

VANAJAVESI Centre
Finland



VANAJAVESIKESKUS
elämää vedestä



Vanajavesi Centre, Finland

Vanajavesi Centre is a regional initiative which aims at improving the status of lakes and rivers in Lake Vanajavesi watershed area in Southern Finland. The Centre carries out a variety of actions including lake and river restoration and ground breaking work in the prevention of eutrophication, thus improving the general appeal of the region. The centre was established to join the forces of different actors in the region and it already has succeeded in creating an active network of municipalities, scientists, media, farmers' organisation, companies, NGOs and private people working together towards the common goal.

Vanajavesi Centre has been operating as a project in the Regional Council of Häme since 2010. In order to provide the Centre with resources for long term work, a permanent new organisation – Vanajavesi Foundation – was established in 2012.

Improving the status of lakes and rivers

There is much room for improvement in the status of lakes and rivers in Häme region. Many of them are in moderate or poor status. Business as usual, it would take many decades for the lakes to heal. The local people do not want to wait that long, as the massive blooming of blue green algae and other symptoms of eutrophication keep troubling both people and businesses. That is why Vanajavesi Centre was established - to improve the status of rivers and lakes in Lake Vanajavesi watershed area and to boost the appeal of the region in other ways, too.

Ambitious goals

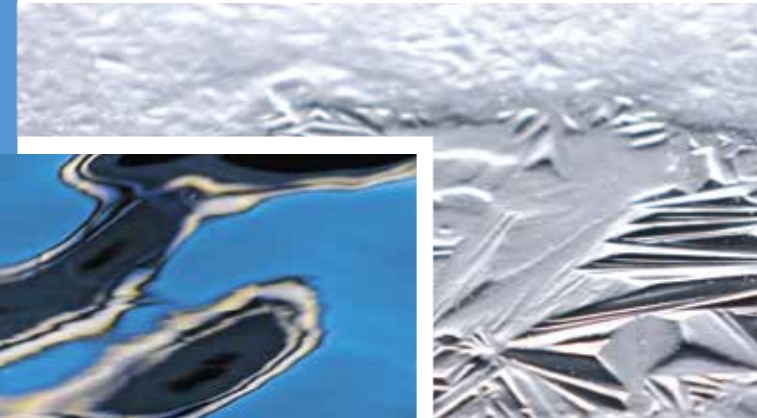
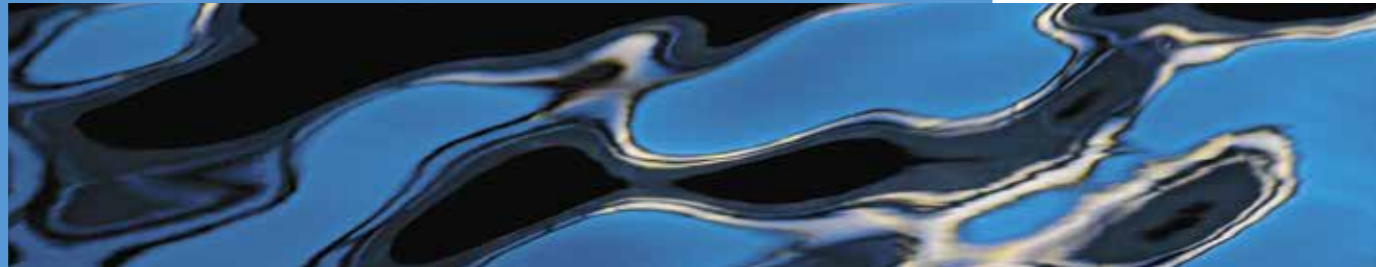
- Lake Vanajavesi is in good status in 15 years and the status of other lakes and rivers has also improved
- Other environmental and cultural values have been strengthened

- Increased tourism and recreation on lakes and rivers
- Enhanced knowhow in water issues
- Increased cooperation among different actors and beyond administrative borders
- The fine lakes and rivers of Häme region have raised the profile of local people and businesses and contributed positively to their image

Taking care of a whole network of lakes and rivers

Vanajavesi Centre is located in Hämeenlinna and it operates in Lake Vanajavesi watershed area in Southern Finland. There are over 300 lakes and ponds in this watershed area. The watershed area is marked in blue in the map of Finland. The watershed area is part of a larger River Kokemäenjoki watershed area (in pale green). Its water flows into the Baltic Sea in the coast of Western Finland. The biggest towns in Vanajavesi area include Hämeenlinna, Valkeakoski and Riihimäki.

Water protection,
research, restoration and
treatment



Not only water protection but a versatile range of topics

Vanajavesi Centre has five fields of action, here with some examples of current activities in each field:

Water protection, research, restoration and treatment

In practice, Vanajavesi Centre carries out a vast array of field work in order to battle eutrophication: establishing wetlands and sedimentation basins to grab nutrients and solids from the flowing water; building precipitation instruments to cut down phosphorus loading; and biomanipulating lake ecosystems by intensive fishing etc. In many cases, some scientific studies have to be made before field operations can be done. These are often carried out in close cooperation with colleges and universities.

Tourism, business and recreation

Lake restoration actions and prevention of eutrophication carried out by Vanajavesi Centre improve the operating environment for water and nature related enterprises. This also enhances opportunities for new business initiatives. Water and nature related tourism and recreation are being strengthened by e.g. bringing school children to fishing, ice fishing and crayfish cruises, participating recreational happenings like open water swimming events and canoeing events.

Tourism, business and
recreation



Cultural landscapes and natural biodiversity

Special projects for managing valuable cultural and natural landscapes are being planned. Fish ladders have been built in dams, thus providing fish with migrating routes in areas where they previously had no access. This strengthens the diversity of fish populations.

Cultural landscapes
and natural biodiversity



Climate change: impacts and adaptation

Climate change is given serious attention to when designing measures for combating eutrophication. Increased frequency of watery winters with great runoffs and exceptional floods with accelerated erosion are a major challenge, which calls for targeted measures outside the growing season.

Climate change: impacts
and adaptation

Communication

Experience oriented communication is the core of the communication activities in Vanajavesi Centre. Combining art, science and physical activities has proved to be a great method for promoting water protection and for motivating people. Moving images and DVD documentaries are a popular media that reaches people in more effective way than printed matter does, and it is utilized to a great extent in the Vanajavesi Centre, both in events and in online communication.

Vanajavesi Centre is compiling a specific rescue plan for the Vanajavesi area including projects and activities in all five fields of action. The rescue plan is created in close cooperation with local actors, pointing out needs and considering suggestions together.

Communication



Vanajavesi Foundation

Vanajavesi Centre started as a project in the Regional Council of Häme in 2010. It then grew to a Centre of three active projects. In order to provide the Centre with resources for long term work, eight actors in Vanajavesi area decided to establish a special foundation – Vanajavesi Foundation – to support and sustain the Vanajavesi Centre. The eight actors are: the municipalities of Hämeenlinna, Hattula, Janakkala and Valkeakoski; the regional newspaper Hämeen Sanomat, the Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners in Häme Region (MTK Häme), Federation of Finnish Enterprises in Häme, and Service Union United PAM. Vanajavesi Foundation began its work in 2012.





HÄMEENLINNAN KAUPUNKI
Hyvä arki asuu Hämeenlinnassa



www.valkeakoski.fi



VANAJAVESIkeskus

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