METSÄHALLITUS

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The cultural heritage of Ramsar wetlands in Finland

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Introduction

When data has been collected on Ramsar wetlands in Finland, information concerning the cultural heritage has been taken into consideration to a much lesser degree than that on the ecology and biogeography of the site. Commissioned by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, the Finnish database was updated with summaries of cultural values of each site by Parks & Wildlife Finland (Metsähallitus) in January, 2018. The aim of the project was

- to assess the overall character, potential and variation of the cultural values in the Ramsar wetlands of Finland;
- to locate hot spots of cultural heritage based on local history and archaeology and an analysis of topographical and historical maps;
- to set out guidelines for a survey of the cultural heritage of the Ramsar wetlands in Finland.

In this report, cultural heritage includes archaeological sites and culturally valuable buildings within a Ramsar wetland or adjacent to it, affecting the potential of the site. It also includes cultural landscapes and cultural meanings embedded in the landscape, when such information is available.

Most of the Finnish Ramsar wetlands are sparsely settled or unsettled natural environments. Therefore, emphasis has been laid on the archaeological cultural heritage which is present in almost all wetlands. The cultural values of buildings and cultural landscapes were examined, where possible.

The potential of the cultural heritage of a Ramsar wetland includes the archaeological potential and the potential of the building heritage.

The archaeological potential of an area derives from (1) the amount and complexity of known archaeological sites and (2) the likelihood, based on current knowledge, that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of future field-archaeological efforts, such as surveys, or other activities, such as hiking in national parks.

Material and method

Information on the cultural heritage was mainly collected from databases and GIS systems held by national authorities. These include the *PAVE*, a cultural heritage database managed by Metsähallitus and the *Museoverkko*, a national cultural heritage database for museum professionals, held by the National Board of Antiquities. The Museoverkko includes data on archaeological sites, culturally valuable buildings, and the *RKY*, the list of nationally significant cultural landscapes. The RKY network lists culturally and historically valuable areas in towns, hamlets, agricultural, maritime and industrial environments, forests, etc. The RKY thus yields a good and professionally argued measure of cultural values. The *Kyppi*, a public national cultural heritage database (National Board of Antiquities) and the *Fornlämningsregistret*, a database of archaeological heritage on the Åland Islands, were used. Information on ship wrecks was retrieved from the web site Hylyt.net, which is privately owned.

Important sources of information are the National Park Management Plans of Metsähallitus. The typology of the *Arkeologisen kulttuuriperinnön opas* (a handbook on the archaeological heritage in Finland) was used, as well as some case studies and overviews (e.g. Ojanlatva 2013).

The method to evaluate the cultural heritage of Ramsar wetlands was to count numbers of archaeological sites and historically valuable buildings and communities, to examine the qualities of these sites and places and to assess overlapping or closely adjacent areas included in the RKY. Given

the scope of the project, it was not meaningful or even possible to examine each building in detail, so the point was rather to make an overall judgement on the basis of information available in databases.

The archaeological potential was assessed more systematically, since the information on them is more comparable. To allow a rough comparison of the archaeological values of Ramsar wetlands, a scoring was developed, using as a basis a procedure that was used in an archaeological survey as a part of a project called Light & Fire LIFE Project, launched by Metsähallitus in 2015. For each archaeological site, a checklist was completed, consisting of four scores related to the archaeological potential. The total score was calculated by summing the scores and dividing the sum by 2. The total score ranges between 0 and 10.

IDOC (0–8)	Amount of known archaeological sites within the project area
IPRI (0–8)	The overall appearance of the project area points towards the existence of archaeological sites
EDOC (0–2)	Amount of known archaeological sites adjacent to the project area
EPRI (0–2)	The overall appearance adjacent to the project area points towards the existence of archaeological sites

Table 1. The scores related to archaeological potential.

The IDOC score is an estimation of the abundance and geographical density of archaeological sites within the project area. The IPRI score is based on an overall examination of possible archaeological remains based on historical sources and topographical, geological, and LIDAR-derived maps. The historical sources may include any source of given textual meaning, such as text, picture, historical map, place-name, narrative, etc.; anything that might reveal a possible indication of archaeological relevance. The EDOC score gives the abundance of archaeological sites adjacent to the project area, a measure which is useful for many Ramsar wetlands that are lakes or bays, where no underwater sites are known, but archaeological indications exist on shores closely adjacent to the border of the Ramsar wetland (edge effect). The same applies to the EPRI score that gives a measure of potential derived from the overall appearance adjacent to the Ramsar wetland.

The total score is a measure of the archaeological potential of the entire area of the Ramsar wetland and therefore it is not made proportional to the area. Due to the edge effect given by the EDOC and EPRI scores, the total score somewhat highlights the potential of small areas.

