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# Destination Development Plan for Lahemaa

## Introduction

The destination development plan for Lahemaa has been developed within the RETROUT project. The Baltic Environmental Forum, in cooperation with the Estonian Fishing Tourism and Marine Institute of the University of Tartu, have been carrying out an international project, “Development, Promotion and Sustainable Management of Coastal Fishery Tourism in the Baltic Sea Area” (RETROUT). The project aimed to develop, promote and sustainably manage coastal fishing tourism in the Baltic Sea Region.

The destination development plan is based on the training program, which took place from October 2018 to March 2019 in Viinistu, Lahemaa. The training program consisted of six training sessions that support destination development of fishery areas, the development of sustainable service providers and the marketing of the Lahemaa fishing tourism cluster on the domestic and foreign markets. The lectures focused on specific destination development areas as well as general business principles such as business planning, budgeting, etc. The training was attended by small fishing tourism businesses and stakeholders: fishing guides, providers of accommodation and other service providers. The training program can be viewed free of charge here -<http://retrout.org.loopiadns.com/mooc/estonia/>

## Lahemaa

Lahemaa – meaning the land of the bays – is surrounded with a wonderful and pristine nature, rich with bogs and forests, and bounded by breath-taking coastlines and predominantly uninhabited islands. Here you will find picturesque indigenous fishing villages and some of the best fishing spots on the Estonian sea coast. They are a mere hour of driving away from the Estonian capital Tallinn.

You can spend time both fishing and hiking through the woods. Taking the time to enjoy Lahemaa forestry nature and fresh air frees the mind from everyday thoughts and leaves a memorable experience. Fishing here is a great way to explore new places which are hard to find elsewhere, as well as a pleasant exercise outdoors.

In Lahemaa forest, bog and coastal ecosystems, as well as semi-natural communities, geological monuments and historic and architectural monuments are protected. Lahemaa is in fact one of Europe’s most important forest protection areas, and, together with its bird and wilderness regions, it belongs to the European Natura 2000 network.

There are almost 150 springs originating in Lahemaa National Park, which is crossed by seven rivers and a number of smaller streams. The largest of them are Loobu and Valgejõgi (both important for sea trout as well). Falling from the clint terrace, the rivers form waterfalls and cascades, of which the most magnificent ones are the Nõmmeveski waterfall and the Joaveski cascade.

## SWOT analysis of the destination Lahemaa

### Strengths:

- Location: Lahemaa National Park, Purekari cape, sea and bays, Mohni island, proximity to the capital Tallinn, diverse and wild nature, central location on the north coast
- Fishing: diverse fishing opportunities, fishing traditions, good trout stocks, good fishing grounds, with one fishing permit you can catch different species in different places

### Weaknesses:

- “own story” is missing or not known
- Lack of ability to sell and market the area
- There is no website for the area
- Poor cooperation between different service providers
- fishing guide service is missing
- Lack of language skills
- No catering facilities

### Opportunities:

- Creation of a fishing guide service
- Creation of bicycle rental opportunities
- Signposts to mark the fishing service
- Creation of a boat rental service
- Extending the tourist season with trout fishing
- Advertising in social media
- International marketing
- Setting up an international network of contacts
- Creation of a "story", creation of visual marketing materials
- Exploiting the existence of the island of Mohni,
- Various EU support measures, Enterprise Estonia

### Threats:

- Pollution caused by tourists
- Value for money
- Poor quality of service
- Bad reputation
- Questionable competence and responsibility of guides
- Non-performing marketing
- Cooperation fails

