

Lahti – European
Green Capital 2021

Lahti

From theme year to the future

Legacy and development of Lahti's
environmental work in 2021–2025



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Lahti is building a sustainable future as a European Green Capital

Lahti's year as the European Green Capital 2021 was a major milestone for us. The recognition put Lahti among the leading cities in sustainable development, strengthened our reputation as a pioneer in sustainability and increased our international visibility.

Lahti began its efforts towards environmental goals fifty years ago. This work is still ongoing, and the Green Capital year helped speed up the development.

Legacy projects to the theme year, such as the Lahti GEM (Green Electrification of Mobility) cluster, have strengthened the city's vitality and competitiveness. Sustainability and the green transition are increasingly central to

both urban development and businesses.

In this report, we take a look at development efforts made by the city after the Green Capital year. Strategic choices and systematic work have made us an internationally recognised leader in sustainable urban development. Our task now is to ensure that this trend continues in the future.

Niko Kyynäräinen
Mayor



Once a Green Capital – always a Green Capital

A particular fulfilling task in my role as European Commissioner is to engage with cities in their efforts to be greener and more sustainable. European Green Capital cities play a special role in this, as they have gone the extra mile and have succeeded to make a difference in the environment for their citizens.

The city of Lahti has taken on the title of European Green Capital in 2021 – and its commitment and achievements have been remarkable: reading this report, you will surely agree. I invite you to learn about the innovations and transformations the city has embraced, and the vision for the future it is guided by.

The progress made by Lahti continues to live on, and continues to shape the city still today, five years on. Indeed, Lahti shows us that the motto “Once a Green Capital – always a Green Capital” is more than a slogan. It is a

long-standing commitment to the environment, and to the quality of life for the city's citizens. Lahti punches above its weight when it comes to the environment. Lahti is a European Green Capital trailblazer and continues to inspire applicant cities across the EU.

I encourage everyone to visit this exceptional city in the North, you will be able to experience hiking in the close-by nature, to swim in clean lakes, to breathe clean air and to enjoy the quality of life a green city has to offer.



Jessika Roswall

European Commissioner for the Environment,
Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular
Economy




Lahti – European Green Capital 2021

Lahti is the European Green Capital 2021. The recognition by the European Commission was awarded for Lahti's long-term and impressive environmental work and ambitious plans for the future.


The Green Capital year strengthened Lahti's role as an international leader in environmental issues, intensified regional cooperation, promoted the achievement of environmental goals and improved the city's reputation.

The impact of the Green Capital year is still strong, demonstrating Lahti's commitment to sustainable development. As a leader in environmental work, Lahti attracts new businesses, increases the vitality of the region and improves the quality of life of its residents.

Lahti aims to become

 Climate neutral as the first major city in Finland.

 Nature positive by 2030.

 Circular city of sustainable consumption by 2050.

Recognitions after the European Green Capital year

- Best Sustainable Destination in Europe 2022, (European Best Destinations)
- Sustainable Cities Index, ranked fourth 2022 and 2023, (Corporate Knights)
- CDP A List of leading cities in climate action 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, (Carbon Disclosure Project)
- EU Covenant of Mayors City in Spotlight Award, winner 2022, (EU Covenant of Mayors)
- EU Mission: Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, selected 2022; EU Mission Label 2024, (European Commission)
- European Capital of Smart Tourism Competition, ranked among the top three 2025, (European Capital of Smart Tourism)

Climate-neutral Lahti

Lahti continues its work towards a climate neutral future. Based on the latest emissions scenarios, the target could be reached in 2028.

Lahti has a long history to have one of the most ambitious climate targets set by cities. The methods for calculating emissions and the definition of climate neutrality have been refined over the years.

According to the latest calculation, emissions have already decreased

by 64%. In particular, emissions from heating have been cut significantly as coal was phased out from use in district heating and residents and businesses have switched from oil heating to sustainable alternatives.

The greatest challenge is reducing emissions from road transport, where Lahti has fallen short of its target. Pedestrian and cyclist traffic and public transport still account for a small share of all mobility, and the electrification of

transportation is not progressing fast enough.