The character of the archaeological heritage in the Ramsar wetlands

Within the Ramsar wetlands there are 2451 archaeological sites. The time span of the archaeological sites varies from the oldest dwelling sites, which date back to the Mesolithic Stone Age (7400-4300 BC), to remains of important traditional sources of livelihood that continued until the 20th century. Examples of such remains are tar pits in forests associated with tar burning and barns along streams, remains of haymaking on wet meadows.

Some of the sites have been used for a long time. An example comes from Lapland: the old route from Bay of Bothnia to the coast of Finnmark, Norway, called the Ruijanpolku. It was first mentioned in 1598, which makes it the oldest known pathway in Lapland. It was used by crown servants as well as traders, vagabonds, and fishers. Along the path there were open wilderness huts where anyone could sleep overnight. The pathway was in use until the beginning of the 20th century.

The cultural and geographical context of the archaeological sites varies a lot and gives a represent-tative cross-section of the archaeological heritage of rural Finland.

Fig. 1. The remains of a house at the mine of Jussarö (site 1, Tammisaari), that produced iron ore during the years 1834-1861 (left). The medieval road Kyrönkankaantie (site 17, Kauhaneva) (right). Photo: Tapani Tuovinen.

The maritime Ramsar wetlands offer a great abundance and a high areal density of sites. Most of them are related to fishing: huts, camps (*tomtning*), stone labyrinths, stone compasses, stone ovens, as well as structures related to boats, fishing equipment, and cooking. The traditional practices of mowing and pasturing, partly continued to present-day, are also visible. The coastal sea areas hide a great number of wrecks of ships and boats, providing food and shelter for small fishes. They are well-preserved thanks to the low salinity of the Baltic Sea.

In the interior, the archaeological heritage reflects fishing and hunting in a long-time perspective ranging from the Stone Age to present-day. Thanks to archaeological surveys during the past 20 years, the archaeology of the Historical Period is much better known than before. The Ramsar wetlands have evidence of past tar burning, swidden cultivation, utilisation of wet meadows (hay-making), and charcoal production, all related to a traditional long-distance utilisation of natural resources in regions of forests and lakes.

In Lapland, an abundant type of remains are the pitfall traps which indicate the most important prehistoric and early historic subsistence strategy, the hunting of forest reindeer. A certain type of sites, the rectangular hearts, dating back to ca AD 800-1600, is considered as the most distinct evidence of early Sami population. Many sites from the Historical Period can also be ascribed to Sami, such as dwelling sites, cabins, turf huts, sheds, cellars, fire places and net drying places and sheds.

The traditional Sami cultural landscape includes, in addition to the hamlets, houses and archaeological sites, also those places, that are significant for native people through the cultural meanings in the landscape. For an outsider, those places can appear as pure wilderness.

Fig 2. A farmstead in Elimyssalo (upper left) (photo: Kaarlo Mikkonen). The smoke cabin Kaulus in Salamajärvi (upper right) (photo: Timo Laitinen). A log cabin in Riisitunturi (lower left) (photo: Päivi Tervonen). The house named Kullakoja in the old pilot community of Jussarö (lower right) (photo: Tapani Tuovinen).

The character of the building heritage in the Ramsar wetlands

Among the buildings within the Ramsar wetlands, there are 110 buildings which have cultural and historical values. Like archaeological sites, they appear in varying cultural and historical contexts.

In Porvoo, the Ramsar wetland forms an inner fjord surrounded by the medieval town of Borgå, a Nordic small town with wooden buildings, the manor of Stensböle, the historical pilot station (1857) on the island of Svinö, the sawmill of Porvoo (1870), and the adjacent worker's residental area Hammars. Here the Ramsar wetland is an integral part of a cultural landscape.

The coastal Ramsar wetlands are typically adjacent to valuable cultural landscapes characterised by historical towns, hamlets, manors, churches, fisher farmsteads, historical mines and forts. The housing stock of the islands consist of summer cottages and historical sea marks, lighthouses, beacons, and pilot stations.

In the interior, Ramsar wetlands are mostly sparsely populated or unsettled natural or semi-natural environments where the human impact in the landscape is more latent than in coastal environments. An important exception are the agricultural landscapes, represented by, e.g., Lake Kutajärvi, Lake Läppträsket, and Lake Kirkkojärvi. There are some preserved valuable pieces of a traditional local building heritage, such as the smoke cabin Kaulus (1901) in Salamajärvi (Fig. 2). It represents a long-lasting tradition of building log cabins with fireplaces without chimney flues.

The Ramsar wetlands of Lapland are today mostly uninhabited. In the northern part of the Urho Kekkonen's National Park (a proposed site), there are two homesteads that belonged to Skolt Sami families during a short period after the war. Up to the year 1826, the historical market place of Markkina in Lätäseno was the ecclesiastical and administrative centre of the rather sparsely populated western part of Lapland.

