

NEST—project Northern Environment for Sustainable Tourism

An innovative
InterregIIIB -Project



Sustainable nature tourism development in Koli National Park and the Koli Resort, Finland Summary

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Objectives for the NEST-Koli-project

Koli National Park together with the Koli Resort is the main nature and tourism development centre in North Karelia Region and in the municipality of Lieksa in Finland. For the future the critical issues to be solved in development strategy are as follows:

- the conservation of the bedrock - soil formations and the lake in landscape
- the conservation of the local heritage in swidden agriculture and small scale handicrafts
- transfer the scientific Koli-information for the benefit of education and tourism
- to develop the motivation of actors to conserve the basic values of Koli Resort

- to assure the visitors and customers about the sustainable development of tourism in Koli Resort
- to activate the private investors to create quality oriented services for tourism customers

The NEST-projects strengthens the activities and networks of the potential new type rural developing centres, like visitor and education centres, in or near-by the national parks and other protected areas. In details the NEST-Koli-project sets objectives to create better environment and more sustainable cultural heritage, more jobs and more economical activities to remote rural areas with very limited development strategies until now.

In the whole Europe and other countries the well studied development programs for tourism development are highly appreciated but rare. In four NEST-partner countries there are no other equally comprehensive cases until now on the issues combining sustainable development in the context of national parks and other protected areas and the development centres of rural networks. The results and the products of NEST-projects produce a pilot model for the partner states for further sustainable nature tourism development.

METLA-Koli NP develops sustainable tourism potential, including sustainable management for attractions and resources, and sustainable nature tourism supply and demand, through all the four themes in the INTERREGIIIb project entity.

Products of project

NEST -project aims to produce in Koli NP and Koli Resort benefits as follows:

- Better status in park management and in tourism marketing with the EUROPARC Charterpark label for sustainable development in nature and cultural heritage on the Koli NP and Resort
- Work and incomes created for the local society (more than 50 enterprises have activation of marketing and selling) through the development of new type development centres in NP and Resort
- Social capital is gained through the new networks uniting the park and the local society
- More satisfied and educated visitors and customers when the quality of leisure environment and content of the information services are better than earlier and the skills of tourism actors are more quality oriented
- Education oriented study reports (3) and the summary book of project proceedings serve other parks and resorts.
- Thoroughly tested pilot model for new type of sustainable development for nature tourism resort for the benefit of other similar centres.
- The core group for International “Grouse Park” -network is created under the Northern Periphery label for continuing development.