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DEVELOPMENT OF ECOLOGICAL TOURISM IN FINLAND

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<p>Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on tutkia ekomatkailua Suomessa ja ehdottaa ideoita sen kehittämiseksi. Opinnäytetyön toimeksiantaja on matkailuyritys Rock and Lake.</p> <p>Työn teoreettinen osa käsittelee tämänhetkisiä ekomatkailun käsitteitä Suomessa ja maailmalla. Lisäksi työssä analysoitiin toimeksiantajan liiketoimintaa ja suoritettiin vertailevaa tutkimusta Rock and Laken ja kilpailevien yritysten välillä. Tämän avulla kartoitettiin matkailuyrityksen tarpeita ja tulevaisuuden kehityssuuntia. Opinnäytetyön empiirinen osa koostuu suoritetusta tutkimuksesta, jonka avulla etsittiin potentiaalisia kohderyhmiä sekä kartoitettiin ekomatkailun kysyntää Suomessa.</p> <p>Tutkimus on suoritettu laadullisen tutkimusmenetelmän avulla. Tiedot tutkimusta varten kerättiin verkkokyselyllä, jossa apuna käytettiin sosiaalisia kanavia Facebookia ja Vkontaktea.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulosten perusteella muodostettiin kolme ekomatkailijoiden kohderyhmää. Tutkimuksessa selvisi ekomatkailun aktiviteetteja, joista matkailijat olivat kiinnostuneita Suomessa. Tuloksia hyödynnettiin ekomatkailu-tuotteen suunnittelussa ja toteutuksessa. Lopputuloksena muodostui Etno-ekologinen kierros - tuote "Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola". Opinnäytetyön viimeisessä osassa tuote toteutettiin testiryhmän kanssa. Testin jälkeen osallistujia haastateltiin.</p> <p>Toimeksiantaja pystyy hyödyntämään tutkimuksen tuloksia "Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola"- ekomatkailutuotteen kehittämisessä ja tuotteen tuomisessa markkinoille. Tutkimuksen tuloksia voidaan käyttää edelleen uusien ekomatkailutuotteiden suunnittelussa.</p>		
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Rock and Lake (Kakkaramäki Oy)		
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Abstract		
<p>The purpose of the work is to study ecotourism in Finland and propose ideas for its development.</p> <p>Publications of the leading experts in the field of ecotourism, management and tourism product design like P. Björk, Ph. Kotler, V. Strasdst, E. Iliina and B. Voronov, as well as different international regulations, reports of international conferences, World Wildlife Fund and World Tourism Organization on ecotourism and sustainable tourism have been used in the work.</p> <p>The thesis is aimed to study existing concept of ecotourism in the world and Finland. It has been analyzed the business activity of Rock and Lake and conducted the comparative analysis of the company and its competitor with a view to reveal the needs and orientation for future development of the company. Also it has been conducted the research to reveal the target groups and the demand for ecotourism in Finland.</p> <p>This is a quantitative research. The data for the research has been collected with help of the online survey that has been realized on the social sites Facebook and Vkontakte.</p> <p>Based on the results of the research three target groups of ecotourists has been formed and the list of ecotourism activities that are interesting to the tourists has been composed. The results of the research have been used for designing an ecotourism program, the ethno-ecological tour "Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola" for Rock and Lake. The tour was tested by an experimental group of tourists. The experimental group has been interviewed after the experiment.</p> <p>The tour program is ready to be included in the list of tourist offers of the company. The results of the online research can be used repeatedly to design different ecotourism programs.</p>		
Keywords		
ecotourism, sustainable tourism, tourism product design, customer		

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Need for the Research and Its Background

Ecotourism is one of the fastest growing forms of tourism around the world, and it is also a tool for implementation of principles of sustainable development in tourism. Although there are many variations in the definition of ecotourism, most of them in fact have the same meaning.

Despite the wide spread of ecotourism in the world, this form of tourism was not accepted in Finland for several decades. It was replaced until recently by the wording "tourism based on principles of sustainable development". Having rich nature heritage objects, to some extent because of the rejection of the concept of ecotourism and may be because of unwillingness to use natural resources for the purpose of tourism, Finland has a risk to stay out of the international ecotourism market for inbound tourism because in neighboring countries with similar natural conditions (Sweden, Norway, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia) existence of ecotourism is not refuted. Moreover, a demand for ecological tours in these countries is growing and the conception of ecotourism is widely used in the promotion of tourism products of this group. Not long ago, Finnish Tourist Board (now it is "Visit Finland") made attempts to put right the situation by giving the definition of ecotourism and examples of tourism products that can have prefix "eco" in Finland.

This fact was for me a stimulus for writing the thesis. In spite of the clarification of the Finnish Tourist Board, there is still no appropriate diversity of ecotourism programs and excursions in Finland that allow speaking about real existence of ecotourism in the country.

1.1.1 Features of Tourist Services in Finland

Finland is a country of well-developed hotel and restaurant service; whereas tourism services have its own specific that maybe not always appropriate for many tourists. Today, the most popular form of the provision of travel services for inbound tourists is renting cottages or houses in nature, where a tourist is

left completely to himself. At the same time there are almost no enterprises implementing excursion programs aimed at visiting natural attractions, familiarity with the culture and way of life in South Savo of Finland. An exception is canoeing programs with guides that are quite popular in summer time.

Rock and Lake is almost only major company of Southern Finland, which aims to create tour packages of outdoor recreation in a format “accommodation + meals + excursions”. Rock and Lake is a young and fast growing company. Currently, the company mainly conducts fishing tours, offers canoes, boats and pontoon rafts to tourists. The company still has no other tourist programs aimed at a wide range of tourists. In connection with this, there is an urgent need to expand the range of excursions at the company.

1.1.2 The Preconditions for Writing the Thesis

The need for the development of new tourism products for Rock and Lake, as well as the incipient stage of development of ecotourism in Finland, were for me as a prerequisite for the study of ecotourism in Finland and the conduct of the online research for what ecotourism activities may be in demand in Finland and what would be its target group. The results of the research I describe in this thesis. I have designed an ecological tour that is based on the results of the research.

2 THE PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND REALIZATION OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 The Objectives and the Research Questions

The purpose of the work is to draw attention to nature conservation with help of ecotourism activity. In connection with this, the aim of the thesis is to design a nature-based tour for Rock and Lake, which meets the principles of ecological tourism. The objectives are to find out what kind of ecotourism activities may be interesting to tourists in Finland, to describe and analyze a current situation at Rock and Lake and feel out why there is a need of a new ecotourist product in the company.

I am going to answer the following research questions:

1. What possibilities for development of ecotourism are in Finland?
2. In what business environment does Rock and Lake operate?
3. What do inbound ecotourists expect from travel to Finland?
4. What kind of an ecological tour could be designed for Rock and Lake in Finland?

While collecting research materials I have set a task to analyze the concept and worldwide practice of ecotourism, define criteria of an ecological tour, draw a general portrait of an ecotourist and examine perception of ecological tourism in Finland. Further I analyze aspects of design of a tourism product.

The next step of my work is the basic analysis of Rock and Lake, its business environment and market segments. In the paper I analyze in details internal and external factors of business environment of the company due to the fact that it is important to know whether Rock and Lake operates in conditions suitable for development of ecotourism and designing of a new ecotourism product. Analysis of business environment of the company without information about its currently existing clients will not be full. So, I describe current market segments of Rock and Lake to understand better the field of business of the company. The final stage of the work is to describe the outcomes and findings of the research and present the designed ecological tour program for Rock and Lake. I conducted all the thesis work from the autumn of 2015 to the end of February 2017.

2.2 The Scope of the Study and the Practical Application of the Results

For the purpose of the work we focus primarily on designing of the ecological tour for inbound tourists in Finland that can be promoted on the Internet and a website of the company as well as on the preconditions influencing the demand for ecotourism in the world and Finland. Whereas the practical implementation of the tour in business processes of Rock and Lake is not considered in the work. The tourism product offered in the paper is tested and it is ready to be included into the service process of Rock and Lake.

The research reveals preconditions of the demand for ecotourism and varieties of ecotourism activities in which potential ecotourists are interested in Finland. The research can be used by Rock and Lake and also other similar tourist organizations for future planning and management of ecotourist activities in Finland.

2.3 The Theoretical Framework

A theoretical footing of the thesis is based on the concept of ecotourism, ecological tour and ecotourist. The purpose of the theoretical aspects of the work is to give a unified interpretation of the terms, so that it would be easy to understand the conducted research.

In the final stage of the work I present the designed ecological tour program. In connection with this, one of the central notions of the theoretical part of the thesis is the process of tourism product designing, consideration of the definition of a tourist product and description of its components as well as preconditions and stages of a competitive tourism product design.

In the paper I use training aids, publications, textbooks on tourism management and planning of tourism activity of leading specialists of this field as well as international regulations, reports of international conferences and World Tourism Organization (further - WTO) statistical publications on ecotourism or sustainable tourism. Also I have got acquainted with the previously conducted research studies about ecotourism in Finland on the Internet-resource Theseus.fi before writing the thesis.

2.4 Methods and Realization of the Research Study

This is a quantitative research which suggests that the phenomena or things under research can be measured in numerical terms (Keto 2014, 2).

Data were collected and processed with help of the online questionnaire (survey). On the basis of the received data I designed an ecological tour. Then I conducted an experiment in the form of testing of the ecological tour after

which I interviewed people from the experimental group. Survey and an experiment are tools of realization of quantitative research (Keto 2014, 4).

2.4.1 The Online Survey

The advantages of online surveys are the possibility to get answers quickly from a large target audience which is dispersed geographically. Also, it is the most economical method of data collection (Sue & Ritter 2007, 12).

I did the questionnaire that is presented in the Appendix 1 on Google Forms. The choice of the Google platform for the conducting of the research is grounded by the following reasons:

- Google Forms is the most well-known free multi-purpose online services in the world; according to statistic it had 425 million users in 2012 (Lenta 2016). In the most cases the link like *https://docs.google.com* does not cause suspicions that this is a spam.
- Previous own experience of work on Google Forms. This resource is reliable.
- Possibility to create different types of questions.
- Possibility of statistical processing of the data and getting of online reports.
- Possibility of sending survey on e-mail or publishing on social networks.
- You do not need Google account to participate in the survey.
- Survey can contain up to 2 million responses.

Questions of the survey are possible to share into two parts: background questions (gender, age, social status, etc.) and questions related to the research problems (Keto 2014, 10). My questionnaire is in English and it contains nine questions. Four of them are background questions concerned gender, age, a field of activity and country of residence. Other five are topical research questions.

The background question about the gender includes the next response options: 0 – 18 years old; 19 – 35 years old; 36 – 55 years old; 56 – 100 years old. It is a matter of fact, that people of different ages have different interests. As the basis for the age division was taken the theory of William Strauss and

Neil Howe about generations X, Y, Z and Baby boomers, where “Baby Boomers” are people older than 55 years old, “Gen X” is 36 – 55 years old, “Gen Y” is 19 – 35 years old and “Gen Z” has come since 2000 (Dergunov, 2014).

The question about a field of activity includes the next response options: schoolchild, student, worker, businessman and pensioner. Answers to this question will help me to design an ecological tour which meets needs and interests of potential tourists. At the beginning the question about country of residence was included in the survey as referential information to know location of people who most actively participate in the survey. Then this information was used in order to understand what country is the best target for outbound tourism to Finland.

With help of topical questions I collect data about kinds of activities interesting to tourists while traveling, knowledge about Finnish history and culture that tourist would like to learn while travelling. One of the questions was about optimal travel duration to Finland.

I use primarily close-ended dichotomous and multiple choice questions in the survey. Only one question from the list belongs to open-end questions. All questions were compulsory to answer. Close-ended questions provide respondents with the choice from given list of answers, whereas open-ended questions suppose to be answered in own words by writing a response in the gap (Sue, 2007, 42 – 49). We use close-ended questions in the questionnaire because it is supposed that respondents are primarily people from abroad who do not know features of ecotourism activities in Finland. In addition, open-ended questions often make respondents spend a lot of time to recall the answers. This in turn increases the risk of refusal in survey participation.

2.4.2 How Were Survey Answers Collected?

I decided to use social networks Facebook and Vkontakte as tools to spread the survey link. For this reason I have become a member of the next communities on Facebook: *Ecoturismo Estrategico*, *Turismo Sostenible*,

Sustainable tourism Program, Tourism concern. Action for Ethical Tourism and Indonesia Ecotourism Program.

I have become a member of the next communities on Vkontakte: “*Путешествие и Природа*” (*Puteshestvie I priroda*, translation – *Travel and Nature*), *Sustainable development* (Ukrainian community), *Международный проект "Развитие устойчивого туризма на Камчатке"* (Mezhdunarodny project *Razvitie ustoichvogo turisma na Kamchatke*; translation - *The international project Development of sustainable tourism in Kamchatka*) and *Ecological tourism in Russia*.

Then I have sent a personal message to each member of the communities with a polite request to fill out the questionnaire. We gave a short explanation in the message what for and what kind of research is conducted. The message sent on Facebook was in English, whereas the message sent followers on Vkontakte was in Russian. The text of the message is given in the Appendix 2. Text of the questionnaire was only in the English language.

The process of data collection was challenging. The maximum number of daily messages, on Facebook as well as on Vkontakte, could not exceed 25. Then, security services at both sites asked to confirm that you were a human. The total number of daily sent messages on both sites was about 50, whereas I did not receive answers with the same regularity. I have sent approximately 5000 requests to participate in the survey for the period of time from the beginning of June to the beginning of September 2016. The participants were sending answers to the end of October 2016. The total number of answers is 214.

When the responses were collected I started the analysis of the data. Based on the results of the survey answers an ecological tour program has been designed. The findings of the research and the process of testing the designed ecological tour are described in the result section 5 of the thesis.

3 THE GENERAL NOTION OF ECOLOGICAL TOURISM

Ecological or ecotourism as a relatively new environmental phenomenon has arisen in the world in the last 1970s. But it has gained popularity and has become one of the most steadily growing sectors of the tourism industry only since the last decade of 20th century (CREST 2016). According to WTO, ecotourism market took seven percent of the total international market in 2007; the number of ecotourists is growing every year (The Globe and Mail 2007).

An important trend lies in the heart of the demand for ecotourism: many countries of Europe, Asia and America have reached a stage where the driving force of the economic growth is not a consumerism, but a desire to get vivid and new experience. Traditional beach holidays are losing their popularity.

3.1 Definition

The main weakness of the concept of ecotourism is that there is still no clear comprehension upon this definition. Different sources are replete with a multiplicity of definitions about ecotourism that for its part makes some difficulties for the research purpose. The lack of common definition originates from the multidimensional nature of this phenomenon (Rahemtulla & Wellstead 2001, 4). We present some of existed definitions above:

- *“Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education”* (The International Ecotourism Society 2015).
- *“Ecotourism is ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation”* (Ecotourism Australia 1992).
- *“Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy, study and appreciate nature (and*

any accompanying cultural features – both past and present), that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations” (Ceballos-Lascurain (The International Union for Conservation of nature) 1996).

In spite of the fuzziness in the definition, there are two clear approaches in understanding of the concept of ecotourism. In the first case, ecotourism is called a tourism activity, the main object of which is wildlife and untouched nature. This understanding of ecotourism emerged in the U.S.A. in the 80s of the 20th century as tourism for naturalists and men of science within the framework of environmental measures and exploration of remote and vulnerable nature regions of the world. In this context, ecotourism is defined as tourism activity within the natural area which is not affected by human existence. It should assist the conservation and the welfare of the local population (Bogatyreva 2015, 79-80). In our opinion, this approach is not entirely right, because mainly “wild” nature is not a prerequisite for implementation of environmental measures, improvement of environmental education and well-being of local population. Moreover, due to the lack of adequate physical training, there are not so many people in the world who can go to a trip into the wild to the remote corners of the earth. Therefore, such tourism can hardly be called tourism in the usual sense of the word. It mostly can be equated to special travels of professionals or to tours as part of scientific expeditions.

In the second approach when talking about travel to nature or nature holidays, “ecotourism” is the identity definition of the terms “ecological tourism”, “sustainable tourism” and “nature-based tourism”. The object of this tourist activity is responsible travel to nature based on the principles of sustainable development (Bogatyreva 2015, 80; WTO 2002, 18). This approach to ecotourism is more viable, because in such ecological tours can participate usual people who would like to enjoy nature, learn more about it and do own contribution to nature preservation.

So, despite the lack of consensus upon the definition of ecotourism, I proceed from the fact that ecological or ecotourism is nature-oriented and sustainable tourism (Lindberg 1998) with the following features (Hrabovchenko 2003):

1) *Cognition of nature*. It is not only experiencing of nature-based attractions, but also obtaining new skills and knowledge about nature, culture and way of being of indigenous population.

2) *Preserving ecosystem*. It is not only appropriate tourist behavior while traveling, but also participation of local governments and tour-operators in environmental activities. It is prevention of negative impact on nature by promotion of sustainable development in the visited regions.

3) *Respect for the interests of local residents*. It is not only observance of local laws and customs, but also a contribution of tourism to the socio-economic development of the region; getting of income by local residents.

To understand the second approach better, I present schematic illustration (Figure 1) of ecotourism among the other forms of tourism and tourist activities (Strasdas 2001).

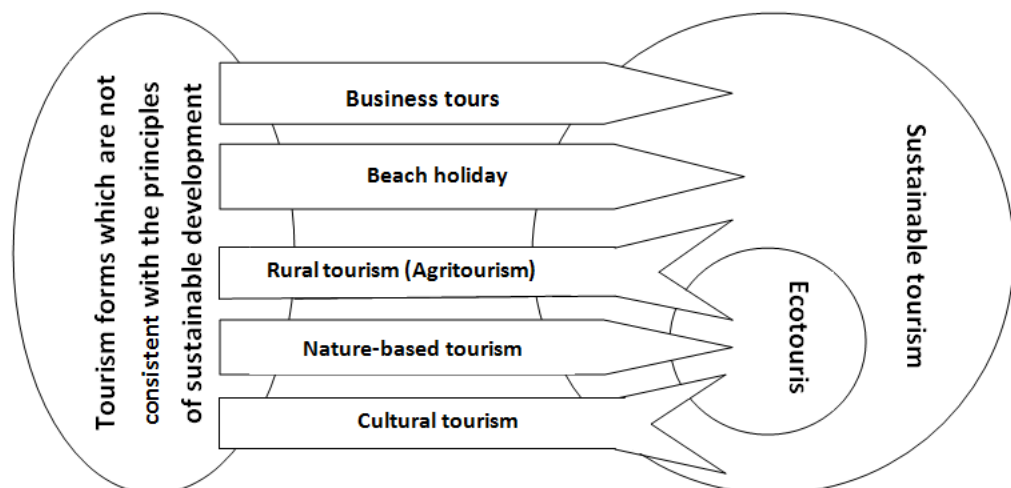


Figure 1. The relationship between the different forms of tourism (Strasdas 2001)

3.2 Ecotourism and Aspects of Sustainability

Ecotourism is a real tool for the implementation of ideas of sustainable development in tourism (Swain 2012, 507, 511). The first time the term of ecotourism was used by Kenton Miller in 1987 in description of nature-oriented travel with an educational component. Then the term was adopted in the concept of planning and management of products of sustainable tourism (Kahveci 2003).

The term of sustainable development in relation to tourism came into wide use after the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, 1992 (Sustainable Environment 2016), known as the Earth Summit. According to Brundtland Commission (1987), sustainable development is *“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (Swain 2012, 506).

The main document, which laid the foundation for the development of tourism in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, is an action plan "Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development" (further - Agenda 21) launched by the World Travel & Tourism Council, the World Tourism Organization and the Earth Council in 1996 (Agora21 2016) as the implementation of the Earth Summit's results. Agenda 21 encourages promotion of ecotourism by governments like an instrument for development of sustainable forest management and planning (Swain 2012, 506).

The document has established the following principles in sustainable management of tourism (Agora21 2016):

- Tourism should not only help people to achieve harmony with nature, but also contribute to protection and restoration of ecosystem as well as stimulate development of sustainable production and consumption patterns.
- Tourism should be managed in cooperation of governments and business, the local population should be involved in tourism planning and managing.