Achieving climate neutrality requires support at the national level and close cooperation between cities, businesses and residents. As a pioneer, Lahti needs to do more, but with concerted efforts, the target is still within reach as the first of Finland's major cities.

Lahti Climate Program 2023-2030 aims to reduce production-based CO₂ emissions by 80% compared to the level in 1990. The remaining 20% will be sequestered by means of carbon sinks or offset using internationally accepted methods.

EU Cities Mission

In 2022, Lahti was selected as one of 112 cities to participate in the EU Mission for climate-neutral and smart cities. The Cities Mission seeks to achieve climate neutrality in these cities by 2030 and make them centres of experimentation and innovation. The aim is to create solutions that all European cities can use on their journey towards climate neutrality by 2050.

As part of the Cities Mission, Lahti signed a climate contract with local stakeholders in 2023. The climate contract is based on Lahti's climate program. A total of 17 local businesses and organisations are participating in the agreement and committed to support the City of Lahti in its climate goal.

In spring 2024, Lahti was awarded the EU Commission's Mission Label for its climate work.



Hämeenmaa promotes climate work and biodiversity

Jaana Järvenselkä,
Customer Relations Director
Hämeenmaa Cooperative Society

Hämeenmaa Cooperative Society, an S Group company, is a climate partner of the City of Lahti and participates in the EU Mission climate contract. S Group is the only cooperative retail society in Finland. The group is made up of 19 independent regional cooperatives. Customer Relations Director Jaana Järvenselkä's responsibilities at Hämeenmaa Cooperative Society include promoting sustainability.

We have a long history in sustainability work, and cooperation with the City of Lahti was a natural next step. Hämeenmaa Cooperative Society aims to be climate neutral by 2025.

Energy used the Hämeenmaa Cooperative is sourced from solar and wind power. We have been actively

using solar power since 2015, and nearly all our business locations are equipped with solar panels.

100% of the energy we use is emission-free, but not yet entirely renewably sourced. We don't use natural gas, and in district heating, our aim is to offset emissions to achieve climate neutrality. Our energy usage decreased by 5% between 2018 and 2024, even as the floor area of our business locations increased over the same period.

We have expanded our network of electric vehicle charging stations. Recently, we opened the largest EV charging hub in Finland in Heinola, a neighbouring municipality of Lahti, where 32 cars can be charged simultaneously. Large EV charging hubs are also planned for Lahti, Hämeenlinna and Forssa.

We have also extended our sustainability work to promote biodiversity. This is a new theme for us, and we are

working with the University of Jyväskylä to find out how we can better integrate biodiversity into our value chain. Locally, we work closely with the Vanajavesi Centre and Lake Vesijärvi Foundation. These foundations conserve lakes and rivers in the region and combat eutrophication and the spread of invasive species.

Our climate partnership with the City of Lahti has brought Hämeenmaa Cooperative Society closer to the regional business network for sharing best practices and experiences. This cooperation has also opened doors to international projects, which has enriched our shared understanding.

The owner-customers of Hämeenmaa Cooperative are involved in sustainability acts, and customers are offered tools that help them make more environmentally friendly purchasing decisions.

We want to make the regions of Kanta-Häme and Päijät-Häme a better

place to live for people as well as other organisms. We are a strongly local cooperative, and it is important for us to make a positive impact on our local nature.

The climate partnership network of the City of Lahti is open to all types of organisations from different sectors. The partnership is voluntary and free of charge and is based on emission reduction targets set by the partners themselves. Currently, the City of Lahti has 35 climate partners.

Reducing emissions from transport

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from road transport is a key part of climate change mitigation and moving towards a more sustainable society. To achieve the set goals, it is important to reduce the use of private cars, transition to cleaner fuels and increase the share of walking, cycling and public transport in day-to-day mobility.

The electrification of transport will bring about a major technological shift, both in the development of electric vehicles and batteries as well as the energy production and infrastructure. Demand for infrastructure and energy production solutions that support this change is growing.



Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan – SUMP

The City of Lahti Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) is based on an approach created by the EU and supports the city strategy. The action plan encourages a shift towards sustainable modes of mobility and sets long-term targets that consider all transport modes and user groups. It seeks to address challenges related to mobility, such as reducing emissions and building a comfortable urban environment.

