



VISIO Plan - Cover Letter Regarding International Consultation

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council is preparing a regional land use plan in accordance with the Land Use and Building Act. The plan is titled VISIO – Innovative Green Transition, the 5th Regional Land Use Plan for Uusimaa. The VISIO Plan supplements and updates the current planning framework with regard to the themes of green and clean transition as well as national defense. The plan addresses the following themes: energy; industrial production, the circular economy, and soil resource management; nature and carbon sequestration; logistics and long-distance passenger transport; water supply and water resources; and national defense. The plan is currently in the preparation phase and was available for public review in Finland as a draft from March 11 to May 8, 2026. According to the preliminary schedule, the draft plan will be made available for public review and comments in Finland in the spring of 2027. The plan is scheduled to be submitted for approval in December 2027.

If the regional plan is likely to have significant environmental impacts on the territory of another European Union member state, the notification procedure and consultations with that member state, as stipulated in the European Union's SOVA Directive, must be carried out. In connection with the VISIO plan, it has been determined that there is a need to conduct consultations with other Member States in accordance with the Directive. This need arises from the new EN/t designation for energy production areas specified in the VISIO plan, as well as the general provision regarding small-scale nuclear power.

This cover letter describes the role of the regional plan in the Finnish land use planning system and the level of detail in the impact assessments of regional plans, as well as the estimated impacts of the VISIO plan regarding nuclear energy. The purpose of this cover letter is to provide an overview of the regional plan and its role in land use planning related to nuclear power.

Regional Plan

A regional plan is a long-term, general plan covering the entire region—typically multiple municipalities—based on Finland's Land Use Act. The regional plan identifies land use of national, regional, and local significance, and aligns national land use objectives with regional and local objectives and values. The regional plan does not address internal municipal land use decisions, but rather broader issues.

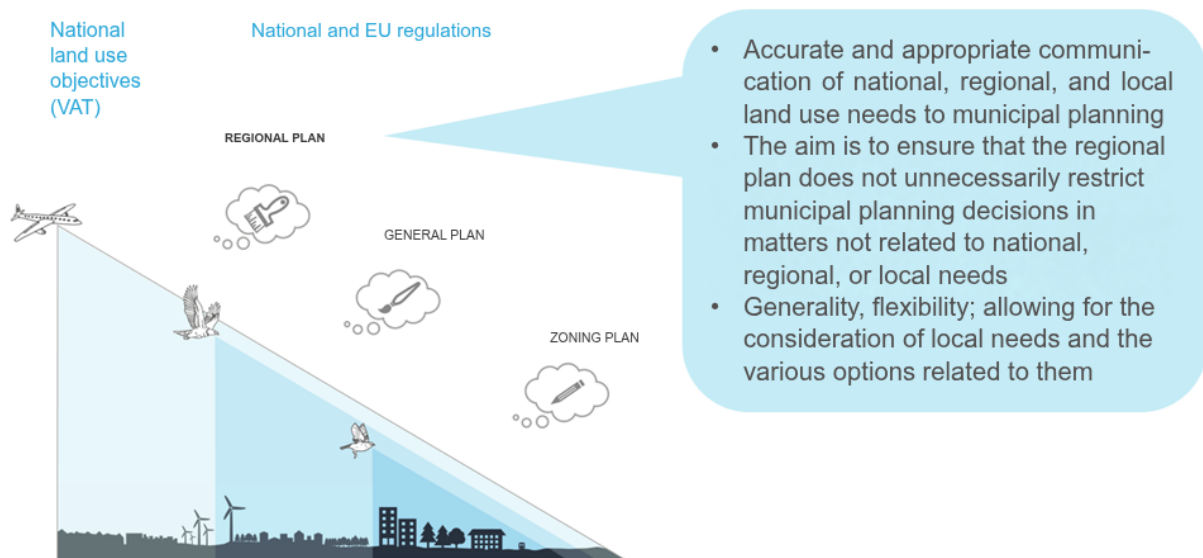
The regional plan serves as a guideline for municipal planning and other land use planning by authorities. The regional plan is not a plan to be implemented on its own, but is implemented and refined in municipal general and local plans.



The regional plan is prepared based on comprehensive information and dialogue, and by evaluating various alternatives. The preparation of the plan also takes into account the results of impact assessments, political guidelines, and legislation.

The legal effects of the regional plan are described in more detail in Chapter 6 of the plan report.

The Role of the Regional Plan in the Land Use Planning System



The VISIO Plan's Planning Solution for Nuclear Power

In the VISIO plan, the prerequisites for the siting of nuclear power production have been examined at a general level and in relation to other regional land use in the province.

