

## **Prognosis and scenarios of outdoor recreation**

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In many parts of the world outdoor recreation trends have shown remarkable changes in participation rates and occasions for almost all outdoor activities during the last decades. Changes in society and way of living relate to changes in the ways people use natural environment as a place to recreate. At a beginning of 21st century more than 80% of Finns live in towns or cities. Compared to previous decades population is aging rapidly but the income level, status of education, amount of leisure time are increasing. This study uses four methods for predicting future recreation participation. Methods are extrapolation of past trends, regression techniques based on cross-sectional recreation inventory data, skills-based estimation, and scenario methods. Use of different methods provides an opportunity for comparison. Extrapolation of past trends is based on participation measurements on 1979, 1992 and 1998-2000. Using cross-sectional data of 1998-2000 participation and frequency prognosis based regression models and socioeconomic forecasts are calculated for fifteen activities in near term (2006-2010 and 2011-2020), mid-term (2021-2030) and long-term (2031-2040). The general impression of the prognosis is that the forecasted changes in participation are minor. The skills based estimation accomplishes the prognosis by including the cohort effect. Finally the qualitative scenario methods provides basis to discuss the pros and cons of quantitative methods. As all methods have uncertainties, the regular-based monitoring of outdoor recreation is necessary. However, the picture of future described by information from prognosis, trends and scenarios help us, indeed, to identify expected changes, which may be critical for the provision of recreation opportunities and the wellbeing of population.