

# Environmental Justice and Ecosystem Services

## Access, Equity and Participation in the Use and Management of Aquatic Environments in the Helsinki Region

### ENJUSTESS

Aquatic ecosystem services in the vicinity of cities face multiple pressures due to urbanization, urban population growth and the intensification of land use in urban areas. These changes have ecological, socio-economic and political implications.

The interdisciplinary research project asks how environmental justice is realised in the

- distribution,
- use and
- management

of water and onshore areas, *blue structure*, and related ecosystem services in the Helsinki region.

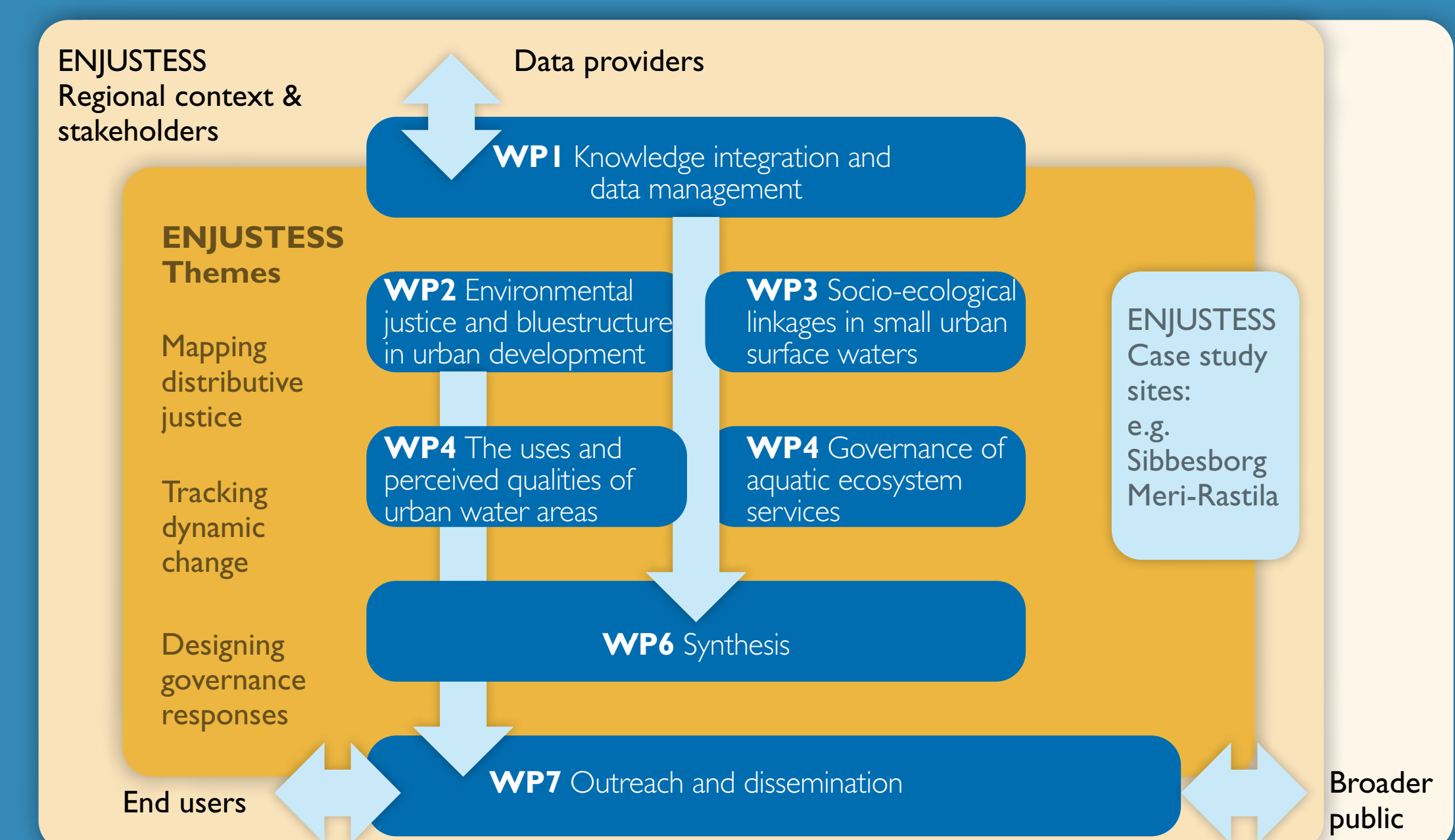
ENJUSTESS focuses on the issues of

- equity,
- recognition and
- participation

in the context of recreation and landscape/scenic amenities in coastal and inland aquatic environments.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How accessible are water areas to residents in different neighborhoods and to different social groups and how will future pressure trends impact accessibility? Which are the most important barriers to accessibility?
- How is environmental justice and public participation realised in decision-making and planning processes concerning blue structure?
- What are the distribution, state and potential threats of small surface water related ecosystem services in urban environments? How should they be managed to ensure ecosystem services provision?
- What relevant affordances can aquatic ecosystems provide to different user groups in an urban environment? How are the affordances distributed geographically?
- Which governance mechanisms can be used for consolidating the different uses of aquatic ecosystem services?



### INNOVATIVE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY METHODS

The project integrates quantitative and qualitative data and methods including GIS and softGIS analyses, field studies, case study analyses, comparative law and institutional analysis (focus on Maritime Spatial Planning) as well as interviews with residents, planning professionals and stakeholders. Data will be collected both on selected case areas (e.g. Sibbesborg, Sipoo; Meri-Rastila, Helsinki) and over the entire Helsinki region.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The research pursues to establish environmental justice as a legitimate concern among urban policy stakeholders as well as to highlight the significance of the novel blue structure concept and related cultural ecosystem services as a current concern for urban planning and governance. The results will include evidence-based information on how blue structure and related cultural ecosystem services may be established in an equitable and just manner in urban planning and how related conflicts can be minimized by good planning and governance practices.

More information on ENJUSTESS:  
[www.environment.fi/syke/enjustess](http://www.environment.fi/syke/enjustess)

Lasse Peltonen<sup>1</sup>, Riina Pelkonen<sup>1</sup>, Kati Vierikko<sup>2</sup>, Jenni Kuoppa<sup>3</sup>, Niko Soinen<sup>4</sup>, Leena Kopperoinen<sup>1</sup>, Pekka Itkonen<sup>1</sup>, Marketta Kyttä<sup>3</sup>, Jari Niemelä<sup>2</sup>, Tuomas Kuokkanen<sup>4</sup>, Marko Järvinen<sup>5</sup>, Daud Hassan<sup>4</sup>

- 1) Environmental Policy Centre, Finnish Environment Institute SYKE
- 2) Urban Ecology Research Group, University of Helsinki
- 3) YTK - Land Use Planning and Urban Studies Group, Aalto University
- 4) Department of Law, University of Eastern Finland
- 5) Marine Research Centre, Finnish Environment Institute SYKE