Fortum, the operator of the nuclear power plant already in operation in Loviisa, Uusimaa, is actively exploring opportunities to build new nuclear power capacity in Finland. The goal of this development work is to meet the growing demand for clean electricity from society and industry, as well as to strengthen Finland's energy self-sufficiency. Fortum has identified the area near Källa-Hästholmen, adjacent to the current Loviisa plant site, as a suitable location for additional nuclear power construction. The location near the existing power plant sites would enable the efficient utilization of existing infrastructure and expertise. Fortum has prepared a report on the planning area for the update of the regional plan. The report is included in the materials for the international consultation.

In the VISIO plan, the Källa-Hästholmen area in Loviisa is designated **with the EN/t notation for an "Energy Production Area,"** which is reserved for facilities, buildings, or structures serving energy production, as well as buildings and structures necessary for energy production research and development. According to the planning regulation pertaining to this designation, it is possible to locate a nuclear power plant and interim storage facilities for nuclear waste in the area. Additionally, support functions may be located in the area, such as temporary housing, facilities related to water treatment, and

port operations related to energy production. A nuclear power plant cannot yet be implemented based solely on the regional plan; rather, the implementation and location of the plant will be determined in further planning and more detailed permit consideration based on detailed studies.

At the time the draft VISIO plan was prepared, it was not yet known what type of energy production might potentially be located in the Källan area. In connection with the VISIO plan, the basic premises have been clarified to ensure that the environmental conditions in the Källan area are such that it is possible to begin a more detailed investigation of energy production, including the conditions for locating nuclear power plants, and that energy production in the area does not conflict with other land use at the regional plan level.

The regional plan sets boundary conditions for the detailed planning of future activities through both regulations and the existing protection zone designation for the facility in the current regional plan: the protection zone based on the current facility remains unchanged in the VISIO plan. It has therefore not been expanded beyond what was designated in the previous regional plan. This means that the new activities planned for the Källan area must be such that the risks on the basis of which the buffer zone was defined do not, even in the future, affect a wider area than they do currently.

The regional plan is not an implementation plan; rather, it requires more detailed plans and designs to be realized. Municipal-level plans—namely, general and local plans—as well as other more detailed plans specify the general objectives presented in the regional plan, including those pertaining to the target area for energy production.

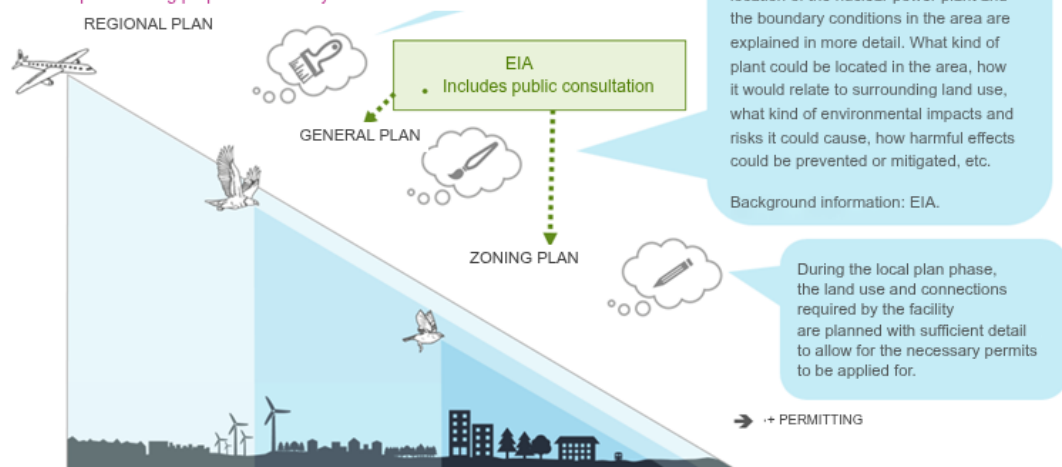
Nuclear Power in the Land Use Planning System / VISIO Plan

EU and national regulations

National Land Use Objectives
(VAT)

Note: different types of plans! For example, a project-specific regional plan drawn up for a single project is much more detailed than a plan covering the entire region and multiple themes.

When drafting a project regional plan, the project for which the plan is being prepared is already known.



Small-scale nuclear power is, in principle, a matter for a planning level more detailed than the regional plan, which is why small-scale nuclear power is not indicated on the regional plan map. However, in the draft VISIO plan, it has been deemed necessary to establish certain boundary conditions for small-scale nuclear power in the regional plan through a general planning provision applicable to the entire plan area.

General provision for small modular reactors:

Small modular reactors (SMRs) intended for energy production may be located within the community structure or in its immediate vicinity, utilizing existing infrastructure.

