



Ympäristöministeriö
Miljöministeriet
Ministry of the Environment

The role of impact assessment and evaluation at the Finnish Ministry of the Environment

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Structure of the presentation:

I Impact assessment at the Finnish Ministry of the Environment

II Evaluation of the social impact of the R&D activities of the Ministry of the Environment



Impact assessment at the Finnish Ministry of the Environment

- General:
 - Impact assessment of legislation, plans and programmes.
Most important legislation
 - Most important assessment types: impacts on the environment & economical impacts & social impacts.



Strategic programme to improve the ex-ante impact assessment of legislation, plans and programmes

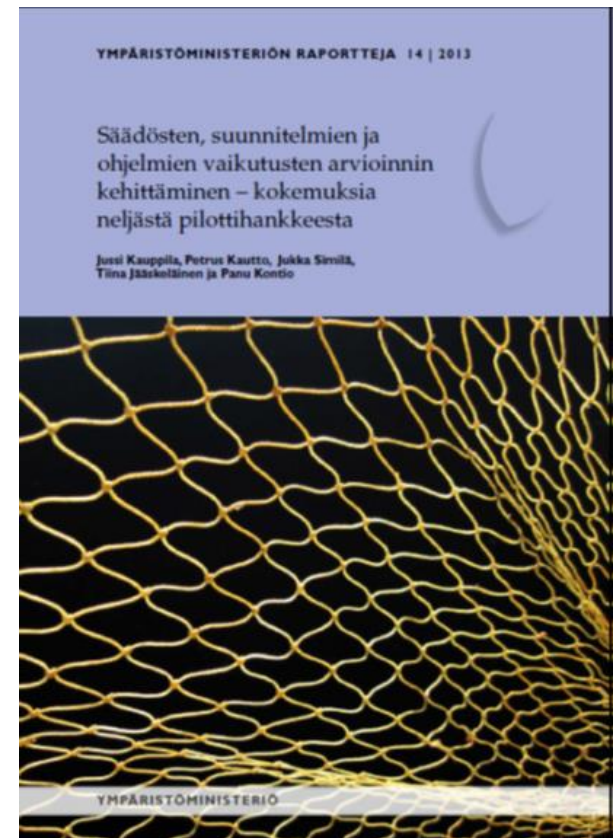
- As a result:

Practical support material & a *helpdesk*

- In addition two publications

Improving the impact assessment of legislation, plans and programmes – experiences from four pilot projects

Kauppila, J., & Kautto, P., & Similä, J.,
Jääskeläinen, T. & Kontio, P. 2013. Säädösten, suunnitelmien ja ohjelmien vaikutusten arvioinnin kehittäminen – kokemuksia neljästä pilottihankkeesta. Ympäristöministeriön raportteja 14/ 2013. 38 s.



Improving the impact assessment of legislation, plans and programmes – experiences from four pilot projects

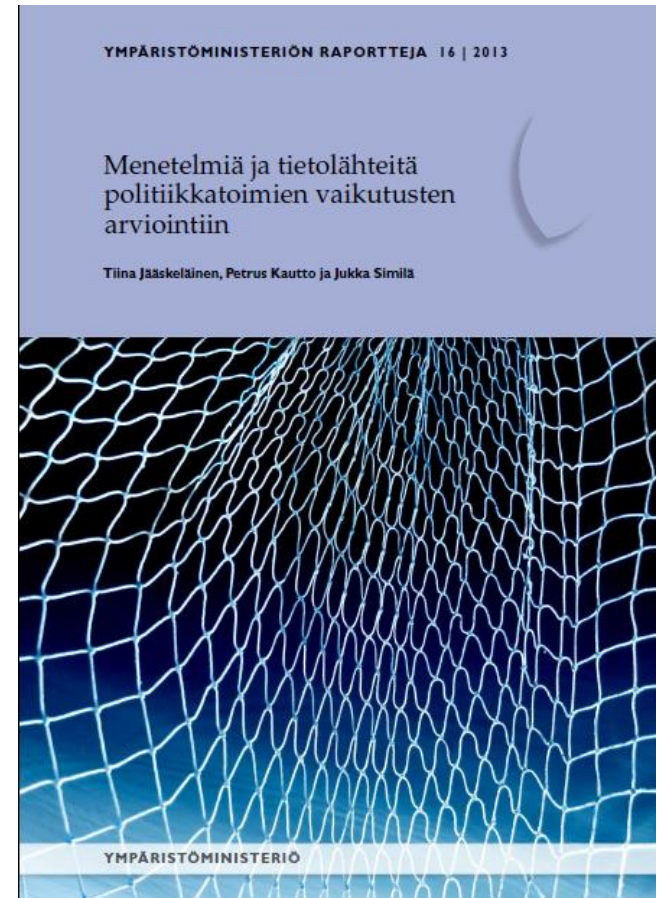
- Why pilot projects? To get a comprehensive view of applying the measures in practice, to identify those areas where impact assessment could be improved & to highlight best practices
- Starting point for conducting assessment and the challenges **vary significantly** from case to case. **For example:** the time needed, financial resources, the object of assessment & the available data and other material on which the assessment is based -> Thus, the impact assessment should always be **tailored to the specific project**.
- On the other hand, carrying out **the most essential tasks** of the assessment are integral to every project.
- Based on the pilot projects: **some new generally applicable practices were identified** concerning methods for producing and documenting information on the assessment.