## Profiling of potential customers/target groups

### Main target groups:

1. Families (mainstream) - father/mother/children, vacation and activities, safe and relatively secure program, everything is pre-determined and planned (fishing is one part of the program)
2. Small businesses (1-3 employees)
3. Foreign tourists from large EU countries and Russia, they know and recognize sea trout, do not know the local language, do not know local conditions, they need infrastructure and guidance
4. Friend groups (both men and women) looking for leisure activities that they are used to doing together
5. Adventurers looking for new challenges (activities and locations)
6. Friends of nature (fishing can be one of their possible activities), fish observers, birdwatchers
7. Estonian middle-class summer vacationers (with or without family)
8. A family tourist from Europe, by car or caravan, will spend the night in Viinistus and more broadly in Lahemaa
9. Tourist with special interests from Russia, especially specialized in fishing
10. Tourist with special interests from Germany
11. Fellowships, especially men, 30-50 years old, can appreciate free time, are willing to pay well
12. Families - with up to two children, especially schoolchildren
13. Start-up companies that take offsite events
14. School students looking for a variety of leisure opportunities

### Selected target groups in order of importance:

1. Friend groups: (both men and women), aged 30-50, looking for leisure activities that they are used to doing together. Group size max 8 people. May be family members or not. Wealthy, may not buy a ready-made package, but need certain services. The key words are not worrying about living conditions, do not need premium conditions, but assume that opportunities exist. They know and recognize sea trout, they don't know the language, they don't know the local conditions, need for infrastructure and guidance.
  - a. There is a certain target group of Estonians who choose different Estonian fishing places instead of Finland and Sweden
  - b. Fellowships - Scandinavian countries, Russia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands - fishermen's clubs
2. Families: usually with up to 2-3 school-age children. Traveling with their own car or caravan, vacation and activities, safe and relatively secure program, everything is pre-decided and planned (fishing can be one part of the program), want a pre-decided and planned full program. Families are financially well above average.
  - a. Estonia - Harju County, Tallinn, Tartu
  - b. Scandinavian countries, Russia, Germany

3. Start-up and IT companies from Tallinn. There is a lot of money, companies motivate their employees in different ways. Buying a service as a company is necessary for spending time, summer days, etc. There are sales channels for event marketing companies.
  - a. Incentive trips for foreign companies and foreign tourists
4. School students: learning about responsible and sustainable nature conservation and management from all across Estonia.

## Example of service design

Target group: **Friend groups from Estonia** - (both men and women), aged 30-50, who are looking for leisure activities that they are used to doing together. Group size max 8 people. May be family members or not. Wealthy, may not buy a ready-made package, but need certain services. The key words are not worrying about living conditions, do not need premium conditions, but assume that opportunities exist. Know and recognize sea trout.

### Mapping customer needs/expectations (customer jobs):

- Discover new fishing spots, learn new fishing tricks and also get fish
- Change of environment, high-quality time spending with friends, development of social network
- Experiencing the life of local coastal fishermen and the specifics of the area

### Customer troubles/worries (pains):

- Does the weather interfere with fishing? what is Plan B?
- Are equipment, feed and other accessories provided?
- Are there fish and can they be found?
- Are the locals helpful, speak the language and communicate?
- Is it private enough?
- Are basic amenities and additional services provided?

### Customer benefits (gains):

- I gain new knowledge and experience, I discover new fishing places
- I make new acquaintances and have a good time with my friends
- By buying the service, I can save time and money on organizing
- You don't have to travel abroad to get the same experience, you can catch the same fish closer to home
- An ideal way to relieve stress and get away from everyday life

### Problem solvers:

- Plan B is that there is always possibility to catch other fish - in the river and/or lake, there are windy beaches where boats are waiting.

- It is possible to take visitors to trout farms.
- The service includes a raincoat and other emergency equipment
- In the absence of fish, there are fresh and/or frozen fish that can be purchased. In addition, fish can be eaten in restaurants.
- Accommodation is private and unique, located in nature and secluded. At the same time, there is a choice of more secluded accommodation places as well as accommodation places closer to the center.
- A foreign language guide is included to help locals with communicating with customers
- The peninsula has hiking trails, local museums and other activities in case of bad weather

#### Benefit creators:

- The package includes a fishing guide who knows and recognizes the local conditions and can guide to better fishing spots
- You can visit local attractions, additional services, etc.
- The service can be purchased as a so-called complete package, or by assembling it yourself - in any case, the entire desired service is provided in all parts and you do not have to buy anything yourself or collect additional information.
- The content and atmosphere of the service is essentially the same as that offered in foreign countries, but significantly cheaper and with a more special quality.

