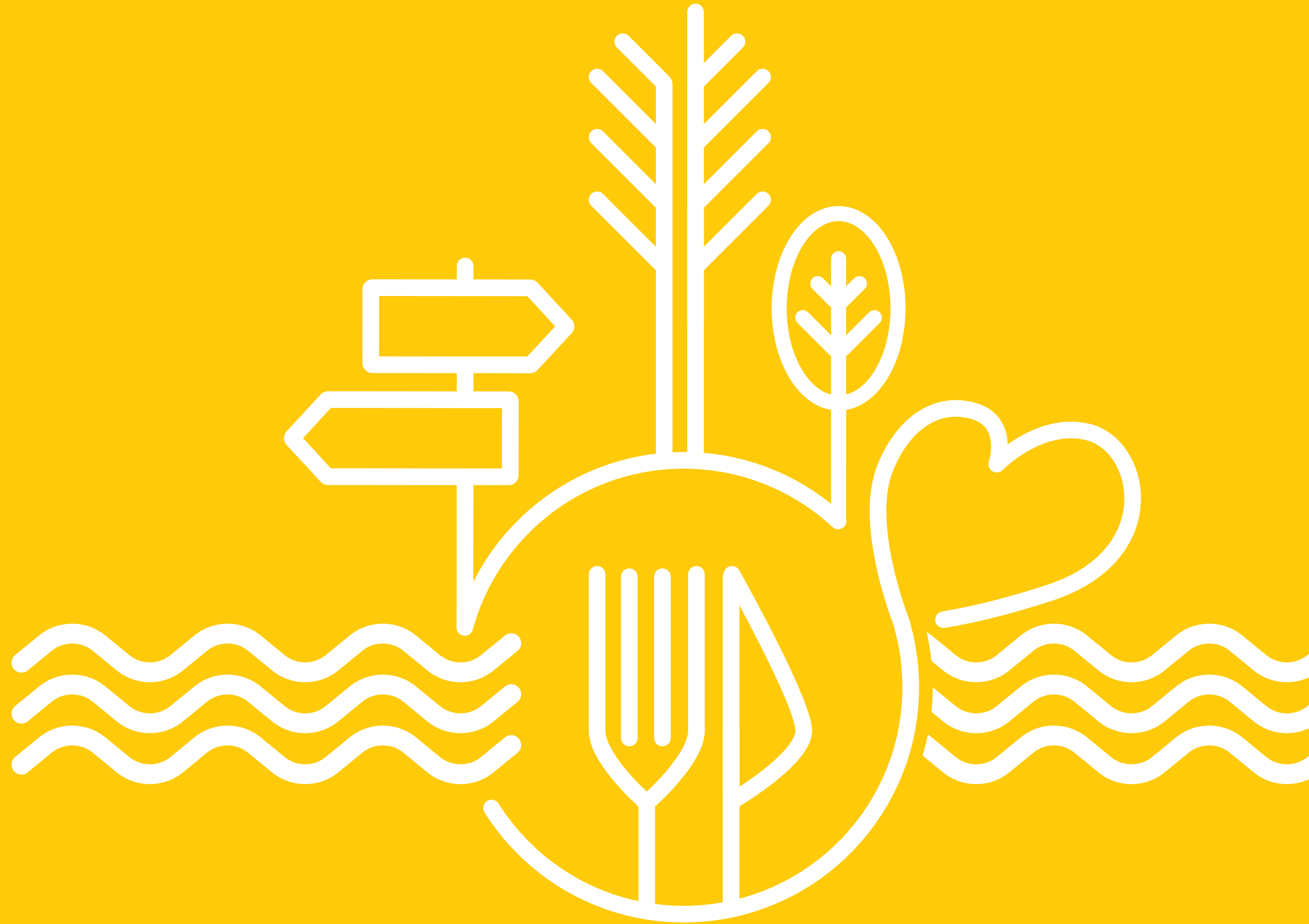
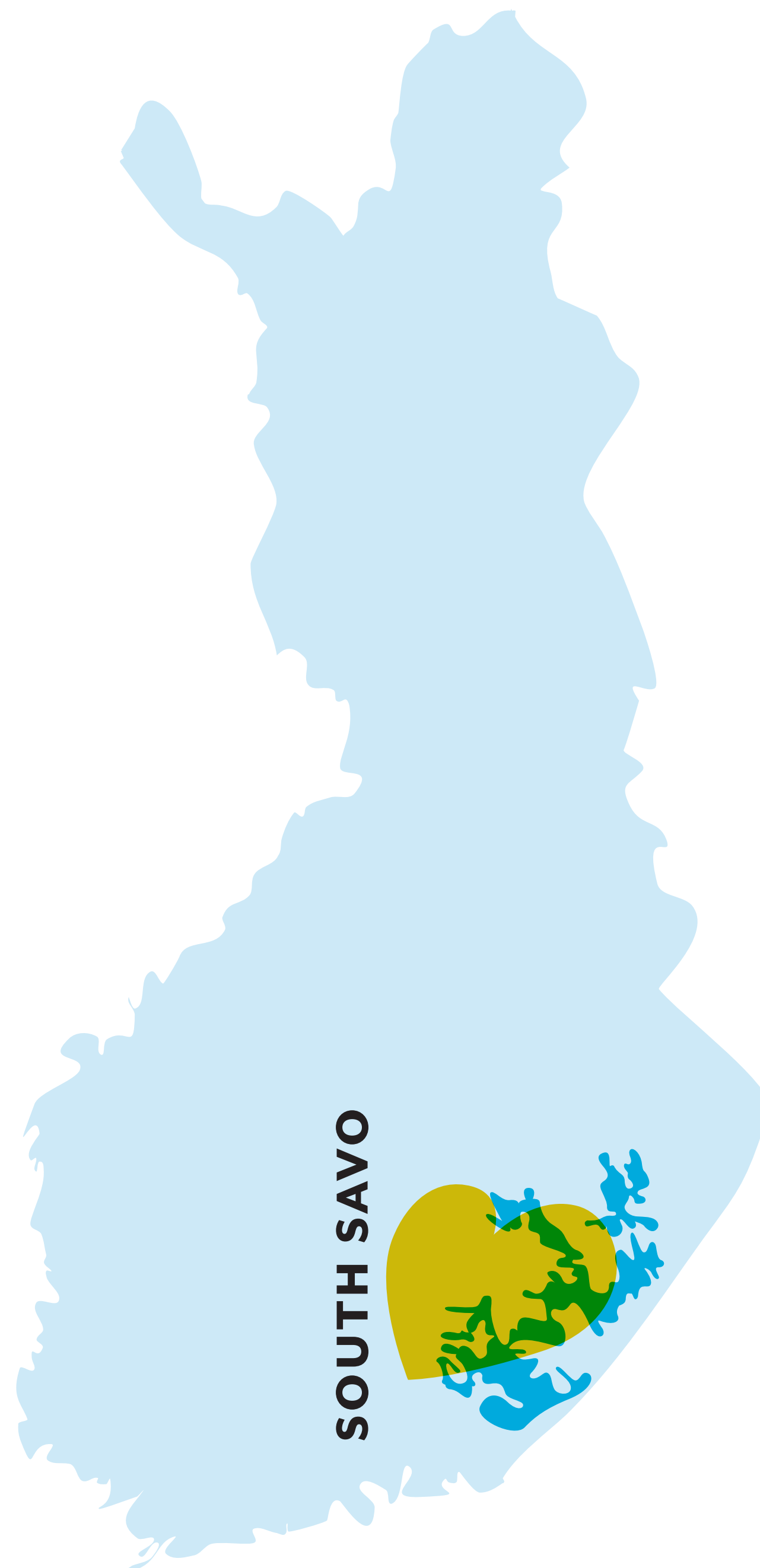