- Tourism should contribute to maintaining of culture and interests of indigenous peoples. Travel & tourism activity should be based on international law on environmental protection.

It has also outlined ten objectives for travel & tourism companies (Agora21 2016):

1. Minimization, reuse and recycling of waste.
2. Effective energy management.
3. Freshwater resources management.
4. Sewage treatment.
5. Disposal of hazardous waste.
6. Transport and transportation management.
7. Land-use planning.
8. Participation of local residents, clients and employees in environmental activities.
9. Implementation of projects in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
10. Partnerships for development of sustainability.

Thus, we can conclude, that Agenda 21 has clearly outlined principles of sustainability in tourism, which in its turn has changed ecological tourism into industry of responsible business.

3.3 Worldwide Practice of Ecotourism

3.3.1 Ecotourism at the Level of International Politics

Although the terms of ecotourism or sustainable tourism are hardly mentioned in Agenda 21, nevertheless, to date, it has already become the subject of several important international declarations. Among them are:

- “the Charter for Sustainable Tourism of UNESCO”, adopted at the first World Conference on Sustainable Tourism hold on the island of Lanzarote in 1995 (Sustainable Tourism +20 2015).

- Male' Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development, adopted at the Asia-Pacific Ministers' Conference on Tourism and Environment in 1997 (UNWTO 2016).
- The *Berlin Declaration* on Biological Diversity and *Sustainable* Tourism, 1997, adopted on the initiative of Ministry of German at the International Conference of Environment Ministers on Biodiversity and Tourism from eighteen countries (The Global Development Research Center 2016).
- The UNEP Principles for the Implementation of Sustainable Tourism, 2000. The *United Nations Commission* on Sustainable Development (CSD) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched together a consultative process at various levels to implement the principles of sustainable tourism (UNWTO 2000, 1). The result of the collaboration is adopted at Santo Domingo the International Guidelines for Activities Related to Sustainable Tourism Development in Vulnerable Ecosystems, 2001 (CBD 2001).

The findings of all above mentioned measures and adopted regulations were presented at the World Ecotourism Summit at Quebec, Canada, in 2002 and in connection with this the United Nations declared International Year of Ecotourism in 2002.

3.3.2 What Kind of Tour Can Be Called an Ecological Tour?

Ecotourism should meet the interests of tourists as well as local population. It should be managed in the way of non-destructive use of tourism resources. Thereby it is interesting to know, whether ecotourism can be mass tourism or is it an exclusive form of activity for limited number of travelers?

Firstly ecotourism was traditionally opposed to mass tourism and it was associated with elitist tours for small groups of people (Mir-Baikala 2013). However, based on the concept of sustainable development, such perception of ecological tours does not seem well-grounded.

One of the most striking examples is Lake Nakuru National Park in Kenia, so called "The Bird Watchers' Paradise". It was visited by more than 344

thousand of tourists in 2005 and its revenues comes to 2,624 million dollars, which is many times greater than annual income of the local population from cattle-breeding (Henninger 2014, 88-89).

Thus, from the point of view of nature preservation the scale of tourism activities or motivation of tourists are not really significant, but the impact that tourists provide on the environment while traveling. Therefore appropriate management of travel to nature is very important. Ten tourists may cause more harm than a hundred, if their journey is not properly planned and organized.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (further - WWF), the biggest international nature conservation organization, states that the main power in management and planning of ecotourism should be given to local communities. In connection with this, based on principles of sustainable development WWF developed guidelines for community-based ecotourism development (WWF 2001, 1-24). On the basis of the guidelines I have composed a table 1 of criteria for ecological tour.

Table 1. Criteria of an ecological tour

Principles of Ecotourism	Criteria of an Ecological Tour
Minimization of negative effects on the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exceeding of the permissible recreational capacity of natural resource is not allowed. - Tourism activity should be planned and managed carefully. - Tourists should behave in accordance with established rules at the natural resource. - Tourists should use ecological transport. - Garbage is collected and recycled in a special way separately from waste of local communities. - Tourist camps and stays are arranged only in specially equipped places. - Tourists should not buy souvenirs made of rare animals. - Collection of plants, berries and mushrooms is allowed only in permitted places. - Hotels and campsites are built from environmentally friendly materials; tourists do not consume too much water and energy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourists eat organic food of local production.
Nature conservation and improvement of local socio-cultural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revenues from tourism should be spent to the development of protected areas and nature conservation. - Tourists should do what one can to help in environmental protection. - Tourists should respect the local culture, customs and lifestyles. - Tourism should encourage local communities to keep their traditions for wildlife, nature and way of life.
Environmental education and awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourists get information about the nature and rules of conduct in advance, before the tour starts. - All tours include cognitive component about local environment and culture. Tours are conducted by qualified guides. - Walking on the nature trails, visiting of local history museums, museums of nature, local farms are included in the tour program. - Tourists get acquainted with local environmental problems and ways to solve them.
Income for local residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism should create job for local communities and stimulate use of local production in tourist services. - Tourism should promote development of traditional form of economy.
Cost-effectiveness and contribution to sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An integrated approach to the development of tourism activities. - Careful planning, monitoring and management of tourism. - Tourism should be a part of regional plans for development. - Close co-operation between regional organizations in various fields. - Tourism revenues are not withdrawn entirely from the regional budget but are contributed to the development of the region.

It is safe to say, that a tour organized according to the given criteria can be called an ecological even if mass tourists participate in it.

It is also worth to notice, that with increasing demand for ecotourism, many tour operators conceive a desire to use the prefix “eco” to all nature-based packages they

sale. In order to make out “real” ecological packages, tour operators were offered to certify their tourist products. Despite the fact that ecotourism certification is voluntary and not a prerequisite for tourism organizations, it gives appropriate guarantees to consumers that selected tour operator adheres to the principles of sustainability.

The most known eco-certification systems in tourism to date are the following: 1) Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP) in Australia which has been suggested as a model for all other systems of eco-certification, 2) Green Business Tourism Scheme in UK and Scotland, 3) Certification of Sustainable tourism in Costa Rica and 4) Green Globe 21, an international certification system which offers accreditation to all kinds of operators in the industry of tourism (GoNOMAD Travel 2016).

3.3.3 Ecotourist Characteristics

Who they are - potential and actual participants of ecological tours? Why they choose an ecological tour? On the one hand, answers to these questions will help tourism companies to design a better tourist product; on the other hand, it will help them to avoid negative impacts on the environment.

There are several different typologies of ecotourists proposed by researchers from Australia, Canada, Northern and Central America. Each typology has its own approach to the division of ecotourists to one or another category. For instance, they are divided according to 1) the evaluation of tourists' social value, 2) the benefits which ecotourists get from their travels, 3) ecotourism activities, 4) motivation factors or 5) in relation to the ecotourist behavior. The first typology of ecotourists was proposed by Londberg in 1991. In accordance with this typology ecotourists are divided in four types (Carvajal 2013, 35) that are presented in the table 2.

Table 2. Typology of ecotourists

Types of Ecotourists	Interpretation of the Type
“Hard-score tourists”	They are scientists, or other participants of special-purpose tours.
“Dedicated tourists”	Tourists who come to the protected areas for the purpose to know more about the local nature and culture.
“Mainstream tourists”	The main purpose of these tourists is to have an unusual journey.
“Casual tourists”	Tourists who visit natural areas incidentally as a part of a wider tourist program.

Although this typology is not the exemplary one, because one and the same ecotourist at different time can participate in different ecological tours and thus be assigned to different groups, but in my opinion this classification may be useful in planning or marketing of ecotourism.

Commissioned by WTO, a group of scientists conducted the research in the U.S.A.(WTO 2002, 39, 43-45) to reveal ages of ecotourists and main motivations on the basis of which they choose ecological tours to nature. Despite the fact, that The International Ecotourism Society states that the average age of an ecotourist is between 35 – 54 years old, according to the research, the highest percentages of ecotourists are younger people of 18 – 34 years of age, whereas older age group is less willing to participate in ecotourism activity. The most common motivations for participation in an ecological tour among all age groups are:

- Leisure, recreation and holiday (92, 8%).
- Visiting friends and relatives (30, 3 %).
- Conducting business (6, 2 %) or study/teaching activities (6, 9 %).

Another interesting fact is that the percentage of tourists choosing ecological tours for the purpose of health improvement is only one percent. Thus it is possible to conclude that tourists who choose ecological tours are determined by the wish to have new experiences, informal communication or combining business with pleasure.

On the basis of said above and guided by the conducted research on ecotourists (WTO 2002), we can draw a distinctive portrait of an ecotourist. So, as usual they are enthusiastic nature lovers who choose cognitive tours to nature places or protected nature areas are the main purpose of their travel. They would like to learn new and have new experience while traveling. They prefer outdoor activities but do not like extreme conditions. “Soft” ecological tours are the most appropriate for them. Most often they travel with spouses or families. Also the possibility of privacy is very important to them. They spend more time for their ecological travel than other kind of tourists (almost 17 days versus 14 days for other tourists). They are less demanding for comfort, they are willing to eat the local food, enjoy the services of the local people. Ecotourists are interested in the local customs and traditions more than other tourists.

3.4 Perception of Ecotourism in Finland

Discussions about what is ecotourism began in Finland in the early 90s. Due to the existence of many controversial opinions about its concept at the world arena, the idea of ecotourism was not understood in Finland and doubts were cast upon its concept both in the scientific and practical communities (Verhelä 2014, 143).

This led to the fact that from the very beginning ecotourism was compared to any nature tourism and was named as Verhelä mentioned “ympäristöä säästävä matkailu” (translation – “environmentally-friendly tourism”). A final rejection of ecotourism happened in 1993, when Finnish Tourist Board officially announced that ecotourism was not conducive to the preservation of natural sites visited by tourists. At the same time such tool of ecotourism management as possibility of charging a fee for tourists' entrance to areas of natural sights for the purposes of nature conservation was not taken into account (Björk 2000, 197-198).

It was proposed to use the concept of sustainability in tourism instead of ecotourism and then Finnish National Commission on Sustainable

Development (FNCSD) was appointed in 1993. At first, the idea of sustainable development was not more than a new trend that many attempted to adapt for the purpose of tourism marketing. However, from this point on, it was outlined own standpoint upon this question in Finland, according to which the main idea of sustainability relates to the environment conservation, namely to energy saving and recycling, whereas in Central Europe the idea of sustainability in tourism has been viewed through the prism of ethics and social responsibility (Verhelä 2014, 143).

For further promotion of sustainable development in tourism Finnish Tourist Board (MEK, whose functions are transferred in 2015 to the department of Finpro ry: Visit Finland) launched a project "*Ympäristöä säästävän matkailun edistämis- ja kehittämishanke*" (YSMEK) (translation - Promotion and development of environmentally-friendly tourism) in 1993. Ministry of the Environment, The Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa, Service Union United PAM and Finnish Environment Institute SYKE participated in the project. The project resulted in the creation of Accommodation and foodservice environmental management system and Environmental Guide for event organizers. The aim of the project was to make the functioning of the tourism industry in Finland the most environmentally-friendly (Hentinen 2009, 37).

Finnish Tourist Board gave the following explanation regarding the difference between ecotourism and sustainable tourism: "*Ecotourism is a part of sustainable tourism which is a part of sustainable development*". Ecotourism is considered in Finland as "*a special group of products*" but not like "*a quality name*". (Finnish Tourist Board 2011). A schematic explanation of the place of ecotourism products among other tourist products is presented in the Figure 2.

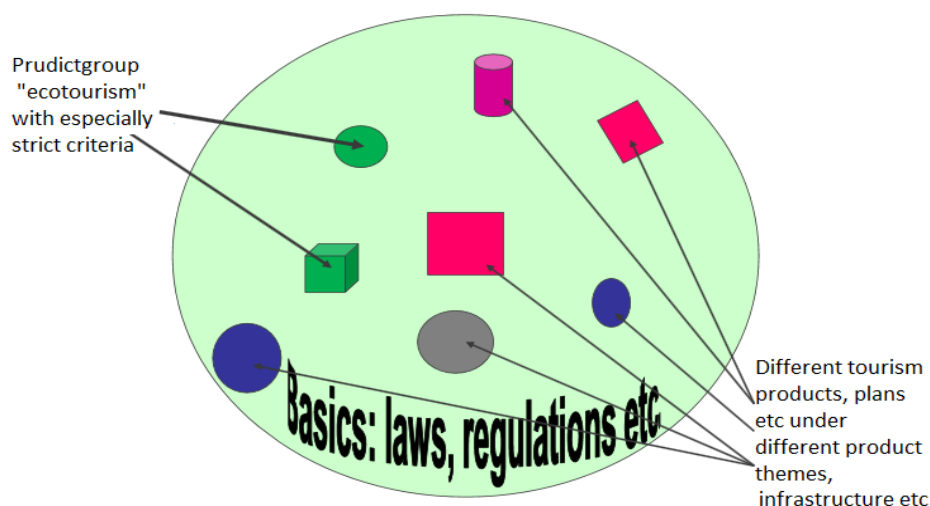


Figure 2. Tourism in Finland (Finnish Tourist Board 2011)

In connection with such perception of ecotourism and being guided by examples of Finnish Tourist Board, it seems possible, in our opinion, to divide “*ecotourism group of products*” into two parts. The first part is products referred to accommodation facilities and organic farming, the second part includes tourist activities like routes to nature and nature conservation areas, wild life or bird-watching and photographing.

There are no associations that directly aimed at development of ecotourism in Finland. There is an organization ECEAT Suomi ry (European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism) that is associated with product group “Ecotours” in Finland (Finnish Tourist Board 2011). It has a certification system for farms and enterprises operated in the service field of tourism for their compliance with principles of sustainable development. The purpose of ECEAT Suomi is development of agritourism and sustainable land use, environmental and nature conservation, protection of culture and traditional rural scenery, as well as promotion of environmental education (ECEAT Suomi ry).

Other logos used for identification of regarded as “eco” organic production are *Leppäkerttumerkki* (Organic farming), *Aurinkomerkki* (Organic production), *Demeter* (biodynamic production), *Maakuntien Parhaat* (national quality label

for snack food, crafts and agritourism enterprises) and *Malo* (quality of accommodation facilities) (Finnish Tourist Board 2011).

Guide information about the routes which refer to Finnish ecotourism is available on the Internet-resource of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation (www.ikkunasuomenluontoon.fi/retkiopas/). Everyone can select an interesting destination on the map or set a place name in the search box of the website, to see pictures of an area, read a description and add comments about the route (Luonnonsuojeluliitto 2016). According to instructions for use of the Internet-resource, everyone can get an access to the guide. So, when you have a registration, it is possible to add information about the routes you took to a nature area of Finland, so that other users could also use this route and add comments. There are a lot of ecological trail routes described on the site. Noteworthy that the list of routes on the website is not a closed and it can be constantly updated by users. Unfortunately, all information about these types of ecotourism activities is available only in the Finnish language.

Another example of Finnish ecotourism product is Wild Taiga: wild life and birds' watching and photographing. Wild Taiga is a brand name which unites 60 entrepreneurs of tourism industry at Kainuu region of Eastern Finland. The area is very picturesque with its nature and is one of the best places to observe the wild fauna within tourist programs offered by Wild Taiga (Wild Taiga 2015).

Despite the vast number of publications on sustainable tourism, it also has being taken some steps with the participation of Metsähallitus (Finnish Administration of Forests) in the development of ecotourism in Finland. Thus, in the framework of *Comprehensive International Management Effectiveness Evaluation* (MEE) of the Finnish protected area system National Heritage Services, (now it is Parks & Wildlife Finland, a department of Metsähallitus), gave a comment, according to which the department in cooperation with entrepreneurs organizes ecotourism in national parks of Finland and provides corresponding marketing opportunities for this (Brian & Nigel 2005, 60).

Also, on the initiative of Metsähallitus was conducted a research about segmentation of tourists and ecotourists on the base of their motivation to visit national parks and other protected areas of Finland. The research was conducted in the context of nature-based leisure, travel and ecotourism (Konu & Kajala 2012, 9, 12, 19, 50-51).

The development of ecotourism in Finnish national parks and protected areas is carried out also with help of international projects for the development of tourism and nature preservation. One of such projects is Quality for Cross-border practices in ecotourism (Quality-CET) founded in the cooperation of the EU, the Russia Federation and the Republic of Finland. It was developed in 2012 – 2014. The purpose of the project is to promote Karelia region (Oulanka paanajärvi, Kalevala Parks, Friendship Nature Reserve and Koli-Kivach parks) as an ecotourism destination (Flogny 2014).

4 TOURISM PRODUCT DESIGN

Creation of tourist programs is one of the main needs not only of Rock and Lake, but also many tourist companies in Finland. There are a large range of hotel and restaurant services in Finland. Tourists are usually offered outdoor recreation including only accommodation and meals, because tourist companies simply do not have any excursions. Such specificity of Finnish tourism does not give to tourists an opportunity to have a rest and get desired impression of the trip. In this chapter we consider peculiarities of design of tourism products.

4.1 What Is a Tourism Product?

In the chapter we are going to talk about a tour. Tour is a travel on a pre-planned program and a route, based on a package service (Marchenko 2008, 46). According to Ilina, a package service (or a package tour) is a tourism product that includes a set of tourist services consisting of accommodation, meals, transportation, excursions and consumer services (Ilina 2005, 21).

When forming a package tour it is possible to design a group or an individual tour. A group tour is a cheaper option available to the mass tourist. However, in a group tour each participant should submit to the established rules for the group. An individual tour gives to tourists more independence and autonomy. A tourist himself can draw up a program of his or her trip. Services selected by a tourist are formed in the tour program. Such tours are usually more expensive (Ilina 2005, 21-22). Each tour has the next tour structure that is presented in the Figure 3 (Marchenko 2008, 46):

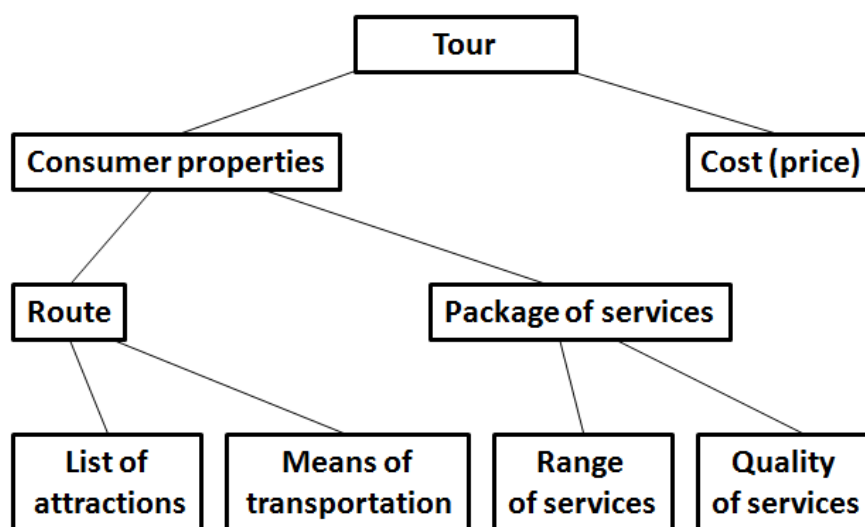


Figure 3. The structure of a tour (Marchenko 2008, 46)

So, we can say that consumer properties and the price are the most important components of a tour. A tourist pays not only accommodation and dinner in the restaurant, but first of all new experience and discovery of unknown, attention and pleasing setting. According to Middleton, a tourism product is estimated by a tourist based on the characteristics of its tangible and intangible components: attractiveness, cognitive component, points of interest, infrastructure, transport system and hospitality (Smith 1994, 584). Therefore, creation of a tour means careful planning of its main components: a route and a set of services.