The goal is that sustainable modes of mobility account for more than half of all trips made in Lahti. The measures focus on promoting walking and cycling, de-

The goal is that sustainable modes of transport account for more than half of all trips made in Lahti.

veloping transportation arrangements in the city centre and public transport as well as improving road safety. This is the second iteration of the action plan as part of the city's master plan.

Public transport

The transformation of vehicles used by the regional public transport operator LSL has been rapid: 75% of the bus fleet used in Lahti use alternative fuels, and electric buses currently account for about a quarter of the total fleet. The aim is that by 2026, the entire fleet will use alternative fuels, with half of all vehicles entirely emission-free.

Mankeli city bikes

Electrically assisted city bikes offer a sustainable and convenient way to get around in Lahti. Lahti residents have access to 500 Mankeli city bikes in around 60 stations, with flexible fare options. City bikes complement public transport and make use of the city's extensive network of 570 kilometres of pedestrian and cycling paths.

The City of Lahti will reduce emissions from transport by



Developing the network of pedestrian and cycling paths and encouraging residents to sustainable mobility



Improving the service level and attractiveness of public transport



Increasing the share of electricity and alternative fuels

Pilot projects to reform daily living and commuting

KELPO – Sustainable mobility trials in the Päijät-Häme region

The KELPO project (2024–2026) promotes changes in transport fuels and modes of mobility in the Päijät-Häme region through local trials and communication. Lahti is responsible for the development

of mobility related to schools and education institutions and for communicating about the project's results. LAB University of Applied Sciences focuses on commuting and freight logistics in rural areas.

The aim of the project is to promote low-emission forms of mobility, new technologies and energy efficiency, raise awareness of sustainable mobility and its impacts among residents and

businesses and influence attitudes and mobility habits.

SYCLA – Sustainable commuting project

The SYCLA project (2023–2025) identified obstacles and opportunities for sustainable commuting and trialled employee-centred solutions in companies.

Among other solutions, the project trialled public transport ticket offers, free bicycle maintenance, improved bicycle storage facilities and dressing rooms and well-being training. In addition, campaigns such as Cycle to Work day and Kilometer race were organised to encourage commuting by bike, and electric bicycles were provided for shared use. The measures

supported Lahti's climate goals and sustainable mobility.

Sustainable mobility year 2025

The sustainable mobility year asks questions and opens discussion about the way we move around in our daily lives. Why do we choose one form of mobility and ignore others? The purpose of the theme year is to promote development and advances in sustainable mobility in Lahti and the Päijät-Häme region as a whole.

The theme year spreads the message through trials and encourages to experimentations. The aim is to get as many people as possible to see that everyday exercise can be enjoyable.



Lahti has received significant amount of funding for sustainability-themed EU projects in recent years.

Lahti GEM - Growth, internationalisation and RDI initiatives

Pekka Komu, Business Development Manager, LADEC

The Lahti Green Electrification of Mobility (GEM) Cluster is a legacy project for the European Green Capital year of Lahti in 2021. Its aim is to support the climate neutrality goal of the City of Lahti and all of Finland. Business Development Manager Pekka Komu from Lahti Region Development LADEC Ltd is the cluster's director and responsible for its activities.

The Lahti GEM Cluster brings together businesses, research institutes and cities in the region to develop green electrification technologies. The cluster was established in 2020 and gained strong momentum during the Green Capital year 2021. Today, it encompasses 43 businesses with around 1,750 employees in total. For example,

Kempower, a Lahti-based company that manufactures fast-charging solutions for electric vehicles, has grown rapidly and now employs more than 900 people.

The cluster has continued to grow since the Green Capital year, although the number of member businesses is not the main concern. It is more important what concrete impacts we can achieve together. Our partners come from the Lahti region, the rest of Finland, around the world, but all have active operations in Finland.

The expansion of LUT University to Lahti around the time of the cluster's establishment was a significant step forward. The university is our close partner and in 2022, the first electric transportation professorship in the Nordic countries was established with support from businesses. An international master's programme in electric transportation systems was

also established, and LAB University of Applied Sciences launched a programme in electrical and automation engineering. In addition, a professorship in sustainable mechatronics was established at LUT University with funding from several members of the cluster.