# SMART SPECIALISATION STRATEGY OF SOUTH SAVO 2022–2027

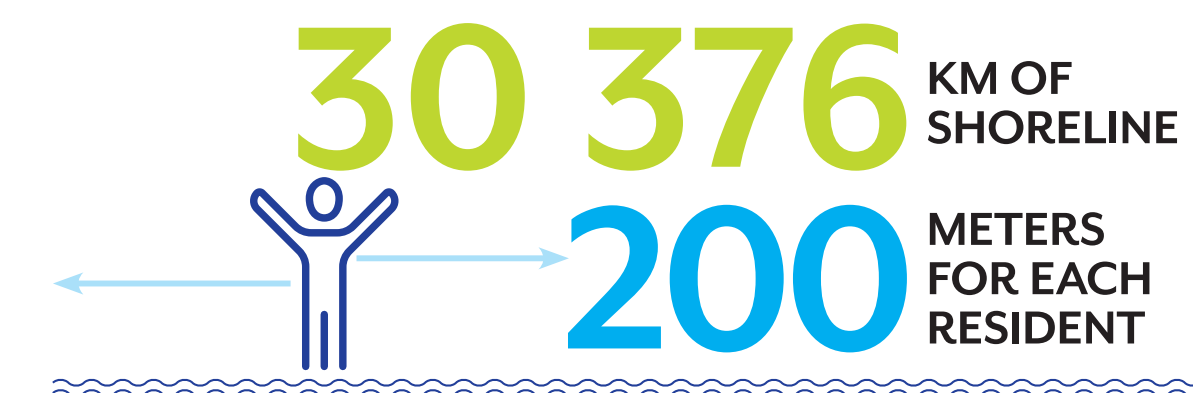


# SOUTH SAVO IS A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

The landscape of South Savo was shaped by the ice age into a labyrinth of lakes, waterways, islands and forests over thousands of years thus, creating a region full of opportunities. Here you can find the true essence of Finnish culture – rugged beauty, an authentic lifestyle, and unique traditions of which we are proud. Thanks to good connections, South Savo is the home of an increasing number of people appreciating nature and its many riches.



