National Guidelines

naturum
Visitor Centres in Sweden

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Naturum Visitor Centres in Sweden

National Guidelines
'What it all ultimately comes down to is that there must grow in us and in our children – the new generation – an insight that all organisms are dependent on each other, so that we can form a realistic idea of the role that human beings play in existence. [...] With that attitude, people will no longer go out into nature; they will simply go into it.'

Lennart Rådström: In i naturen [‘Into Nature’] (1977)
Preface

Visitor centre is an international term designating a centre to receive people who visit natural or cultural environments which are protected or otherwise worth experiencing. Such facilities exist in many countries, even though there may be differences in design. The Swedish ones have been called naturums since 1973, when the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – whose English name was then the Swedish National Environment Protection Board – started pilot projects at three locations based on American and British models. Today there are 28 naturums in Sweden, with several more planned. As the owner of the naturum trademark, the Swedish EPA decides which visitor centres may use this word in their names.

The Swedish EPA sees naturums as an important means to disseminate knowledge about nature and nature conservation, to enrich the outdoor-recreation activities of the general public and to inspire people to visit the countryside. The provision of information is an important part of the planning of nature conservation as well as a means to reconcile the conservation of nature with its sustainable use for outdoor recreation and nature tourism. In its Written Communication on the Renewal of the Policy for Nature Conservation, the Swedish Government states that the dissemination of knowledge and information is crucial to the long-term success of nature conservation. The Government also emphasises that natural experiences are an important part of our quality of life and that if people spend time in nature for purposes of recreation, public-health objectives will more easily be achieved.

More than ten years have passed since the adoption of the previous guidelines/policy on naturums. On the basis of a review which has now been carried out, we will raise the level of ambition to further develop naturum operations. These guidelines deal with subjects such as the principles governing the establishment, operation and monitoring of naturums and the distribution of roles among the various parties involved. We hope that the future implementation of the guidelines will give us even better naturums which meet the high expectations that visitors and society are entitled to have of the ‘gateways’ to our valuable Swedish nature.

This document consists of a basic text which constitutes the actual guidelines as well as comments provided in footnotes which are intended to serve as further guidance. The project to develop the guidelines was led by Per Wallsten.

Stockholm, December 2007

Björn Risinger
Director, Natural Resources Department
Table of contents

Preface .................................................................................................................................................3
Table of contents .................................................................................................................................4
Summary ...............................................................................................................................................5
Guidelines for naturums ......................................................................................................................7
  1. Introduction ..............................................................................................................................7
  2. Purpose .....................................................................................................................................8
  3. Target group .............................................................................................................................8
  4. Location and design ..................................................................................................................9
  5. Responsible authority; financing .............................................................................................10
  6. Operations ................................................................................................................................11
  7. Monitoring and evaluation .........................................................................................................14
  8. The naturum trademark ............................................................................................................15
  9. Name and logotype ..................................................................................................................15
  10. Role of the Swedish EPA ........................................................................................................16
  11. Role of county administrative boards ..................................................................................17
Annex 1: Naturums and other information about nature – an overview ........................................18
Annex 2: Graphical rules for the naturum logotype ........................................................................21
Annex 3: Descriptions of pictures ....................................................................................................23
Summary

Naturum visitor centres in Sweden – national guidelines

A ‘naturum’ is a centre to receive people who visit a natural area. It is the Swedish equivalent of the ‘visitor centres’ of other countries. The purpose of a naturum is to describe, explain and build an understanding of the values of an area as well as to inspire people to spend time and experience nature there. A naturum consists of one or several buildings and provides information, both indoors and outdoors, about the natural, cultural and experiential values of the area and about the impact that human beings have had on the landscape.

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) owns the rights to the word ‘naturum’, which is a registered trademark. The Swedish EPA’s guidelines lay down rules for naturum operations in Sweden and for facilities which have been given permission by the Swedish EPA to call themselves naturums and use the special logotype.

A naturum is preferably to be located in or near an attractive natural area of great value for nature conservation and outdoor recreation. This often means national parks or well-frequented natural reserves, but it could also be other natural areas which have great value for outdoor recreation and/or are close to population centres.

