

The Question of Natural and OGF Forests in Finland

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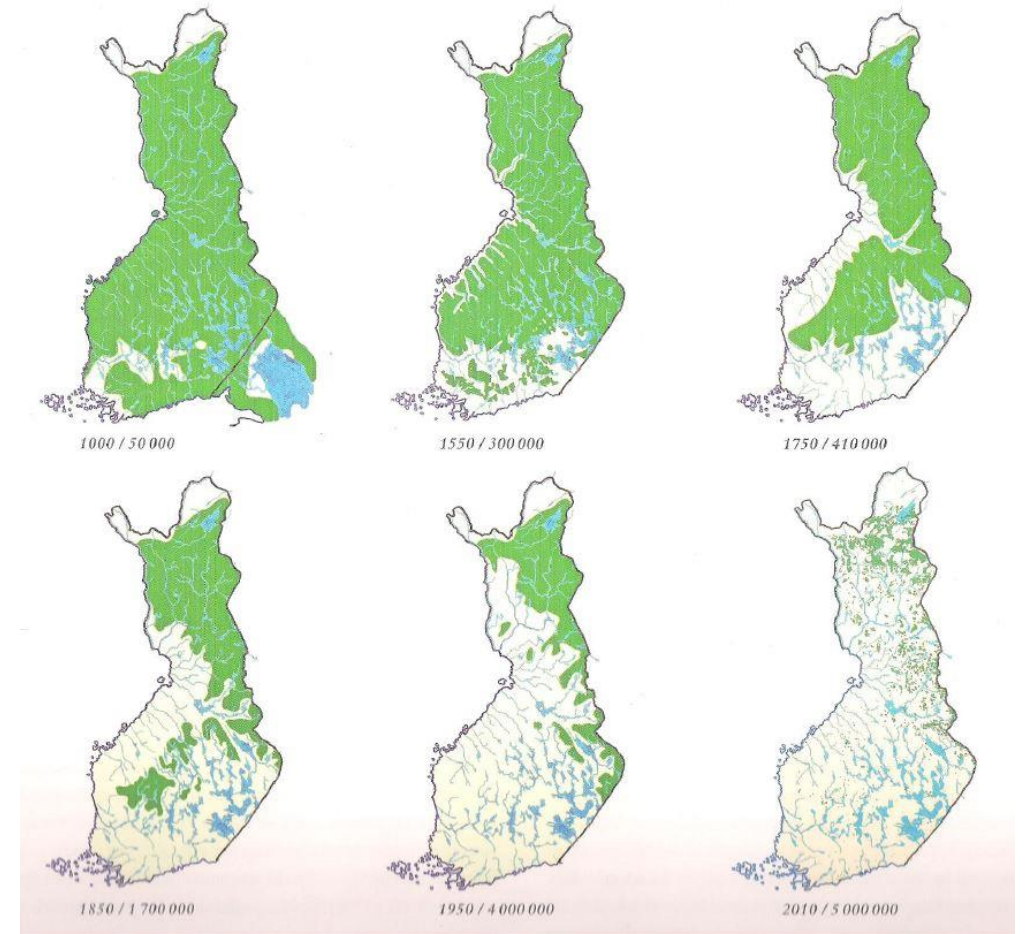
Pre-1800: Traditional lifestyles, cultures, "mind" and the natural boreal forest co-existing

- Finnish, Karelian and Sámi communities herding, hunting and fishing, small-scale slash and burn farming
- Endemic oral poetry gave the rise to *Kalevala*, national epic of Finns and similar forest communities as across Eurasia
- (Inspired Longfellow and Tolkien)
- Era of 'taiga civilisations'



Loss of natural and OGF forests has been total, 1500-2021

- Between 1500 and 2021 Finland has lost over 95 % of her natural and old growth forests to timber industries, saw mills, pulp mills, agricultural expansion and human settlement
- Over 5 million hectares of post-Ice Age peatlands have been ditched and converted to economic forests
- Regional extinctions of willow tit, Siberian jay, and many, many other species followed
- Clear felling of natural and OGF forests continues with little inventory, especially in the last post-Ice Age primary forests in Sámi area
- No land rights exist for villages or Indigenous communities



Lähde: P. Keto-Tokoi & T. Kuuluvainen 2011: Suomalainen aarniometsä

- Clear cuts alter the ecosystem completely, including the microclimate, decaying timber, insect and pollinator networks, water tables. Clear cuts also release mercury to downstream, making predator fish not fit for consumption
- Between 1940s and 1980s the pulp mills released all the waste and pollution to downstream lakes and rivers. Now these have sedimented in the waterways across the country.
- Ditching and churning of the peatlands and soils has created a massive backlog of CO2 emissions





Remedies/Wish List

- Implement FPIC – Free, Prior, Informed Consent
- Large scale rewilding of peatlands and OGF forests with a mandatory large amount of decaying timber in the forest floor
- Inventories for all forestry actions, followed by all natural and OGF forests to conservation in dialogue with land owners
- Ratification of ILO 169 and Sámi land rights and protection of the last primary north boreal forests in Lapland
- Cooperation to create large, interconnected over 1000 hectare forests of multiple use in southern Finland
- Uses of Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas
- Price of cubic meter per private land owner to meet the actual price – from 50 € to 500 €
- Rebirth of the artisanal, small-scale and local industries –
- TREAT BOREAL WOOD ACCORDING TO ITS REAL VALUE AS A UNIQUE RESOURCE