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Recent Changes in Organizational Structures and Financing Natural Resources Research in Finland

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Background - why reforms?

- Societal challenges and emerging needs of scientific knowledge for decision making (evidence based policy)
- Insufficient dissemination of scientific knowledge to decision making and industries
- Traditional policy sectors vs. horizontal research topics
- Dominance of bottom-up research priorities
- Productivity and efficient use of public money (“more with less”)
- Fragmented organization structure, inefficient use of resources
- Similar reforms in other countries (Denmark, Norway...)

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The Government Resolution on Comprehensive Reform of State Research Institutes and Research Funding of 5 Sept 2013

- The resolution specifies the set of measures to be taken to implement the reform and identifies the ministry responsible for each measure.
- The measures include structural reforms, reforms of research funding instruments, and the implementation and follow-up of the reforms.
- The overall reform will be implemented in 2014–2017.

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New funding instruments

- Strategic research funding:
 - ca 50 M € per year
 - manager: Strategic Research Council
 - 9 trusted experts on science and policy
 - hosted by the Academy of Finland
- Government's analysis, assessment and research funding:
 - ca 10 M € per year
 - manager: Prime Minister's Office
 - specific short term topics supporting government's goals

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Strategic research funding

- Funding for 3 + 3 years, multi-discipline consortiums
- 2015 themes:
 - Utilisation of disruptive technology and changing institutions
 - **A climate-neutral and resource-scarce society**
 - Equality and its promotion
- 2016 themes:
 - Knowledge, know-how and the changing of lifestyles
 - Health and the changing of lifestyles
 - Overall security in a global environment
 - The dynamics of urbanisation



Structural reforms

- 2 research institutes merged to University of Helsinki: Legal Policy Research, Consumer Society Research
- Center of Metrology merged to VTT Technical Research Center
- Finnish Geodetic Institute merged to National Land Survey MML
- **Natural Resources Institute Finland – Luke** (2015)
 - MTT Agrifood Research + Forest Research Institute Metla + Game and Fisheries Research Institute RKTL + Statistical services of MMM Tike
 - Planning and preparation 2012-2014

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Natural Resources Institute



- A research and expert organization promoting bioeconomy and sustainable use of natural resources
- Staff 1300, network of 25 regional offices
- Challenge: significant decrease of basic funding and establishing the new institute at the same time (money taken to the new funding instruments + other budget cuts)
 - Pressure to increase incomes from different external sources
 - Cutting costs: office buildings, field stations, other infrastructure, staff
- Opportunity: Bioeconomy is one of the government's priorities, lot's of bioeconomy initiatives also in EU and globally

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Experiences?

- The impact of structural reforms and new funding instruments will be assessed - soon.
- Establishment process of Luke was documented and reported in detail (lessons learnt, best practices, risks, difficulties, recommendation)
 - Key factors for successful merger: involvement of staff, integration of digital systems (ICT), effective communication and spread of information, firm and consistent leadership and management, resilience for unexpected events and turns

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Thanks for your attention!

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