4.2 Aspects of Ecotourism Product Design

Ctirad Schejbal (2013, 50) noticed that a poorly planned tourism product cannot be well managed in practice. Therefore, for the design of a tourism product it is very important to prepare a detailed plan, which is shown in the Figure 4:

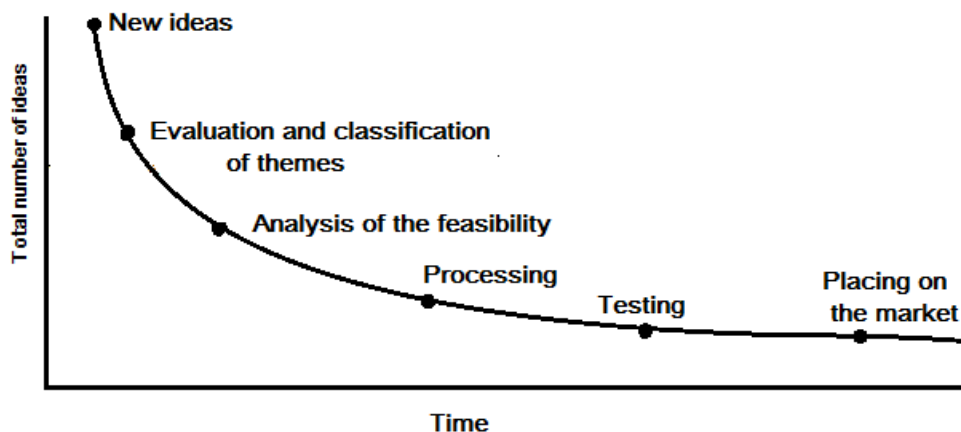


Figure 4. Process of design of a new tourist product (Schejbal 2013, 51)

Tourism product planning should begin with a search for an idea. Consideration of various ideas and choosing the best idea is a key to successful planning of a competitive tourism product. To do this it is important to trace modern trends, to know needs and desires of customers and tourism products existing in the tourist market. It is important to identify the consumer segment for which the tourism product is planned (Schejbal 2013, 51). In our case, the idea is to design an ecological tour in Finland.

Interests and motivation of ecotourists can be quite varied. It is important to bear in mind that not all ecotourists have the same requirements for accommodation comfort, vehicles, professionalism of guides, the degree of informational content of excursions and entertainments in their trip. For example, for “Hard-score tourists” the main point is high biodiversity, the presence of certain species and the possibility to conduct their research. The visual appeal of a landscape and comfortable accommodations are of secondary importance. For birdwatchers (“Dedicated tourists”) variety of avifauna is of the main importance. Such tourists value the opportunity to

register the maximum number of birds' species for the minimum period of time. On the contrary, for "Mainstream tourists" attractiveness of a landscape, good accommodations and other facilities and organization of educational excursions are important (Lindberg 1991, 5).

Once the idea is picked, it is important to determine the theme or concept of the ecological tour. The theme of an ecological tour may be born out of historical events which occurred in the region, it may be associated with a famous person, a mythical character (Schejbal 2013, 52) or with nature sites of tourist region. For instance:

- *The geological past and future of Finland with examples of landscapes in the region of Mikkeli.*

As soon as the idea and the theme of the tourism product are defined, it is possible to start planning an ecological tour, its route and package of services. It is also important to estimate financial and technical abilities of tourism product realization. A team of scientists led by Voronov gives the following recommendations for the design of ecotourism programs (Voronov 2000, 120):

- A program of an ecological tour should contain a description of the region, protected areas and natural (ecological) trails where the tour is conducted. The description should include information on the natural environment, landscapes, climate, flora and fauna and other distinctive features of a tourist region. It is necessary to pick up an interesting title for the ecotour that reflects its theme (concept). For example: *Title "Finland, the land of lakes and crags"; the theme: the geological past and future of Finland with examples of landscapes in the region of Mikkeli.*
- A tour program may be of different duration depending on whether a tourist would like to have: two, three or seven and more days long. Options for the travel program can be used as bricks to design the final program, depending on what tourists wish.

- It is desirable to include in the program of ecological tour places of interest (cultural and historical objects, folk architecture) outside the main route. This helps to reduce the load on the ecosystem and diversifies experience of tourists.
- It is necessary to inform about what kind of transport services and accommodation will be included in the tour before it starts. These components are directly related to the quality of the tourist product because they affect not only the physical but also the emotional perception of the entire trip (Schejbal 2013, 53).
- Tour price. Usually the total price per person for a tour includes accommodation, transportation, meals, guide services, costs for visiting natural and cultural sites. However, currently more often a tour with the following structure, as seen in the Figure 5, is called a package tour:

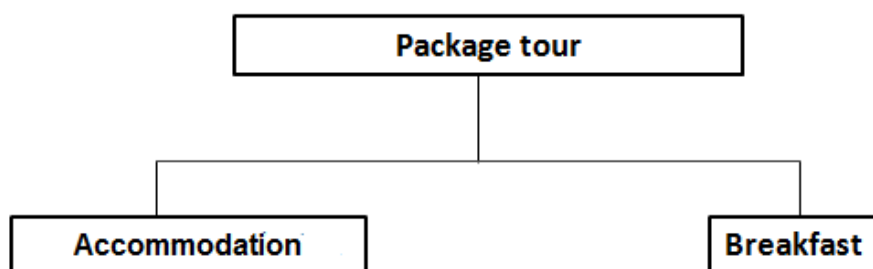


Figure 5. Structure of complex service (Marchenko 2008, 48)

According to the Figure 5, accommodation and meals are necessarily included in the tour costs. Other services and excursions tourists buy at the additional cost for his or her choice during the trip (Marchenko 2008, 48). Thus, tourists are not obliged to pay some excursions when they would not like to participate in them.

- Additional information about the tour program. It is necessary to inform tourists about the level of complexity, necessary physical training. It is important to tell about the best season for visit, a number of tourists in the group, participation of parents with children, age of children,

peculiarities of local cuisine, equipment required for travel and equipment provided by a tour organizer. It is important to inform about how to get to the starting point of the tour, to give a map and to show some pictures of natural sites of the tour (Voronov 2000, 122).

- It is desirable to develop additional materials about the rules of conduct in the area of natural sites and information for environmental education of visitors, which can be given to them before the tour starts (Voronov 2000, 122).

Once a tour product is designed, it is necessary to conduct its testing in practice. The testing should be conducted in the group of people that is maximally similar to the target group. On the basis of results of the experiment the decision on whether the tourism product is ready for selling to consumers or if it needs further refinement can be made.

5 THE ANALYSIS OF THE COMPANY AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

In this chapter we will give a general characterization of Rock and Lake and consider factors of business environment and market segmentation of the organization. The description of Rock and Lake and the analysis of its operations are conducted on the basis of information received through the personal meetings and in telephone conversations with the chairman of the association, Pasi Ilmari Romo as well as with workers and partners of the organization.

5.1 Rock and Lake and Its Business Environment

Rock and Lake is a brand name and an auxiliary business name of Kakkaramäki Ltd. The name has been registered in Finnish Patent and Registration Office. The company was founded in 2012 by Jenni Annikki Wahteristo, the Director of the company. Kakkaramäki Ltd. is a family business. The company is situated in Kangasniemi, Finnish municipality, located in South Savo, not far from Mikkeli (Yritystele.fi 2016).

Rock and Lake is a network of associated entrepreneurs that provide a wide range of region's tourist opportunities. Kakkaramäki Ltd. is at the head of the network. Active in the network are companies that rent out accommodations, provide outdoor activities and cooking service.

We consider Rock and Lake in a context of business environment in which it operates. Business environment is the whole set of internal and external factors which currently have an influence on business. Internal factors are things that affect directly a company, its customer service capabilities and audience it contacts: business partners, clients, competitors, etc. External factors include economic, political, demographic, cultural and historical, technological and other circumstances which the company cannot influence. (Moiseeva 2007, 53)

5.1.1 Internal Factors of Business Environment of Rock and Lake

The first and the most important thing in our view is that Kakkaramäki Ltd. has chosen good business development strategy that gives an opportunity to develop a network consisting of partners, thereby reducing the number of potential competitors. Currently Kakkaramäki Ltd. has 15 business partners which are operating under the brand Rock and Lake in region of South Savo. The major partners of the organization are Hiidenniemen Hirsihuvilat Ltd., Lomaromo Ltd. and Vavesaaren tila Ltd. which rent out accommodations. Also important in the organization are program service companies Uutelan Talli Ltd., Uistelumatka Ltd., Puula Tours Ltd. and Feel Lake Ltd., they are responsible for tourist activities. Kakkaramäki Ltd. also has its own villas, an old school building and boats that are used by tourists. Cleaning and cooking services are organized by specialized organizations which also work under the brand Rock and Lake. The company builds partnerships on the basis of agency agreements, according to which Kakkaramäki Ltd. acts as an agent to obtain business for a principal by searching clients for rental accommodations and selling different tourist activities to them. The said principals pay the agent a commission of the percentage on all sales.

By means of the Internet-site Rock and Lake has organized service process in such way, that a client can design his or her package holiday according to her or his wish choosing offerings from the list. Thus, Rock and Lake has a wide offer of accommodations; the client is provided by a low-budget as well as by more expensive choice of rent. Currently the network has 32 villas available for rent. It also rents out cottages, cabins, and some parts of cottages. In addition it is possible to rent saunas of different types or fonts.

Rock and Lake offers nine cruising routes to clients who rent accommodations; most of them are different types of fishing, also canoeing, pontoon boat or motor boat trips. The organization provides tours for people with disabilities. Currently the company is designing guided walking tours to the surrounding nature attractions (Rock and Lake 2016).

Rock and Lake offers food service to clients. Clients can order meal cooked specially for them according to menu from a restaurant or book cooking service into accommodation. Also there is a kitchen in each accommodation for those clients who would like to cook food by their own.

Rock and Lake has its own niche in the Finnish tourism market. According to the Chairman of Kakkaramäki Ltd., Pasi Romo, competitive advantage of Rock and Lake is that the association offers package holidays, whereas entrepreneurs of the same field of business have only apartments for rent. However, in our view, Rock and Lake cannot be compared with individual organizations acting independently in the Finnish tourism market due to the fact that Rock and Lake has combined efforts of various companies of Finnish tourism industry. In connection with this, in our opinion a real competitor to the network may be a similar union of entrepreneurs operating under the brand name Wild Taiga near the north-eastern border of Finland, in area of Suomussalmi. Another similar association of tourism entrepreneurs is Lapland Safari. Due to the fact, that the second one is situated in the north of the country where tourism conditions are significantly different, we do not take it into account.

We are going to do the comparative analysis of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga despite the fact that at first glance it may seem that these organizations cannot be compared. Wild Taiga is many times bigger than Rock and Lake; it has successfully operated in Finnish tourism market many years. In addition it offers to tourists incomparably more different tourism activities than Rock and Lake. However, it should be mentioned that Wild Taiga also once began its business being a small company, which eventually grew into a big tourist association. Rock and Lake is using a similar idea in the development of the business: it forms a network of tourism entrepreneurs, united under one brand name. The goal of Rock and Lake is to build a large association of Finnish tourism industry in South Savo that would be competitive to Wild Taiga. In connection with this we analyse business activity and tourist offers of both organizations to know what areas of business Rock and Lake should develop at first. Also we have chosen Wild Taiga for the comparative analysis with Rock and Lake in connection with the following factors:

- Despite the more northern position, natural and climatic conditions of the region of Suomussalmi more or less can be compared with nature and climate of South Savo.
- Wild Taiga has products of ecotourism: "Wild life watching and photographing" among other tourist offerings (Finnish Tourist Board 2011).

Association of Wild Taiga was founded in 2004 and currently includes about 60 entrepreneurs in the field of tourism. The field of activity of Wild Taiga is similar to Rock and Lake. It offers both holiday packages and an opportunity to choose activities to your taste. Holiday packages include apartments of different types and cost, large variety of outdoors activities and meals if tourists wish. The variety of apartments of Wild Taiga is very similar to offerings from Rock and Lake.

The incontestable advantage of Rock and Lake is that it is the only association of entrepreneurs in Southern Finland. In turn, a considerable factor of the competitor is the historical significance of the region, since it is operating in the region where The Finnish Winter War took place in 1939-1940 (Wild Taiga, 2016). A further advantage of the competitor is a variety of natural

attractions and wildlife of more northern region, which give an opportunity to design a wider range of different tourist activities.

I conduct a comparative analysis of summer and winter outdoors activities and extra services of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga. I also consider how both organizations provide information about tourist activities to clients according to the next criteria:

1. Description of tourist products
2. Average prices of tourist products
3. Way of advertising and promotion

For the comparative analysis we use information from websites of both organizations.

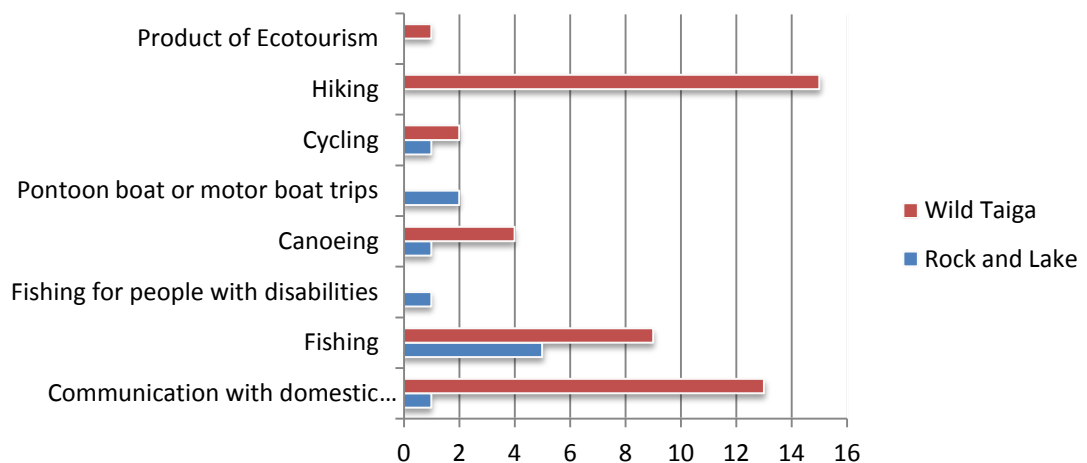


Figure 6. Comparison of summer activities of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga

I present all categories of summer activities of both organizations in the vertical line in the Figure 6. The number of existing tourism programs offered within one type of activities is presented across. It is possible to see from the figure that summer programmes of Wild Taiga within a specific category of activities are more diverse. For instance, Fishing: Rock and Lake has five fishing programmes, whereas Wild Taiga offers nine programmes within this type of activity.

However, Rock and Lake has such activities which Wild Taiga does not have. They are Fishing for people with disabilities, Pontoon boat or motor boat

cruising. It is possible to see the need to develop hiking tourist programmes of Rock and Lake, because it does not exist at the time at all.

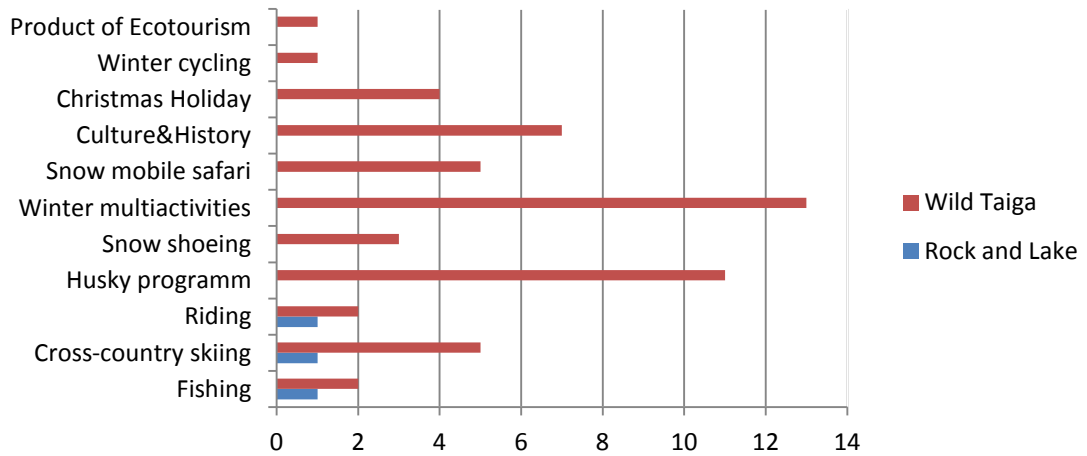


Figure 7. Comparison of winter activities of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga

Winter activities of both companies are arranged vertically in the Figure 7. The number of tourist programs within one type of activities is represented in the horizontal line. The figure 4 shows that winter offerings of Rock and Lake are extremely poor. We can conclude that Rock and Lake cannot be a full-valued competitor to Wild Taiga in winter time. This difference can be explained by the fact that in comparison with Wild Taiga, Rock and Lake is a young and smaller organization, which has much to develop.

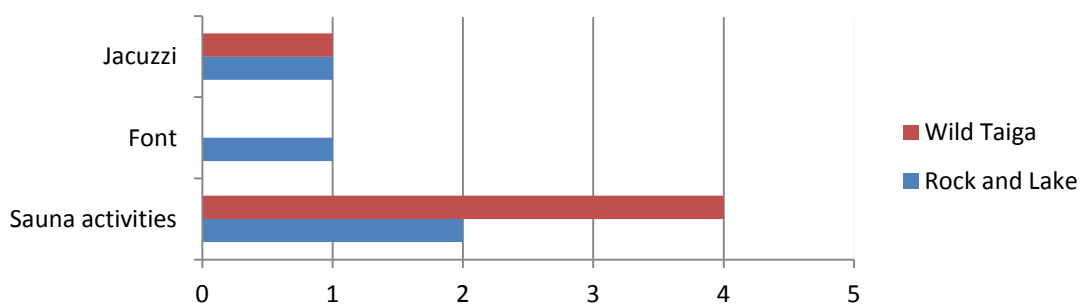


Figure 8. Comparison of extra activities of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga

The comparative analysis of extra services reveals that Rock and Lake has more various offerings of wellbeing services than Wild Taiga. In particular, Rock and Lake has for clients not only saunas and Jacuzzi, but also a font. Wild Taiga has less varied offers, although it has different four options of saunas.

Price comparison of activities of Rock and Lake and Wild Taiga is presented below. To simplify the analysis, I compare prices within one category of activities: Summer Fishing. Price for any fishing activity from Rock and Lake is presented for a group on average of six people per day, whereas Wild Taiga appoints prices for on average of five days long fishing tours per person. In each of the summer fishing program from both organizations are included guide service, fishing equipment and a boat (if it is necessary).

For the purpose of comparison, I use average prices of summer fishing for a person per day from both organizations. Calculation was performed in the Excel program and presented in Appendix 3, the results of the calculation are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of prices for summer fishing for a person per day

Summer Fishing average price from Rock and Lake	Summer Fishing average price from Wild Taiga
100,5 €	94,5 €

Price for fishing from Rock and Lake is six euro more expensive. In my opinion the price difference is not significant. So we can conclude that, prices for summer fishing from Rock and Lake are competitive.

Next I consider ways of conveying of information on tourist products of both organizations to clients. For the most effective service promotion Rock and Lake actively advertises itself on sites Facebook, Vkontakte and Tripadvisor; places booking offerings on booking.com and airbnb.com. Rock and lake publishes videos and photos about Finnish nature and its tourist products on Youtube and Instagram. This year Rock and Lake has launched a new multilingual version of website (En, De, Fi, Ru, Es) with convenient and easy interface. The website has its own booking system and it is optimized to Google search engine.

Analyzing the website of Wild Taiga, I found out that the association is actively advertised on Facebook and Tripadvisor. The company also publishes the pictures and videos about its products on Youtube and Instagram. It places information about services on the Internet catalog of ideas, Pinterest.com. The

company has a comprehensive and easy-to-use website in two languages (Fi, En).

Wild Taiga won in 2008 the title of Finland's Emerging Tourist Destination of Excellence in the European Commission's "European Destinations of Excellence" international competition. So, information about Wild Taiga is possible to find on the Internet resource European Best Destination and on Wikipedia.fi

If it is possible do not take into consideration the winning European Commission's international competition, it could be concluded, that the advertising methods of both organizations are almost the same. Both of them use the most effective Internet resources available today for the promotion. Multilingual website of Rock and Lake may give the organization some addition advantage in searching clients.

In conclusion, we can say that Wild Taiga is a big competitor for Rock and Lake. It has operated in the market three times longer than Rock and Lake. Anyway, both networks offer tourist activities of the same type on the basis of rent accommodations. However, the product line of Wild Taiga is much broader and it has products of ecotourism. Especially for winter activities both networks cannot be compared as competitors at all. Rock and Lake is a young organization in Finnish tourist market, so current lack of tourist offerings is quite understandable. The designing of winter activities as well as the development of summer walks programs would be a priority for Rock and Lake.

