Summer cottage – a gate to nature
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A typical summer cottage
Ownership of Cottages

• 450,000 summer cottages or leisure homes
• one of seven households owns a cottage
• equally common among rural and urban people

• Source: Statistics Finland
Location of summer cottages

Number of summer cottages per km²

Source: Statistics Finland
Aim of the study

• To get a better understanding of outdoor life of Finnish people related to nature
  – participation rates and frequencies of spending time at summer cottage
  – outdoor activities at the cottage and close by
  – travel distances

• To learn about the motives and significance of spending time at summer cottage

• To understand the importance of leisure homes to forest management
Study data

- National Outdoor Recreation Demand and Supply Inventory (LVVI)
- population survey, sample 12 649
- telephone interview 10 651 respondents
  - how many participate and how many times
- mail questionnaire, 5 535 respondents
  - information of trips to summer cottage
- Secondary data use of an interview study and literature
Who participate

- 56 % of the population spend time at cottage annually
- younger people more than older
- well educated more than less educated
- urban dwellers more than rural people
**Who participate**

*logistic regression model*

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<thead>
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<th>Factor</th>
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<th>P-value</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Access to summer cottage</td>
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<td>Number of outdoor activities</td>
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<td>Size of household</td>
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<td>Type of living environment</td>
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N = 5535

Model predicts number of cases correctly 75.30 %

Log-likelihood (constant) 4581

Log-likelihood (model) 4476
Who participate according to the model

• young
• high income
• living in an apartment house
• urban dweller
• Southern Finland
• participate in a high number of outdoor activities
Distance to travel

- average distance to travel to a summer cottage is 200 km (median 120 km)
- two thirds of cottages are located in one's own province
- one third is located in one's own municipality
Access to summer cottage

- 45% of population have an access to summer cottage on regular basis
- 86% of those, who have access, spend some time annually
- 44% of those, who do not have access, spend some time annually
Time spent at the cottage

- average number of days is 31 per year
- young people spend 19 days in average
- retired and old people spend 63 days in average
What people do at the cottage
What people do close to the cottage
Participation in forest recreation

- Those who spend time at summer cottage participate more in traditional recreation activities
Reasons to participate

to be close to nature
to enjoy the scenery
to be alone and in peace
to be together with others
to relax
to keep fit and healthy
Back to nature

ref. Williams & Kalternborn 1998

• opportunity to feel and to observe the natural environment
  – vicinity of water
  – sunrises and sunsets
  – birds singing
  – fresh air
  – silence
Continuity
ref. Williams & Kalternborn 1998

- memories of family life
- history of personal life
- chain of generations
- roots of home place
- home district
- sense of place
Inversion
ref. Williams & Kalternborn 1998

• ’real life’
• opposite to everyday life
• opposite to urban life
• freedom from work
• to be and to do - self-realisation
Conclusions

• Outdoor life at summer cottage is an essential part of Finnish way of life

• The amount of leisure time spent at cottage is remarkable

• For urban population summer cottage is a gate to nature
  – to participate in many outdoor activities
  – to get to know about forests and forestry