



L A P P I

Elämänvoimaa

LAPLAND – VITALITY FOR LIFE

An Abstract of Lapland Tourism Strategy 2007 - 2010

1. GOOD RESULTS THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING

The earlier tourism strategy for Lapland set the guidelines for regional tourism development in 2003-2006. It established the main priorities for tourism project financing. The strategy has introduced an overall perspective to tourism industry in Lapland and made possible significant long-term development activities. In 2007, the positive results of that strategy are clearly visible: growth in the number of visitors to Lapland and in overnights, internationalisation of the trade, efficient organization within the industry and rapid expansion in major tourism centres. The scope and value of the present and planned investments are clear indicators of the positive prospects of the industry.

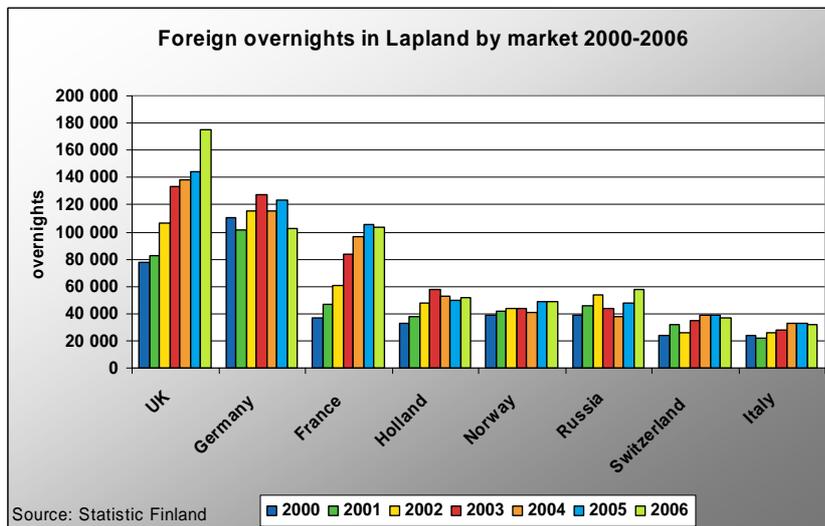
During 2007, the tourism strategy of Lapland has been revised and its validity period extended until 2010. The main objectives of the 2007-2010 revised strategy are to secure the future growth and profitability of the trade, to improve accessibility, and to create all-year-round employment and better subsistence for people. This new strategy is faithful to the earlier strategy in the fact that it will continue to put strong emphasis on tourism-centre-focused development. The earlier strategy defined 5 major tourism centres or regions in Lapland. Today, tourism centres have reached different development stages, and therefore the new strategy classifies the regions into four categories: strong, medium-strong, developing and other tourism areas. This classification provides an effective tool for directing public financing to the industry. The emphasis will be in supporting the developing and medium-strong areas to qualify for the critical mass in Lapland tourism.

In general, the main objectives of the new strategy are quite similar to earlier goals (e.g. internationalisation and all-year-round operation), but they also address the new challenges of the industry. These include improved accessibility, increased tourism marketing efficiency, sustainable development, safety and quality issues of tourism.

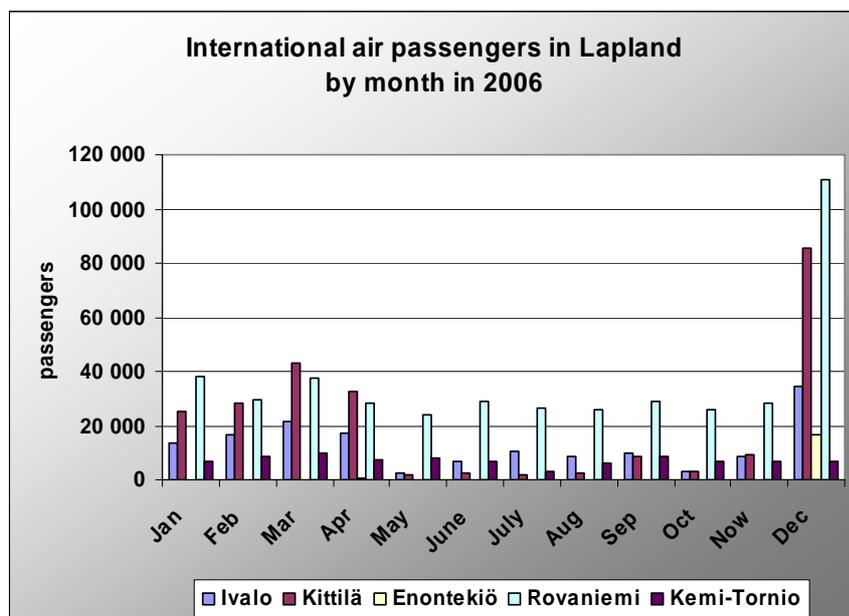
The strategy revision has been carried out in collaboration with tourism entrepreneurs, regional organisations, and other tourism actors. The revision fits into the national guidelines that have been set in Finland's Tourism Strategy 2020. The two major priorities that are established there include: 1) tourism centre development, and 2) thematic product group and service development. Product groups include snow and winter packages, water-related products, Finnish wellness products, and events. The tourism strategy of Lapland is also integrated into the 2007-2010 Regional Development program of Lapland which is an overall development guideline on the county level. Tourism industry is described there as one of the main industries that qualify for regional development funds.