5.1.2 External Factors of Business Environment of Rock and Lake

External factors are those that appear outside of a company and independently of its will. The company is not able to influence these factors. However, under the influence of the factors the microenvironment of the company is forming. These are economic, political, climatic, cultural and historical, technical factors and etc. (Moiseeva 2007, 53). Due to the fact, that there are very many conditions influencing the company within each of these factors, I explain only the most important of them.

There is a clear link between the development of tourism, the overall growth of economy and personal income of people. Thus, a growth of business activity of population in the world and an increase in personal income refer to *economic factors*. For instance, rising incomes and increasing leisure time, has caused an increase in outbound travel by 68% in the U.S.A. over the past decade. Number of visits in Europe by the Americans for the purpose of tourism has doubled. Moreover, half of all American tourists come to Europe for the purpose of ecotourism (WTO 2002, 25). Another example is China, a country of rapid economic growth. With the increase of affluence, the growth of outbound tourism from China is amounted to 120 millions of trips per year (Zitting 2015). These circumstances provide an excellent opportunity for “Rock and lake” to promote its services to new tourist markets.

Another important economic factor is funds allocated by Finland to the development of tourism. According to the Finnish tourism development strategy 2020, the development of inbound tourism is one of the priorities of economy. In connection with the desire to increase the flow of income and taxes to the state treasury, it was decided to provide financial assistance to tourism businesses, especially to such groups of companies like Rock and Lake. These businesses are expected to play a leading role in selling of tourist products on the international market and attracting foreign capital into the country.

Finnish Tourist Board (MEK, now it is Visit Finland) was tasked to promote inbound tourism to the country and to assist Finnish tourism companies in development and marketing of their tourist products on international markets (Finpro 2015). According to the Strategy, public funding for tourism promotion in 2008 was amounted to 16.2 million euro, and by 2010, should be gradually reduced to 9.8 million euro. Anyway, in 2015 state support for the development of Finnish tourism market was 10 million euro. (Finpro 2015). In my opinion such state support creates favorable conditions for the development of tourism in the country.

Recent developments in Ukraine and Crimea refer to *political factor* that significantly affects Rock and Lake. Political sanctions against Russia have caused increasing of euro. Travels to Finland have become very expensive for Russians. This results in a significant reduction of Russian tourists in Finland. Finland is experiencing the consequences of this political crisis so far. Russian tourists were the main market for Rock and Lake. Currently the organization has clients from countries of Europe and the U.S.A. Rock and Lake is going to develop partnerships with Chinese tourism companies.

Ecological and climatic factors are also important for business activity of Rock and Lake. The main driving force behind the development of ecotourism in the world is a rapidly growing demand for recreation in nature, which arises due to inconsistency between the urban lifestyle and mental needs of a human (Novikov 2007). People are more willing to spend vacations in untouched nature. Finland is one of the few countries in Europe that fully meets the needs of such tourists.

Thus, a province of South Savo is considered to be the most environmentally friendly region of Finland (Da.fi 2016). Beautiful lake scenery, rocky shores, coniferous and mixed forests full of peace and tranquility, provide excellent opportunities for recreation. It has a great potential for development of foot tours along forest trails and observation and photographing of wild animals and birds in their natural habitat. South Savo has great potential for development of ecotourism activities both in summer and winter.

Despite the fact that Finland is a northern country, the climate of the province is soft enough. There is a sunny and hot summer and a snowy winter in the province. The climate in South Savo is significantly influenced by a large number of lakes, which are warming up during the summer. In this connection, there are almost no cold nights in June, July and August in the province. There is a unique system of Lake Saimaa in the province. The second largest lake systems of South Savo are Puulavesi and Kyyvesi where Rock and Lake is operating (Ilmasto-opas 2013).

Cultural and historical factors are indisputably important for the development of tourism in the region. Experienced ecotourists tend to combine several types of outdoor activities in a single trip. They pay great attention to culture, history and way of life of local population (Hrabovchenko 2003). The South Savo offers opportunities for cultural, cognitive and historical tours. There is an old farm-museum Liehtalanniemi near the village of Puumala where it is possible to take a closer look at the traditional rural way of life in Finland. It is also possible to visit Ollinmäki winery in the village of Antola, municipality of Mikkeli and taste Finnish berry wines. Rapio Mill is an old water mill of the early 19th century, which is still in working condition. It gives opportunity to experience an atmosphere of rural life, where you can enjoy Finnish traditional pastries. Art Centre Salmela is one of the largest and well-known centers of Finland. Various cultural events, exhibitions of Finnish art and concerts regularly take place there. Other interesting place in Mikkeli is Kenkävero, an ancient papal manor. There are also Finnish craft centers located on its territory (Visitmikkeli 2016). For theatre and classical music lovers there is Mikaeli, a concert and congress hall in Mikkeli. As one of the options, it is also possible to organize tours to churches of the region.

The next significant factors for successful business activity of the company are *technical factors*. The development of tourism in the world is also connected with technological progress: development of air communication and ground transportation makes flights and transfers easier and cheaper. Technological advance has it made possible to exchange information quickly and inexpensively.

Thus, business activity of Rock and Lake is completely based on the use of the Internet. They communicate with partners and clients as well as make advertising predominantly on the Internet. In comparison with a telephone or fax machine, Internet technology allows to work at lower cost when booking tours and apartments online.

The analysis of external factors of Rock and Lake's business environment reveals that tourism is an industry, which depends on political and economic

developments in the country and in the world. However, there are all conditions for development of tourism in Finland. Natural resources, cultural heritage, as well as the state support give great opportunity to Rock and Lake for designing unique and popular products of ecological tourism for international tourist market.

5.2 Characteristics of Market Segmentation of the Company

In this chapter I describe client segment of Rock and Lake. Market segmentation is a process of dividing consumers into groups according to similarity in their requests or needs. Market segmentation helps a company to understand who its clients are. The main idea of market segmentation is that not all customers have needs for the same product. In connection with this, for the company it would be the most effective to focus attention on a concrete market segment where the product could bring the most revenue (Dadakova & Draganchuk 2005).

At the beginning I tried to carry out cluster-based analysis to identify clients of Rock and Lake. I left paper questionnaires in all tourist apartments and asked summer clients to fill it in. However, I received very few completed questionnaires by the end of summer. It was not enough for the analysis. In connection with this, I had to change the method of data collection. The content of the chapter is based on data obtained from the interview with a worker of client service of Rock and Lake. Questions of the interview are presented in Appendix 4. The organization has not yet conducted the research on its existing clients; however the worker has collected some information about them. I conducted the interview with the worker of client service, using the parameters for market segmentation by geographic, demographic, psychological and behavioral features (Kotler 2012).

Segmentation by geographical features means the division of the market into different geographical units and advisability of doing work in a region. I found out that the most part of all clients of Rock and Lake were Russians. But currently situation has changed and the company has more clients from

Northern Europe, the Baltic States, than from Russia. Rock and Lake has increasingly clients also from the U.S.A. and Central Europe.

Segmentation by demographic features supposes the division of the market into groups according to age, gender, family size, family life circle, income, occupation, education, social class, religious belief, race and generation. Here I found out that clients of Rock and Lake are people 35 years old or older. Usually they are young couples without children, older spouses that have children older than 18 years old or single men and women who come with friends. Tourists with little children are rather an exception, than a rule.

The clients are people with secondary and higher education of various fields of work and different incomes. By nationality they are Russians, living in Europe, Latvians, Lithuanians, Danes, Finns, Germans, Poles, Americans, Englishmen and sometimes Russians from Russia.

Psychological segmentation is based on the division depending on personal habits, lifestyle and values. Customers of Rock and Lake are lively and sociable people who prefer outdoor activities, it is important for them to get new experience in travel and learn something new. They appreciate and enjoy nature. They are less demanding for comfort, although they need some of the basic facilities.

Segmentation on the basis of behavioral features includes the division of clients into groups according to occasion of purchasing, desired benefits, intensity of consumption and attitude to the product. Clients of Rock and Lake are people looking for calm recreation in nature, away from a bustle of the city. Clean environment and water in the place of recreation are important to clients. Often they are clients of not certain loyalty, visiting Finland for the first time. However, Rock and Lake has several regular clients who come for a vacation to Finland every summer.

From the above it is possible to conclude that the company is more oriented to recreation for adults, because there are almost no families with little children among clients of Rock and Lake. It is also important to say that Rock and Lake is a young organization with good prospects for development in the

international tourism market. The organization has its own customer segment, but currently it is possible to see the barest necessity to develop tourism programs at Rock and Lake to develop the business and attract new tourists. This is why in the next chapter I am going to talk about designing of an ecological tour in summer time which includes hiking activities.

6 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter I consider the results of the research about consumer demand for ecological tours in Finland, as well as I present a tourism product designed on the basis of the research results: an ecological tour “Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola”.

6.1 The Research on the Consumer Demand for Ecotourism in Finland

In order to create a successful tourism product it is necessary to know what it should be and for what target group it is designed. To find out this information, I conducted the research of consumer demand for a variety of ecotourism activities, which could be used for making up an ecological tour for Rock and Lake.

I conducted the research with help of online survey. The findings describe the portraits of consumers and their interests in the proposed tourism products. In the first phase of the research I have selected criteria on the basis of which the questionnaire was composed. The questionnaire consists of two parts. There are standard questions in the first part of the survey that reflect social, demographic and geographic characteristics of a target group: gender, age, social status (occupation) and country of residence (Kotler 2012). I have not included in the list the question about the income, because the participants of the interview are ecotourists from different countries with different economies and currencies. In this way it is difficult to raise the question that reflect the real situation and would give data suitable for further analysis. Instead, I have included the question of the social status of the respondent (the question about the occupation), based on the fact that even people with small income can make a trip to Finland if the tour program is interesting to them.

The second part consists of questions aimed at identifying behavioral trait: an interest or lack of interest in the proposed ecotourism products (Kotler 2012). I have chosen the behavioral trait for the survey on the base of literature and Internet resources, worked over for the purpose of the thesis. The analysis of the literature and Internet resources shows that almost nobody knows Finland as a tourist country. This fact is also confirmed when during the collecting of the responses to the online questionnaire, primarily on Facebook, I received answers "I do not have any idea about Finland". In this regard, many ecotourists from Europe, Asia and America do not consider Finland as the country of a possible trip.

In connection with this, as a basis for the research we have taken the behavioral trait: the attitude of ecotourists toward specific list of ecotourism activities that are popular in other more known ecotourism countries (Canada, German, Africa, Russia Norway, Sweden and Lithuania). The criteria that I have taken into account when compiling questions for the questionnaire:

- The possibility to adapt the activities to the conditions of ecotourism in Finland.
- Technical and financial possibilities of Rock and Lake.

The online survey was conducted in order to obtain a numerical (or approximate percentage) indexes of the attractiveness of a particular activity. The most frequently selected activities are regarded as promising for inclusion in the ecological tour program. Similarly I assessed demographic characteristics of respondents. The group of respondents with the highest numerical (percentage) index was selected as a target group.

The second phase of the research consisted directly of conducting the online survey. I describe the way of the conducting of the online survey in subchapter 2.4.1 and 2.4.2. The final phase of the research is the processing and analysis of the data presented in subchapters 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 of the thesis. All numerical (percentage) results of the research were processed and counted by hand. The results of the calculation were checked twice.

6.1.1 The Results of the Research on Characteristics of the Target Group

According to popular belief ecotourists are people older than 35 years old, with good welfare and education. However, according to the results of my research, the most active group of ecotourists interested in Finland is people between 19 - 35 years old. This group includes 141 ecotourists of all surveyed ecotourists. The next group that is three times smaller consists of ecotourists between 36 - 55 years old. This group included 54 respondents. At the same time, in Table 4 is possible to see, that the most active ecotourists are women. The number of women in both age groups exceeds the number of men for 25 women between 19 – 35 years old and eight women between 36 – 55 years old. Age groups of ecotourists under 18 years old and over 56 years old represent a minority. However, when I compare these two groups of ecotourists, I see that the group of people older than 55 years old is a little bit bigger than the group of people under the age of 18 years.

Table 4. Age and gender of ecotourists participating in the survey

Age range	Male ecotourists	Female ecotourists	All ecotourists
0 – 18 years old	4	4	8
19 – 35 years old	58	83	141
36 – 55 years old	23	31	54
56 – 100 years old	5	6	11
		Overall	214

The results of the research about the social status (the occupation) of ecotourists are presented in the Table 5. It reveals that the greatest interest in ecological tours to Finland is among the age group of 19 - 35 years old: students, they make up 72 respondents of the total number involved in the survey. They are followed by young workers and entrepreneurs in the same age group; their total number is 69. The third group of ecotourists is mainly the older generation of workers and some number of entrepreneurs between 36 - 55 years old. They form 54 respondents of all ecotourists. I do not analyze groups of ecotourists under 18 years old and older than 55 years old in the work, because they are very small.

Table 5. Occupations of ecotourists participating in the survey

Age	School child	Student	Worker	Business man	Pensioner	All
0–18	7	1				8
19–35		72	59	10		141
36–55			45	9		54
56–100			2	2	7	11
Overall	7	73	106	21	7	214

Table 6 presents the results about the place of residence of ecotourists (*Students and Workers between 19 – 35 years old and Workers between 36 – 55 years old*). According to the research, the largest group of ecotourists interested in ecotourism to Finland lives in Europe. They make up 104 ecotourists of the age group 19 - 35 years old and 36 ecotourists of the age group 36 - 55 years old of the total number of respondents. I consider this group in details.

Thus, the biggest part of ecotourists from Europe is accounted for Eastern Europe (mainly for Russia). Analyzing ecotourists of Eastern Europe we also marked out groups with quantitative features similar to those that are given in the Table 5. Thus, the largest group of ecotourists from Eastern Europe consists of 43 students. The second, most numerous group is the young generation of workers and entrepreneurs between 19 - 35 years old. This is the group of 39 ecotourists that is for 4 ecotourists smaller than the group of students. The third group consists of workers and entrepreneurs between 36 - 55 years old; the total number of ecotourists in the group is 25.

The next largest group of ecotourists from Europe lives in Northern and Western Europe. Generation 19 - 35 years old is represented by 21 respondents, the majority of which are young workers. The group of the generation of 36 – 55 years old consists of 10 respondents. The least interest in ecotourism to Finland is observed in Southern Europe. At least, there are almost no participants from these parts of Europe in the survey.

A similar pattern about the ratio of the age and the size of groups of ecotourists is observed in other parts of the world: groups of respondents between 19 – 35 years old are bigger, than groups of respondents from the older generation between 36 - 55 years old. Thus, the generation between 19 - 35 years old from Asia is presented in the survey by 22 ecotourists. There are 15 students and young workers 7 among them. The group of the generation 36 - 55 years old smaller: 9 ecotourists. There are 4 ecotourists between 19 - 35 years old and one ecotourist between 36 - 55 years old from Africa. The group of generation 19 – 35 years old from America consists of 11 ecotourists versus 8 ecotourists between 36 – 55 years old.

Table 6. Place of residence of participated in the survey ecotourists

	Student 19-35	Worker 19-35	Business man 19-35	Worker 36-55	Business man 36-55
Eastern Europe	43	34	5	23	2
Northern Europe	3	8	2	6	2
Southern Europe	0	0	1	0	1
Western Europe	4	4	0	1	1
Total	50	46	8	30	6
Eastern Asia	6	1	0	1	0
Southern Asia	0	0	0	0	1
South-Eastern Asia	0	1	0	5	0
Western Asia	0	3	0	1	1
Central Asia	9	2	0	0	0
Total	15	7	0	7	2
Northern Africa	2	1	1	1	0
Total	2	1	1	1	0
Northern America	2	1	0	1	0
Southern America	3	3	1	3	1
Central America	0	1	0	3	0
Total	5	5	1	7	1
Overall	72	59	10	45	9

A specific list of countries of presented in the table 6 parts of the world is in the Appendix 5. The given division in the parts of the world is done according to the grouping presented by the UN.

From the discussed above data I have found an interrelation between such characteristics as the age, the social status (the occupation) and the country of residence of ecotourists. I have collected the information about the gender of the respondents for the marketing purposes of Rock and Lake and it has been included in the thesis only as a reference data. To simplify the analysis, we add Businessmen to the group of Workers of the same generation because the number of Businessmen is not enough for the separate analysis.

For the purpose of the research I took into account ecotourists living in Europe and partly Asia because they constitute the largest group of surveyed participants. Respondents from other parts of the world are not included in the target group because of the very small number of received answers.

As one result of the analysis, I have marked out three target groups:

1. Ecotourists "*Students 19 - 35 years old*". This is the most active and largest group with an interest in ecotourism in Finland. The country of residence of the group is Europe, mainly it is Russia. We have also added students from Asia in the group, since 15 participants are approximately 1/5 of the total number of surveyed students. As a whole to ecotourists students refer 65 out of 72 participants, accounting for approximately 90% of all surveyed students.
2. Ecotourists "*Workers 19 - 35 years old*" are the second largest group of ecotourists, consisting of employees and entrepreneurs that live in Europe, mainly in Russia. It consists of 54 out of 69 participants which are about 78 % of all workers and businessmen of 19 – 35 years old.
3. Ecotourists "*Workers 36 - 55 years old*" is active and the third largest group of ecotourists, consisting of workers and entrepreneurs living Europe, mainly in Russia. This group includes 36 out of 54 respondents that is accounting for approximately 66% of all workers and businessmen of 36 – 55 years old.

6.1.2 The Results of the Research on Attitude of Ecotourists to Different Kinds of Ecotourism Activities in Finland

The results of the research about ecotourism activities that are interested to the generation of “*Students 19 - 35 years old*” are presented in the Figure 9.

The results reveal that students are most interested in overland trips, active walking in the nature and cognitive excursions about culture and traditional way of life in Finland. Traditional calm vacations in a summer cottage are not for them.

Thus, in the first place for this group are outdoor activities: visiting unique natural places and objects (63 (97%) respondents), walking along the natural/ecological paths (62 (95%) respondents) and watching wild birds and animals in natural habitat (60 (92%) respondents). It is also noteworthy that the water excursions are not as popular among these tourists like walking. Only 34 (52%) respondents chose canoeing and boating.

An interest to culture and traditional way of life in Finland is in the second place: Students choose such activities like meeting with village craftsmen at work (56 (88%) people), meeting with local folk groups (55 (84%) people) and meeting with old-timers and ethnographers and distinctive people (54 (83%) people). Trips to museums (41 (63%) people) are less interesting to these ecotourists.

Finnish sauna (28 (43%) people), fishing (25 (38%) people) and picking wild berries and mushrooms (15 (23%) people) are of the smallest interest to students. This group of ecotourists is much less demanding for comfort. Thus, 38 (58%) respondents chose holidays in a cottage in the traditional rural way of life versus 27 (41%) respondents willing to be accommodated in a house with all facilities.