Naturums are to offer exhibitions, programme activities and outdoor nature interpretation in their premises or nearby. They are to be manned with well-trained staff and must have generous opening hours. Entrance to naturums owned by the central government is to be free of charge. The target group is members of the general public without special knowledge.

The presentation of information in naturums must be objective and impartial as well as pleasant and inspiring. The buildings and the information must be aesthetically appealing and of high quality. The construction methods and materials used and the operation of the facilities must be environmentally friendly.

The Swedish EPA is the owner of the central-government naturums and contributes financially to their construction and operation. These naturums are
usually managed by county administrative boards. The authority responsible for other naturums may be a municipality, a foundation or a non-governmental organisation.

The authority responsible for a naturum has a duty to monitor and evaluate operations. The findings made are to be reported on a regular basis to the Swedish EPA, which has overall responsibility for promoting, developing and inspiring naturum operations in Sweden.
Guidelines for naturums

1. Introduction

One important task of nature conservation is to inform the general public about nature, especially natural areas which are protected under the Swedish Environmental Code. Naturums are an important tool in this work.

Naturums are centres to receive people who visit a natural area. It describes, explains and builds an understanding of the values of the area, and it inspires visitors to spend time and experience nature there. Comment1

‘Naturum’ is also a registered trademark owned by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These guidelines lay down principles for the conduct of naturum operations in Sweden and specifications to be met by facilities which have been given permission by the Swedish EPA to call themselves naturums and use the naturum logotype.

1 Comment: A naturum consists of one or several buildings where information activities are carried out both indoors and outdoors. A naturum does not deal exclusively with aspects of natural science but also describes possible experiences to be had as well as human beings’ dependence and impact on the natural and cultural landscape.

Naturums are one of several tools used to provide information about nature. Other tools include outdoor exhibitions, signs at entrances, nature paths, marked trails, guidance, guided tours, folders, books and Internet-based information. Several of these tools are used in connection with naturums. For a more detailed description of various forms of information about nature, see Annex 1.

The Swedish EPA (which was then called the Swedish National Environment Protection Board in English) introduced the naturum concept in 1973 on the model of visitor centres in North America and the United Kingdom. The word ‘naturum’ is a Latinised version of the internationally transparent Swedish word natur (‘nature’). It is intended to evoke associations with nature and with ‘museum’ and ‘forum’. For Swedish-speaking people, it also evokes the word rum (‘room’).
2. Purpose

A naturum is to show the way into nature. It is to give visitors a pleasant experience which provides them with knowledge about nature, with an understanding and a feel for all of its richness and with the inspiration to visit nature, spend time there and experience a deeper connection with nature as a result of their visit. In other words, a naturum is to serve as a gateway to nature in general and to a specific natural area in particular. *Comment²*

The purpose includes the organisation of exhibitions, programme activities and other nature interpretation in order to:

- enhance knowledge about the values of a natural area from the perspectives of natural science, natural and cultural history, culture and experiences to be had;
- give visitors a deeper understanding of the natural area by explaining to them what has happened, what is happening now and why it is happening;
- give visitors guidance about possible sights, experiences and activities in the area as well as suitable ways of getting there;
- motivate/influence visitors to behave in the natural area and make use of it in such a way that its values are preserved;
- create an understanding of the need to preserve and tend to nature in general and the specific area in particular;
- stimulate interest in nature, nature conservation and nature studies, and help meet various educational needs;
- provide knowledge from the perspective of cultural history about how human beings have used and impacted on nature; *comment³*
- disseminate knowledge about the protected natural areas and other outdoor-recreation destinations of a region.

3. Target group

The main target group of naturum operations is members of the general public of all ages without special knowledge. *Comment⁴*

School teachers and pupils are an important group. Appropriate translations are to be provided so that those who do not speak Swedish may also acquaint themselves with the content of naturums. The premises, operations and information are to be accessible to people with disabilities to the largest extent possible.

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² *Comment:* A naturum is often linked to a specific area – a natural reserve, a national park or another area with special natural values. In some cases it may also deal with areas in a wider sense, for instance a large district, a region, a county, a natural habitat or a specific theme.

³ *Comment:* The notion of ‘use by human beings’ includes the effects of the management (and the lack thereof) of culture-affected nature as well as both good and bad aspects of human impact.

