

# THE STORY OF LAHTI

European Green Capital 2021

18.9.2025

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LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION  
Supported by LADEC

25 000  
years  
ago

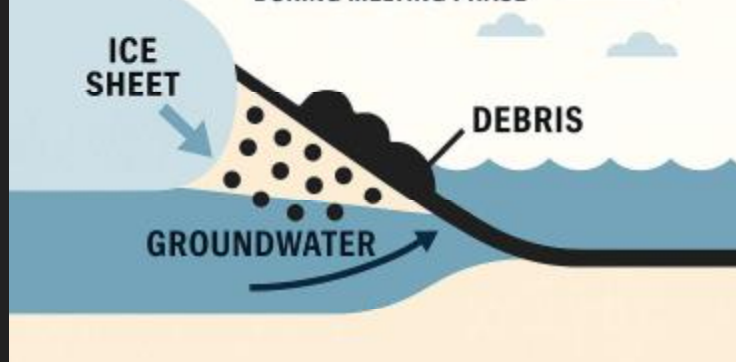
ICE SHEET DURING THE  
LAST GLACIAL PERIOD



LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION

12 000  
years  
ago

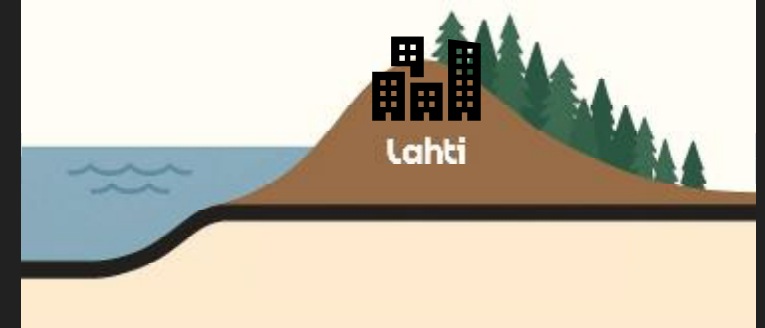
FORMATION OF THE SALPAUSSELKÄ  
TERMINAL MORaine  
DURING MELTING PHASE



LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION

Today

SALPAUSSELKÄ



LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION

Today

LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION



LAHTI  
BUSINESS  
REGION



Salpausselkä  
Geopark

unesco  
World  
Biosphere  
Reserve



Thanks to the groundwater  
formed during the Ice Age, the  
Lahti Region is the heart of  
the **beverage industry**.

Pajala Home  
Grain Cluster

[www.viljaklusteri.fi](http://www.viljaklusteri.fi)



Thanks to the terrain  
shaped by the Ice Age, the  
Lahti Region is the center  
of **Nordic sport business**.

LAHTI  
SPORTS  
HUB

[www.lahtisportshub.fi](http://www.lahtisportshub.fi)







Thanks to the natural water and land routes formed by the Ice Age, the Lahti Region has become a **central hub for logistics** and an innovation platform for **future mobility**.



Thanks to the beautiful nature shaped by the Ice Age, Lahti became a city of environmental business and the **European Green Capital 2021**.



[www.greenlahti.fi](http://www.greenlahti.fi)



Transition from an industrial city to an environmentally friendly city and European Green Capital



1960s  
Lahti,  
industrial  
city





## ←1975

### A city of heavy industry

The story of Lahti is closely linked to the development of Finland. An era of rapid growth and urbanisation that placed a burden on the environment continued until the 1970s. Lake Vesijärvi was one of the worst polluted lakes in Finland, and most of the jobs in the area were industrial, which later resulted in heavy unemployment during the recession.



## 1976

### The City stops discharging wastewaters into Lake Vesijärvi

Lahti already started ambitious water conservation work in the 1970s, with the aim of stopping the visible eutrophication of the largest lake in the city. Starting from 1976, the wastewater that used to go straight into Lake Vesijärvi has been treated at the Kariniemi wastewater treatment plant, from which the clean water is discharged into the Porvoonjoki River.



## 1987–1994

### The Vesijärvi I project starts

The journey of Lahti towards becoming a Green Capital started with the conservation of Lake Vesijärvi. The Vesijärvi I project was the largest restoration of a food web in the world: more than one million kilos of roach was removed from the Enonselkä Basin in the lake and over one million young zander were planted into the lake; as a result, blue algae blooms decreased significantly. The decades of work for the conservation and restoration of Lake Vesijärvi have brought important environmental expertise into the city.



## 1994

### The condition of Lake Vesijärvi starts to improve

In the early 1990s, the results of the Vesijärvi I project started to show: the water quality improved and the life below the surface flourished. As the condition of Lake Vesijärvi improved, both fishermen and the people of the city returned to enjoy the lake near the city centre.













## 2019

### A personal carbon trading scheme is tested

A model for personal carbon trading on mobility and an application for the citizens that enabled real-time tracking and visualization of one's mobility carbon footprint was developed and tested in Lahti for the first time in the world.