"Students 19 - 35 years old"

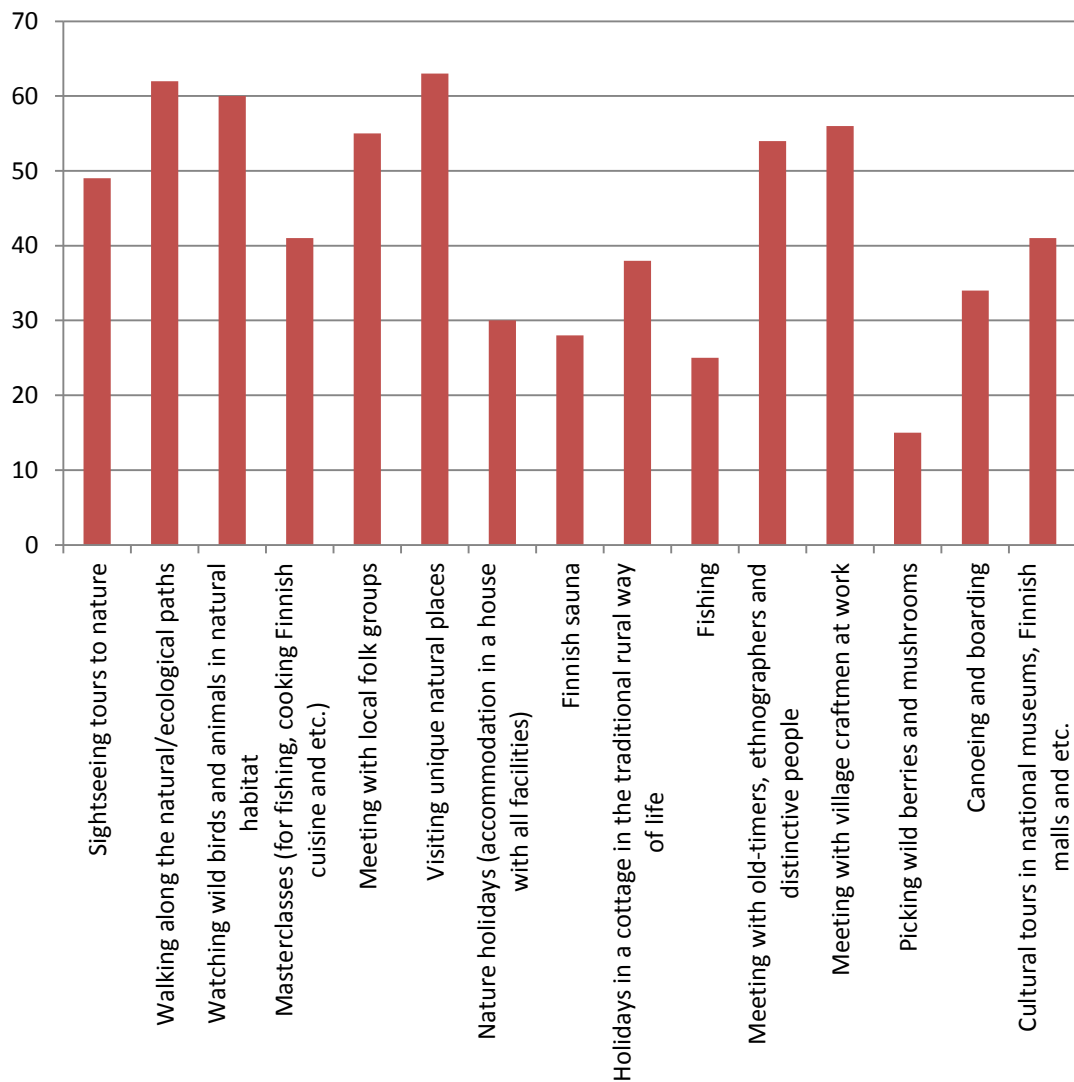


Figure 9. Ecotourism activities ("Students 19 – 35 years old")

The Figure 10 presents learning activities interesting for ecotourists students. Educational activities as a whole are somewhat less interesting for this group of ecotourists than ecotourism activities. Nevertheless, in the first place they are interested in culinary: cooking something of Finnish cuisine (41 (63%) respondents) and baking Finnish bread in the oven (42 (64%) respondents).

In the second place the group is interested in Finnish handicrafts (34 (52%) respondents) and learning Finnish history and culture (35 (53%) respondents). This result intersects with the results of the research from the Figure 9, where similar activities (but without the learning component) are also in the second place. It also means that ecotourists students are not just interested in culture

and folklore of Finland, but also are willing to try to do something by their hands. The least interesting are activities like cooking on the fire (22 (33%) respondents), chopping wood (8 (12%) respondents) and stoking furnace (4 (6%) respondents).

"Students 19 - 35 years old"

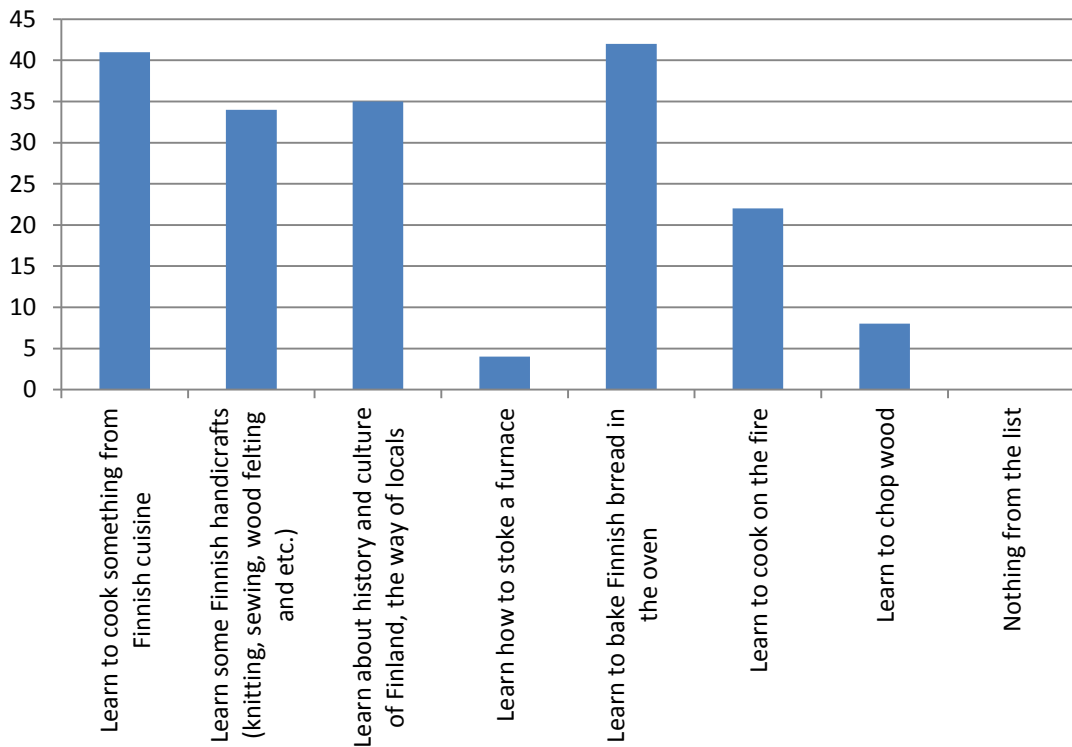


Figure 10. Learning activities (*"Students 19 – 35 years old"*)

The results of the research on activities of ecotourism interesting to the group of *"Workers 19 - 35 years old"* are presented in the Figure 11. The research reveals that this group of ecotourists prefers multi-purpose ecotourism vacations, because the interest in different types of activities is dispersed on the whole almost equally. Nevertheless, the results of the research show that in the main the ecotourists would like to visit unique natural places and objects (35 (65%) respondents) and to do canoeing and boarding (34 (63%) respondents).

In the second place these ecotourists give almost the same preference to overland trips: walking along the natural/ecological paths (26 (48%) respondents), and sightseeing (21 (39%) respondents). Watching wild birds and animals in natural habitat is less interesting to them than walking (17

(31%) respondents). Finnish sauna is not essential part of their travel for this group of tourists. Only 20 (37%) respondents would like to have it in the program.

Excursion programs with cultural components, aimed at acquaintance with the traditional way of life and way of life of local people are of the least interest to them in comparison with outdoor recreation. Thus, Master-classes for fishing and Finnish cuisine (13 (24%) respondents), meeting with old-timers... (14 (26%) respondents) meeting with local folk group (13 (24%) respondents), tours to museums (13 (24%) respondents) and meeting with craftsmen at work (10 (18%) respondents). Such activities like fishing (10 (18%) respondents) and picking wild berries and mushrooms (14 (26%) respondents) are also not very interesting to the group.

Talking about accommodation, only half part of the group indicates their preferences for specific living conditions. Thus, 18 (33%) of ecotourists prefer accommodation in a house with all facilities, whereas 14 (26%) of ecotourists chose a cottage in the traditional rural way of life. Other 22 (40%) respondents do not give any comments on this point. So, it can be concluded that these ecotourists are undemanding, because the living conditions are not paramount almost for every second member of this group when choosing an ecological tour.

"Workers 19 - 35 years old"

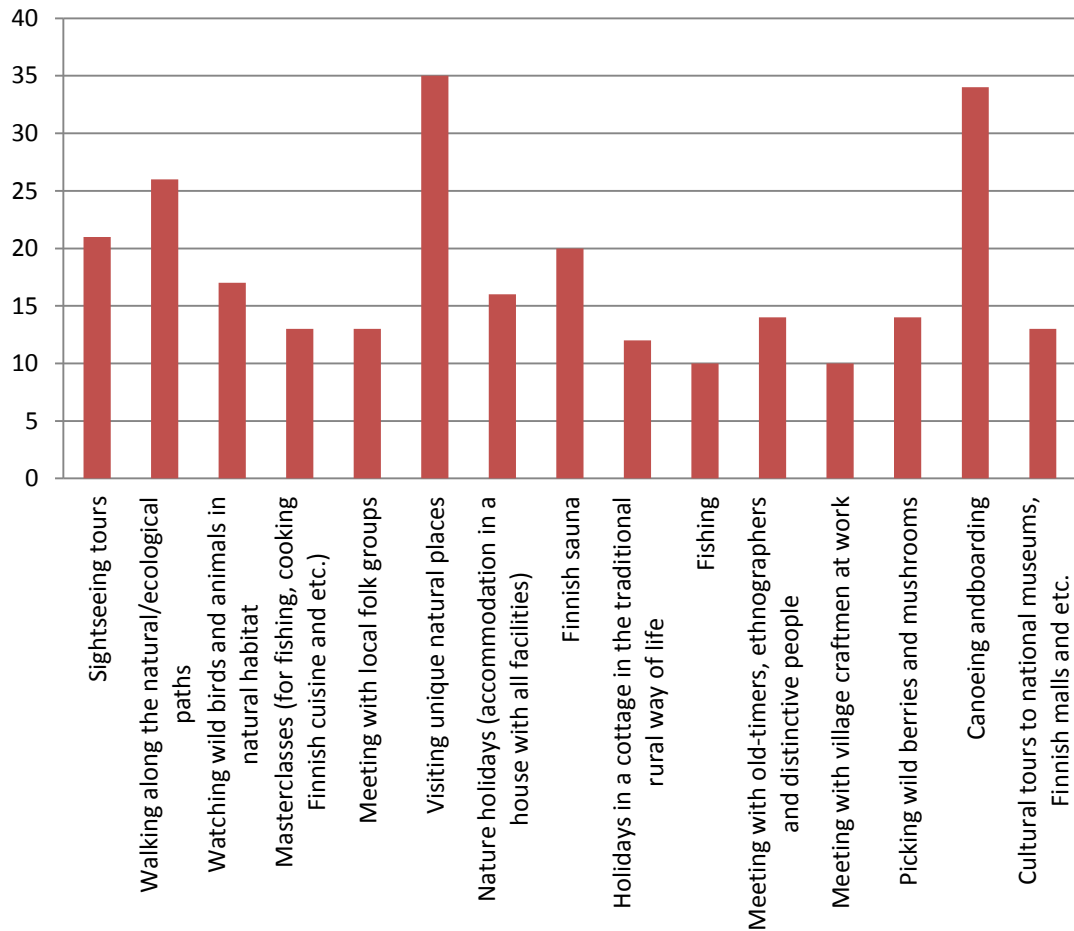


Figure 11. Ecotourism activities ("Workers 19 – 35 years old")

Figure 12 presents the learning activities, which are interesting to "Workers 19 – 35 years old". The results reveal that the most interesting for their are educational activities about the history and culture of Finland (27 (50%) respondents), they are also interested in making by their hands some of traditional Finnish handicrafts (23 (42%) respondents). The interest to the culinary activities is in third place. Chopping wood, kindling and stoking a furnace is not interesting to the group, (4 (7%) and 7 (12%) respondents correspondingly). There are ecotourists in the group that are not interested in learning activities at all (2 (3.5%) respondents).

"Workers 19 - 35 years old"

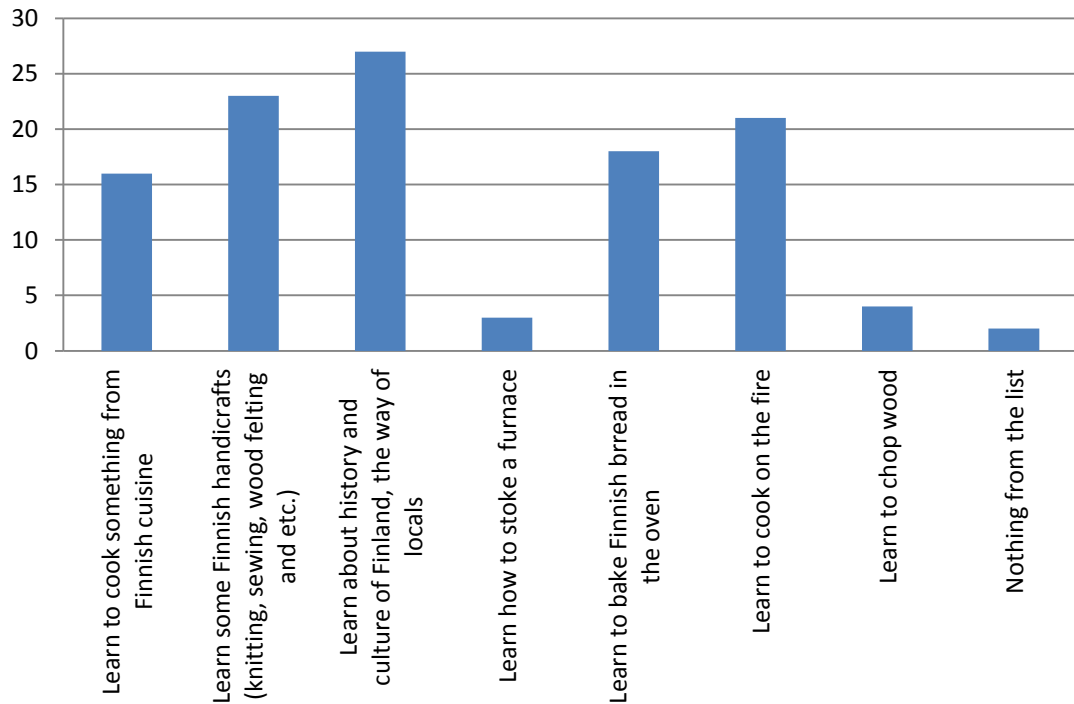


Figure 12. Learning activities ("Workers 19 – 35 years old")

The results of the survey about the older generation "Workers 36 - 55 years old" is presented in the Figure 13. For this group of ecotourist overland and foot trips to the nature are the most interesting: Visiting unique natural places and objects (28 (77%) people), Walking along the natural/ecological paths (28 (77%) people) and Sightseeing (25 (70%) people). In the second place are such activities like Watching wild birds and animals in natural habitat (19 (52%) people) Meeting with old-timers, ethnographers and distinctive people (19 (52%) people).

All other activities are in the third place: Finnish sauna (15 (41%) people), Fishing (15 (41%) people), Canoeing and boating (13 (36%) people), Meeting with village craftsmen at work (14 (39%) respondents), Food and fishing master-classes (14 (39%) respondents), tours to museums (12 (33%) respondents), meeting with local folk groups (12 (33%) respondents), Picking wild berries and mushrooms (11 (30%) respondents). The most preferable for this group of ecotourists is accommodation in a house with all facilities (22 (61%) respondents) versus accommodation in a cottage in the traditional rural way of life (14 (38%) respondents).

"Workers 36 - 55 years old"

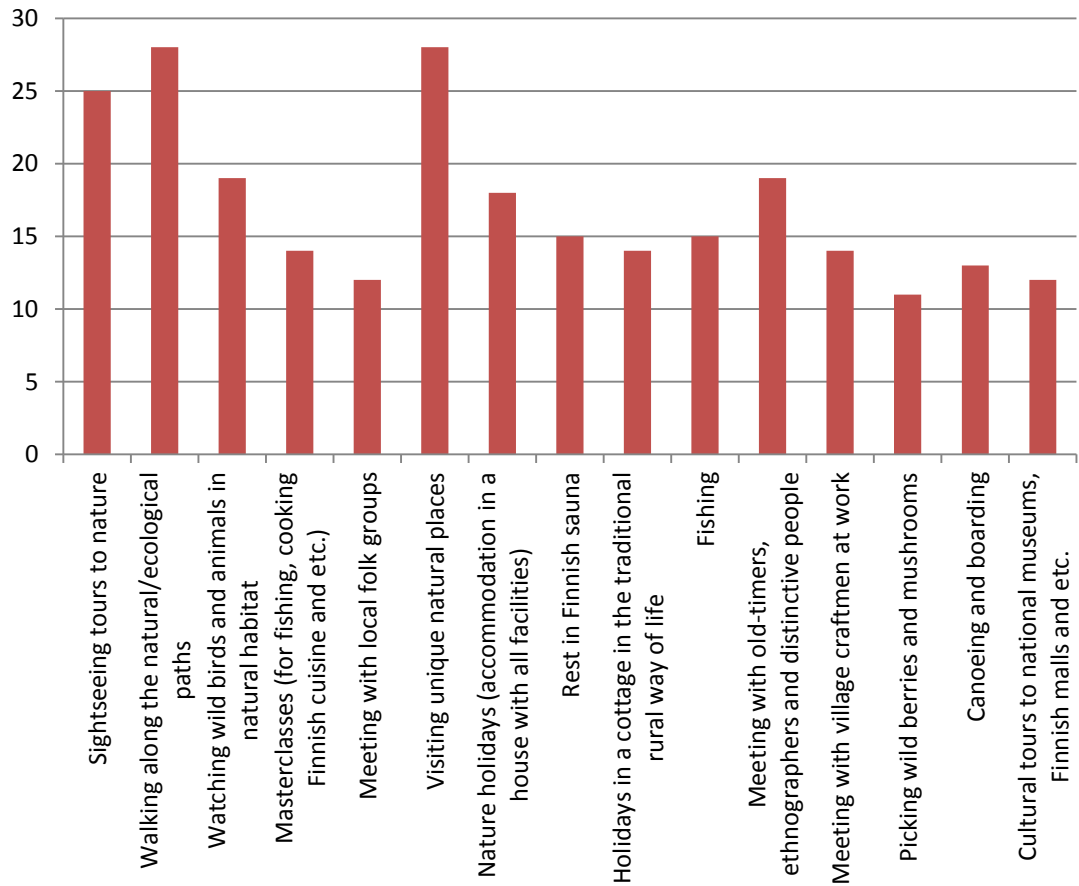


Figure 13. Ecotourism activities ("Workers 36 – 55 years old")

The results on learning activities interesting to the group are presented in the Figure 14. Like for the generation of workers 36 - 55 years old, the most interesting for this group is an educational program about the history and culture of Finland (23 (64%) respondents), as well as the desire to cook some Finnish dishes (21 (58%) respondents). Learning activities about doing Finnish handicraft (14 (39%) respondents) or baking (15 (41%) respondents) is in the second place. All other activities are of the least interest for these ecotourists. There are ecotourist in the group that are not interested in the learning activities at all (one (2%) man).

