



OFFICE INTERNATIONAL du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux
association sans but lucratif

Finnish petition for Kupitaa allotment in Turku

supported by the

**Office International du Coin de Terre
et des Jardins Familiaux**

The Kupittaa allotment garden is the oldest in Turku - founded in 1934. The allotment garden was established to ensure the food supply of the families as well as to offer recreation and promote the well-being of the city's working population. However, the first chapter in the history of the Turku allotment gardens was written in 1917, when Finland became independent. The garden has retained its character for 85 years and is a very significant urban environment as a whole, enriching the Kupittaa area.

The diversity of species in the allotment garden is significant.

The allotment garden has 57 plots with very small cottages. Three of the cottages are in their original appearance, as the others show a spectrum of variations that has developed over the decades, with minor changes. Although the primary function of the plots is no longer to feed the gardeners, there are still about 300 apple trees in the area, some of them decades old. In addition to them, the plots grow a large number of old ornamental and useful plants. In Kupittaa, all cultivation is carried out without pesticides and the Kupittaa allotment garden, with its vegetation and other organisms, is a “hotspot” of the city’s biodiversity. The University of Turku and the Natural Resources Institute Finland have documented the valuable vegetation of the garden and some of them have been deposited in the Natural Resources Institute's crop genetic resources collections.

The Kupittaa allotment garden is a green oasis and a socially vibrant and active part of the city of Turku. Visitors are welcome to explore and enjoy the area. The allotment garden has also received international recognition for its activities. In March 2020, the General Assembly of the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux awarded the Kupittaa Allotment Garden Association a diploma in social activities: The association was the main partner in the project “*Multa ja Mukuloita - nature meanings and phenomenon learning in a city garden*”. This project from Sateenkaari-Koto ry has received a lot of publicity, and funding has been received from the Finnish National Agency for Education. 4H’s youngsters run a summer café in the area, and residents of nearby service houses use the garden as a place to relax. The Federation of Finnish Allotment Gardens has listed Kupittaa as one of five allotment gardens worth a visit in Finland.

The abolishment of the Kupittaa allotment garden would seriously, and in many ways weaken the urban environment of the city. It would destroy a diverse urban area consisting of people, plants and animals that maintains the physical and mental well-being of citizens of all ages, an abundant pool of pollinators and healthy biota in cultivated soil. The protection of biodiversity is also a key goal of the Finnish government’s environmental policy, to which we seriously hope that the city of Turku will commit itself in this case as well.

The signer demands that:

1. The Kupittaa allotment garden remains in Kupittaa.
2. The City of Turku recognizes the value of the plants as well as the environmental and cultural historical value of the current allotment garden.
3. The City of Turku is participating in the development of the current Kupittaa allotment garden area as the city's green area and the city's green lungs.
4. The Kupittaa allotment garden will be added as part of the Turku National City Park.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Malou Weirich". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Malou WEIRICH
Secretary general

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux a.s.b.l
Association unifying more than 3 million European allotment gardeners