⁴ *Comment:* Regular or particularly knowledgeable visitors should also be able to benefit from visits. This can be achieved by offering opportunities to gain deeper knowledge as well as by renewing and developing operations, for instance by means of changes to programme activities and temporary exhibitions.
4. Location and design

Initiation. The establishment of a naturum may be initiated by local or regional actors or by central-government entities.

Planning. Any decision to designate a new naturum must be based on a comprehensive plan for information about the area concerned, including explicit objectives for nature interpretation. In addition, the documentation underpinning a decision to establish a new naturum must contain estimates of investment and operational costs as well as a plan for financing these costs. *Comment*\(^5\)

Location. A naturum is preferably to be located in or near an attractive natural area which has great value for nature conservation and outdoor recreation. This often means national parks or well-frequented natural reserves. The naturum should normally be an easily accessible part of the main entrance to the area. *Comment*\(^6\)

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\(^5\) *Comment*: A complete information plan should contain the following elements: (a) an analysis of the present situation: who the visitors are, how they move about, when they come and what they come for; (b) an investigation of potential target groups and the need for information and nature interpretation, from the perspective of management as well as from that of visitors; (c) objectives for information determined on the basis of this; (d) suitable locations in the area for information/nature interpretation, such as a naturum, signs at entrances, self-guiding nature paths or outdoor exhibitions; (e) suitable locations for the information activities chosen; and (g) guidelines for the themes and design of information.

\(^6\) *Comment*: Naturums are usually established in or near areas of great natural value, but they may also be linked to other important natural areas whose main significance derives from their value for outdoor recreation or their closeness to population centres. In addition, some naturums may deal with a large district, a region, a county, a biome or a specific theme – but they should still normally be physically close to the nature they interpret.
Local support. The process to decide on a new naturum must consider how its establishment could contribute to the development of the surrounding region and thereby help increase acceptance of nature conservation and area protection. The establishment of a naturum must include a local process to foster confidence and co-operation. Comment

Opportunities outside naturums. In the choice of location, consideration must be made of opportunities to exploit or develop attractive and easily accessible target points, nature paths and other forms of outdoor nature interpretation in the field which are located close to the naturum.

Visitor numbers. The expected number of visitors must also be considered in the choice of location. Comment

Function and quality. A naturum must be an attraction in itself through its design and content, at the same time as it must enhance the value and identity of the location or area. Comment

Planning and construction. It should be ensured at an early stage that the content and design of exhibitions will interact well with the design of the building.

Co-operation. Opportunities for local co-operation should be exploited, both with local government and with private organisations and individuals. Comment

Environmental friendliness. The exhibition, the building and their operation must be environmentally friendly as regards materials, operation and construction processes. As a minimum, operations should comply with the requirements for environmental certification under ISO 14001. Central-government naturums should be part of the Swedish EPA's environmental-management system.

5. Responsible authority; financing

Responsible entity. The owner of central-government naturums is the Swedish EPA. The responsible entity, which is also the manager of the naturum, is usu-

7 Comment: For example, a naturum may help create new jobs and raise income levels in tourism and services.

8 Comment: The expected annual number of visits at a planned naturum should be at least 20,000.

9 Comment: Naturums owned by the central government, like other public facilities, must have high ambitions and set good examples as regards the quality of architecture and design (Government Bill 1997/98:117, Parliamentary Written Communication 2002/03:129). This applies to naturum buildings as well as to exhibitions and the adjacent grounds. According to the Government, new architecture must enrich and renew the existing environment while taking as its starting point the valuable aspects of older buildings, natural conditions and the overall environment. Naturums owned by others than the central government should of course also be of high quality.

10 Comment: Where a naturum shares a location with other operations, it must have a clear identity as well as its own entrance.
ally a county administrative board or another area-management entity. For naturums not owned by the central government, the responsible entity, the owner and the manager may be foundations, municipalities or non-governmental organisations. The responsible entity may appoint other managers for the naturum by means of commissions, leases or other agreements. The responsible entity has a duty to monitor operations. Each naturum must have a superintendent. Comment\textsuperscript{11}

**Financing of central-government naturums.** The Swedish EPA is to help finance the construction and operation of central-government naturums. Comment\textsuperscript{12}

**Financing of other naturums.** For naturums not owned by the central government, the Swedish EPA or county administrative boards may contribute financially to the construction of naturums and exhibitions, and in some cases also to their operation.