The local Salpaus vocational college supports the cluster by providing training for jobs in the automotive sector, and upper secondary schools have started offering courses on electric transportation. The demand for ICT professionals is particularly high, and Lahti is the third largest provider of training for software developers in Finland.

Our cluster's achievements include the establishment of the Electronic Mobility Research Center (EMRC), a collaboration between LUT University and Kempower.

In addition, Nordic RenGas received a €45 million grant from the European

Hydrogen Bank to produce clean e-methane in Lahti. The product development grant received by Kempower for the development of a charging ecosystem for heavy-duty traffic is the largest RDI investment in the region's history. In the project, Business Finland is providing €10 million in direct funding for Kempower and €20 million for other companies in the ecosystem. The remainder, around €30 million, will be made up of self-financing contributions from participating companies.

In the future, we want to promote sustainable Finnish energy production and emphasise the positive aspects of the green transition. I see my work as meaningful because it helps to protect the environment, creates jobs and improves our city's prosperity.

Nature-positive Lahti

Nature positivity means halting and reversing nature loss to achieve a recovery in nature and biodiversity. However, at the moment, biodiversity loss continues in Lahti and globally.

The concept of nature positivity came into the public spotlight in 2022 with the UN Global Biodiversity Framework. The aim of the framework is to halt nature loss by 2030, followed by promoting nature recovery.

The same goal is also being strived towards in Lahti. Lahti launched the work towards nature positivity in the Nature-Positive Life project (2023–2025), which received funding from the Sustainable Lahti Foundation and the

Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra. As part of the project, Lahti was one of the first cities in the world to calculate its nature footprint. The calculation was carried out by the Sustainability Change research group of LUT University. In October 2024, the City Board decided that Lahti would strive to be nature-positive by 2030.

Lahti is also a signatory to the Nature Forum's declaration by participating cities, which takes a stand on halting nature loss and strengthening biodiversity. The declaration, signed by city managers and mayors, was published in September 2024.

The promotion of nature positivity in Lahti has received an extension of funding until 2026.



Nature, forests and green environments as part of sustainable cities

Nature reserves within the City of Lahti comprise a diverse range of biotopes, including bogs, heath forests and wetlands with their flora and fauna. There are around 50 areas protected under the Nature Conservation Act in Lahti, with an area of 1,055 hectares, or 2.04% of the city's total area.

The 7,000 hectares of forest in the City of Lahti offer a wide range of opportunities for recreation and nature conservation. Climate-resilient forest management also supports the city's climate neutrality goal: diverse and healthy forests absorb carbon, adapt better to changing conditions and remain carbon sinks in the long term.

In recent years, several nature-related initiatives have been promoted in Lahti. These include urban tree policy, nature conservation plan, forest management principles, groundwater protection plan and urban greening plan. All the action plans aim at protecting and developing the city's natural environments.



Contact with diverse nature improves human health

Hanna Haveri, Planetary Health Doctor, Päijät-Häme wellbeing services county Legacy project - Nature Step to Health

Nature Step to Health is the Lahti region's health and environment programme for 2022–2032. The City of Lahti, the Päijät-Häme wellbeing services county and Lahti University Campus are working in close cooperation to prevent chronic diseases and mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss. The cooperation also aims at achieving financial sustainability. Neurologist Hanna Haveri works part-time as the first planetary health doctor in Finland and serves as an expert in the programme.

In the Lahti region's health and environment programme, we work

together to promote the well-being of people and nature. This includes improving public health, supporting biodiversity and developing living environments. Cooperation is a key part of the programme, with the Päijät-Häme wellbeing services county, the City of Lahti, universities and higher education institutions among those participating.

Research and education are at the core of the programme, as we need new knowledge on planetary health and its effects. For example, the effects of urban planning and biodiversity on health have been studied extensively in Lahti.

Concrete solutions have also been developed. The Health Forest established in Lahti offers residents the opportunity to enjoy the health benefits of nature. The forest is located about six



The world's first planetary health doctor works in Lahti.

kilometres from the city centre, close to Päijät-Häme Central Hospital.

