

Strength from resource wisdom!

Sanna Tyni, PhD, Principal Lecturer, Arctic natural resources and economy, Lapland University of Applied Sciences

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In recent years, resource wisdom (Sitra) has become familiar to all of us in an entirely new way. The Covid-19 pandemic forced organisations around the world to reconsider working methods and the implementation of operational processes, and this has also replaced the traditional working methods with new operational models in many industries. This sudden change in the operational culture has also forced many to consider the available resources from a new perspective, both in terms of personnel and the material resources needed for performing the work. In certain fields, this change gave a welcome boost to the operational opportunities of the twin transition (Maaseudun tulevaisuus, 2022), whereas other fields struggled to balance the still-present need for in-person interaction with the risks posed by the pandemic. I'm sure many of us can recognise the pressure brought on by this change, especially regarding the people trying to adapt to the situation, i.e. human resources.

There was a glimpse of light at the end of the pandemic's long tunnel, a promise of an easier year, when another crisis hit that affected our operations at a global level. In the spring of 2021, we were in a situation that even now, as I'm writing this editorial, feels like an absurd nightmare that you just want to stop. Russia launched an attack on Ukraine, and Europe faced the threat of losing access even to critical resources (European Council, 2022). For some European countries, the winter of 2022–2023 will be a period reviewed by historians for many years to come. Finland is preparing for an energy and material crisis for the first time in this new millennium. We have started the new year in a situation where it is no longer self-evident that we will have access to the resources we want – or even those we need.

It had been thought that the transition to operations applying resource wisdom and the circular economy (A European Green Deal; Ministry of the Environment) would be boosted when global climate change and a more sustainable way of living started to become part of our operational models. However, the global crises of recent years have acted as horrifying drivers for implementing a more sustainable operational culture in Finland and in Europe. Even in these dark times, the scientific and higher education communities must maintain their belief in the innovative influencing opportunities of research and development work. The first Lumen journal of 2023 will therefore highlight the many dimensions of resource wisdom and especially its positive influencing opportunities in various fields and activities.

We received a comprehensive selection of articles and comments from the different sectors of our institute of higher education, and I was overjoyed to learn more about our current work from the perspective of these themes. Resource wisdom means taking care of the resources and competence of yourself, your colleagues and students, fostering a healthy work community, developing functional working environments and redesigning work. Resource wisdom in Lapland is also present in reindeer herding, the utilisation of horse manure, construction and the energy communities. We understand the meaning of resource wisdom in cooperation, networking, seeing people as people, and in our small and large everyday actions, choices and values. I had some “light-bulb moments” and sensed I was learning something new when I read about my colleagues’ thoughts and views on the many forms of resource wisdom. I felt honoured to belong to such a diverse work community that shows such commitment to their cause. I would say that the Lapland University of Applied Sciences and its personnel, stakeholders, network and the whole scope of its operations are a great example of adopting resource-wise operations with every ounce of one’s being.

To conclude this editorial, I would like to quote our visiting columnist, Nani Pajunen (2023):

“Scarcity encompassing the entire Earth is such a large concept that it is difficult to see.”

However, there is an even more important question that we should consider:

“So, what do we actually want, what kind of a future are we building, and what will we use all these riches of the Earth for in the future?”

A warm thank you to all the writers contributing to this issue, the promoters of resource wisdom and our visiting columnist! I wish enjoyable reading to you all in issue 1/2023!

Sanna Tyni

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