2. TOURISM INDUSTRY TODAY

- In 2006, Lapland registered 2.1 million overnights, and the share of foreign visitors was approximately 40 % (over 800.000 overnights)
- The average annual growth rate in overnights has been 5 %.



- Major marketing areas are Great Britain, Germany, France, and the Netherlands. The number of Russian visitors has grown remarkably.



- Strong seasonality is characteristic of tourism in Lapland. Christmas is still the most popular season but lately, summer tourism has also had positive development.

3. TOURISM STRATEGY FOR 2007-2010

3.1. THE VISION OF LAPLAND TOURISM 2010

By 2010, Lapland has become an attractive, international, and easily accessible tourism region whose diversified services supply, clean nature, and experience-based activities offer the visitor genuine LAPLAND VITALITY in every season.

3.2 CORE VALUES

The tourism strategy of Lapland 2007-2010 is based on following core values:

Authenticity: The attractiveness of Lapland is based on genuine assets: unspoiled nature, original Lapland and Sàmi culture that people are proud of.

Customer satisfaction and high quality: The individual visitor is the core and focus of tourism service production. Warm and cordial service will give a finishing touch to a high-standard tourism product.

Innovativeness: Lapland possesses creativity, volition, and competence to produce innovative tourism packages, services, and operation models.

Safety: Lapland is safe, unpolluted, and clean resort. Potential safety threats have been analysed and precautions taken to prevent them.

Respect for nature: Lapland's natural surroundings provide the settings for unforgettable experiences. Tourism industry will adopt principles that guarantee socially, ecologically, and culturally sustainable development. In practice, this means that we secure the opportunities for travel and recreation in Lapland's nature for future generations.

3.3 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Economic growth: The target of tourism development is to secure all-year-round demand for products. The industry will grow and provide more fulltime employment and livelihood in Lapland. Tourism will indirectly contribute to many other businesses and thus bring prosperity to the whole county as well as promote a balanced regional development. Tourism centres will be the generators of further development. Networking between these centres and surrounding communities will increase village vitality, decrease population outflow, develop and maintain service structures in rural areas.

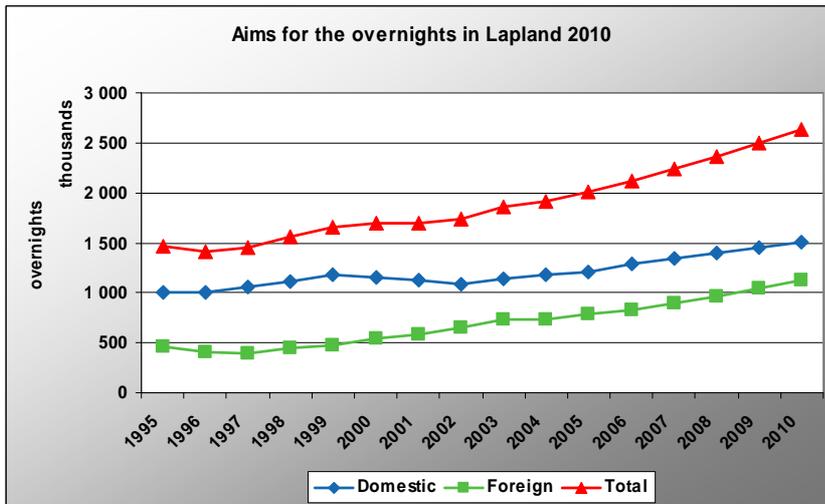
Operative efficiency and quality: Tourism industry will have sound profitability. Goods and services will display high quality, and they are provided all year round. The trade is well-organized, entrepreneurs possess sound business skills, academic research is effectively exploited in the field, and operational development is an on-going process.