The Health Forest promotes the well-being of hospital employees and gives patients and their relatives the opportunity to spend time in nature. There is a wealth of evidence on the positive effects of nature on well-being, including promoting recovery from stress.

One example of the measures we have taken is the development of nature prescriptions for exercise counselling in cooperation with the Natural Resources Institute Finland and the City of Kajaani. They help direct clients to nature-based well-being services. The City of Lahti is also promoting the development of green spaces and the network of pedestrian and cycling paths.

Planetary health means that people and nature are intimately linked. Everyone can contribute to this through their choices, such as keeping a garden rich in biodiversity, participating in the city's development and adopting a healthy lifestyle.

One of the challenges in the programme is measuring its impact, as health is affected by many factors. In addition, a balance needs to be found between urban development and nature conservation. However, in terms of economic considerations, I believe that ecological thinking and economic benefits go hand in hand.

The City of Lahti is known for its environmental achievements, and the international interest we have attracted shows that the cooperation gives results. It is important that we continue to make a difference both locally and globally, as planetary health affects us all.

**Mayor Niko
Kyyneräinen invited
other cities to join in
promoting planetary
health at a meeting of
the international ICLEI
network in October
2024.**



Nature and health in urban development

Nature Prescription project

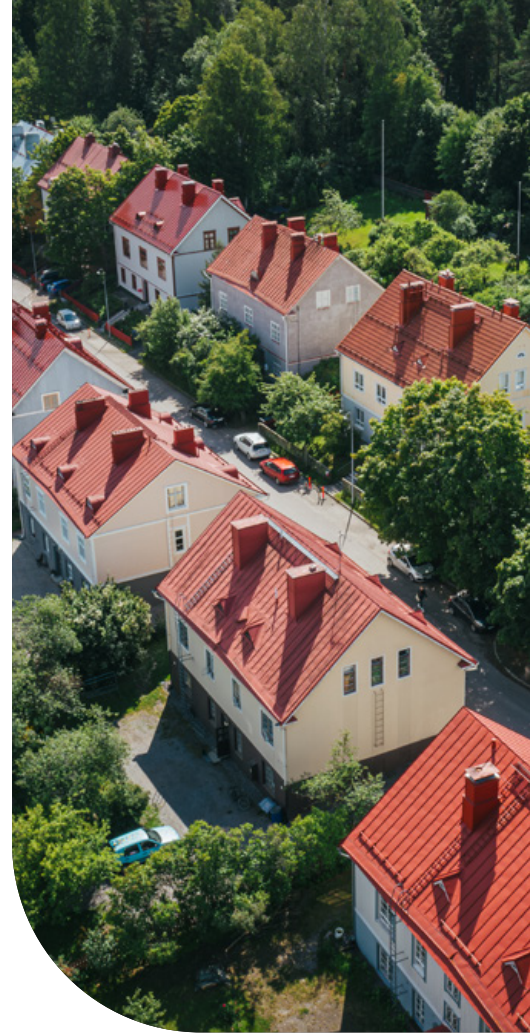
The Nature Prescription project (2024–2026) promotes the use of nature-based approaches to support health and well-being in municipalities. Its goals are increasing exercise, improving mental well-being and promoting the adoption of a sustainable lifestyle. In Lahti, the pilot project aims to expand the use of Health Forest and other nature recreation areas and strengthen the knowledge base about the health effects of nature. The Nature Prescription is being tested as part of exercise counselling and employment services. The project is implemented by the Natural Resources Institute Finland in cooperation with the cities of Lahti and Kajaani.

GoGreenRoutes project

The GoGreenRoutes project (2020–2024) expanded the understanding of the importance of human-nature interaction for well-being and urban planning. The project, which received funding from EU Horizon 2020, supported the integration of nature-based solutions for promoting health and sustainable development. In collaboration with a total of forty partners, the project developed ways to strengthen proximity to nature and promote citizens' participation in the experience of nature through digital, educational and behavioural innovations.