### 6. Operations

**Content.** The operations at and in connection with a naturum are to focus on communicating values of natural science and cultural history as well as cultural and experiential values. They may also deal with the need to preserve and tend to nature, with human beings’ role in nature and their impact on the environment, with the Right of Public Access and with the provision of knowl-

\textsuperscript{11} Comment: ‘Responsible authority’ (huvudman) is a term used in Swedish administrative law to designate the entity which has main responsibility for an operation or an institution. This responsibility always includes responsibility for costs and legal responsibility for operations.

\textsuperscript{12} Comment: Funds for the operation and maintenance of naturums are included in the Swedish EPA’s funds for the management of protected areas via county administrative boards.
edge about local protected areas and other outdoor-recreation destinations.

Comment\(^{13}\)

**Character.** The presentation of information in exhibitions, programme activities and nature interpretation in the field must be objective and impartial at the same time as it must be pleasant, inspiring and convey a positive feeling for nature. Exhibitions and signs must be designed in an aesthetically appealing manner and the construction methods and materials used must be of high quality.

**Manning.** Naturums are to be manned and their staff must have appropriate training for their job.

**Opening hours.** Naturums must have generous opening hours to meet the demand from the general public and from schools. **Comment\(^{14}\)**

**Entrance fees.** Entrance to central-government naturums is to be free of charge. **Comment\(^{15}\)**

**Programme activities.** There must be programme activities such as lectures and days devoted to specific themes. Such activities may be conducted jointly with other stakeholders. **Comment\(^{16}\)**

**Outdoor activities.** Outdoor nature interpretation must be offered at or near the naturum. **Comment\(^{17}\)**

**Temporary exhibitions.** It must be possible to organise temporary or replaceable exhibitions on various themes, including environmental issues of topical interest.

**Children.** Nature interpretation and other activities adapted to the needs of children must be offered.

\(^{13}\) **Comment:** The wideness of the target group specified in Point 3, ‘members of the general public of all ages without special knowledge’, makes heavy demands on the design and presentation of the content of naturums. The profile of exhibitions may vary depending on local conditions.

To the largest extent possible, operations should be used as part of the management of the area – that is, to influence visitors’ behaviour, channel the flow of visits, inform visitors about rules as to what they should and should not do, etc.

The Right of Public Access (allemansrätten) entitles people to roam the Swedish countryside more or less freely provided that they comply with certain rules of principle and observe the dictum ‘Don’t disturb – don’t destroy’.

\(^{14}\) **Comment:** Where a naturum is closed during the off-season, special opening hours and guided tours should be offered on request.

\(^{15}\) **Comment:** A fee may be charged for additional and special services such as guided tours for groups. However, guided tours for groups of school pupils should be free of charge at central-government naturums. Naturums owned by others than the central government should offer free entrance if possible.

\(^{16}\) **Comment:** There should be co-operation with schools, preferably in the form of ‘nature school’ operations.

\(^{17}\) **Comment:** Examples of suitable forms of nature interpretation include signs, guided tours, demonstrations, self-guiding paths and sign-posted target points. See also Annex 1.
Other content. A naturum must also contain materials for visitors who do not speak Swedish and a reading corner with literature for those who want to know more. The naturum building should contain an assembly hall with room for at least 25 people which can be used for photo shows, lectures, etc. Toilet facilities for visitors must be offered at or near the naturum.

Size. The exhibition area should be at least 100 square metres.

Accessibility. Good accessibility is an important issue of democracy. The design of naturums and the conduct of their operations must ensure, to the widest extent possible, accessibility for all citizens, including those with disabilities. This is also applicable to relevant parts of target points in the vicinity of the naturum as well as outdoor paths and trails for nature interpretation. Comment

\[\text{Comment}\] The issue of accessibility is emphasised in the Government's concept of 'design for all', which means that products, articles intended for everyday use, services and indoor and outdoor environments should be accessible to everybody to the widest extent which is at all possible (Government Bill 1999/2000:79, Parliamentary Written Communication 2002/03:25). The Swedish Planning and Building Act (SFS 1987:10) imposes certain requirements to the effect that the interests of people with disabilities must be taken into consideration in the case of new construction and reconstruction, and that 'easily remediable obstacles' must be removed.
Shops and restaurants/cafés. Product sales and food-and-drink services in connection with a naturum are important components of the total service offering for visitors. However, county administrative boards are not allowed to provide such services under their own management at a naturum without special permission – except as regards certain products such as publications and other information material which are sold to a limited extent and have a direct link with operations. Instead, product sales and food-and-drink services in connection with central-government naturums should be offered by a leaseholder or entrepreneur, who should preferably have links to the local community. *Comment*¹⁹