## 2021

### The European Green Capital year

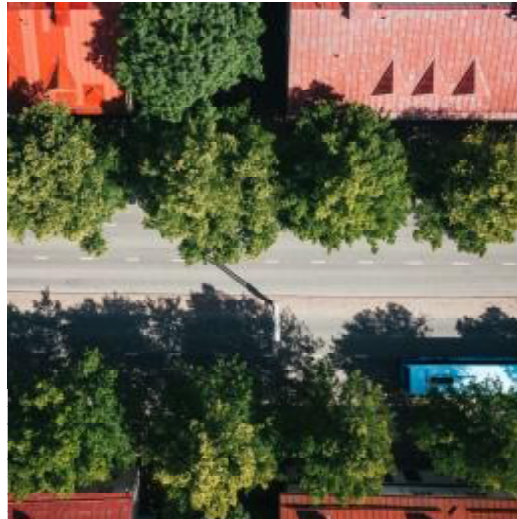
Lahti has received the honour of becoming the European Green Capital as the first city in Finland. Large-scale cooperation projects will be launched and a number of international and local environmental events will be hosted. During the year, the best European environmental solutions are highlighted and the citizens, companies and communities are encouraged to take bold environmental action together.



## 2022

### One of the Europe's 100 forerunner cities

Lahti has been selected as one of Europe's 100 forerunner cities. Lahti is involved in the EU Commission's 100 Climate-neutral and Smart Cities Mission. Access to this EU mission directly supports the achievement of the city's 2025 carbon-neutrality goal.



## 2024

### Nature-positive city

Lahti aims towards a positive nature impact, striving for nature positivity. Lahti wants to develop best practices to mitigate nature loss as part of its climate action. The goal is for Lahti to be a nature-positive city by 2030.



