisa Kokkarinen, Manager Regional Partnerships, Business Finland, said: "We want to encourage all tourism providers to reduce their impact on the environment through their social, economic and cultural footprint in order to preserve and protect the pristine Finnish countryside for future generations.

"With this new Sustainable Travel Finland programme, we will be able to reward companies and destinations that act in a conscious fashion as well as easily allow travel trade to recognise companies that are serious about protecting the environment, both constructed and natural."



Companies and destinations which participate in the new progressive programme will be recognised with the Sustainable Travel Finland label and have access to a continuous development model, the latest information on sustainable tourism development, marketing support and visibility on Visit Finland channels.

The new label will provide international travel trade with an easy way to identify a sustainable tourism provider or destination. Finnish tourism businesses can use the following 7-step 'sustainable tourism path', supported on an e-guide programme online:

- Step 1. Commitment
- Step 2. Increasing know-how
- Step 3. Development plan
- Step 4. Responsible communication
- Step 5. Certification
- Step 6. Verification and measurability
- Step 7. Agreement on Sustainable Travel Finland

Visit Finland is also inviting visitors to be like a Finn by making a pledge of sustainability to nurture, to help conserve and preserve Finland's pristine natural environment and protect the country's unique lifestyle, which is rooted in the natural world and supported by a culture which celebrates equality.

By taking the Sustainable Finland Pledge, visitors promise to respect and treasure Finnish nature, its inhabitants and culture during their visit. To watch the video message and sign the pledge, please visit: [www.visitfinland.com/sustainable-finland-pledge/](http://www.visitfinland.com/sustainable-finland-pledge/)

**For more information visit [www.visitfinland.com/sustainable-finland](http://www.visitfinland.com/sustainable-finland)**

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

Ms. Sari Hey, PR & Media Manager, Asia & Australia, [sari.hey@businessfinland.fi](mailto:sari.hey@businessfinland.fi), +358 46 923 4745

Ms. Hanna Muoniovaara, Manager, Regional Partnerships, [hanna.muoniovaara@businessfinland.fi](mailto:hanna.muoniovaara@businessfinland.fi), +358 40 350 9882

Press photos & the Sustainable Travel Finland logo can be downloaded from Visit Finland image bank: <https://mediabank.businessfinland.fi/l/ZN5jzMxzpS6> (Always give credits to Visit Finland & photographer when using these images)

*Visit Finland works to develop Finland's travel destination brand, marketing Finland to travellers abroad and help companies in the travel industry go global. We cooperate with travel destinations regions, businesses in the travel industry and other export promoters and embassies, Visit Finland is part of Business Finland.*

*Business Finland is the Finnish government organization for innovation funding and trade, travel and investment promotion. Business Finland's 600 experts work in 40 offices globally and in 16*



*regional offices around Finland. Business Finland is part of the Team Finland network. [www.businessfinland.com](http://www.businessfinland.com)*

**ENDS**