

# Photo Journal of the Pandemic Times

Sastamala Community College



Creating Green Bridges Between  
the People and the Nature



# Finland, COVID-19 and the Nature

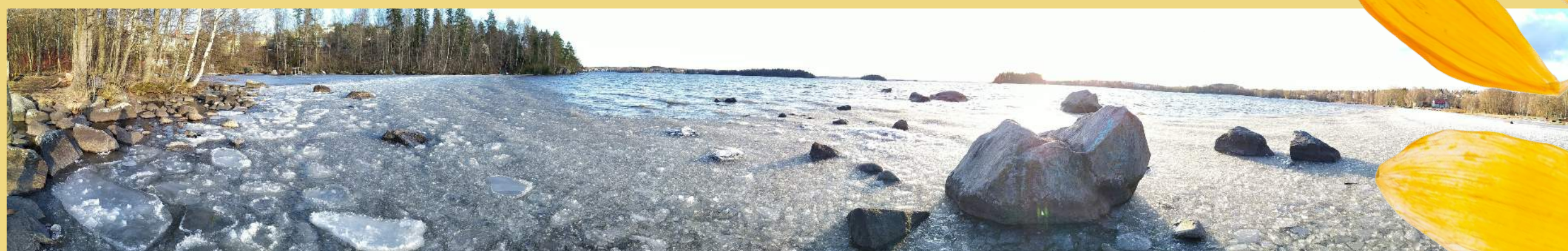
In Finland the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have been extensive, but not nearly as dramatic as in many countries. We have been lucky to keep our freedom of movement. Even without restrictions in movement, the rate of COVID-19 infections has gone down in Finland, as the Finns are known to be very law-obedient and generally have had a big trust in the present women-led government. Of course our population density also is only 18 per km<sup>2</sup>...

As everything else has been closed (schools, sport places, restaurants, bars, cultural venues and events, libraries, museums), the Finns have headed into the wild. Many to the parks and forests nearby cities and towns, some deeper into the nature, or to the summer cottages by the lakes.

Our picture report is not showing dramatic images of empty cities and police forces guarding the streets. Nor have we been restricted to stay only with the view from our window. Our picture journal instead shows the increasing time many of us have spent outside. Somehow, in Finland, corona has managed to create real **green bridges between the people and the nature.**

Sometimes there has been consequences: There has been a worry that the health care services of the generally small countryside municipalities (in which the summer cottages usually are situated) will not sustain if people from cities will come in excessive numbers and spread the virus.