Accessibility: Lapland can be easily reached by different means of transport and at competitive costs. It is an attractive destination especially for international visitors.

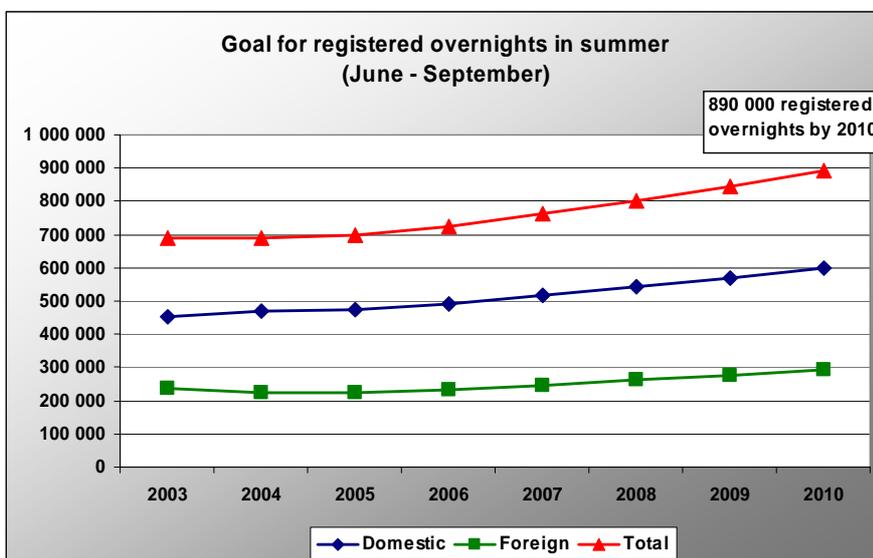
Marketing and Sales: Lapland tourism marketing is effective, displays high content quality, and is based on profound visitors' needs analysis. Strong Lapland brand is well-known globally, and it conveys a message of the genuine values that characterize Lapland tourism: pure nature, high-quality service provision, rich culture, and leisurely way of life. Marketing efforts and sales operations utilize efficiently digital distribution channels such as internet and social media. Lapland brand and image are built through long-term commitment and by utilizing of the regional expertise in content production, for example.

High-standard surroundings: Tourism and environment construction are based on high-quality planning and sound building, and they reflect Lapland identity. Special attention will be paid to pleasant surroundings, green construction, landscaping, and protecting the nature from the erosive effects of tourism. In building, the purpose is to create harmonious, functional and enjoyable surroundings.

