

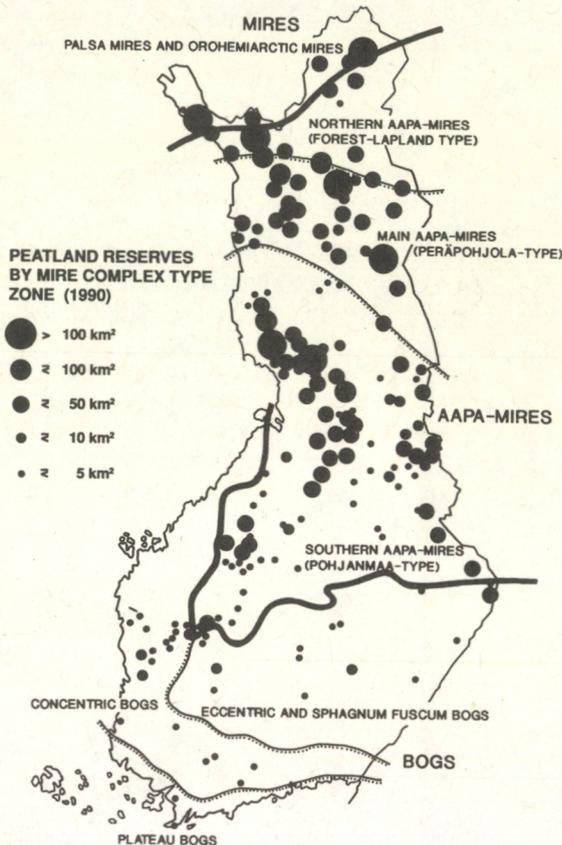
Finland's national parks and strict nature reserves are managed by the Finnish National Board of Forestry and the Finnish Forest Research Institute.

**National parks (total 27)**

National Board of Forestry	24
Finnish Forest Research Institute	3 *
total surface area	7,100 sq.km
established in 1938, 1956, 1982, 1983, 1989, 1990, 1991	

**Strict nature reserves (total 19)**

National Board of Forestry	14
Finnish Forest Research Institute	5 *
total surface area	1,530 sq.km
established in 1938, 1956, 1964, 1982	



All the peatland reserves are managed by the Finnish National Board of Forestry.

**Peatland reserves (total 173)**

total surface area	4,020 sq.km
established in 1982, 1985, 1988	

Drawings by Jari Kostet

**Further information:**

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# PROTECTED AREAS

on State-owned land



## PROTECTED AREAS IN FINLAND

Finland's nature protection system is based on a variety of protected areas established under the Nature Protection Act. They have differing conservation objectives and also furnish various degrees of protection. Each different type of area has its own function in the conservation network.

Most of Finland's protected areas lie on State-owned land. These State nature protection areas were established by law and decree. The most important categories are **national parks**, **strict nature reserves** and **peatland reserves**. Unlike the counterparts in many Central European countries, Finland's national parks and nature reserves are controlled and managed directly by the country's highest nature protection authorities. The protected areas network is complemented by areas on private land established by Regional Authorities. On January 1st, 1992, there were 951 of them, covering a total area of 597 square kilometres.

The network of protected areas exists to preserve samples of all the most important characteristics of Finnish nature and its regional variation. Approved protection programmes are employed in order to maintain the diversity of nature and establish a nation-wide network of protected areas. The programmes focus on the key elements of Finnish nature - peatlands, eskers, marshes, groves with luxuriant vegetation and culturally important landscapes.