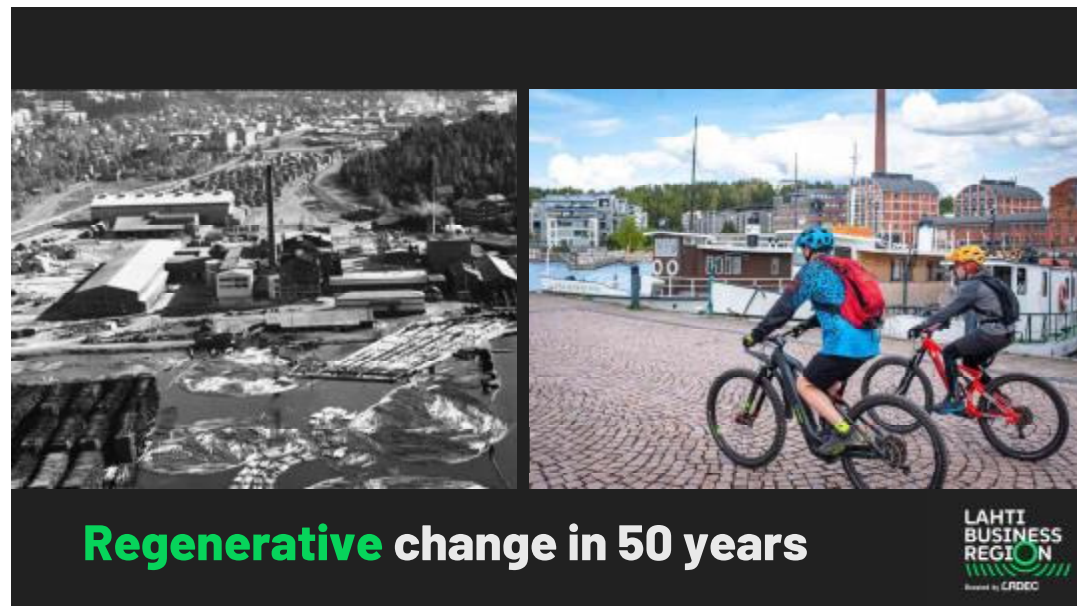




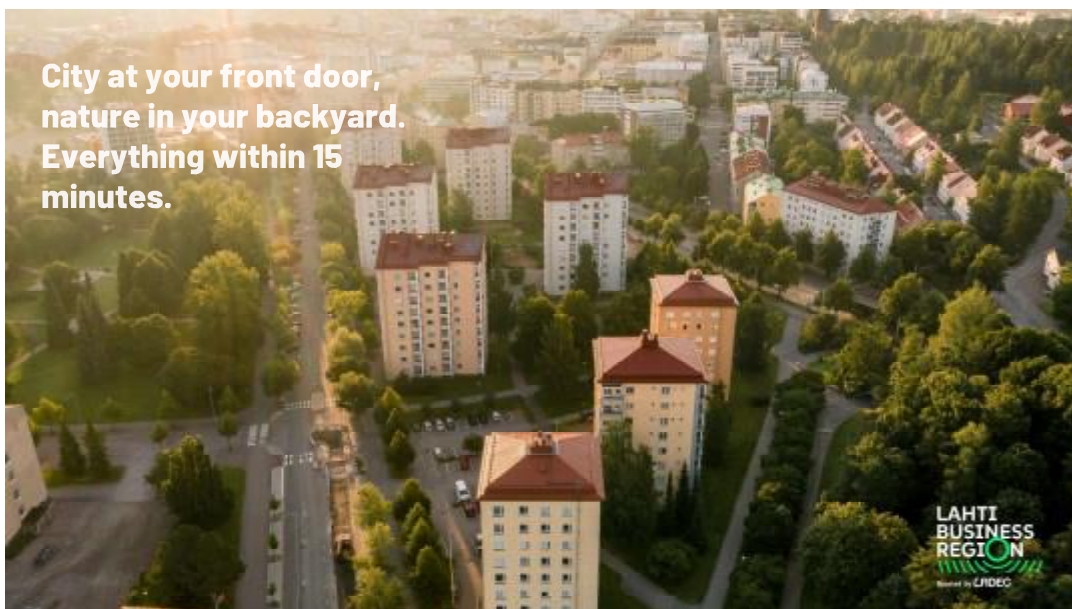
# 2028

## Carbon-neutral Lahti

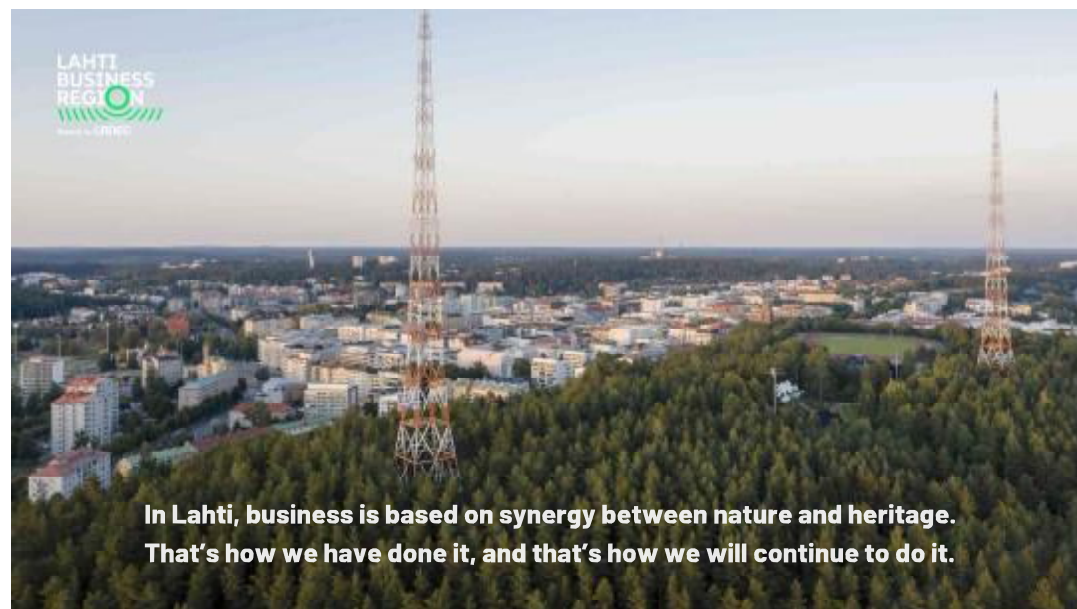
When Lahti leads, the rest of the world will follow. Lahti has set ambitious climate goals and intends to become a carbon-neutral city by 2028. As the first large carbon-neutral city in Finland, Lahti shows the way both for the other Finnish cities as well as internationally.



## Regenerative change in 50 years



City at your front door,  
nature in your backyard.  
Everything within 15  
minutes.



In Lahti, business is based on synergy between nature and heritage.  
That's how we have done it, and that's how we will continue to do it.



#### European Green Capital Award 2021:

Lahti was the first Finnish city to win this prestigious award, recognizing its strong performance across various environmental indicators, including air quality, waste management, green growth, and green innovation.

#### EU Mission Label:

In 2024, Lahti was awarded this label by the European Commission for being one of 100 selected climate-neutral and smart cities in the EU Urban Mission.

#### Corporate Knights Sustainable Cities Index:

Lahti has repeatedly been ranked highly on this global list, most recently in fourth place, a testament to its success in climate change mitigation, air quality, and sustainable land use compared to other global cities.

#### Sustainable Travel Finland Destination Label:

Recognized by Visit Finland, this label highlights the region's commitment to responsible tourism and the development of sustainable travel services, with many businesses in the region also holding individual labels.

#### Classical:NEXT Innovation Award:

In 2018, Lahti's symphony orchestra received an international award for its project to become the world's first carbon-neutral orchestra, showcasing local innovation in sustainability.



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**THANK YOU**  
ありがとうございます