Up to  
more than  
**230 000**  
residents

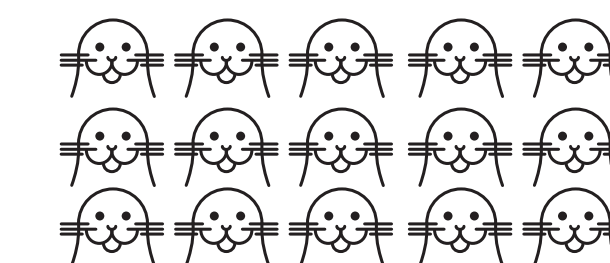


HIGHEST POINT  
OF THE REGION  
**184 M**  
AT NEITVUORI HILL

270 METERS

DEEPEST POINT  
**86 M**  
IN LAKE YÖVESI IN  
SAIMAA

**3 761 LAKES**  
– LAKES SAIMAA, PUULA AND  
KYYVESI AS THE LARGEST



**430** SAIMAA  
RINGED SEALS

**2.** highest number of  
entrepreneurs of the  
employed residents

**PLENTY OF PRIMARY  
PRODUCTION**

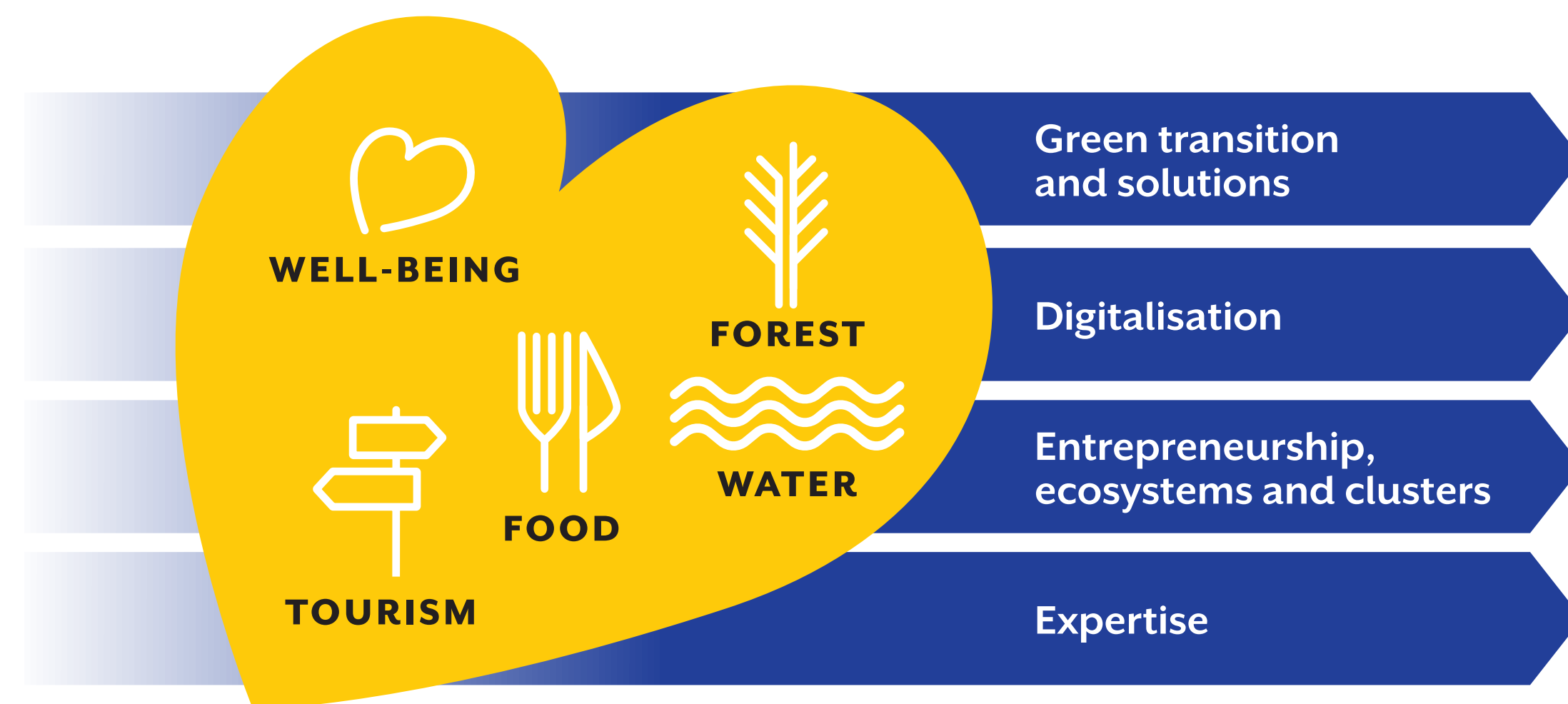
# WHAT IS THE SMART SPECIALISATION STRATEGY?