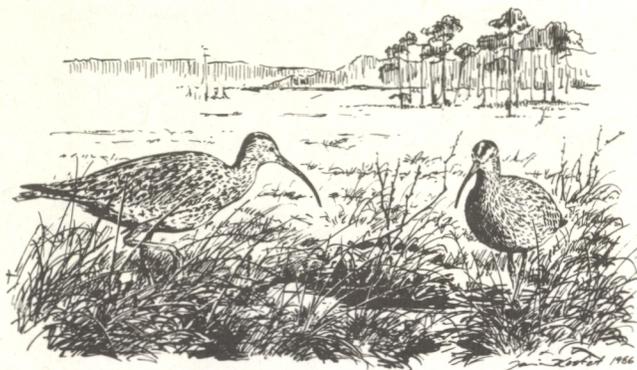
## NATIONAL PARKS

Finland's national parks are the backbone of her network of protected areas. The parks are relatively large, contain a wide variety of fauna and flora, and are nationally or even internationally significant. Their primary purpose is to conserve untouched Finnish nature. Besides protecting primeval nature, some of them also conserve noteworthy man-made environments which need careful management. The national parks are also open for public viewing. Whilst the protection of nature is their paramount concern, they also serve the causes of environmental education and research, and provide leisure facilities. The UN List of Nature Protection Areas, kept by IUCN, groups most of Finland's national parks under category II (National Parks). In some national parks in the north of the country, however, local residents enjoy hunting, fishing and other rights which do not accord with international criteria.

Each park has its own bylaws which rest on the Nature Protection Act and must be observed by all visitors. The regulations are based on the different nature protection requirements of different parks.

The general principles are that:

- \* Disturbing and causing damage to nature is forbidden.
- \* Visitors to national parks may move about freely on foot and skis and use canoes and rowing boats where appropriate. Cross-country vehicles may not be used.
- \* Camping and lighting fires is only permitted at specific camping and campfire sites. The larger Lappish national parks, however, have wilderness zones where camping regulations are less strict.
- \* Visitors may pick berries and collect edible mushrooms.
- \* Hunting is usually prohibited. Visitors may fish in some parks, provided that they first obtain licences from the National Board of Forestry.



## STRICT NATURE RESERVES

Strict nature reserves are chiefly established for scientific purposes. Their conservation format is defined under the Nature Protection Act and they aim at full protection. Nevertheless, some strict nature reserves have areas whose management precludes complete conservation.

Strict nature reserves are primarily scientific enclaves and not tourist sights or outdoor recreation areas. Where their protection and research goals permit, the reserves also endeavour to promote education.

Those Finnish nature reserves which cover an area of at least 1,000 hectares are grouped under category I (Scientific Reserves / Strict Nature Reserves) in the UN List of Nature Protection Areas.

\* It is generally forbidden to move around in strict nature reserves without written permission. Permission is only granted to specific projects.

\* Some reserves have marked trails which may be followed without special permission; leaving the signposted paths is forbidden.

## PEATLAND RESERVES

The conservation regulations of peatland reserves are looser than the rules which apply to national parks and strict nature reserves. The chief objective is the preservation of peatland nature. Peatlands are consequently preserved in natural condition but nature and landscape-friendly forestry may be permitted on mineral lands within the reserve.

Peatland reserves are established in order to preserve the unique richness of Finland's bogs and mires. The underlying aim is to conserve the various types of peatlands which typify the country's different regions and to protect threatened peatland types, plants and animals.

Most of Finland's peatland reserves may be grouped under the IUCN category IV (Nature Conservation Reserves / Managed Nature Reserves / Wildlife Sanctuaries).

\* Free movement, berry-picking, mushroom-collecting, hunting and fishing rights are only curtailed when they jeopardize peatland reserves' conservation goals.

## OTHER PROTECTED AREAS ON STATE-OWNED LAND

Besides national parks, strict nature reserves and peatland reserves, a variety of other nature protection areas have also been established on State-owned land. Their sizes, characteristics, protection objectives and management aims vary. Some have strict rules which aim at full protection whilst others protect certain aspects of nature or types of landscape. Various eskers, groves, culturally important landscapes and water fowl marshes etc. are protected in this way.

The number of these sundry protected areas will increase as national protection programmes are implemented. On April 1st, 1992, there were 31 of them, covering a total area of 390 square kilometres.