**Annual plan and annual reports.** Each naturum must have a plan for its operations. A proposed operational plan must be included in the application filed by a responsible authority to use the naturum name and logotype under Point 8 of these guidelines. The operational plan is to form the basis of annual operational reports to be submitted to the Swedish EPA under guidelines issued by it. The annual plan must be kept alive and be revised on a regular basis or as necessary. *Comment*²⁰

**Programme Council.** Each naturum should have a Programme Council. *Comment*²¹

7. Monitoring and evaluation

**Responsible authority.** The responsible authority has a duty to ensure that the operations of a naturum are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Monitoring and evaluation findings are to be reported to the Swedish EPA under guidelines issued by it. *Comment*²²

**Swedish EPA.** The Swedish EPA is to carry out, on a regular basis, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the quality of naturums in Sweden. The documentation underpinning this work will include operational plans and monitoring and evaluation reports from the naturums.

¹⁹ *Comment:* Restrictions applicable to the central government are laid down in Section 4 of the Swedish Fees Ordinance (SFS 1992:11). During the opening hours of food-and-drink services at or near a naturum, the naturum itself should also be open to visitors.

²⁰ *Comment:* The operational plan should contain information relating to aim, target groups, main content and themes, information-provision and nature-interpretation techniques, operation and maintenance, skills development of staff, investments, programme activities, a plan for renewal of exhibitions and other actions to develop operations in the short and long term.

²¹ *Comment:* The principal task of the Programme Council is to support the manager. It should discuss the operations carried out at the naturum, proposed activity programmes and proposed budgets. The Council should have a broad base: it should include representatives of the county administrative board, the municipality and non-governmental organisations, and it should cover areas such as tourism, management of cultural heritage, outdoor recreation and education. The Council should be convened at least once a year by the manager.

²² *Comment:* Factors which are important in the case of evaluation and monitoring include visitor numbers and visiting patterns, visitors’ attitudes and degree of satisfaction with their visit, the quality and finances of operations and the operation and maintenance of the facility. It is also important to try to obtain comments from those who do not visit the naturum.
8. The naturum trademark

**Rights.** The Swedish EPA owns the rights to the name ‘naturum’ and its logotype under Section 1 of the Swedish Trademarks Act (SFS 1960:644). The name and the logotype are registered in the Trademark Register of the Swedish Patent and Registration Office. The logotype is to be used in accordance with the graphical rules laid down in Annex 2 and must not be modified. Originals of the logotype and identifying names can be ordered from the Swedish EPA. The sign ® denoting a registered trademark must be attached to the logotype in all distributed communication, i.e. in printed matter and web texts. On signs and in exhibition premises, the logotype is to be used without the ®.

**Approval.** Under Sections 1 and 4a of the Trademarks Act, the Swedish EPA is entitled to approve facilities which comply with the naturum guidelines, thus allowing them to use the naturum name and logotype. Those wishing to use the naturum name should file an application with the Swedish EPA which must include an operational plan as well as information about financing, operation and compliance with the naturum guidelines. A facility which fails to comply with the guidelines may be deprived of its naturum status. *Comment*

9. Name and logotype

**Naming.** The official name in Swedish of a naturum is to be ‘naturum’ followed by the identifying name, e.g. ‘naturum Fulufjället’. These two components are to be used together on signs, in marketing and advertising contexts, etc. The identifying name is to be placed left-aligned under the logotype with an upper-case initial, as shown in the example below. *Comment*

23 *Comment:* Approval entails the right to call a facility ‘naturum’. On approval, a rights agreement is drawn up whereby the manager undertakes to use the naturum name and logotype and to comply with the guidelines in all other respects. The Swedish EPA may impose additional requirements in the agreement.

