Boldly towards sustainable change - Sustainable development in the National Library of Finland 2021–2030

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Background

Strategies in support of sustainability

- Policy 2020 of the Ministry of Education and Culture
  - Actions of the administrative sector on a sustainable basis

- Strategic plan of the University of Helsinki 2021–2030
  - One of the four strategic choices: Our university is a forerunner in responsibility and sustainability

- The strategic plan of the National Library of Finland 2021–2030
  - Part of the vision: "The principles of sustainable development are reflected in the National Library's operations and service development. We ensure that the cultural diversity and multilingualism of Finnish society are reflected in our operations and that the published cultural heritage is made available in a wide range of ways."
  - One of the three cornerstones of our operations Renewal: "... The renewal will be supported by active cooperation in Finnish and international networks and will be guided by the principles of responsibility, openness and sustainable development."
  - Sustainable development implicitly involved Openness, accessibility, digitisation, networks

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Perspectives on sustainable development

Environmental sustainability

Economic sustainability

Social and cultural sustainability

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In addition, aspects of sustainability include:

Temporal sustainability

✓ Particularly specific to the cultural heritage sector

✓ The statutory duty of the National Library of Finland is to deposit and preserve national cultural heritage materials (both physical and online), and to enable their use

Sustainability of the organisation

✓ The world, society and working life are changing rapidly.

✓ What kind of organisation survives and is able to act in a sustainable way in changes?

✓ The National Library of Finland has a role to play in mitigating social opposites.

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Evaluation of own activities: Levels of action in the sustainability work of the National Library of Finland

National/international level	• What is the role of the National Library in the field of cultural heritage concerning sustainable development? How do we relate to others?
Viewpoint and needs of customers/users	• Customer spaces supporting sustainable development • Reporting needs for digital services • Impact of using digital services on the customer's carbon footprint
Own activities	• Sustainable development as part of the strategy • Practical aspects of everyday life: spaces, everyday activities, logistics, provision of services • Basic operations already support many areas

Evaluation of own activities:
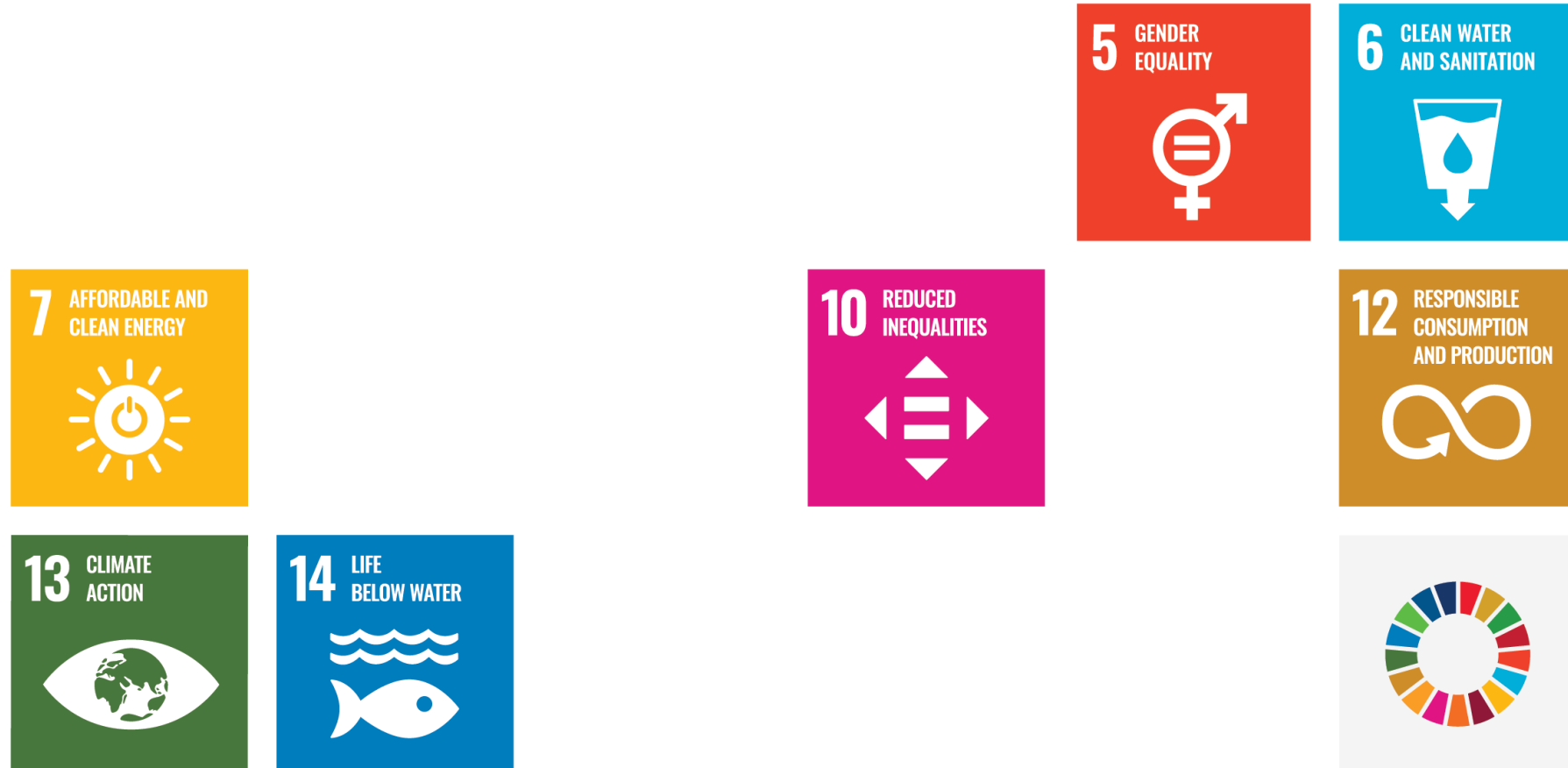# The activities of the National Library of Finland support

