

Restoring river habitats in Merikarvianjoki river



Project Duration: 3 years

In the early 1900s the Merikarvianjoki riverbed was significantly altered to suit log driving for the logging industry. This made it unsuitable for trout to spawn in. EKOenergy funded 3700 € to Merikarvianjoki Kalakierros organisation's project restoring the trout spawning habitats.

Merikarvianjoki river is located in the East of Finland. It is 27 kilometers long, flowing into the Bothnian Sea from the north of Isojärvi.

It is home to many fish species, such as the atlantic salmon, sea trout and perch. Migrating fish have a clear route upstream for the entire length of the river. However, the spawning habitats are poor due to the clearing of river beds to support historical log driving activities. In addition, the flow of Merikarvianjoki is regulated by a hydropower station upstream from Merikarvianjoki in Lankoski and by a dam at Isojärvi lake. This means that the flow varies greatly depending on the time of the year and on electricity demand, which has an impact on the fish population.



In 2017, the EKOenergy Environmental Fund donated 3700 € to Merikarvianjoki Kalakierros, an organisation that takes care of the river's fish stocks and fishing permits, to perform a river restoration project. Three events were organised to restore the reproductive habitats of the trout. Gravel and bigger stones were

reintroduced into the river to diversify the flow, creating refuges and spawning areas for the fish.

Local fishermen and other volunteers from the community were involved in this work and river experts provided explanations on the issues of the river and solutions on how to keep the river habitats healthy. "We have plans to do two more this summer 2019," Marianne Hakala, contact executive manager of Merikarvianjoki said. "However we already have one of the best river habitats for trout reproduction in Lankoski area with this project. Simple restoration events have brought big positive changes in trout population in the Merikarvianjoki river. We are very happy about it and hope to see further results in the future".

Such projects don't only help fish populations, but also locals. As Ms. Hakala says: "When the effort is put in the river, the value of the river rises even at a local level. We have noticed that now locals are much more proud of their home river".

Text: Maria VEDIKOVA
Photo: Marianne Hakala

ENVIRONMENTAL FUND



EKOenergy funds river restoration projects annually



Projects implemented by trustworthy local organisations



Projects selected by independent jury of experts



In 2017, EKOenergy donated 77,000 € to 4 projects



Funding comes from sales of EKOenergy ecolabeled hydropower

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Sustainability criteria: additional value for our planet

	EKOenergy	Other renewable	Mixed sources
New renewable energy production via our Climate Fund	✓	?	-
Only the most climate friendly bioenergy	✓	?	-
Wind power outside bird and nature areas	✓	?	-
Hydropower takes into account migratory fish. River restoration projects via our Environmental Fund .	✓	?	-
Renewable energy tracked by GOs, RECs, I-RECs	✓	✓	-
Wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, bioenergy	✓	✓	?
Fossil fuels, nuclear, possibly renewables	-	-	✓

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info@ekoenergy.org | www.ekoenergy.org