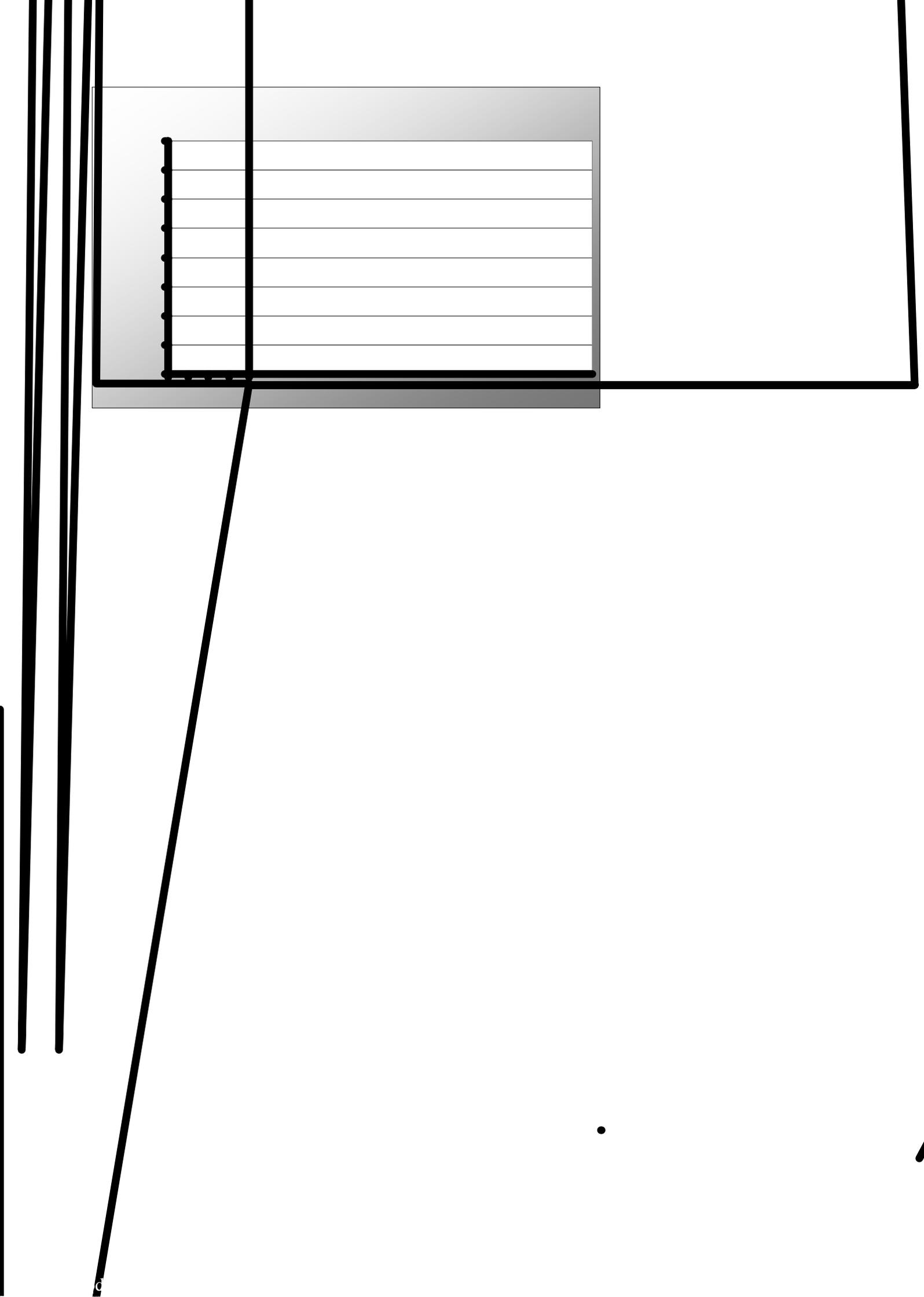
3.4. MAIN QUANTITATIVE TARGETS



- Demand for registered domestic overnights will grow by 4 % and for foreign overnights by 8 % every year
- The overall demand growth rate will be approx. 5.3 % per year
- By 2010, the number of registered overnights will reach 2.6 million (compared to 2.1 million today)



- A growth rate of 5.6 % per year in June-September overnights.
- The number of registered guest nights during summer months will reach 890.000 by 2010



Strong tourism areas: Levi, Ylläs, Olos and Pallastunturi, Saariselkä, Rovaniemi

Medium-strong areas: Pyhä-Luosto, Salla, Meri-Lappi

Developing areas: Suomu, Enontekiö-Kilpisjärvi

Other areas which lie in the outskirts of established centres but where tourism development has recently been positive.

- * Public financing will be allocated according to the different needs and the different development stages of the tourism areas
- * All regions can receive funding, but the main emphasis will be on supporting the developing and medium-strong areas to reach the next development stage and to become part of the critical mass of tourism
- * Financing will be directed to projects which enhance the overall attractiveness of the area and which aim at removing the obstacles or bottlenecks of tourism development.

2. Internationalization and accessibility

- * Growth will be sought from foreign markets.
- * The competitive strength of tourism must be secured by measures which improve Lapland's accessibility: the development of flight connections is imperative.
- * The Finnish national communications working group has proposed a new budget post for procurement of public transport services. Money from this post could be allocated to
 - * increasing the number of flight connections in summer
 - * securing the continuance of night train connections
 - * developing feeder and commuter connections.