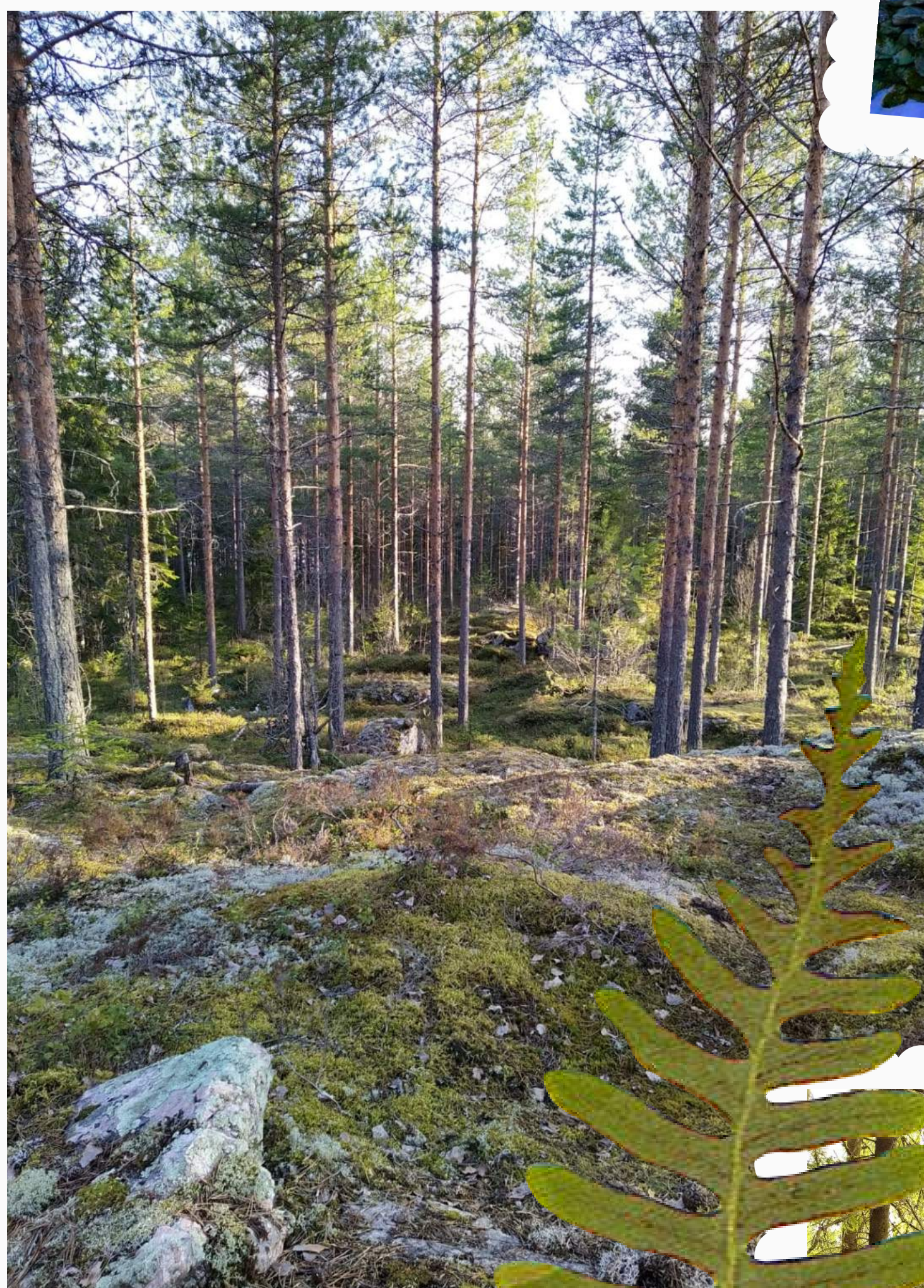
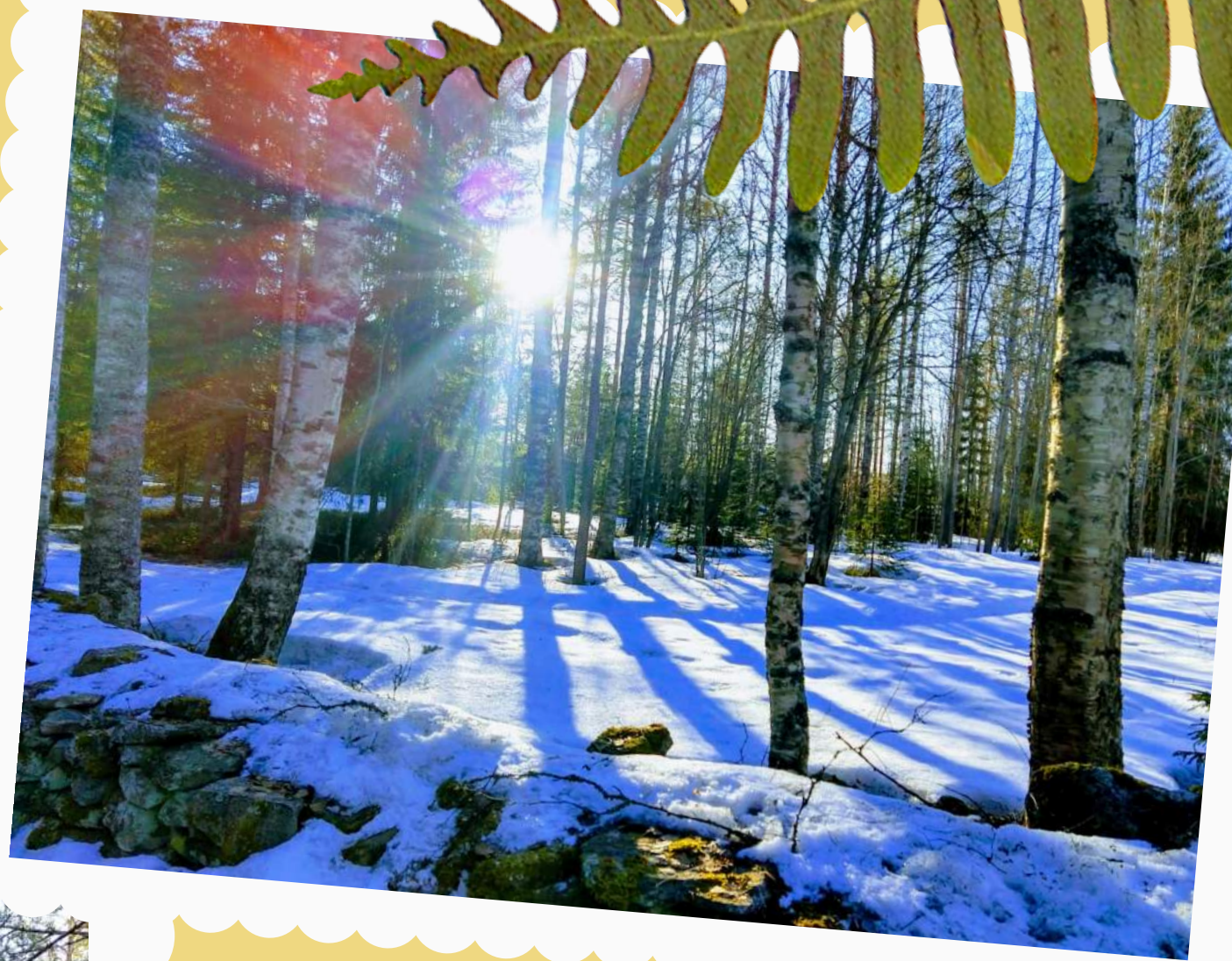
Some of the public recreational nature areas have had to be closed, as there has been too many people enjoying the nature and trying to find their spot by the fire. Also the national parks have had to start making excessive monitoring in the areas, as people have starting building illegal fire places.