Strategic programme to improve the ex-ante impact assessment of legislation, plans and programmes

II Publication:

Methods and sources for impact assessment of policies

Jääskeläinen, T., Kautto, P. & Similä, J. 2013. Menetelmiä ja tietolähteitä politiikkatoimien vaikutusten arviointiin. Ympäristöministeriön raportteja 16/2013. 76 s.



Methods and sources for impact assessment of policies

- Publication provides policymakers with methods and information sources for formulating policies.
- Knowledge about different methods and information sources helps in decision-making during impact assessments and supports the formulation of policy.

What is the impact of impact assessments?

- Are these assessments utilised? What is the impact of these assessments? Do they have an effect on the process and/or end result?
- Outi Slant / SYKE will tell you more about it this afternoon

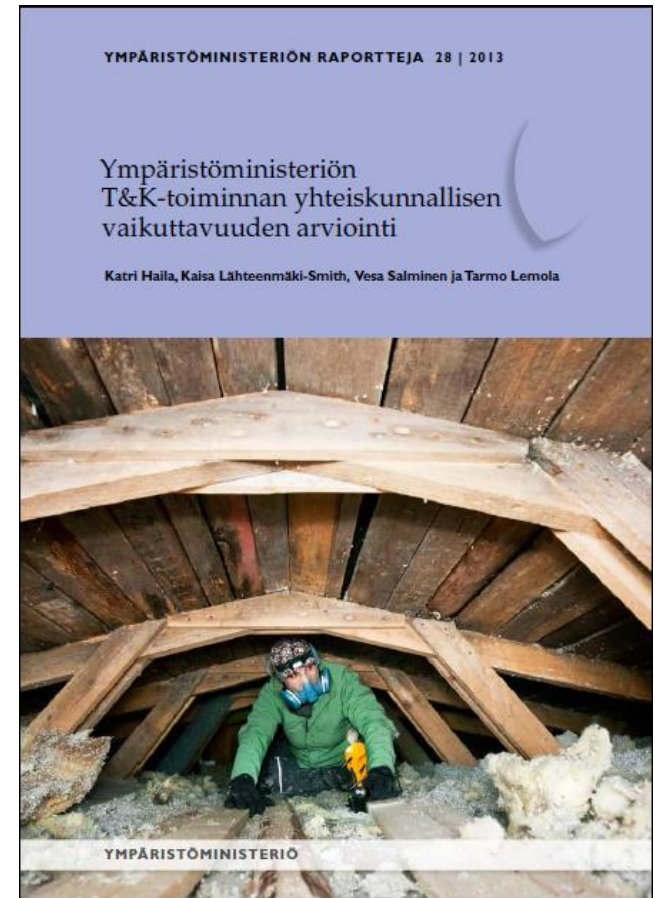
" We tend to use evidence the same way as a drunken man uses a lamp post – more for support than for enlightenment"



Evaluation of the social impact of the R&D activities of the Ministry of the Environment

YMra28/2013 Ympäristöministeriön T&K-toiminnan yhteiskunnallisen vaikuttavuuden arviointi

Katri Haila, Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith,
Vesa Salminen ja Tarmo Lemola, 2013
Ympäristöministeriön raportteja
28/2013, s. 67.