"We promote open science, open data and services. If we want a more equal society, it is precisely openness that must be developed. All this strengthens not only science but also learning and education."

Professor Cecilia af Forselles, Chief Librarian of the National Library of Finland

# Evaluation of own activities: Things to improve

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

"We represent cultural sustainability in itself, but our goal is also to reduce the carbon footprint."

Professor Cecilia af Forselles, Chief Librarian of the National Library of Finland
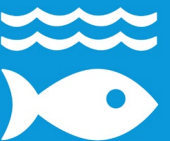
What does environmental sustainability have to do with the National Library of Finland?

Change starts with individuals! All choices and actions make a difference:

- How do I travel to work: bike, public transport, low-emission car?
- Should I choose a plastic mug, a cardboard mug, or a washable mug?
- Do I sort waste?
- What do I eat? What do I drink? What do I offer at events?
- Do I take into account the ecological impact when designing energy solutions for collection spaces or purchasing a new device?

Digitalisation has a **twofold ecological impact**:

- Less travel, paper consumption, and so on

BUT

- All systems, data transfer and data storage consume energy: more efficient code, interoperability, what is really worth preserving?
- The devices have an ecological footprint (production, use, disposal)

How **can we help others** reduce their ecological footprint?

- Storage responsibility, digitisation and sharing of data, and the provision of digital services reduce the need for others to do the same

What does social and cultural sustainability mean to us?

Work community
- Do we have the sense of togetherness and equality, do we feel we are a relevant part of the community and work?
- Is gender equality in pay or in recruitment, for example, realised?

Customers
- Accessibility of facilities and services: physical and digital
- Linguistic accessibility: do we provide all information equally in all official languages?
- What kind of materials do we digitise or highlight in exhibitions, for example? What hidden attitudes influence your choices?
- What biases do the materials used in machine learning teach the algorithms?

Networks and society
- Who are we networking with?
- Do we treat our stakeholders equally?
- We use our services to support the impact of science in society and knowledge-based decision-making

Vision for sustainability and responsibility

Where are we in 2030?

- We have achieved carbon neutrality
- Ecological sustainability is a criterion in all our operations
  - Procurement, tendering, provision of services, everyday choices, and so on
- We provide services sustainably
  - We report regularly, transparently and in comparable ways
  - Our services support our customers' work for sustainable development
- We are active in the dialogue related to the themes of sustainable development in the GLAM sector
- As an organisation, we are sustainable and welcome change
  - We identify and change norms that hinder development
  - We support staff's professional growth, career development and well-being at work
  - We offer a meaningful experience to everyone
  - We are equal regardless of background, gender, titles

Roadmap

How can we reach the goal?