# Forests and "the Nature Lovers"

Finland is one of the world's most forested countries. Ca. 75 % of the land area is forest covered. The forests have been called "The Green Gold", which refers to their main purpose as a resource to Finland's strong and influential forest industry. The forestry in Finland has a long history starting with sawmills in the beginning of the 18th century.



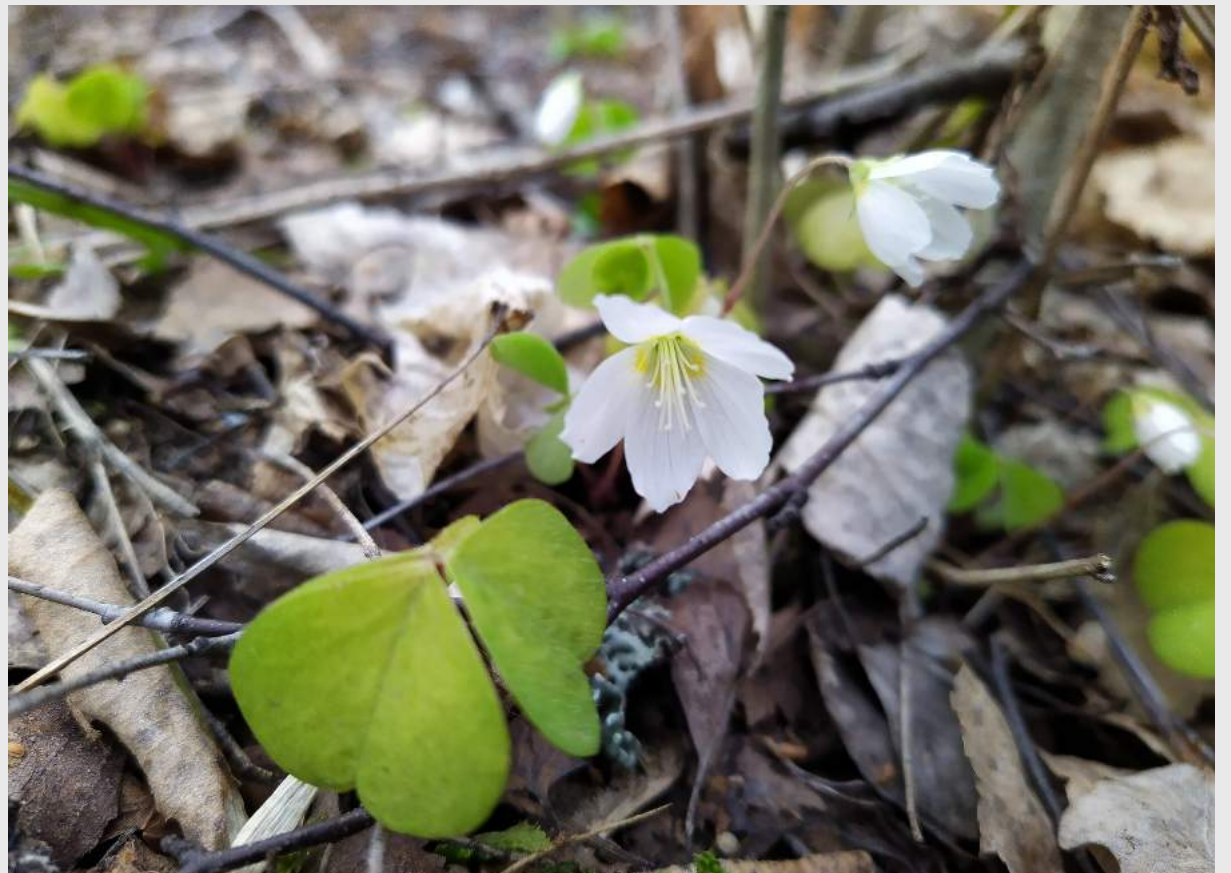
Much of the forest area is managed commercial forest, and keep on staying a subject of debate between the forest companies, forest management associations and the nature conservation organisations. The old growth forests with a larger biodiversity remain scarce. No matter what your opinion is, 78 % of the Finns see themselves as nature lovers: persons who enjoy spending time in nature or consider nature important.

"It's wonderful to have a forest nearby to empty the mind after a busy day at home office."





*The Spring is coming...*



*Spring blooming nearby  
the Sastamala Community  
College building.*

*"The pandemic times  
have given a  
possibility to  
really observe the  
signs of the spring.  
The signs of life.  
The first flowers  
blooming, the first  
leaf buds in trees  
and the migratory  
birds returning!"*





*Or is it?*



*"View from the same window in the morning and at noon!"*



*"The spring is always unpredictable in the northern climate, but this year we have witnessed even more variety in the weather. Many days have started with sunshine and ended with snow storm or vice versa. Snow. Sun. Snow. Sun. Hail. Sun. Perfect weather for gardening!"*



Who is it? Buzzing, puffing  
and chirping outside.



"There has been time to build  
homes for the needy. Might it  
be the future house of the  
great tit, the pied  
flycatcher or the redstart?"



"And these little fellows! Would  
our eyes and ears be as open  
with the normal hustle and  
bustle of our everyday lives?"







# The Bug Hotel



Can you not hear enough buzzing in your garden? The nesting places suitable for pollinating insects have diminished dramatically all around the world. This is bad news for the bees and other super important friends of our nature and food production. The corona time has inspired people to build bug hotels to help out our pollinating friends! Also Sastamala Community College is participating!



*Super easy DIY BUG HOTEL: You only need some empty tins, string, scissors, rotten wood, cones, bark, sticks (not too small) and straw etc. The older, the better.*

*Fill the tins with the natural materials and tie a string toughly around the tins. Make a strong loop for hanging the hotel.*