Hot spots of cultural heritage

The ten hot spots of cultural heritage (Fig. 3) were selected using the frequencies and scores given in the Appendix and an overall judgement of the character of the cultural heritage in each Ramsar site.

1. Bird Wetlands of Hanko and Tammisaari. A maritime cultural landscape with a high diversity of archaeological sites and building heritage.

9. Lake Kutajärvi Area. A representative agrarian landscape.

10. Valkmusa National Park. A wetland with exceptional preconditions for submerged Stone Age remains.

16. Quark Archipelago. A representative maritime cultural landscape with a strong human impact.

17. Kauhaneva - Pohjankangas National Park. A sparsely settled area with a well preserved medieval road.

20. Salamajärvi National Park. A forested area where the remains of tar burning and hay-making on meadows are well

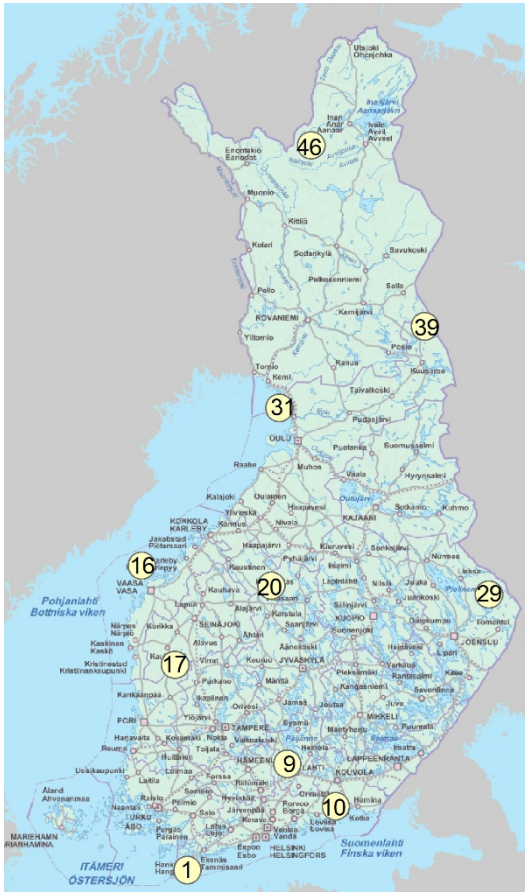

Fig. 3. The hot spots of cultural heritage.

preserved.

29. Patvinsuo National Park. A multifaceted cultural heritage that reflect the traditional sources of livelihood in a forested area.

3.1 Krunnit Islands. An outer archipelago community of pilots.

39. Oulanka National Park. The characteristic cultural landscape of the area consists of flood-meadows that once were used for haymaking. Traces of many traditional activities exist.

46. Lemmenjoki National Park. A traditional Sami cultural landscape with human impact from the prehistory to present reindeer round-up sites.

Towards a survey of the cultural heritage of the Ramsar wetlands in Finland

As it was pointed out above, the known and professionally recorded cultural heritage of the Ramsar wetlands represent a wide archaeological, historical and anthropological variety. A future survey of the cultural heritage thus requires a thorough planning and preparation as well as adequate professional qualifications.

Since the network of Ramsar sites obviously gives a representative cross-section of the cultural heritage and especially of the archaeological heritage of rural Finland, the scope should be to maintain the representativeness of the known cultural heritage. This sets up a *qualitative* aim: to encounter the full range of variation and a typology of known categories of cultural heritage. Especially for the archaeological sites, a *quantitative* aim would be to find out, what is common and what is rare, where different types of sites tend to be located, how they are located in relation to each other etc.; in other words, the objective would be to achieve a good understanding of the character of the sites and the landscape in which they are embedded.

The archaeological survey should include a sampling design which coincides to the qualitative and quantitative aims combined with a traditional procedure where preceding information of sites is made use of. This leads to separate schemes for sites on-land and underwater sites and assemblages and it might lead to schemes based on stratified sampling.

A good outcome of an archaeological survey would be a representative overview of the material, an understanding of the archaeological remains in their natural settings, and a readiness to be published. The surveys of building heritage would put special emphasis on traditional demotic building and the architecture of sites of forest work and timber rafting.

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Cover page: A beacon (built 1874) and a field-labyrinth on the Ramsar site Krunnit Islands. Photo: Tapani Tuovinen 2011.