#### Content of the example service/package:

2 nights in Lahemaa, 6-8 people, includes:

- Accommodation on the island of Mohn, in a bed and breakfast, hotel or holiday home
- Net or spinning fishing at sea with a boat (Hara Bay) or in case of bad weather spinning fishing in a river or lake with guide
- Welcome drink and snacks on arrival
- Groceries for making breakfast, barbecue facilities
- Access to sauna
- Picnic on Hara Island (only in case of good weather)
- Raincoat if necessary
- 25 km bicycle tour with a guide
- Surprise gift at departure

*For extra money:*

- evening cultural program (disco, village party...)
- Opportunity to visit local museums
- hiking and/or cycling
- Renting of fishing equipment
- guided fishing tour at sea
- In case of not catching any fish, you can buy fresh and/or smoked fish or visit a fish farm

**Sample program:**

1. day - Friday night	2. day - Saturday	3. day - Sunday	Alternative
<p>Reception with welcome drink and snacks</p> <p>An overview of the local area, fish and fishing opportunities/rules</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>Fishing nets in</p> <p>Buffet</p> <p>Sauna</p>	<p>Fishing nets out</p> <p>Breakfast</p> <p>Equipment inspection</p> <p>Fishing according to the weather</p> <p>Lunch in nature</p> <p>Fishing continues</p> <p>Dinner/fish preparing</p> <p>Sauna and buzz</p>	<p>Brunch</p> <p>Fishing if possible</p> <p>Surprise gift at departure</p>	<p>After breakfast to the sea</p> <p>A lunch picnic on the island of Mohni</p> <p>Fishing continues</p> <p>Evening sauna and other activities</p> <p>On the second day, replace sea fishing with river/lake fishing</p>

**Cost components to take into account:**

Costs related to fishing packages	Fixed costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accommodation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ accommodation</li> <li>○ sauna</li> <li>○ grill</li> <li>○ cleaning</li> <li>○ bed linen</li> <li>○ firewood</li> </ul> </li> <li>• breakfast</li> <li>• snacks and welcome drink</li> <li>• net fishing permit</li> <li>• recreational fishing permit</li> <li>• fishing guide service</li> <li>• transport</li> <li>• additional manpower</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accounting costs</li> <li>• labor costs</li> <li>• amortization</li> <li>• marketing costs</li> <li>• presents</li> <li>• loans, leasing</li> <li>• insurance</li> <li>• equipment</li> <li>• fuel</li> <li>• other expenses</li> </ul>

A more detailed budget and financial calculations have been made during the training program and DMO creation. Based on the financial prognosis **estimated annual costs** are 15 000 – 17 000 euros.

## Risk analysis

Risk	Impact	Risk reduction measures
Lack of customers	high	Marketing!!! Distinctiveness and visibility of the service, USP (unique selling proposition)
Unsuitable weather conditions	medium	Alternative catching sports/ activities
Communication problems between service providers	medium	The terms of reference must be clear between the parties
Not receiving money from customers or delayed payments	high	Implementing prepayment, voucher system
Demand cannot be met	Medium/low	Larger network of service providers and its development, training of new fishing guides
Incorrectly calculated project budget	medium	Multiple calculations and analysis, verification
The company is unknown to the customer	medium	Strategic planning, marketing, media planning
Impact of seasonality	medium	Replacement activities
Increase in costs	low	Correct and analyzed financial planning
Damage to property	high	Insurance, diversity of service providers, neighborhood watch and good relations with the community
Increased competition	medium	Collaboration and unique sales argument, loyalty program, market analysis, quality control, customer feedback
Accidents with customers	Low	Safety instruction
Marine pollution	low	Alternative fishing spots
Lack of fish	medium	Alternative fishing spots
Changes in legislation	low/medium	Indistinguishable risk, have to be prepared and adapt

In summary, the highest risks are:

- Lack of customers
- Not receiving money from customers
- Damage to property





## DMO creation – Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ

### Goals:

- To bring together businesses, communities, stakeholders and individuals in the Lahemaa region to develop sustainable fishing tourism;
- Focus on fishing tourism and its development and economic benefits;
- To promote the northern coast of Estonia, especially Lahemaa as a fishing tourism area;
- **To create the umbrella organization Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ (NGO Lahemaa Fishing Tourism).**

### Tasks:

- Maintaining and developing the cooperation network, managing the members;
- Marketing of regional and fishing tourism opportunities in Estonia and abroad;
- Involvement of strategic partners to increase influence;
- Promoting and protecting the common interests of its members in the interests of sustainable fishing tourism, economic benefits and the popularization of the region;
- Finding financing opportunities through various projects, funds, etc.;
- Representation of members in communication with agencies;
- Coordination of joint projects;
- Information sharing.

### Management / administration:

- External components:
  - Legal body - NGO, governing bodies, a / a
  - Website, social media platforms
  - Visual identity
  - Image bank, other advertising materials
- Substantive issues:
  - Leader/leaders
  - Action plan
  - Funding
  - Marketing and media plan
  - Cooperation partners

### Unresolved issues:

- Who will be the leader(s)?
- Where and with what to start and how to reach a substantive activity?
- What members and partners are needed?
- Where to get financing?



### Action plan:

- Create an NGO as a legal entity
- Elect administrative bodies and substantive managers
- Create a statute and design a structure
- Plan the first real activities

### What has been done?

The core group of participants in the training program established the **Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ (NGO Lahemaa Fishing Tourism)** to simplify and formalize its future activities. As a result of the collaboration, the **LaheKala brand** was created, which offers a complex service of fishing tourism (fish guides, accommodations, and catering).

**Business and marketing plan** for Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ has been developed with the 1-2 perspective.

In order to keep all marketing activities in visually unified style a **brand book** was created including the **LaheKala logo**.



**LaheKala website** has been developed that offers information in 3 languages – Estonian, English and Russian. More information on LaheKala can be found at [www.lahekala.ee](http://www.lahekala.ee)  
For more information on merger options, see – [www.lahekala.ee/register](http://www.lahekala.ee/register).

In addition, **social media** accounts for LaheKala have been created - [Facebook](#) (more than 1 700 followers) and [Instagram](#) (174 followers) pages and [YouTube channel](#).

**Two videos** for advertisement have been produced –

- [Fishing in Lahemaa](#) gives an overview of a fishing trip in Lahemaa
- [LaheKala in a cabbage leaf](#) – specially created recipe by chef Rain Käärst for LaheKala

**A book called “Kalast kahe tipuga”** has been published with the support of RETROUT project ([video of the book](#)). The book is both in Estonian and English and invites you to stop for a moment and look at the people of the northern coast. Fishing, which is attracting more and more attention from enthusiasts today, is part of our ancient daily activities. Activities that helped cover the coastal people's table for centuries, because the main character of this book is sea trout. Fish species that has received wider attention in recent years and whose sustainable development has been set as a separate goal.

Fishing guide Timo Tintse (Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ) shares tips and advice to keep in mind when you are planning to go to catch sea trout.

Chef Rain Käärst (Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ) has taken recipes that have long been remembered and mixed them with a good dose of the nuances of modern cuisine. The finished recipes can be tried by everyone in their home kitchen or even on a hiking trip.

A special spice to the book is added by the stories from life itself and fragments of history shared by seven village elders, which describe life in coastal villages through the centuries.



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Marketing activities can be considered successful as **several fishing events/packages** have been organized for different target groups (companies, children etc.).

Lahemaa Kalaturism MTÜ in cooperation with Baltic Environmental Forum Estonia has applied and **received local funding for two projects:**

1. Training program for new fishing guides
2. Fishing camps for children

LaheKala is also a **member of the Baltic Sea Fishing**, an international network of fishing tourism created by RETROUT. For more information visit [www.balticseafishing.com](http://www.balticseafishing.com).

**We are looking forward to active fishing guides who respect fishing ethics to join both LaheKala and the Baltic Sea Fishing network!**