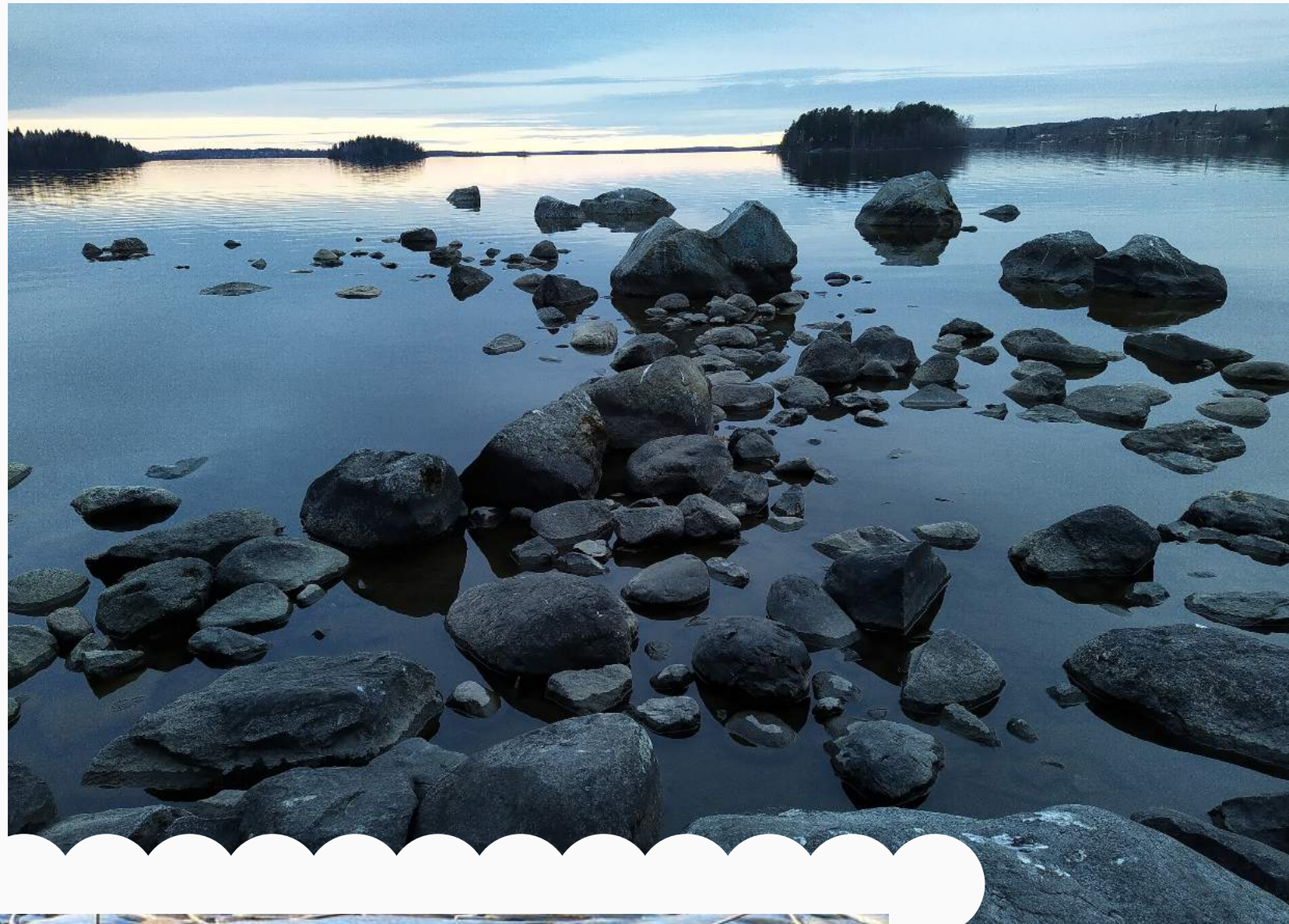
*Place the hotel in a shady place protected from wind. Welcome the buzzzzzz!*





# The Land of Thousands of Lakes

There are ca 168 000 lakes (with an area of 500 m<sup>2</sup> or more) in Finland. The lakes are in the essence of our nature experiences also during these extraordinary times.



"The 2nd of May. Having a corona walk on the lake's last ice cover. Wonderful texture created by the lake reed and the ice."

"The 4th of May. Throwing off the 'winter jacket' by dipping in the cold water for the first time after the winter."



"The 17th of May. The beginning of the kayak season."





*Nothing to do? Why not enjoy the sunset?*





*Kippis! Cheers!*



## PHOTOS:

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