Appendix

The potentials of cultural heritage and hot spots (marked as yellow text)

Ramsar site	Archaeo-logical sites	Valuable buildings	Potential of building heritage	Valuable cultural landscape	IDOC	IPRI	EDOC	EPRI	Total scores
Existing sites									
1 Bird Wetlands of Hanko and Tammisaari	255	6		X	8,00	6,00	2,00	1,00	8,50
2 Lake Läppträsket				X		8,00	2,00		5,00
3 Vanhankaupunginlahti, Laajalahti	1			X	1,00	3,00			2,00
4 Porvoonjoki Estuary - Stensböle						4,00	1,00		2,50
5 Söderskär and Långören Archipelago	40	11	High	X	5,00	3,00			4,00
6 Pernajanlahti Bay	3				1,00	6,00	1,00		4,00
7 Aspskär Islands	1				1,00	3,00			2,00
8 Torronsuo National Park	6				4,00	6,00	1,00		5,50
9 Lake Kutajärvi Area	25			X	6,00	4,00	2,00		6,00
10 Valkmusa National Park	3				4,00	6,00	1,00		5,50
11 Lake Kirkkojärvi and Lupinlahti Bay				X		6,00	1,00		3,50
12 Kirkon-Vilkkiläntura Bay						4,00	1,00		2,50
13 Siikalahti Bay Area							1,00		0,50
14 Lake Kirkkojärvi Area				X		2,00	2,00	1,00	2,50
15 Bird Wetlands of Vanajavesi Area							1,00		0,50
16 Quark Archipelago	258	16	High	X	8,00	7,00	1,00		8,00
17 Kauhaneva - Pohjankangas National Park	39				5,00	5,00	1,00		5,50
18 Levaneva Mires	14				3,00	1,00	1,00		2,50
19 Pilvineva Mires						2,00	1,00		1,50
20 Salamajärvi National Park	51	1	High		6,00	4,00	1,00		5,50
21 Bird Wetlands of Lapväärtti						4,00	2,00	1,00	3,50
22 Vassorfjärden						3,00	1,00		2,00
23 Lågskär and Björkör	2	14	High	X	4,00	5,00			4,00
24 Signilskär-Märket	5	4		X	2,00	5,00			3,50

Archipelago								
25 Bird-lakes of Rantasalmi							1,00	0,50
26 Suurenaukeansuo - Isosuo Mires and Lake Pohjalampi	1				2,00		1,00	1,50
27 Bird-lakes of Rääkkylä and Kitee	1			X	1,00	1,00	2,00	2,00
28 Lake Sysmäjärvi							1,00	0,50
29 Patvinsuo National Park	38	1			6,00	6,00	1,00	6,50
30 Lakes Heinä-Suvanto and Hetejärvi						1,00		0,50
31 Krunnit Islands	4	8	High	X	2,00	8,00		5,00
32 Bird Wetlands of Haapavesi						2,00	1,00	1,50
33 Bird Wetlands of Hailuoto Island	11	1		X	3,00	5,00	1,00	4,50
34 Liminganlahti Bay Area						1,00		0,50
35 Bird Wetlands of Siikajoki	1				1,00	2,00	1,00	2,00
36 Lakes Aittojärvi and Kongasjärvi						1,00	1,00	1,00
37 Veneneva-Pelso Mires	4				1,00	1,00		1,00
38 Olvassuo Mires	32				5,00	3,00	1,00	4,50
39 Oulanka National Park	171	17		X	7,00	6,00	1,00	7,00
40 Martimoaapa - Lumiaapa - Penikat Mires	11				4,00	3,00	1,00	4,00
41 Kainuunkylä Islands						2,00	1,00	1,50
42 Riisitunturi National Park	84				6,00	4,00		5,00
43 River Luiro Mires						2,00	1,00	1,50
44 Teuravuoma - Kivijärvenvuoma Mires	18				4,00	3,00	1,00	4,00
45 Koitelainen Mires							1,00	0,50
46 Lemmenjoki National Park	762				8,00	6,00	2,00	8,00
47 Sotkavuoma Mires	1				3,00	3,00	1,00	3,50
48 Lätäseno-Hietajoki Mires	6				4,00	4,00	1,00	4,50
49 Sammuttijänkä - Vaijoenjänkä Mires							1,00	0,50

Proposed sites

Bird Lakes of Maaninka				X	1,00				0,50
Bird Wetlands of Alavus								1,00	0,50
Elimyssalo Mires	65	11		X	2,00	3,00			2,50
Kesonsuo Mire – River Syväysjoki	6				1,00	3,00	1,00		2,50
Kokemäenjoki Estuary and Preiviikinlahti Bay	5			X	1,00	3,00	1,00		2,50
Lake Koskeljärvi Area	3				1,00			1,00	1,00
Lake Otajärvi							1,00		0,50
Mietoistenlahti Bay	1		High	X	2,00	5,00	2,00		4,50
Oukkulanlahti Bay	1			X	1,00		1,00		1,00
Puurijärvi – Isosuo National Park							1,00		0,50
Urho Kekkonen National Park, Sompio Strict Nature Reserve and Kemihaara Wilderness Area	522	20		X	7,00	6,00	1,00	1,00	7,50
Mean					3,54	3,85	1,17	1,00	3,09
Sum	2451	110							