Ministry of the Environment

R&D activities

- The Ministry **steers** R&D conducted within its administrative sector and **finances** R&D activity within its scope of responsibilities in order to generate the knowledge and competencies required for administrative planning and steering, and decision-making.
- **Vision for 2020:** In order to facilitate a proactive response to environmental issues, the Ministry of the Environment ensures that the administrative sector has access to reliable information. The Ministry of the Environment utilises research data efficiently in developing environmental policy and at the various stages of the decision-making process.

Source: Ministry of the Environment R&D Strategy 2020: R&D as the backbone of the Ministry

http://www.ym.fi/en-US/The_Ministry/Research_and_development

Ministry of the Environment

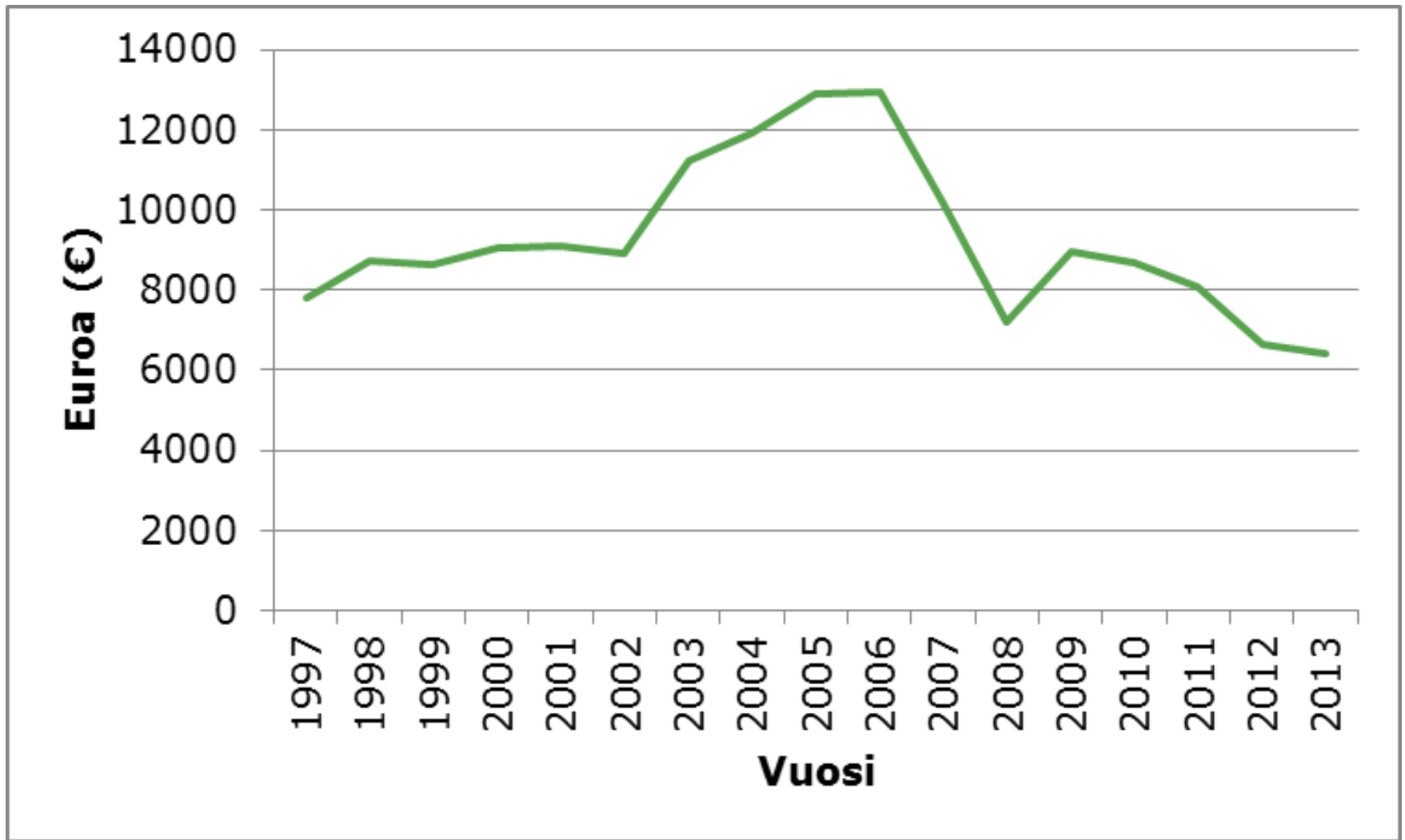
R&D activities, themes

Wide scope, key research themes:

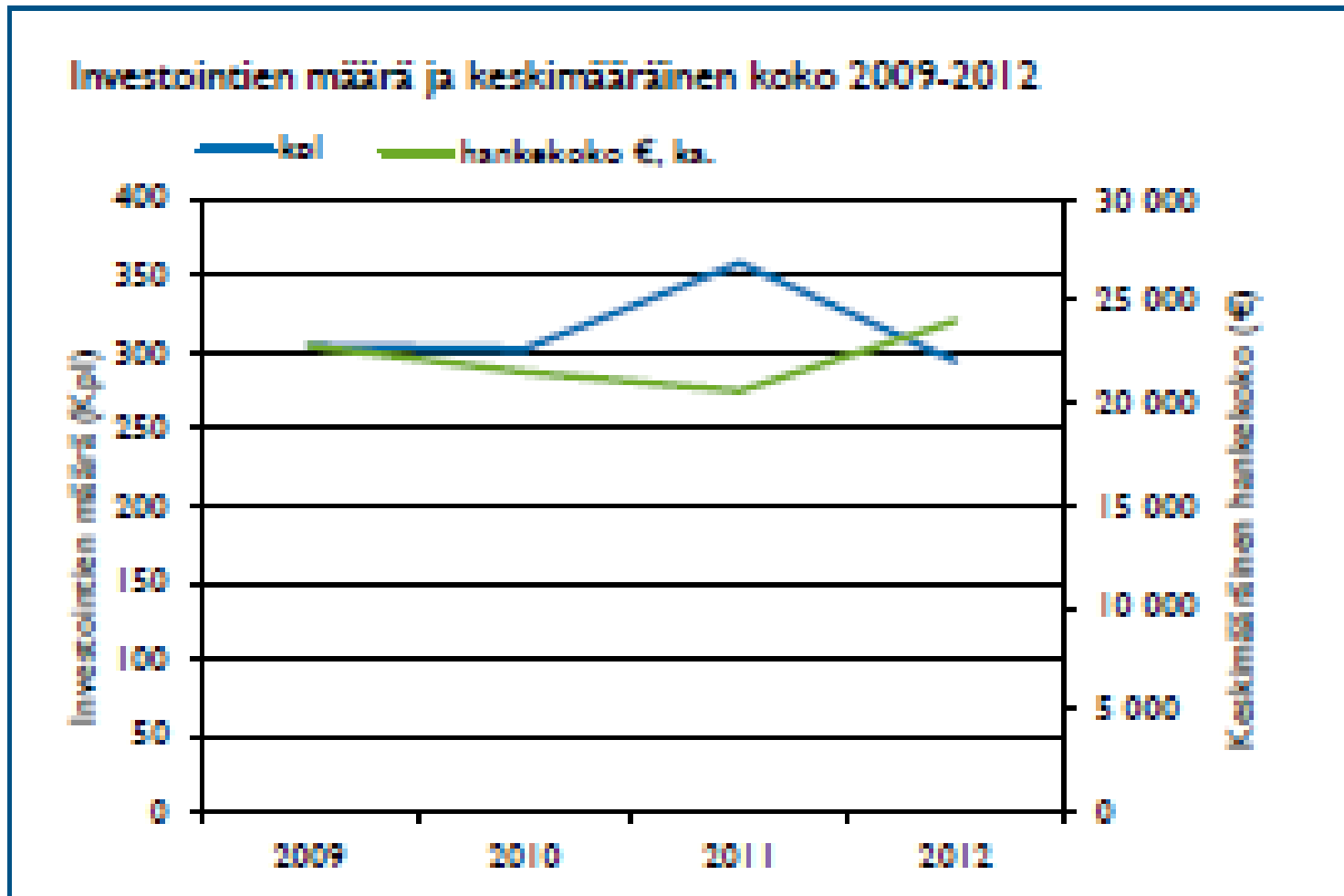
- Climate policy
- The Baltic Sea, inland waters and water resources
- Consumption, production and natural resources
- Ecosystem services and biodiversity
- The built environment, land use planning and housing