If the location, operations, content, etc., as proposed are deemed not to comply with the naturum guidelines, the application will normally be rejected. If the orientation of an existing naturum is modified so that it deviates from the guidelines, or if an evaluation shows that the guidelines are no longer being complied with, the Swedish EPA may terminate the rights agreement and deprive the facility of its naturum status. The first choice of action, however, should be to try to steer the operations concerned in a desirable direction.

Facilities for nature visitors which do not comply with the Swedish EPA’s guidelines may of course serve a useful purpose in many contexts where it is unsuitable or impossible to establish a naturum because of inadequate resources or other circumstances. For such facilities, the Swedish EPA recommends the names of ‘nature centre’ (naturcentrum) or, for small facilities, ‘nature corner’ (naturhörna).

24 *Comment:* The logotype, the identifying name and the ® sign are normally to be used without additional graphical elements. However, a naturum’s own symbol may be added in accordance with the graphical rules laid down in Annex 2.
Spelling. The word ‘naturum’ is to be spelled with a single r. Its Swedish forms should be ett naturum–naturumet–flera naturum–naturumen. It is to have a lower-case initial except when it begins a sentence in running text. In English running text it is to have an upper-case initial when used in the name of a specific facility.

Colour. The logotype should normally be black. On signs it may be presented in negative: white on a black or neutral background. On signs it may also be ‘nature-conservation blue’ (PMS 295). See also the graphical rules in Annex 2.

10. Role of the Swedish EPA

Development. The Swedish EPA has an overall unifying task to promote, develop and inspire naturum operations in Sweden. It has a duty to strive to develop the skills of those whose work is linked to naturums. Comment

Comment: Skills development may involve the dissemination of knowledge about organisations, publications, courses and other events, the organisation of training, etc. The Swedish EPA’s website is an important tool for this. The Swedish EPA should promote the development of methods, techniques and R&D in naturum operations, and it should initiate thematic and travelling exhibitions.
Construction and financing. The Swedish EPA is responsible for the construction of central-government naturums, and it may provide advice and information to assist in the construction phase of other naturums. The Swedish EPA finances central-government naturums and may also contribute financially to other naturums under Point 5 of these guidelines.

Evaluation and monitoring. The Swedish EPA has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluating naturum operations in Sweden.

Co-operation. The Swedish EPA will promote the building of networks and the exchange of experience among naturums, and it will strive to bring about co-operation with other government agencies and organisations which conduct information activities. Comment

Marketing and advertising. The Swedish EPA will carry out overall marketing and advertising efforts to promote naturums and ensure that the naturum trademark becomes well known. It holds the original of the naturum logotype.

11. Role of county administrative boards

Management. County administrative boards are the responsible entities for and managers of central-government naturums. County administrative boards may select other managers for naturums by direct award or tender. County administrative boards are to monitor operations and appoint naturum superintendent, who are in charge of operations. Further, county administrative boards are to promote regional co-operation among the naturums in their respective counties and contribute to the skills development of naturum staff.

Financing. County administrative boards are responsible for the operation of central-government naturums, using funds allocated by the Swedish EPA. Other naturums may also be given an operational grant.

Comment: Exchanges with facilities and responsible authorities in other countries should also be developed.
ANNEX 1:

Naturums and other information about nature – an overview

Information about nature and the environment can be provided in a wide variety of ways and contexts. One way is through naturums – which is often a versatile and attractive option. The aim of this annex is to clarify the notion of ‘naturum’ and its relationship with other forms of information about nature. The division below is based on (a) where the information is located and (b) how it is conveyed.

Off-site information
Some of the basic requirements that must be met in order for people to visit a natural area relate to information:
• They need to know that the area exists and find out roughly what it has to offer them. The source of such information can be written publications, TV, radio, the Internet, maps, courses, etc.;
• They need to be motivated and willing to go there. Information can give them relevant expectations of possible activities and experiences in the area as well as stimulating them to visit it;
• They need to find their way to the area. Traffic signs and maps in folders or guide books will help visitors in this respect;

There are of course a series of other important factors that may determine whether people actually visit a natural area, such as their experience and habits, any social, psychological or physical disabilities that they may have, or the existence of public transport which can help them get to the area.

On-site information
Once visitors have arrived at the area, another type of information is needed. Signs at landing places and entrances together with marked trails and off-road signposts will help visitors find their way in the area.