Such siting requires more detailed planning in a local detailed plan, which must ensure that:

- *The facility is compatible with surrounding land use and does not cause significant harm to the landscape, cultural environment, or natural values.*
- *The plant's location is based on its main product. A prerequisite for locating a plant focused on heat production is an appropriate connection to the district heating network or to industrial process heat needs.*
- *The plant's cooling solutions are feasible, and an electricity-generating plant has a sufficient connection to the power grid.*
- *Detailed planning must be based on adequate studies that assess the direct and indirect impacts of the SMR project. The assessment must take into account the project's social impacts as well as its significance for local safety and security of supply.*
- *The Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority shall be given the opportunity to issue a statement.*

In the VISIO plan, a small modular reactor refers to a modular nuclear reactor suitable for series production with a thermal output of less than 1,500 megawatts. The plant's safety design is based on passive solutions, which enables its integration into the existing energy system and a dense urban structure.

Impact Assessment in the Regional Plan

The purpose of the impact assessment is to provide information on the impacts of implementing the plan, their significance, and the possibilities for mitigating adverse impacts. The Land Use Act sets the framework for the impact assessment of the regional plan.

When assessing the plan's impacts, the plan's purpose and objective are taken into account; in other words, the impact assessment is conducted at the same level of detail and scope as the plan itself. In other words, the impact assessment of the regional plan is conducted at the same general level as the plan itself. Just as the regional plan becomes more detailed in subsequent planning stages, the impact assessment also becomes more detailed as planning progresses to a more specific level.

In the context of the VISIO plan, the impacts, including those related to nuclear power, have been assessed at a general level appropriate for the regional plan and based on the information currently available regarding the plans of Fortum and other potential project operators. For example, at the time the draft plan was prepared, it was not yet known what type and size a potential future nuclear power project in the Källa area might be. For this reason, it is not possible at this stage to assess in more detail the impacts, risks, and distribution of risks of a potential plant, nor the broader impact area.

Regarding the impacts of the energy theme in general, it can be stated that the plan enhances safety by promoting the transition toward a decentralized and diversified energy system. The plan solution secures the operational and development opportunities of Loviisa's existing power plant units and enables the further planning of a new power plant unit in the vicinity of the existing units. The plan also strengthens the operational reliability, energy security, and security of supply of the region's energy system. If implemented, nuclear power would help balance the load on the power grid, which is important alongside variable forms of generation such as wind and solar power. The provision regarding small-scale nuclear power enables the integration of electricity and heat production into the existing community structure and infrastructure.

In energy production areas, particularly in activities related to nuclear energy, safety, risk management, and public perception of safety are emphasized. Nuclear power may also have impacts on water bodies and the marine environment, for example through the use and discharge of cooling water, as well as port operations. For small-scale nuclear power, the impacts on water and the climate depend on the implementation method and the size of the facility.

With regard to nuclear power, transboundary impacts from Finland are possible only in the event of a severe reactor accident. A serious reactor accident is an extremely unlikely extreme event at a nuclear power plant, the occurrence of which would require multiple failures in the plant's systems and problems with plant control. However, as noted above, the type or size of the plant was not known during the preparation of the VISIO plan, so the impacts cannot be assessed in greater detail during the preparation of the regional plan. As the regional plan is refined in subsequent planning stages—namely, in municipal general and local plans, as well as in EIA and permitting processes—the impact assessments will also be refined.

We emphasize that a similar notification and consultation procedure will also be carried out separately in relation to other planning levels within Finland's land use planning system, namely regarding municipal general and local planning, as well as in relation to the EIA process. At these stages, more detailed information and studies than those available at the regional level will likely be available, including those related to impact assessments.

The impact assessment is included in sections 5.1.8 and 7 of the plan report.

International consultation materials

The Uusimaa Regional Council's website features the plan materials [in Finnish](#), [Swedish](#), and [English](#) .

At this stage, the materials for the international consultation are available in Swedish and English and include the following:

- Plan map
- Plan symbols and regulations
- Plan description (*sections 5.2–5.6, 7.2–7.7, and 8 have been removed from the original description as they are not necessary for the consultation*)
- Participation and assessment plan
- Fortum's summary report

- In addition, the materials include a cover letter that has been translated into all the languages of the target countries.

The cover letter and the plan materials have been prepared in Finnish and Swedish and translated using artificial intelligence into English, as well as into the languages of the countries covered by the notification and consultation procedure . We apologize if the AI translation of the cover letter contains minor inaccuracies. We are happy to answer any specific questions regarding the VISIO plan.

You may send such questions directly to the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, which is drafting the VISIO Plan. The contact person for the international consultation is Environmental Specialist Tanja Lamminmäki, tanja.lamminmaki@uudenmaanliitto.fi , and Planning Manager Ilona Mansikka, ilona.mansikka@uudenmaanliitto.fi , is responsible for the VISIO Plan as a whole.

Sincerely,
Helsinki, June 3, 2026

Mari Siivola
Director of Regional Planning