"Workers 36 - 55 years old"

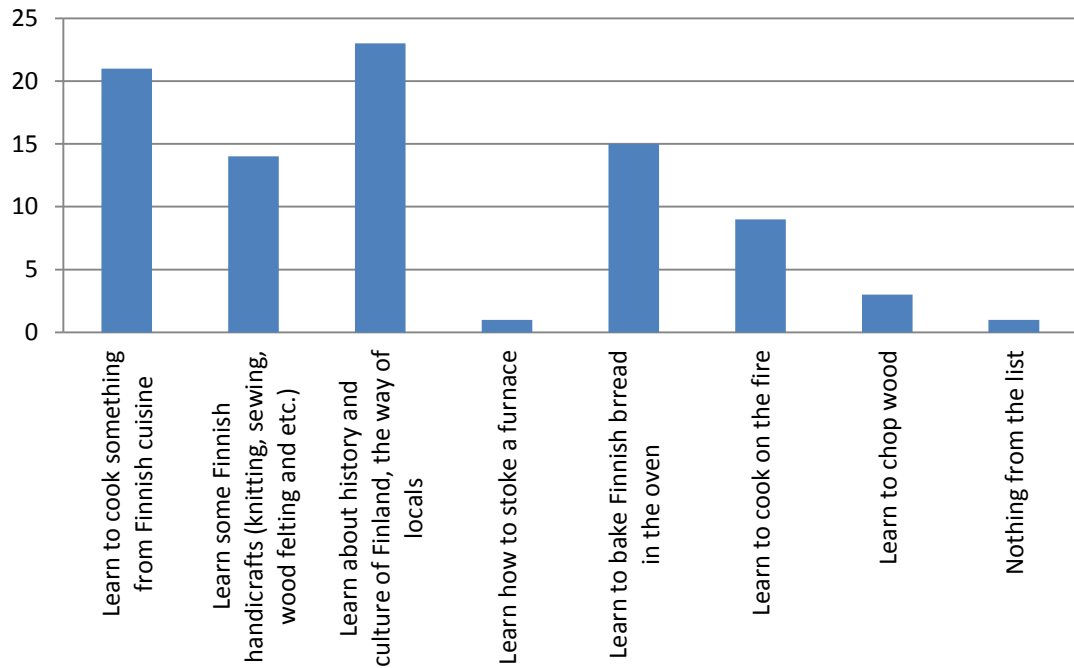


Figure 14. Learning activities ("Workers 36 – 55 years old")

The Figure 15 shows the results of the survey regarding the optimal duration of ecological travel to Finland. The survey found quite a logical general trend: the younger and light-hearted an ecotourist, the longer he or she would like to travel. The Figure 15 presents that in the group "*Students 19 - 35 years old*" preferences regarding the duration of the trip grow beginning from the options "from seven to ten days" and ending with the option "from 14 to 21 days". 32 (49%) students chose the longest trip in 14 - 21 days. Option "from 10 to 14 days" chose 25 (38%) students.

The results in the groups "*Workers 19 – 35 years old*" and "*Workers 36 – 55 years old*" give generally similar patterns. Thus, the Figure 15 reveals that the group "*Workers 19 - 35 years old*" prefers travel of "Less than seven days" (24 (44%) ecotourists). In the second place is travel of seven to ten days long (20 (37%) ecotourists).

A similar result can be observed in the group "*Workers 36 - 55 years old*". Thus, 13 (36%) people chose trip less than seven days. The second place is divided equally between options "travel from seven to ten days" and "travel up

to 14 days” (8 (22%) and 8 (22%) respondents correspondingly). Noteworthy is the fact that among those who would like to travel in Finland 14 - 21 days, the group “*Workers 36 - 55 years old*” is on the second place (6 (16%) after the students.

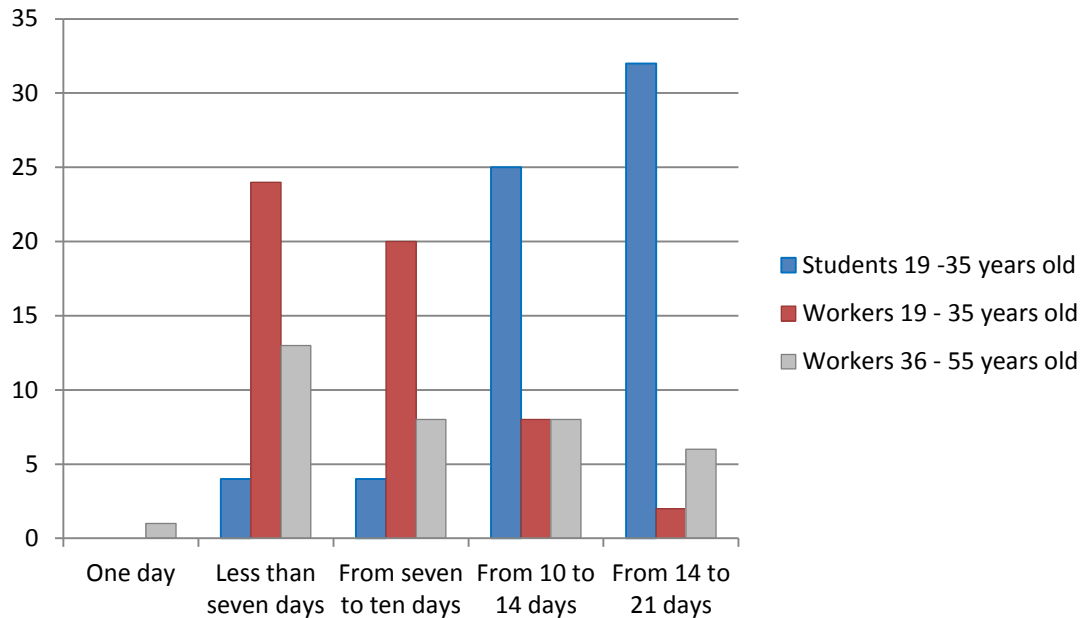


Figure 15. Optimal duration of travel to Finland

Summarizing the results of the research, I can mention the next facts:

Interests of ecotourists “*Students 19 – 35 years old*” and “*Workers 36 - 55 years old*” in outdoor recreation are somewhat similar. So for the both groups of ecotourists the most interesting are overland excursions and foot walks in the nature. Whereas for the group “*Workers of 19 – 35 years old*” trips to unique natural places, canoeing and boating are more interesting than foot programs to nature.

Ecotourism programs with cultural components aimed at acquaintance with the traditional way of life in Finland are mostly interesting to Students. Moreover, the group “*Student 19 – 35 years old*” would prefer such programs more than excursions to museums. In my opinion this result indicates the fact, that opportunity to touch lively traditions, to communicate with vivid people and to get new experience is more important for young people than to see museum exhibits, information about which it is possible to find on the Internet. For groups “*Workers 19 – 35 years old*” and “*Workers 36 – 55 years old*”

activities with cultural component are in the third place. This circumstance may be due to the fact that both generations of workers have less free time than students and for this reason they longer appreciate calm rest and contact with nature during their holidays than students.

Such tourism activities like picking wild berries and mushroom, as well as fishing are on the third place in all groups of ecotourists. Perhaps, lack of popularity of these activities is connected with the absence of a cognitive component about natural sights of Finland.

Talking about learning activities we can notice, that for groups of Workers 19 – 35 years old and Workers 36 – 55 years old learning something about culture and history of Finland is in the first place, whereas for Students 19 – 35 years old this is on the second place. This result seems quite logical in view of the fact that people who do work and earn money more consciously choose place of their vacation. In this connection, knowledge about the history and culture of the host country are interesting for them.

Each person would like to spend vacations that are not similar to everyday routine. That may be a reason why gastronomy activities are interesting to *“Students 19 – 35 years old”* and *“Workers of 36 – 55 years old”*, whereas *“Workers of 19 – 35 years old”*, that may have to cook for their young children, are more interested in handicraft activities.

Such learning activities like stroking a furnace, chopping wood, cooking on the fire are almost not interesting to any group of ecotourists. Perhaps such activities is a commonplace for most ecotourists, therefore I believe that these activities can supplement main ecotourism programs.

The findings with respect to the duration of the trip and accommodation allow me to consider *“Students 19 – 35 years old”* and *“Workers 19 - 35 years old”* versus *“Workers 36 - 55 years old”*. The generation of 19 – 35 years old would be satisfied with accommodation in a cottage in a traditional rural way of life. Students are the most unpretentious lovers of long journeys. The longer the trip, the better it is. Most of *“Students 19 – 35 years old”* is ready to make a

trip of two - three weeks long to Finland. *“Workers 36 - 55 years old”* prefer accommodation in a house with all facilities. The biggest number of respondents in the groups *“Workers 19 – 35 years old”* and *“Workers 36 – 55 years old”* go on a trip of no longer than seven days to Finland.

6.1.3 Conclusions and Recommendations for Rock and Lake Based on the Results of the Research

In the chapter I do some conclusions that can be useful for Rock and Lake when using the results of the research in the business activity of the company. The results of the research have revealed such weakness of the company like a need to expand the range of tourism products for new market segments. With help of the research results it has been formed three new target groups (*“Students 19 - 35 years old”*, *“Workers 19 - 35 years old”* and *“Workers 36 - 55 years old”*) for Rock and Lake.

The results have indicated the greatest interest in ecotourism in Finland among the ecotourists of the generation of 19 - 35 years old. The group includes students and workers mainly from Eastern Europe (Russia) and partly from Asia. When holding an advertising campaign of the new ecological tour on the Internet, it should be taken into account that the most active part of the target audience consists of women.

Despite the fact that Finland is considered to be an expensive country, the conducted survey has determined what kind of ecotourism activities the target group (*“Students 19 – 35 years old”* and *“Workers 19 – 35 years old”*) is willing to pay. The main priority of ecological trips in Finland should be overland, foot and water excursions to nature sights.

In order to diversify travel program for ecotourists and to prevent the excessive recreational load to natural resources it is desirable to include in the program a sufficient number of educational and cognitive excursions about the culture, history, the way of life in Finland, Finnish cuisine or handicrafts.

Due to the interest of ecotourists in Finnish baking and cuisine, as an alternative to the gastronomic tours, Rock and Lake can arrange catering with Finnish dishes for tourists for additional fee.

In connection with the desire of ecotourists "*Students 19 - 35 years old*" to have long travels (up to three weeks) in Finland, Rock and Lake would consider a possibility of cooperation with Finnish and Russian professional educational institutions so, that, for instance, students of biological, geological or linguistic departments could do summer practical works being accommodated at Rock and Lake and participate in ecotourism programs offered by the company in free of work time.

Ecotourists 19 - 35 years old are active hikers and nature travelers, so they will not spend long time in rented apartments. In connection with this, expensive accommodation with all facilities is scarcely suitable for them. Accommodation in cheap summer houses or cabins may be the best option for overnight stays.

"*Students 19 – 35 years old*" and "*Workers 19 – 35 years old*" belong to the same generation; nevertheless, the needs of both groups are different. In order to meet the needs of both groups in the best way, it is necessary to design a flexible tour program, which can be adjusted depending on the preferences of an ecotourist.

6.2 The Ethno-Ecological Tour "Travel to the Forest Kingdom Tapiola"

Taking into account all done work, I decided to create an ethno-ecological tour "Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola". It is a tour that is aimed not only at visiting natural objects and familiarity with the local flora and fauna, but also excursions to cultural and historical monuments in the region of Mikkeli, as well as gastronomic workshops for national dishes.

I have chosen the ecological trail of Häkkilä and its surroundings that are in Haukivuori of Mikkeli region as a place of realization of the ecological tour. Although I was planning a summer ecotourism program, the trail was explored three times: in the autumn, winter and summer 2015 - 2016. A rich biodiversity

of plant species and wildlife was found, as well as beautiful nature places. In this connection, I decided to use the trail for development of ecotourism in Finland.

I designed the tour program that is described in the Figure 5 of the thesis: package tour “accommodation and meals”; choosing of excursion programs are in place of destination upon the arrival of tourists. On request, excursions can be agreed and paid in advance before arrival. I do not talk about accommodation, booking and meal services in the tour program, as this is not the objective of the work.

The tour consists of a set of excursions; the theme of the tour: *travel to natural sights and acquaintance with traditional way of life and culture of Finland*. Each excursion of the tour matches the principles of ecotourism because the routes are carefully planned in accordance with principles of sustainable development and responsible attitude to environment:

- Prevent overcrowding of natural resource;
- Timely informing tourists about the rules of behavior in nature: the rules about collecting of bark, cones, berries and mushrooms in the forest, etc.;
- Informing about the behavior when seeing wild animals and birds, the rules of inciting a fire;
- Every excursion includes cognitive component about environment or culture;
- Tourists have possibility to buy local handmade souvenirs;
- Guide's wage is carried on the income from the tour.

The tour program is flexible; each excursion is a kind of brick - an integral part of the whole program, which can be “built” in the way a tourist wishes. A tourist chooses himself excursions from the program that are interesting to him and he decides on which days he will leave for the excursion. Thus, the tourist can choose only one excursion from the program or, on the contrary to take part in all the proposed activities.

I have planned excursions of the tour based on the results of the research, described in chapter 6.1.2 of the thesis. With help of the research I have got

three target groups of ecotourists, the needs of which are somewhat different. In spite of the fact, that the program of the tour is most preferable for the generation 19 – 35 years old, nevertheless we do not exclude the possibility of participation in the program of the older generation 36 – 55 years old. “Collapsible” structure of the tour program makes it possible to form a versatile tourism product that meets the interests of almost each target group of ecotourists.

I do not use all the research results in the ethno-ecological tour program but only part of them. In particular, the program of the ethno-ecological tour does not include some excursions about culture, learning activities and bird-watching, because Rock and Lake would like to do wider research the results of which can be used in the future for designing more than one ecotourism programs with different themes.

6.2.1 The Program Description of the Ethno-Ecological Tour “Travel to the Forest Kingdom Tapiola”

Program of the individual ethno-ecological tour “Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola”.

Target category of ecotourists:

“Mainstream ecotourists” from Europe, predominantly from Russia; for all generations.

Participants of the tour: adults preferred. Duration of the tour depends on the options chosen by tourists.

Description of the full tour program:

A fascinating journey into the kingdom of Tapiola - in Finnish mythology it is a country of the forest god Tapio. Forest kingdom - it is one of the poetic names of Finland, mysterious land of the forest with the enigmatic life of northern nature and humans co-existing in a harmony with it. Beauty of the nature is captivating and full of mysterious charm that is inherent only to northern nature. The route of the tour is laid through the forest along the Häkkilä trail, which is rich by diversity of landscapes and nature and lacustrine sceneries.

The tour combines trips to the nature and trips dedicated to culture and traditional way of life in Finland. During the tour you will learn about the unique variety of plants of the northern forest. The trail lays in the habitat of forest birds and animals: hares, foxes, otters, badgers, elk, quail, pheasants, grouse and other representatives of forest fauna that can sometimes be seen in the immediate vicinity of a human since forest animals in Finland are usually do not afraid of people.

The tour also includes acquaintance with the culture and cuisine of Finland. You can visit the city of Mikkeli and Puumala, cultural and craft center Kenkävero, open-air farm-museum Liehtalanniemi in Puumala; participate in cooking of Finnish dishes. The sightseeing part of the tour includes the following excursions and has structure that is presented in the Figure 16:

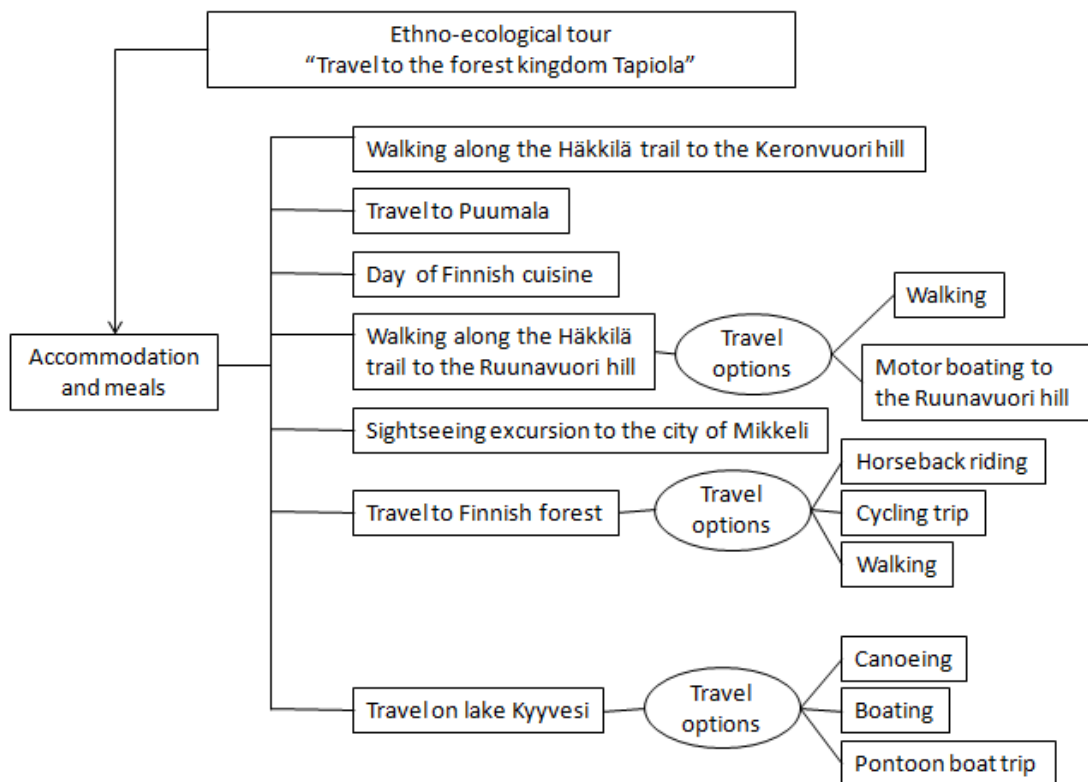


Figure 16. Structure of the tour "Travel to the Forest Kingdom Tapiola"

The description of excursions of the tour:

1. Walking along the Häkkilä trail to the Keronvuori hill.

Departure to the beginning of the route by car. The route runs between two rocky hills the Ovensuori and the Keronvuori, from where beautiful scenery of Lake Kyyvesi opens before your eyes. Forest landscape is represented by luxuriant vegetation diversity, starting from coniferous trees, which are typical of the Finnish forests, ending with different kinds of ferns, lichens and forest herbs and flowers. The duration of walking is about two hours. The route finishes at a barbecue place where tourists can have a picnic and cook meal on the fire. After the picnic and rest tourists will be taken back to apartments in which they are accommodated by car. The whole duration of the trip is not more than 5 hours.

2. Travel to Puumala.

Departure to Puumala by car; travel to Puumala is about two hours. Visiting the open-air museum farm museum Lihtalanniemi in Puumala where tourists will learn about traditional rural way of life in Finland. If tourists wish they can have lunch at a local cafe (extra charge). Then tourists will have a sightseeing car excursion of the village of Puumala and visiting Finnish glass workshop LaisRuusu. After that tourists will be taken by car back to Kangasniemi.

3. Day of Finnish cuisine.

It is held in Kangasniemi. Participants are told about the features of Finnish cuisine. It may be conducted both indoors and outdoors. Tourists can choose from the next options: Letut (Finnish pancakes), Lohikeitto (Finnish soup with salmon), Kalakeitto (fish soup), Kantarelli keitto (chanterelle soup), Rosolli (herring salad), grilled meat or savukala (hot smoked fish). After cooking tourists will have dinner and rest on the bank of the lake. There is an opportunity of canoeing on the lake for those who wish (extra fee).

4. Walking along the Häkkilä trail to the Ruunavuori hill (rock).

Departure by car to the beginning of the route to the Ruunavuori hill. The duration of walking is about two hours. The trail runs along the bank of the lake. Exciting views of Lake Kyyvesi opens from the top of the rock. Tourists

will have there a picnic without fire after which they will be taken back to their apartments.

By prior arrangement this trip to the Ruunavuori rock may be done on motor boats. The arrival to the place may also be done by car but the return by motor boats.

5. Sightseeing excursion to the city of Mikkeli.

It is a sightseeing excursion to the city of Mikkeli. Tourists will visit center of Finnish crafts Kenkävero where they can buy handmade souvenirs and have a lunch in the old papal manor (extra charge). The excursion lasts for 3 hours and then the tourists will return to Kangasnemi.

6. Travel to Finnish forest.

It is a trip in the area of the Häkkilä trail but the route runs beyond the trail along the different forest roads which come to Lake Kyyvesi. The trip is possible in the following ways: on horseback, by bicycles or on foot. The duration of the trip depends on chosen option.

7. Travel on Lake Kyyvesi.

The trip is available in three versions: by canoes, by boats or a pontoon boat. The duration of the trip is four - five hours depending on the selected version.

The best season for all excursions of the tour is from mid-June up to mid-August.

The level of difficulty of the tour: adults, for all ages. The program provides simple walks up to seven kilometers a day. Special physical preparation is not required.

Number of participants: up to 10 people.

Clothing: sports, casual, according to the weather.

6.2.2. Testing of the Ethno-Ecological Tour “Travel to the Forest Kingdom Tapiola”

The method of the experimental research is a testing which is carried out under controlled conditions. Often two homogeneous groups are used for the experiment, one of them is an experimental group and other one is a control group, though only one experimental group can be used for the experimental research (Keto 2014, 5-6). The purpose of our experiment was to test the program of the ecological tour with one experimental group of people.