#1 We develop the environmental sustainability and carbon footprint of our operations
- We are committed to the pledge given in the strategy: Carbon neutral by 2030
- We collect and share information
- We are actively taking action to reduce the carbon footprint

#2 We leverage our strengths and networks
- Strengthening our role in easing societal opposites
- We offer our own expertise to others in our areas of strength
- We participate in our networks in solving the challenges of sustainable development
- We communicate in a structured and open manner

#3 We take sustainability thinking as a concrete and cross-cutting part of our operations
- Taking sustainability aspects into account as part of everyone's job description
- Green handprint measures: brainstorming & experimentation with agility and a low threshold
- Making everyday deeds easy
- Critical assessment of own activities
- Regular progress assessment & reflection as a feed for activity development

How can we reach the goal? 1/3

#1 We develop the environmental sustainability and carbon footprint of our operations

- We are committed to the promise given in the University of Helsinki's strategy
    - For example, carbon neutrality by 2030
- We collect and share information
    - We estimate our carbon footprint during 2021
    - We prepare for regular monitoring and reporting
- We are actively taking action to reduce the carbon footprint

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How can we reach the goal? 2/3

#2 We leverage our strengths and networks
- Strengthening our role in easing societal opposites
    - Our services are already making organisations and citizens more equal
    - We provide equal access to information, promote access to cultural heritage and create the conditions for high-quality research.
    - We strengthen the capacity of libraries and memory insitutions to operate in a rapidly changing technical environment
- In our strength areas, we offer our own expertise for the use of others, for example:
    - Online collection cooperation projects
    - National responsibility for the recording of publications
    - Open science
    - Digital infrastructures and environments
- We participate in our networks in solving the challenges of sustainable development
    - We collect and share information
    - We promote and facilitate dialogue and cooperation
    - We participate in the national development of GLAM sector sustainability indicators
    - We participate in the development of the sustainability programme and indicators of the University of Helsinki
- We communicate in a structured and open manner

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How can we reach the goal? 3/3

#3 We take sustainability thinking as a concrete and cross-cutting part of our operations

- Taking sustainability aspects into account as part of everyone's job description
  - Training of staff, purchase service if necessary
- Green handprint measures: brainstorming & experimentation with agility and a low threshold
- Making everyday deeds easy
  - e.g. waste sorting in accordance with the schedule of the University of Helsinki
- Critical assessment of own activities
  - Effectiveness of the action plan: environmental, social/cultural, economic, temporal sustainability of solutions.
  - For example, do equality and non-discrimination actually take place?
    - Equality (pay, gender, linguistic, etc.)
    - Social equality (accessibility, cultural)
- Regular progress assessment & reflection as a feed for activity development
  - As part of the annual reporting?
  - Indicators to be developed in the area of the Ministry of Education and Culture

Progress roadmap 2021–2030

2020
- The processing of the National Library of Finland's sustainable development programme

2021
- Assessing the carbon footprint of operations
- Involvement of all employees in the idea of positive climate action.
- Improving waste sorting, cooperation with the University of Helsinki

2022–2024
- The carbon footprint reporting starts.
- Reducing the carbon footprint from the grassroot level
- Analysis of the responsibility of operations: equality and non-discrimination, among others
- Working on the sustainability and responsibility programme internally and as part of the university community

2025
- Revision of the sustainability programme

2026–2029
- Measures under the updated sustainability programme
- At the end of the strategy period, an assessment of the achievement of the programme's objectives

2030
- Our operations are sustainable

Environmental sustainability as the focus of 2021

- Evaluation of the carbon footprint, preparation for regular monitoring and reporting

- Sustainability communications planning

- Improving the sorting of waste

- Ideas for green handprint actions

- Networking

Working Group 2020–2021

Susanna Eklund (Chair)

Laura Lipponen (Secretary)

Helena Helander

Marjaana Sailio

Tiina Lehmikoski-Pessa

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