The benefit that people will draw from a visit is particularly strongly affected by information which is intended to enhance their understanding of an environment and its points of interest in the sense of making them comprehensible. This is referred to as ‘interpretation’ and has been defined by Hultman (1985; English translation here): ‘Interpretation amounts to describing the points of interest of an environment to the general public: what has happened and what is happening there, and why. Interpretation should enable people to experience and feel for ecological relationships and the role of human beings.’

This is a wide definition. It does not distinguish between types of environment and thus not between nature and culture interpretation. The relationships between human beings and the environment are fundamental. The focus on environments stresses concrete aspects: a location and applications in the field. This is well in line
with other fundamental definitions which emphasise the use of original objects and first-hand experience or illustrative media. The pioneer Freeman Tilden (1957) describes interpretation as ‘an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.’ Sharpe (1976) analogously states that the aim of interpretation is to help, in the actual area, visitors to appreciate, understand and become aware of the points of interest of the area. Interpretation should enrich the visit and make it a pleasant experience.

In the Nordic countries, the concept of ‘nature guidance’ (naturvägledning in Swedish) is also used in a similar sense but focusing only on natural areas. This is defined as follows by the Outdoor Recreation Group of the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM 1990; English translation here): ‘Nature guidance is the communication of a feeling for and knowledge about nature. Its aim is to enhance understanding of fundamental ecological and cultural relationships and of human beings’ role in nature. This will increase the likelihood of positive experiences in nature and of increased environmental awareness both in individuals and in society as a whole.’ The international term ‘nature interpretation’ will here be used synonymously with ‘nature guidance’ in its Nordic sense.

Manned nature interpretation
The personal meeting with a guide or nature interpreter creates opportunities for two-way communication and makes it possible for the message to be adapted to fit the needs of the receiver. This means that it creates a favourable atmosphere for the provision of information, but it also imposes certain demands. In the case of manned interpretation, it is particularly obvious whether the visitors are satisfied or not. The members of the audience participate voluntarily and will be receptive only for as long as the experience feels absorbing and interesting to them. They are what Sam Ham (1992) calls ‘a non-captive audience’. If the experience no longer feels meaningful, a listener may fall asleep, show a lack of interest – or simply walk away.

Manned activities may be guided tours of indoor exhibitions, guided walks in the field, question-and-answer sessions at information desks, lectures in assembly halls or outdoors (such as the ‘campfire talks’ in American national parks), demonstrations and spontaneous information provision indoors and outdoors, days devoted to specific themes, etc. Another form of manned nature interpretation is the reconstruction – or the bringing to life and dramatisation in other ways – of events or historical eras.

Unmanned nature interpretation
Unmanned nature interpretation includes text and images, for instance on signs, on information sheets and in folders. Self-guiding paths such as nature paths can be created by means of signs posted along the trail and at viewpoints, by means of folders where selected locations are marked out, or by means of portable tape recorders. Indoor exhibitions may also be self-guiding, using text and audio.

Exhibitions are usually indoors and use various media with differing degrees of interactivity, but there are also ‘outdoor museums’ with screens and objects. The challenge is to bring exhibitions to life and make them sufficiently good in all respects to meet the expectations of the potential audience. The fundamental question here is ‘what’s in it for me?’.
Naturums
The main purpose of Swedish naturums corresponds well with the sense of ‘interpretation’ or ‘nature guidance’ as described above. Even though the naturums have ‘nature’ in their name, there is nothing to exclude cultural aspects and information about human beings’ role in nature. On the contrary: the relationships between human beings and the environment are central. In this respect, the naturums square well with the debate on nature interpretation in the Nordic countries, where one part-objective is said to be ‘to enhance understanding of how human beings have used and impacted on nature from the perspective of cultural history’ (NCM 1990:52; English translation here). These impacts can be both positive and negative.

Naturums can and should include many of the forms of manned and unmanned nature interpretation. The full range of indoor and outdoor activities is necessary to create an attractive naturum which works well. This will enable it to function as a visitor centre in the best possible sense of that term: a centre which attracts visitors, gives them a pleasant experience and guides them not just physically out into nature but also, at a deeper level, further into it.