A testing of the ecological tour “Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola” was organized in September 2016 in Haukivuori, an area nearby Kangasniemi in Finland. Tour language is English and Russian. The experimental group consisted of ten people similar to the generation “*Students 19 – 35 years old*” and “*Workers 36 – 55 years old*”. Among them were five women and five men. Also two children aged six and eight years participated in some parts of the tour. Participants of the experiment were tourists from Russia as well as a worker and the Chairman of “Rock and Lake” Pasi Romo.

I composed an informational booklet with a map about the trail of Häkkilä (Häkkilän luontopolku), which tells tour participants some facts about Finnish flora and fauna, way of life of local people as well as about Finnish customs and laws on nature resources. The booklets were given to the participants before the tour starts. The booklet is presented in the Appendix 6.

The group tested Day of Finnish cuisine and all nature excursions of the program: Walking along the Häkkilä trail to the Keronvuori hill; walking along the Häkkilä trail to the Ruunavuori hill; Travel to Finnish forest (Walking), Travel on Lake Kyyvesi (Canoeing and pontoon boat trip).

We conducted testing of excursions to Puumala and Mikkeli later. Participants of this testing were I and one of the workers of Rock and Lake. Testing of all foot excursions along the Häkkilä trail, including walking in the Finnish forest, were successful. Success of the experiment is largely concerned with the fact

that the trail and its vicinities were explored three times before the testing starts.

Culinary experiment also proved to be successful. All participants of the experiment took a part in cooking grilled goose meat and then they had lunch. During the baking participants shortly were told about peculiarities of Finnish cuisine. Baking experiment lasted about two hours.

When we tested canoeing and pontoon boat trips, it was decided to shorten the route considerably. At the beginning the lake route should be run from Rock and Lake tourist place located at Itäkyläntie 463, Kangasniemi on the bank of the lake to the hill Keravuori. However, the route turned out to be too long for a canoeing trip, as well as for travel on a pontoon boat. Therefore, we decided to shorten the route. As a result, we designed an excursion on a circle around some part of the lake with return back to Kangasniemi at Itäkyläntie 463. Two children aged six and eight years participated in testing of a pontoon boat trip. In spite of the excessive duration of the trip, the children were not tired, but the trip was too boring for them.

The experimental group was accompanied by guides in all excursions. Lake trips were conducted with the participation of guides who know how to manage canoes, boats and a pontoon boat. The trip to Puumala was the most difficult in terms of realization as the road to Puumala is long. However, the program in Puumala is interesting and we decided to include this excursion in the tour program.

At the end of the experiment it became clear that not all trips need presence of the guide. Therefore, we decided that the obligatory presence of the guide should be when operating the boats and during Travel to Puumala. In all other cases, the guide is included at the request of tourists. As a whole the results of the test showed that the program of the tour is interesting and well planned. Physically, the tour program is not difficult, even for children, although it is more suitable for adults.

After the experiment was realized I interviewed all participants of the experimental group to get a feedback about the tour. It was a semi-structured interview which consists not only of close-ended but also open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions were used only in the case when it was necessary to get answers directly related to the objectives of the research (Kuchko 2014). Questions of the interview are presented in the Appendix 7.

According to interviewed respondents, the tour program was interesting, well-planned and corresponded to the expectations, although it was not easy to participate every day in different excursions. The most interesting parts of the tour were walking along the ecological trail Häkkilä and cooking meat on the fire. Ethno-ecological tour "Travel to the forest kingdom Tapiola" is ready to be included in the list of tourism programs of "Rock and Lake".

7 DISCUSSIONS

I have chosen this theme for my thesis because of my personal interest in ecotourism that has long been recognized around the world, but until recently did not exist in Finland. I wanted to conduct my own research about what ecotourism is and why in Finland it has not been accepted for long time. When I first became interested in this subject, I was convinced that ecotourism in Finland does not exist to this day. However, the more I deepened in the study, the more obvious it was that the case moved forward. Recognition of ecotourism on the level of Finnish Tourist Board ("Visit Finland") gave me cause for the research in what forms ecotourism can be integrated into the Finnish tourism and who they are - ecotourists interested in ecological tours to Finland.

The research has revealed that traditional Finnish holidays in a cottage with fishing or walking in the forest with possibility to pick up berries and mushrooms are not interesting for the majority of ecotourists. The most interesting for them are overland routes to natural attractions and trips to cultural sites in Finland. Lack of sufficient tourist programs can entail a risk that a flow of ecotourists that could have their vacations in Finland, will pass by to the neighboring countries, where the tourists will be offered appropriate tourism service on the background of similar northern nature.

I conducted the research aimed at different types of ecotourism activities and target groups for Tourism Company of Southern Finland, Rock and Lake. Comparison of the company with its competitor showed that Rock and Lake has a great field for further development. The results of the research have revealed current trends regarding the demand for ecotourism in Finland and have helped me to design an ecological tour, which must be interesting to potential ecotourists. Some of the results of the research were not used in the design of the tour program, because the research is universal. Its results can be used repeatedly to create also other ecotourism oriented programs and activities.

Of course, to implement the proposed ecological tour program in business process of Rock and Lake it is necessary to solve some organizational issues, like marketing, advertising, the safety of tourists and other questions. Previously, the company had no experience of such tours, so we can assume that in practice some moments that require improvement may arise. Anyway, the development of tourist service of Rock and Lake has already begun and the company is going to achieve the goals. By common efforts and purposeful work the desired result will be gained. As a continuation of this work service of accommodation from Rock and Lake may be studied and researched on the basis of which some ideas of hospitality service under the brand can be proposed to the company and realized in its business activity.

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Table 5. Occupation of participated in the survey ecotourists.

Table 6. Place of residence of participated in the survey ecotourists.

Sustainable travel/ecotourism in Finland

Dear friends!

Please help me to carry out research in the field of sustainable tourism/ecotourism in Finland for the purpose of my graduation work. Could you please answer few simple questions of my questionnaire, it takes only a few minutes. Your answers are very important to me!

Your gender *

male

female

Your age *

0 -18 y.o.

19 - 35 y.o.

36 - 55 y.o.

56 - 100 y.o.

What country are you from? *

short answer



Your field of activity *

- Schoolchild
- Student
- Worker
- Businessman
- Pensioner

Are you interested in sustainable/eco travel to Finland *

- Yes
- I do not know

Are you interested in weekend tours to nature in Finland *

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

What kind of activity is interested to you in sustainable/eco travel? (choose several answers) *

- Sightseeing tours to nature
- Walks on natural/ecological paths
- Watching wild birds and animals in natural habitat
- Masterclasses (for fishing, cooking Finnish cuisine and etc.)
- Visiting unique natural places and objects
- Holidays on the nature (accommodation in a house with all facilities)
- Holidays with accommodation in a cottage in the traditional rural way of life
- Meeting with old-timers, ethnographers and distinctive bright people
- Meeting with village craftsmen at work
- Meeting with local folk groups
- Fishing
- Picking wild berries and mushrooms
- Rest in the Finnish sauna
- Canoeing or boating
- Cultural tours in Finnish national museums, Finnish handicraft malls and etc.
- Answer of the respondent

...

Choose learning activities you may be interested in during sustainable/eco travel *
(choose several answers)

- Learn to cook something from Finnish cuisine
- Learn some Finnish handicraft (knitting, sewing, wood felting and etc.)
- Learn about the history and culture of Finland, the way of the locals
- ☰ Learn to stoke furnace
- Learn to bake Finnish bread in the oven
- Learn to cook on the fire
- Learn to chop wood
- Nothing from the listed above
- Answer of the respondent

What is the optimal duration of sustainable/eco travel to Finland in you opinion? *

- 1 day
- less than 7 days
- from 7 to 10 days
- from 10 to 14 days
- from 14 to 21 days

TEXT OF THE MESSAGE

Hello (Name),

I am Anna Dzhagarova. I am studying at University of Applied Science in Mikkeli, Finland and writing my graduation thesis about ecotourism in Finland. Could you please take a part in my research filling in the questionnaire? It takes a few minutes, but your answers are very important to me. Please, do not hesitate even if you do not know anything about Finland!

Follow the link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqIQIpWoyU2rqc_tbyQccpwb6R5yVLAB7YxH16cRsoSNwvaw/viewform

Thank you!

Anna Dzhagarova

AVERAGE PRICES OF SUMMER FISHING FOR A PERSON PER DAY

Names of Tours from Rock and Lake	The number of tourists in a group
Accessible Guided Fishing Tour	8
Big Pike Guided Fishing Tour	5
Lake Salmon Fishing	5
Guarantee Catch Trip To Kyyvesi	5
Minight Sun Fishing at Kyyvesi	5
Arithmetical mean of tourists in a group	5.6

We express 5.6 in round number - 6.

Names of excursions form Rock and Lake	Prices for a group per day (euro)
Accessible Guided Fishing Tour	490
Big Pike Guided Fishing Tour	690
Lake Salmon Fishing	660
Guarantee Catch Trip To Kyyvesi	490
Minight Sun Fishing at Kyyvesi	690
Arithmetical mean of price for a tour per day	604

Arithmetical mean of price for a tour per day	604
Arithmetical mean of a tourist group	6
Excursion's price per a person/day at Rock and Lake (euro)	100.6666667

Names of Tours from Wild Taiga	Duration of a tour (days)
Privat Lake Fishing	7
Fishing week in Kuhmo	7
Trolling	1
Trolling With Catch Guarantee	1
Self Drive and Fish	3
Fishing Under the Midnight Sun	1
Fly Fishing Week at Kuhmo	7
Elite Fly Fishing Week	7
Pike Fishing Week	7
Arithmetical mean of tour's duration per person	4.555555556

We express 4.555555556 in round number 4.5

Names of Tours form Wild Taiga	Tour prices per person (euro)
Privat Lake Fishing	679
Fishing week in Kuhmo	545
Trolling	390
Trolling With Catch Guarantee	495
Self Drive and Fish	210
Fishing Under the Midnight Sun	67.5
Fly Fishing Week at Kuhmo	438
Elite Fly Fishing Week	562
Pike Fishing Week	438.5
Arithmetical mean of tour price	425

Arithmetical mean of tour price	425
Arithmetical mean of tour's duration per person	4.5
Tour price per a person/day at Wild Taiga (euro)	94.44444444

QUESTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW ABOUT CLIENTS OF “ROCK AND LAKE” WITH THE WORKER OF THE COMPANY

What country usually clients of the company are from?

What nationality usually clients of the company are?

To what age group the company's clients generally belong?

Who are travel companions of the clients?

How often do your clients come with little children?

What education do your clients have?

How in a whole you can characterize personality of your clients?

LIST OF COUNTRIES

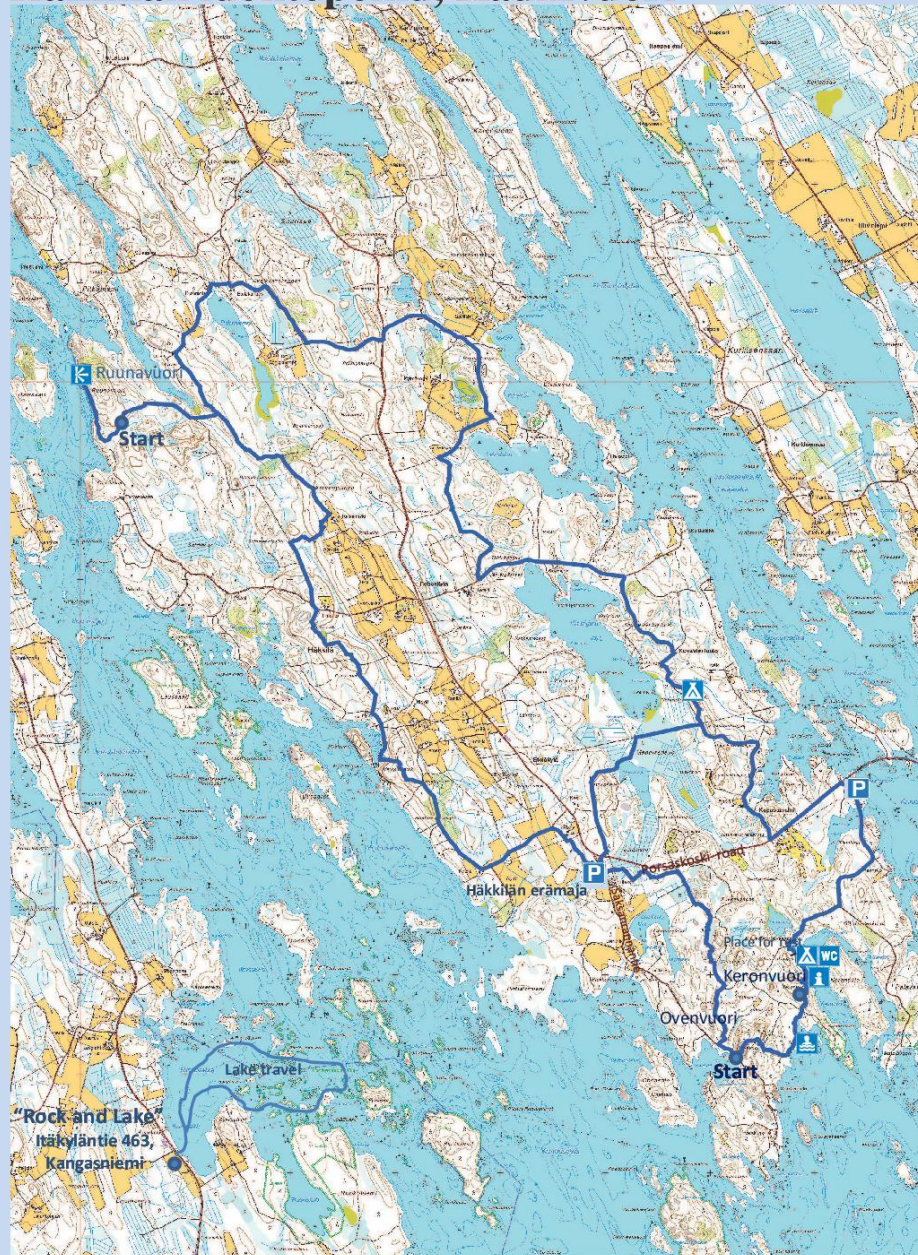
Parts of the World and Country	Number of answers
Eastern Europe	
Russia	105
Ukraina	11
Northern Europe	
Finland	10
Latvia	1
Lithuania	1
Estonia	5
Norway	1
Sweden	1
United Kingdom	2
Southern Europe	
Greece	1
Italy	1
Western Europe	
German	4
France	7
Western Asia	
Georgia	2
Turkey	4
South-Eastern Asia	
Indonesia	4
Malaysia	1
Thailand	1
Philippines	1
Southern Asia	
India	1

Eastern Asia	
South Korea	4
Mongolia	3
Japan	2
Central Asia	
Kazakhstan	6
Uzbekistan	4
Tajikistan	2
Kyrgyzstan	1
Turkmenistan	1
Northern Africa	
Algeria	4
Tunisia	1
Northern America	
USA	5
Canada	1
South America	
Colombia	4
Argentina	1
Chili	1
Brazil	1
Peru	2
Ecuador	1
Venezuela	1
Central America	
Mexico	4
Costa Rica	1
RESULT	214

BOOKLET "HÄKKILÄN LUONTOPOLKU"



Häkkiän luontopolku, Haukivuori



Used source [http:// www.saimaaroutes.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/hakkilan-polku-complete.pdf](http://www.saimaaroutes.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/hakkilan-polku-complete.pdf)

The Route Description:

Häkkilän luontopolku is 34 km. long path for hiking in Haukivuori. The path has been renovated for hiking in 2013 – 2014. There are beautiful views of local scenery, places for break and also a beach on the route. The route runs along the earth road and then continues on the footpath through the forest. There are some small marshlands in the forest. Further the route goes along the picturesque bank of Lake Kyyvesi, where you can discover many-sidedness of local nature. Häkkilän luontopolku is also interesting for its flora and fauna. You can see wide variety of plants found in the Nordic countries during the route. The place is also unique because it is a home for different animals and various species of forest and water birds that you may be lucky enough to see in natural habitat.

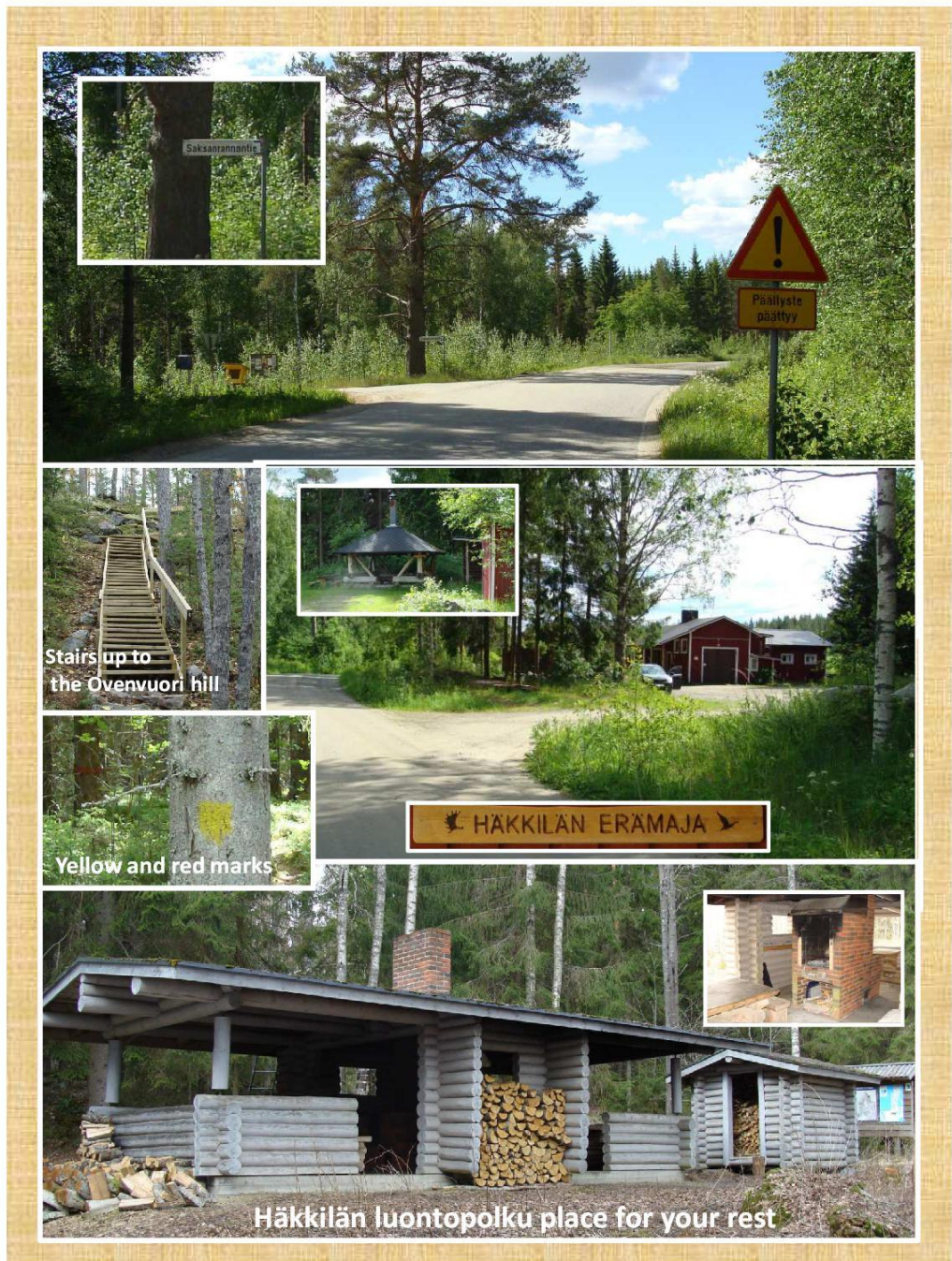
The shorter route on the South from the high road to Porsaskoski is beautiful for its views. During the route you go up the stairs to viewpoints of the Ovensuori and the Keronvuori hills, where Finnish nature appears in all its glory. Also you pass through the beach which is situated between the hills. Further along the route, behind the beach, you can have a rest and even grill barbecue in specially equipped for this place. Viewpoint of the Ruunavuori hill is also worth to visit. It is a giant rock, washed by lake's waters; the rock stretches for hundreds of meters along the lake coast, so that you can see beautiful panoramic scenery of Lake Kyyvesi from the rock height. The best way to reach Ruunavuori is on foot or by motor boat. The rock is equipped with a staircase, so trip to the Ruunavuori is suitable also for tourists with children.

