Taiga

Saving the forest

Forest preservation

Human intervention alters the natural replenishing cycles of the forest and its structure and composition in terms of species. Although the forest surface has increased during the 20th century, natural forests have shrunk. If a forest is used to make timber, pride of place is generally given to one species only (often Scots pine or red fir in Finland), while the others tend to be removed. In addition, the life of the trees is shortened by regular falling and dead wood is removed. This produces a forest, which tends to have one species of trees of the same age, remarkably younger than those of natural forests. Nevertheless, reforestation reduces the impact of the timber-related industries and protects other natural forests, and favourably affects the climate, water system, water cycle and the quality of life in general.

Tourism and wildlife sanctuaries

Tourism offers the beauty of a wild, uncontaminated region of unique beauty and produces employment and services. Many wildlife sanctuaries offer to nature-loving tourists unique sights and uncontaminated places, while a number of sporting facilities scattered all over the world provide winter sports. Finland has 30 national parks that occupy an area of approximately 7000 square kilometres. If we add this figure to other natural reserves, the total surface of protected areas reaches 29000 square kilometres, that is almost 9% of the total surface of Finland. Sweden has 25 national parks that cover approximately 6000 square kilometres and natural reserves that cover 26000 square kilometres. All these protected areas amount to 7% of the total surface of Sweden.