One Health 4 Cities project

Inspired by Lahti's health and environment programme, the city is also participating in the One Health 4 Cities project (2023–2025). Its aim is to promote the integration of the One/Planetary health approach into urban strategies. The project is strongly influenced by approaches employed in sustainable development and One/planetary health. Lahti is participating along with eight other European cities who all have local working groups and extensive cooperation with different stakeholders. Development of the Nature Step to Health programme will be continued in One Health Gov (2025–2029), an international project that brings together new participants from all over Europe to promote One/planetary health.



Salpausselkä UNESCO Global Geopark

The Salpausselkä ice-marginal formation represents Finland's most internationally renowned geological heritage, and Salpausselkä Geopark was designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark in 2022. The geopark encompasses six municipalities, stretching from the first Salpausselkä in Lahti to the southern part of lake Päijänne.

Promoting sustainable tourism and education for sustainability are amongst the main objectives of the UNESCO Geoparks. In Salpausselkä Geopark, a sustainable tourism development plan has been compiled to serve as a common tool for operators in the region. Salpausselkä Geopark was the first Finnish geopark to receive the Sustainable Travel Finland label by Visit Finland. The Geopark early childhood education programme has seven participating kindergartens, there is also a regional environmental education working group and successful Geopark guide training, was developed with Salpaus Further Education Institute.



Lahti as a circular economy city

Lahti aims to become a zero-waste city of sustainable consumption by 2050. Circular economy can help reduce the use of natural resources and cut energy consumption and CO₂ emissions.

Waste recovery in Lahti has long been at an excellent level. Source-separation of waste started in the city in 1998, almost 30 years ago. A large proportion of residents have adopted sorting as a daily habit, and they sort household waste into as many as ten different types of waste. Just half a per cent of municipal waste ends up in landfills.

In Lahti, waste is further processed at the Kujala treatment centre, where the business ecosystem is a unique example of the circular economy. There

are several other interesting examples of circular economy in the Lahti region, such as Päijät-Häme grain cluster, Fazer xylitol factory and Hartwall biogas plant. By using side streams, one's waste becomes a raw material for another.

Lahti is an internationally recognised and attractive hub of expertise in the circular economy. The aim is to attract significant new circular economy investments and businesses to the Lahti region.

The City of Lahti published its circular economy roadmap in December 2022, after extensive preparation together with stakeholders. The roadmap identifies the focus areas in circular economy for the city: education, sourcing, construction, food and material cycles.



Sustainable construction

Housing and construction account for a third of Finland's CO₂ emissions, so the way we live has a significant impact on climate change. In Lahti, the focus is actively on finding new solutions to reduce emissions from housing, using various projects and bringing together experts from industry, education and research.

Among other measures, Lahti is improving the energy efficiency of its building stock, developing public procurement in built environment and promoting low-carbon solutions in

building and infrastructure construction and sustainable demolition. The principles of the circular economy are considered already in urban planning. In the latest revision of the city's master plan, Lahti is reportedly the first city in Finland to trial master planning regulations and designations that enable ecological compensation, ecosystem services and timely circulation of soil and recycled materials suitable for construction. In 2025, the city made history in interactive urban planning, when the Lahti master plan 2035 became legally valid without any appeals.

Legacy project – Carbon neutral construction

Carbon neutral construction development centre and Carbon neutral construction innovation network projects (2021–2023 and 2023–2025) promoted low-carbon construction in the Lahti region.

The projects have focused on developing renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions for the construction of low-carbon buildings and the conversion of existing buildings to climate neutral energy consumption.

Emissions from construction and housing are divided into three stages: before, during and after the use of a building. The projects identified solutions for each of these stages with the target to facilitate climate neutral housing.

The network strengthened cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises, research institutions, universities and public sector. The collaboration will allow researchers to focus on developing solutions for



renewable energy and climate neutral construction. In turn, companies can bring new products to market, creating added value and contributing to sustainable development.

A currently ongoing project Circular construction cluster will run until 2027.



Significant emission savings from energy renovations in Lahti

Lahti participated in the national Canemure project (2018–2024), which focused on promoting climate neutrality in Finnish cities, municipalities and regions. In Lahti, seven residential sites were renovated to achieve various energy efficiency improvements, and their effects were monitored. The goal was to investigate the impacts of measures such as reduced water consumption, recovery of waste heat from wastewater and smart thermostats on energy consumption, CO₂ emissions and costs.