3. All-year-round operation and theme-based product groups

- * all-year-round tourism demand will be grown by creating theme-based product groups which utilize the natural strengths of Lapland
- * The Finnish Tourism Strategy defines main theme-based product groups as follows: snow and Christmas products, water-related products, Finnish wellness products, and special event products. These comply with the strengths of Lapland tourism.
- * Tourist service providers take responsibility for their products and develop products with customer-orientation
- * the profitability of trade will be improved through product development, for example.

4. Marketing efforts

- * Marketing and sales efforts will be intensified and Lapland brand strengthened in the market
- * Lapland Marketing Ltd will assume the responsibility for the marketing of all Lapland

- * focus on foreign markets
- * emphasis on image marketing
- * The effects of tourism marketing can be intensified by cooperating more closely with content producers (films, TV-series, net and mobile applications) and by developing e-commerce.
- * Internet will become a marketing, sales, and distribution channel for Lapland tourism products
 - * it is a cost-effective way to reach international clientele
 - * Finnish Tourist Board's national booking system and regional tourism portal utilization
 - * creation of the tourism and experience industry cluster (lead by the Lapland centre of expertise for experience industry)

5. Infrastructure and land-use policy

- * Tourism construction must give due regard to the environment, pleasant surroundings and their quality standards.
- * The decisions on land-use must be made in cooperation with other industries and they must take into consideration many different expectations: the interests of tourism, forestry and mining, reindeer husbandry and others

6. The roles of different actors and cooperation

- * The goal is that all tourist service providers will have distinct roles and clearly defined tasks within tourism development
- * The industry will develop through joint collaboration which is equally rewarding to all partners
- * Products are built on similar elements in Lapland and in Ruka-Kuusamo regions as well as in Swedish and Norwegian Lapland. This will enable the development of transregional and crossborder cooperation in the future, which in turn, will spare resources and guarantee maximum visibility in international markets.

7. Research, education and competence upgrading

- * Future employment demands of the tourism industry will be met through adequate, high-standard education
- * high-quality tourism research will be setting guidelines for trade development
 - * specific tourism research programme
 - * an institution for tourism research and education.
- * Collect more, accurate statistical data on tourism and harmonize the data collection methods in order to improve the compatibility of produced information.

8. Quality control

* Lapland is the leading province in tourism quality development. The goal is to secure the quality leader status in the future.

* For overall quality guarantee, it is essential that

- * there is also future investment in development of quality standards, in business skills upgrading, and in improved human resources development in the companies.

- * tourism development will adhere to the guidelines of sustainable development (including ecological, social, cultural, and economic sustainability)

- * the safety of tourism is secured.

4. SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGIC GOALS

The most important strategic issues in Lapland's tourism strategy for 2007-2010 include improved accessibility, growing international and all-year-round tourism demand through vigorous sales and marketing efforts.

Lapland tourism will seek growth in international markets, and a major challenge is to generate more all-year-round demand for Lapland tourism products. A serious hindrance to the development of all-year-round service supply is the fact that Lapland has occasionally poor accessibility, especially outside the high seasons of Christmas and midwinter months. The tourism strategy seeks solutions to improve accessibility, but it is equally important to have an overall perspective on development measures. If international tourism demand could be guaranteed on an all-year-round basis, accessibility would improve automatically.

In order to increase successfully all-year-round demand from international markets, stronger emphasis on sales and marketing measures will be necessary. Marketing development will require joint commitment, long-term cooperation and ample resources from municipalities and tourism industry.

One method to develop sales and marketing is e-commerce. Finland is regarded as high-technology country but in this field of business we lag behind, although Lapland has positive prospects to develop into a strong e-commerce actor. Intensive network cooperation between tourism industry, research and education, and other operators will be necessary, however.

The need for extensive, accurate, and multiple research data is essential for tourism development. When planning effective foreign marketing measures, for example, it will be necessary to secure the

continuous supply of updated information on consumer behaviour, market situation, and future trends within the industry. Similarly, we need information about the development within tourism industry as well as the employment and revenue effects of the trade in order to direct public funding to suitable projects, and to make reliable evaluations of their results. The tourism research programme of Lapland will provide an extensive network of operators and create excellent conditions for producing high-quality research data to the industry.

Within the present tourism boom, it will be obligatory to pay special attention to the standards of construction, planning, and natural surroundings. In tourism development, the major distinctive attractions must be protected and the surroundings kept pleasant for both visitors and local inhabitants.