It is of course also possible to use many of the above-mentioned forms of nature interpretation in cases where a naturum is not linked to a specific area. But please bear in mind that a naturum does not work without nature interpretation!

References and other fundamental books on interpretation/nature guidance:


ANNEX 2:

Graphical rules for the naturum logotype

Form and trademark
The naturum logotype is a registered trademark. It is to be reproduced as shown in Figure 1 below. The sign ® denoting a registered trademark must be attached to the original logotype in all distributed communication, i.e. in printed matter and web texts. On signs and in exhibition premises, the logotype is to be used without the ®.

Store Mosse

Figure 1. Logotype with identifying name, black colour.

Colour
In printed matter and web texts, the logotype is to be reproduced in black print. This is to make it as clear as possible and to avoid the risk that it will be subject to competition from other colours in the vicinity. On signs, the logotype may be reproduced in negative, i.e. white on a black or grey/neutral background. The logotype may also be printed in the Swedish EPA’s usual dark blue colour as shown in Figure 2 below: PMS 295 or a four-colour mix with 100% cyan, 50% magenta and 30% black.

Store Mosse

Figure 2. Logotype with identifying name, ‘nature-conservation blue’ colour.
Addition of a specific symbol

In certain cases, with the Swedish EPA's approval, a specific symbol for a naturum may be placed next to the logotype as shown in Figure 3 below. The solid vertical line indicates the left-hand side of an imaginary square within which the symbol is placed. This line prevents additions from encroaching upon the original logotype and disturbing it.

The symbol may be in colour or in black. It should be designed in a stringent manner with clear outlines and solid fields of bright colour. Detailed and complicated symbols are to be avoided. Tinted colour fields, photos and screen plates must not be used.

Figure 3. Logotype with identifying name and placement of a specific symbol.
ANNEX 3:

Descriptions of pictures

Front cover:
Fulufjället Naturum
Located in Fulufjället National Park, Älvdalen Municipality; opened in 2002
- Architect: Gunilla Hagberg, White arkitekter i Uppsala
- Exhibition designer: Björn Ed
- Exhibition producers: Bertil Brunnegård & Johan Sandzén, Naturinformation
- Photographer: Lars Wallsten

Page 2
Store Mosse Naturum
Located in Store Mosse National Park, Värnamo Municipality; opened in 2003
- Architects and exhibition designers: Ulla Antonsson & Mattias Lind, White Arkitekter i Göteborg
- Project managers (house and exhibition): Lennart Salomonsson & Johan Rova
- Photographer: Mikael Olsson

Page 4
House of National Parks (Nationalparkernas hus)
Located in Tyresta National Park, Haninge Municipality; opened in 1997
- Architect: Per Liedner, Formverkstan
- Exhibition designers and producers: Håkan Kvist & Kenneth Johansson
- Photographer: Claes Grundsten

Page 5
Fulufjället Naturum (see above)
- Photographer: Lars Wallsten

Page 7
Fulufjället Naturum (see above)
- Photographer: Åke E:son Lindman

Page 9
Värmland Naturum
Located in the Marieberg Forest, Karlstad Municipality; opened in 2002
- Architect: Gunilla Hagberg, White arkitekter i Uppsala
- Exhibition designer: Björn Ed
- Exhibition producers: Bertil Brunnegård & Johan Sandzén, Naturinformation
- Photographer: Tre Bildare

Page 11
House of National Parks (see above)
- Photographer: Claes Grundsten

Page 13
Värmland Naturum (see above)
- Photographer: Tre Bildare

Page 16
Värmland Naturum (see above)
- Photographer: Tre Bildare

Back cover:
Fulufjället Naturum (see above)
- Photographer: Luc Pages

House of National Parks (see above)
- Photographer: Claes Grundsten
Naturums are centres to receive people who visit a natural area. The purpose of naturums is to explain and build an understanding of the values of an area and to inspire visits to it. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) owns the rights to the protected trademark ‘naturum’.

This report contains the Swedish EPA’s guidelines for naturum operations in Sweden and the rules applicable to facilities which have been given permission by the Swedish EPA to call themselves naturums and use the special logotype. It deals with subjects such as purpose, location, operations and graphical rules. The report is intended for government officials at the central, regional and local levels and consultants whose work involves the planning, construction and management of naturums, as well as for others interested in the provision of information about nature.