

DEMAND AND SUPPLY INFORMATION IN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF RECREATION SERVICES

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Abstract

In protected and recreational areas, it is essential to have information both on visitors as well as on supply of recreational services. This kind of information is needed e.g. for outdoor recreation planning, monitoring the impacts of nature tourism, regional and national analyses of outdoor recreation trends, marketing, and developing environmental interpretation programs.

In order to estimate current recreational demand, Metsähallitus has been carrying out systematic visitor monitoring in parks, protected areas, national hiking areas and customer service points since the year 2000. Years 2005–2006 Metsähallitus developed a data base application called ASTA for managing this visitor data. At the same time, the guidelines for gathering and managing data were updated, and they are in line with what is recommended for the Nordic and Baltic countries (Kajala et al. 2007). The supply of recreation services in Metsähallitus is managed in a GIS data base system called Reiska, which has been in use since the year 2004.

The data base applications allow for much more efficient use of demand and supply information in planning and decision making than what has previously been possible. However, all the potential of the systems is not yet utilised effectively. Moreover, Metsähallitus recognises that knowing the current supply and demand inside the protected and recreational areas, is not sufficient. Cooperation with other actors is necessary in order to obtain a broader picture and forecasts e.g. on potential demand, and on what is occurring in the tourism destinations as a whole. The other important actors in building a larger understanding of tourism and recreational needs and trends include tourism business, research organisations and Statistics Finland.

This presentation describes the current methods and tools that are being used in Metsähallitus for managing and utilising recreational demand and supply information, as well as makes suggestions for future development needs.

Key Words

Visitor monitoring, recreation demand, supply of recreational services

Key References

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