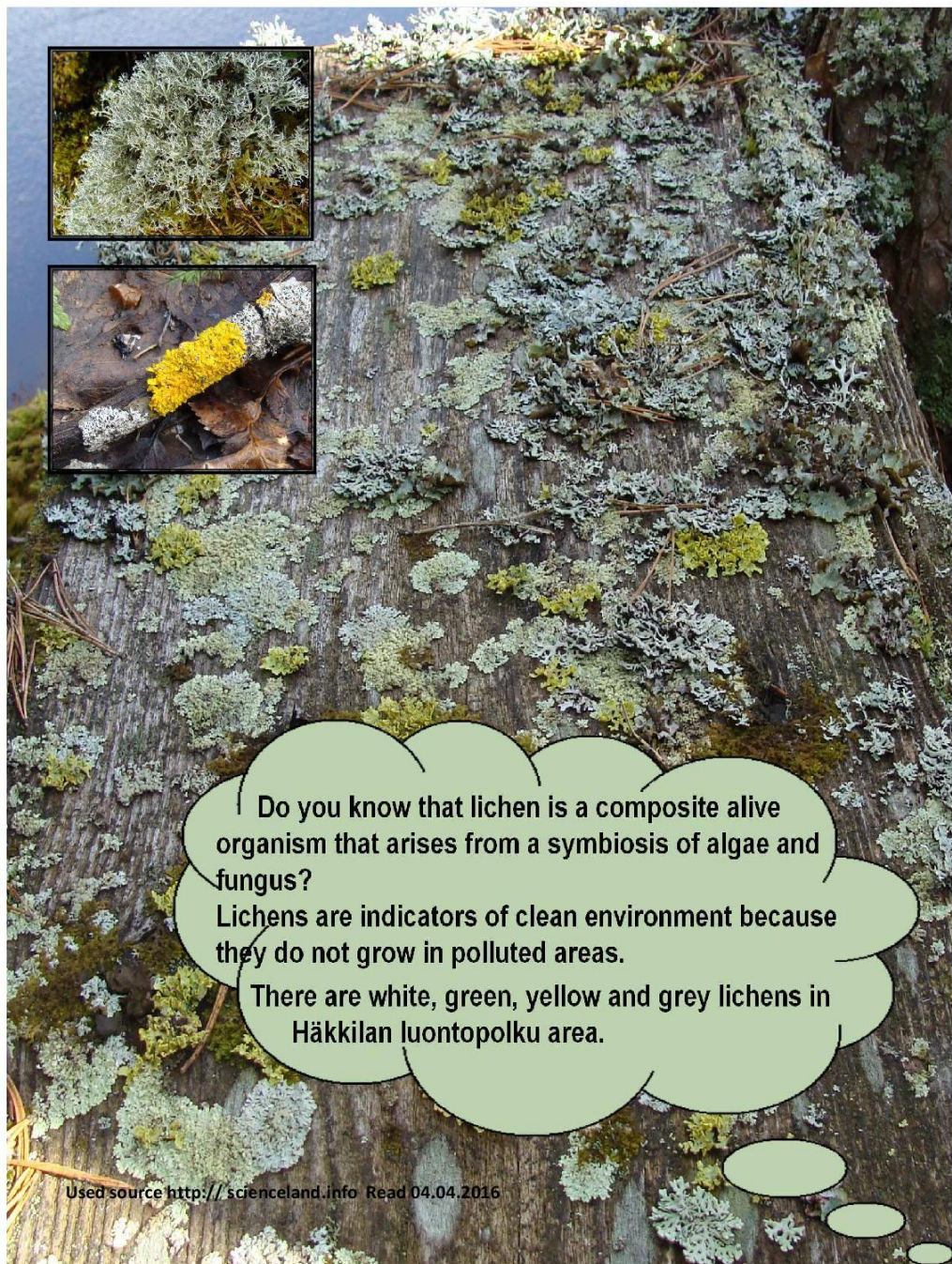
You should have hiking shoes and weather-appropriate clothes for the trip. Also you can take some food and drinking water with you.

For that who decided to go to the trip without our guide.

There are parking lots in the area, so you can get to the start point of the route by car. You can reach the start point of the route from Mikkeli (St. Michel town) by Kuopio high road (5) and then turn to Pieksämäki high road (72). Drive along Pieksämäki high road 38 km. then turn to the left to Porsaskoski road. Drive along Porsaskoski road about 6,6 km. until you see *a road sign with an exclamation mark in the red triangle*: after this sign an asphalt road ends. On the opposite side of the road you can see a big pine and the direction sign Saksanrannantie (the name of the road). Turn to Saksanrannantie and drive to Saksanrannantie 5. It is a red wooden house of Häkkilän erämaja (tourist station). You can park your car on the territory of Häkkilän erämaja. Then the way 2,4 km. to Häkkilän luontopolku continues along Saksanrannantie on foot. Häkkilän luontopolku starts from wooden stairs up to the Ovensuori hill to the forest.

There is only one path in the forest, so your way in accordance with the route will be easy. Anyway, moving on the path (Häkkilän luontopolku), you see signs of right direction in form of yellow marks and red colour hoops around trees.





Do you know that lichen is a composite alive organism that arises from a symbiosis of algae and fungus?

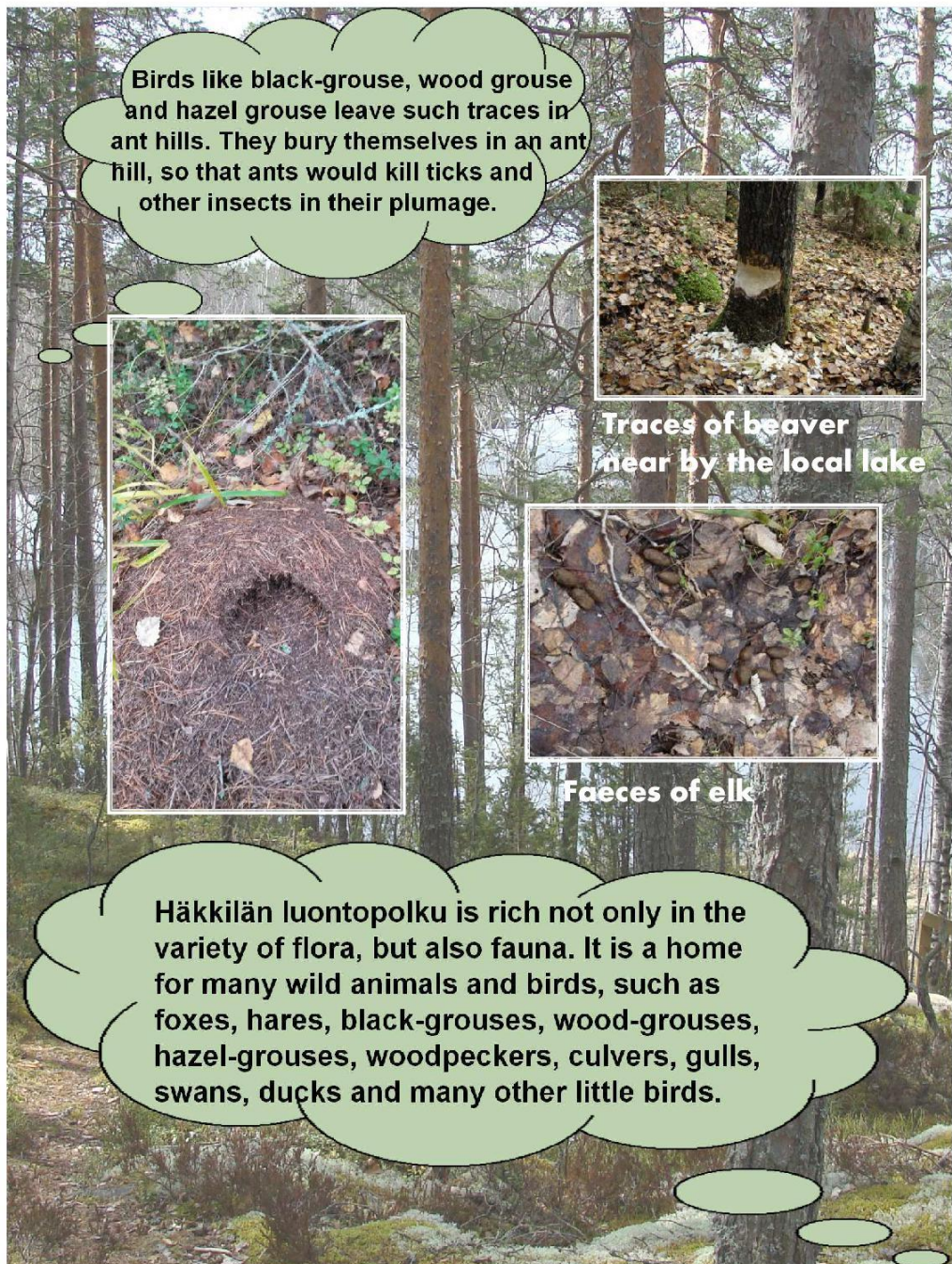
Lichens are indicators of clean environment because they do not grow in polluted areas.

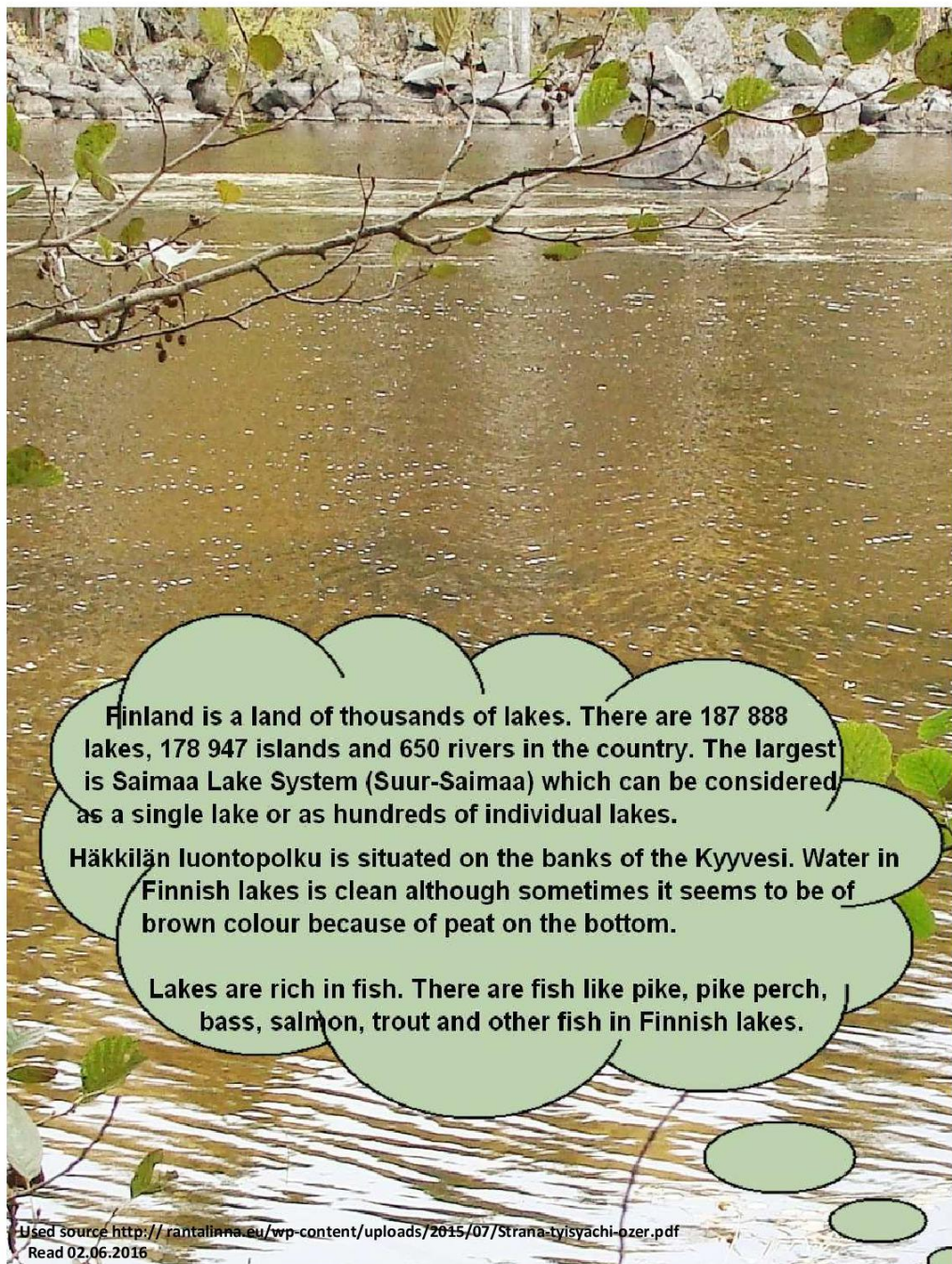
There are white, green, yellow and grey lichens in Häkkilän luontopolku area.

Used source <http://scienceland.info> Read 04.04.2016









Geological history of Finland

Long ago the Earth was a fiery ball of liquid in an atmosphere of which was vaporous water.

The Earth gradually cooled down so that a granite crust was formed on its surface. Water vapor fell to the surface in a form of heavy rainfalls; in this way the first prehistoric ocean appeared.

Under the influence of water and air the granite crust split into gravel, clay and sand, which then were involved in soil formation suitable for vegetation.

The bottom of the ocean were pressed by the fiery masses from inside and it rose under the water surface in the form of first continents. While surfaces of Russia and other European countries in the South and in the East were on the bottom of the ocean, Finland was above the water in the form of a giant granite island.

Modern relief of Finland was formed in the geological period of the Quaternary which began 2588 million years ago and continues to our days. The movement of huge streams of water from the North-west to the East took place in that period. Traces of these streams look now like huge round boulders, polished rocks and cobbles, heaps of sand and elongated valleys that you can see everywhere.

Modern relief of Finland continues to imperceptible change. So that the northern part of Finland raises at 4 feet every century.

Used source http://www.kolamap.ru/1864_semenov/1864_semenov_Fin_2_1.html



Everyman's Rights

An Everyman's Rights tradition provides people in Finland unparalleled opportunities to explore nature and enjoy the bounty of the forest. Nearly 90 per cent of Finland's surface area falls under the Everyman's Rights law and can be used for recreational enjoyment of the great outdoors. Everyman's Rights also apply to visitors from abroad. Moving about in natural areas does not require the landowner's permission, nor are the privileges enshrined in Everyman's Rights subject to the payment of any fees. Anyone may freely pick wild berries, mushrooms and plants, with the exception of a few species protected under environmental laws.

Used source [http:// www. arctic-flavours. fi](http://www.arctic-flavours.fi) (Direct copying of information). Read 25.05.2016.

Everyman's Rights

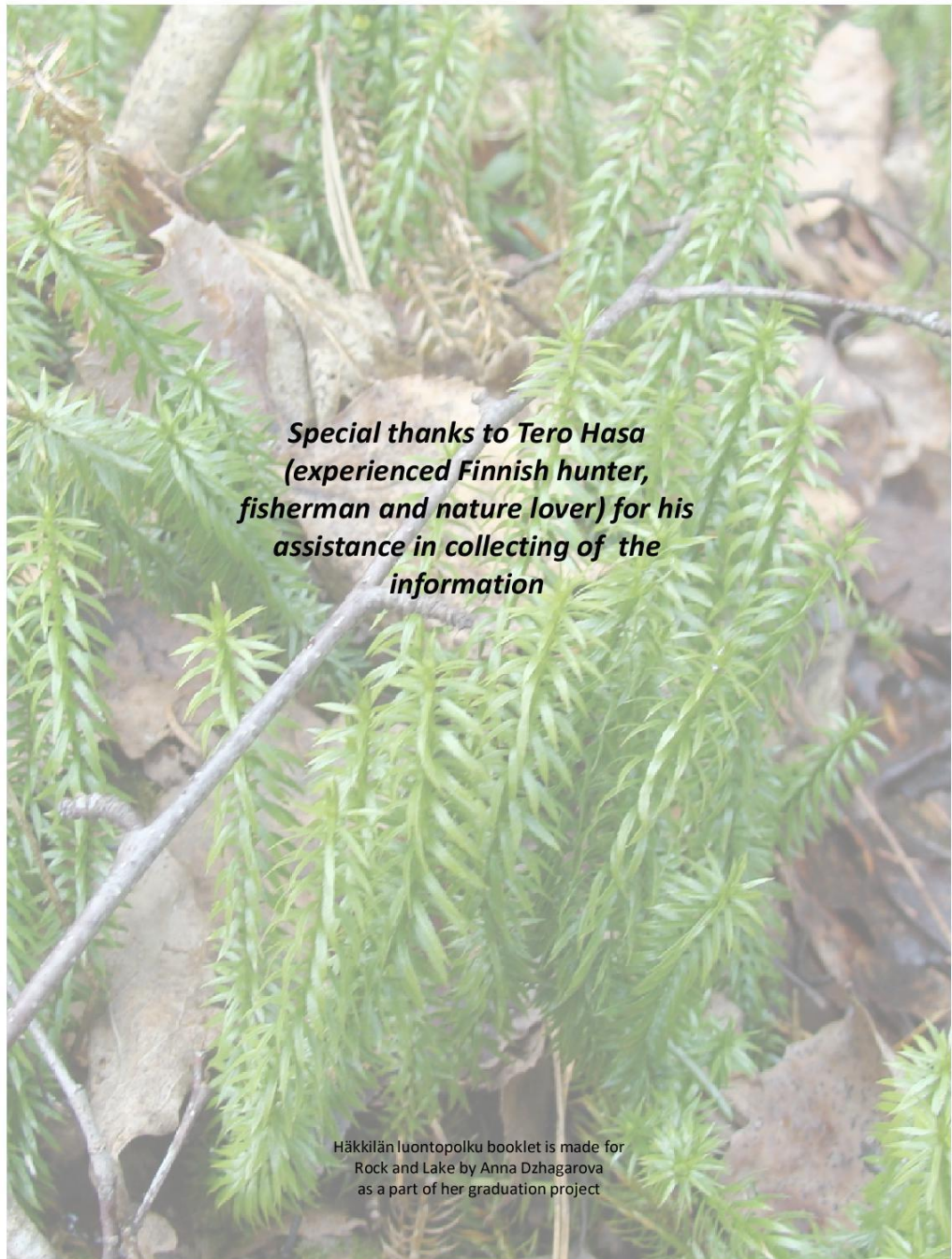
Permitted activities:

- Collecting wild berries, mushrooms, flowers and most herbaceous plants; rowan and juniper berries may also be collected.
- Gathering pine cones, dry twigs or other such natural products from the ground.
- Walking, skiing or cycling anywhere apart from on cultivated land or in gardens or yards.
- Traversing and camping temporarily on someone else's land.
- Fishing with worm bait and ice fishing.
- Boating, swimming and washing in inland waters or the sea.

Prohibited acts:

- Removal of bark, branches, leaves, resin, sap or cones from a growing or fallen tree.
- Removal of moss, lichen, wood, shrubs or peat from someone else's land.
- Cutting down grass.
- Traversing and staying overnight on cultivated land or in someone's yard.
- Lighting an open fire on someone else's property without permission.
- Littering.
- Fishing or hunting without permission.
- Driving a motor vehicle off marked tracks or roads without the landowner's permission.

Used source <http://www.arctic-flavours.fi> (Direct copying of information). Read 25.05.2016.



QUESTIONS OF THE INTERVIEW FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

1. Whether you were interested in the tour program?
2. Does the tour meet your expectations?
3. Whether there is sufficient number of excursions in the tour?
4. What part of the tour was the most interesting?
5. What part of the tour was the least interesting?
6. Do the tour was well organized?