Circular economy solutions for cities

StoPWa project

The StoPWa project (2023–2026) develops and tests stormwater filtration systems made from construction and demolition waste. The filtration systems are made from sustainable and cost-effective waste materials most suitable for water purification. The functionality of the systems is tested in field conditions in Lahti, among other places.

CITISYSTEM project

The CITISYSTEM project (2023–2027) promotes biocircular economy, which reduces the consumption of natural resources and is part of the transition from a linear to a circular economy. The project supports cities in developing biocircular economy, with a particular focus on actions at the city level and inclusion of local communities. The aim is to increase understanding of regional nutrient and energy flows and promote practical solutions, including nutrient recycling and separate collection and recovery of biowaste.



Inclusion and communication

Inclusion is a key part of Lahti's environmental work, as it strengthens the commitment of residents and stakeholders to sustainable development goals. The city strives to achieve inclusion through joint development, transparent decision-making and collaborative networks, among other means. Residents can get involved in experimenting with sustainable solutions, influencing environmental decisions and promoting biodiversity. In this way, inclusion supports concrete environmental action and sharing of responsibility in communities.

Legacy project – Sustainable inclusion

After Lahti's Green Capital year, a social sustainability project was launched to strengthen the city's inclusion efforts and develop new ways of encouraging participation by residents. The project promoted cooperation across administrative divisions and interaction within the city to improve residents' opportunities for influencing and incorporate inclusion work as part of the city.

During the project, new inclusion models were developed and tools to support inclusion work were created and made part of the city's practices. One of the lasting results of the project was the development of the Skidialogi, a dialogue model for early childhood education and illustrated dialogue prompt cards. The cards help understand the dialogue process visually

and are particularly helpful for children and young people who do not have a common language or otherwise face challenges to discuss verbally.

Another lasting result was the development and testing of the Kumppanuuspöytä, a round table model for partnerships. There are four regional partnership round tables in Lahti with aim is of promoting community, well-being and vitality in their respective areas and increasing dialogue throughout the city. The round tables strengthen local democracy and participate in the development of the city by issuing statements, giving presentations and organising various events and activities with the city organisation and local stakeholders. While the round tables don't make decisions, they provide local information to the city administration.

Climate partnership involves organisations in environmental work

The climate partnership model has been in use in Lahti since 2015. It offers free and voluntary support for promoting environmental sustainability to all interested parties, regardless of sector. Organizations set their own climate targets and emission reduction measures based on an initial assessment. Cooperation with partners in the region is key achieving the climate neutrality target set by Lahti. Lahti currently has 35 climate partners committed to the climate measures they have selected.



Climate action and equality on and off the football pitch

Markus Mujunen,
Commercial Director, FC Lahti –
Climate partner of the City of Lahti

Sustainability and environmental work play an important role in the activities of Lahti-based football club FC Lahti.

Our climate partnership with Lahti has provided us with valuable partners and allowed us to develop our climate acts in a more systematic way.

The social impact of football in Lahti is also significant, and we want to use our position to make a positive difference through visible sustainability work and by inspiring others to also get involved.

In recent years, we have deepened our sustainability work with concrete

actions. We have adopted the “Palo on meillä” (“We’ve got the ball”) value proposition and a sustainability plan covering four key areas: environmental sustainability, equality, the joy of sports and leading by example.

In terms of environmental sustainability, the plan includes improved recycling at our matches, promoting local food, supporting sustainable mobility solutions among players and actively communicating on environmental issues. We want to make sure that our sustainability work is not just words – it’s the actions that count.

We have adopted the Carbon Link carbon footprint calculator, which allows us to more effectively monitor and reduce our emissions. Our goal is to make our matches climate neutral



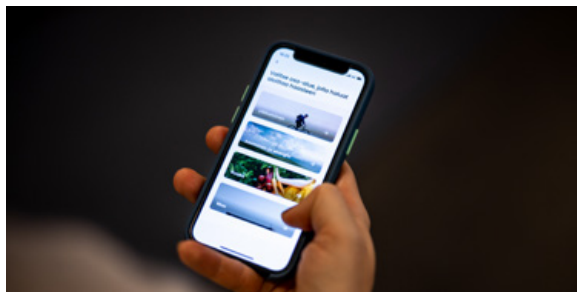
and to constantly develop new ways to reduce our strain on the environment.