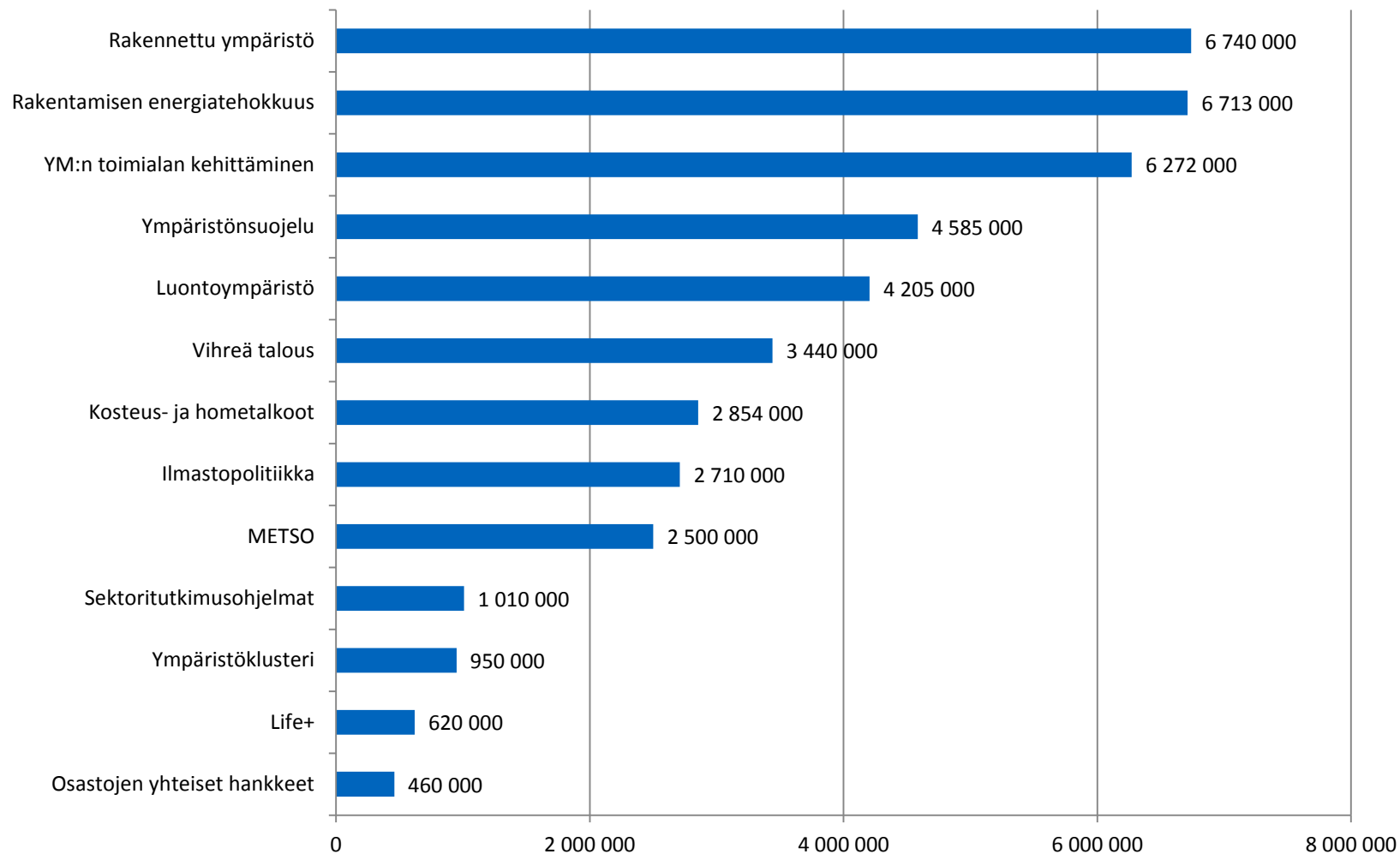
R&D years 1997-2013



The amount and size of the projects



R&D activity (€) / portfolio years 2009-2013. Total n. 43M €



Evaluation process

- The evaluation focused on the use of the Ministry's R&D funds **in the 2000s**

The evaluation questions were comprehensively explored, based on the following materials:

- Document and literature analysis
- Interviews (70)
- an online survey (342)
- Cases studies (all themes covered)
- Assessment workshop (stakeholders such as ministries, financiers, R&D data users, associations, researchers)
- The answers/results did not vary a lot between different stakeholders

Results

- Based on the assessment, the Ministry's R&D activities have followed the objectives laid out in R&D strategy.
- Current R&D activities focus, in particular, on reports and development work carried out in order to support the Ministry's decision-making.
- The Ministry's R&D activities provide the most added value in the development of legislation.
- Ministry's R&D activities are quite poorly known.
- The R&D activities emphasise short-term perspectives, due, in part, to government terms. One of the questions raised is how the Ministry is involved in shaping future activities?
- A positive development is the establishment by the Ministry of the Environment of a foresight network precisely for this purpose.

Recommendations for development based on the assessment:

- The Ministry should continue to **profile itself as a strong user of research data**, while, at the same time, it should strengthen its profile at the forefront of evidence- and knowledge-based decision-making. The Ministry should continue to uphold its practice of utilising research evidence to support the preparation of statutes and other decision-making.
- In the future, the Ministry should **clarify the role of its R&D activities**. For example: in relation to the new funding instruments (TULA reform: support of Government decision-making & strategic research)
- The importance of **prioritisation** will continue to grow as funding decreases.
- The **division of labour** between the R&D activities of the Ministry of the Environment and the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), in particular, should be further clarified.

Recommendations for development based on the assessment:

- Ministry should more extensively consider **the local level** in which environmental management work is carried out in practice. It is important to continue to improve cooperation between municipalities and centres for economic development, transport and the environment.
- Some R&D funding should be focused on **forecasting** and **experimentation**,
- Ministry should continue to develop the means of providing **synthesised information** to support decision-making.
- Based on the assessment materials, the most important means of developing the social impact of R&D activities is improving **both internal and external communications in various ways**.
- The assessment and enhancement of expertise and operating models in ways that create **linkages between administrative sectors** should continue.

Recommendations for development based on the assessment:

- The **international perspective** of R&D activities could be strengthened through the more wide-ranging utilisation of international experts, for example, in forums for research and peer groups and in seminars.
- **Shared operating principles** and transparent data management practices in **project management** should be strengthened.
- The monitoring of R&D activities should be further improved. It is important to monitor **project implementation**, in addition to financial monitoring. Monitoring the social impact of R&D activities requires project-tracking information and the self-assessment of projects.

Comprehensive reform of state research institutes and research funding: Research funding reforms

Through the overall reform, research and analysis work in support of decision-making by the government and its ministries will be strengthened **by gathering together research funding:**

- 1) **Strategic research funding instrument** will be established: this funding will be allocated to research aimed at finding solutions to the major challenges facing Finnish society.
- 2) Research and analysis activities supporting societal decision-making by the Government will also be strengthened: such funds will be allocated **to supporting decision-making within the ministries' administrative branches.** Projects will be designed and coordinated through a plan for research in support of Government decision-making.

Ympäristötiedon foorumi



Forum for Environmental Information (FEI), founded in June 2010, aims at advancing the transfer of timely environmental information and at increasing interaction between information producers and users. The main objective is to support national policy making, keeping in mind the global significance of environmental problems. Events organised by FEI do not seek financial profit



Finnish Partnership for Research on Natural Resources and the Environment

– more together



Evira - Finnish Food Safety Authority

GL - Finnish Geodetic Institute

MTT - Agrifood Research Finland

Metla - Finnish Forest Research Institute

RKTL - Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute

SYKE - Finnish Environment Institute

Thank you