We also strive to emphasise the importance of sports and exercise for well-being and offer opportunities for everyone to play football – no one is left on the sidelines.

We know that major changes take time and cooperation. We believe that

together we can achieve more, which is why we are actively building partnerships with businesses, communities and other sports clubs.

Football is the most influential sport in the world, and we want to use this position the right way by leading by example and promoting the things we believe in.



Climate app assists in everyday choices

Lahti, together with 12 other cities and research organisations around the world, developed the *Climate Campaigners* climate app (2021–2023). The app allows residents to monitor their personal carbon footprint and encourages making everyday choices that reduce CO₂ emissions. The free climate app tracks the greenhouse gas emissions of everyday choices and provides users with daily challenges that give real-time feedback on the impact of climate actions on their personal carbon footprint.



Communication and public relations campaigns

The City of Lahti communicates on environmental issues and sustainability across multiple channels to various target groups. The aim of the communication is to raise awareness, stimulate debate and encourage residents and stakeholders to act in a more sustainable way.

The GreenLahti channels are dedicated to communication on environmental issues. The online service, social media accounts and newsletters have been in use since the Green Capital year. They offer news content related

to environmental issues at the local, national and international levels.

Since the Green Capital year, the following environmentally themed campaigns have been carried out:

Planetary prescription 2022 promoted the concepts of planetary health, sustainable lifestyles and the Nature Step to Health project.

Design competition and textile deposit 2023 raised awareness of the value of recycled textiles and their use as material for designer products. The campaign also tested a fee-based textile collection system, which yielded positive results.



Without pollinators we cannot survive 2024 brought up biodiversity and the role of pollinators in the urban ecosystem.

The marketing communication concept developed for 2025–2027 will link together the city's environmental acts and strengthen their impact.

We can all influence the kind of world we leave behind for future generations

Lauri Pöyhönen,
Managing Director, Lahti Pelicans

Lahti Pelicans is the world's first climate neutral ice hockey club. Pelicans achieved climate neutrality in 2021, the same year when Lahti served as the European Green Capital.

We wanted to send a message through our climate acts that everyone can influence the kind of world we leave behind for future generations. I believe that our work can make people think about the well-being of the environment, both locally and globally.

Our carbon footprint decreased by 70% between 2020 and 2021, and we have continued measuring it. In

cooperation with LUT University, we have expanded the calculations to cover our entire value chain. The biggest reductions have been achieved through energy efficiency solutions.

Our goal is to be climate negative, which means that we take out more CO₂ from the atmosphere than we emit from our operations. We have switched to biodiesel for transport and are looking into adopting electric buses. We have also invested in the sustainability of our gear and preferred local food and biodegradable materials at our customer events.

Cooperation has been key to the efforts. Together with our partners, we have developed a model where gear is not replaced but maintained. We are also upgrading our fan merchandise



range to be sustainable and work with climate neutral suppliers.

Climate neutrality is reflected in our everyday work, for example in the way the team gets around: we give preference to walking, cycling, public transport and carpooling. Our theme has also been received positively by fans, and for example, the bus service included in match tickets has been very well received. The commitment of our fans and the entire organisation has

been a great achievement. Although new ways of working may seem strange at first, they are eventually understood to be in everyone's best interests.

In the future, our aim is to achieve climate negativity and reduce the need for offsetting emissions. We are the world's first climate neutral hockey team and want to use the voice of sport to drive change. We also encourage other sports organisations to get involved in climate acts, as they benefit us all.



Our story as an environmentally conscious city began with the clean-up of Lake Vesijärvi in the 1970s. Since then, we have made numerous environmental acts, both large and small, to become one of the most progressive green cities in Europe.

Our work continues with ground-breaking and bold initiatives in close cooperation with universities, educational institutions, businesses, NGOs and citizens.

City of Lahti

Lahti