The Smart Specialisation Strategy summarises the identified strengths of South Savo. Based on the strengths, our goal is to create new products and services that bring us competitive edge and thereby increase the vitality of the region.

## The Smart Specialisation Strategy answers the following questions

- What is unique in South Savo compared to other regions?
- At what are we especially good?
- What kind of special expertise can we offer to others?
- What do we want to develop further?

The Smart Specialisation Strategy is also our internationalisation strategy and part of the regional programme.



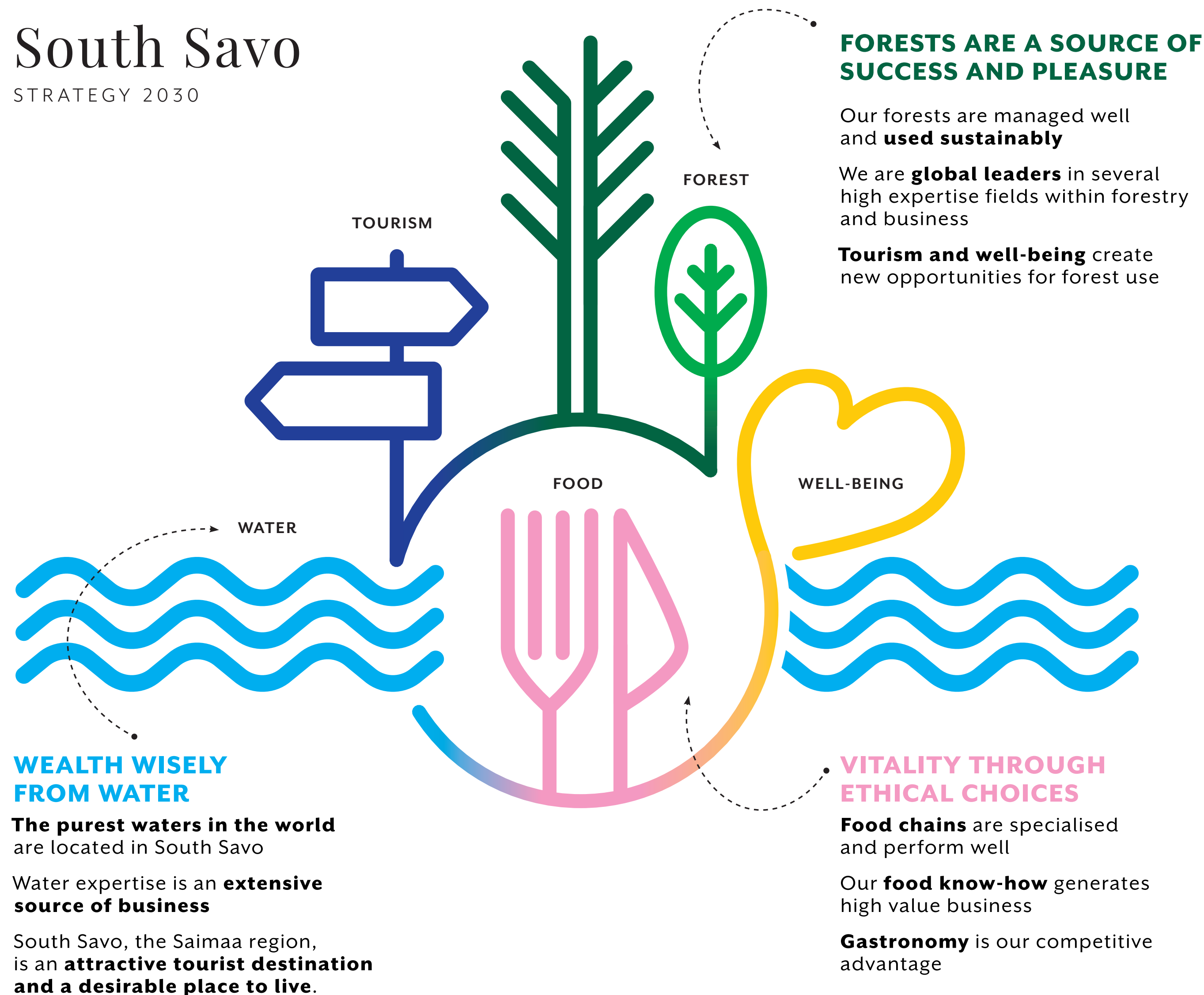
## Enables EU funding

EU may grant funding for developing the region based on the Smart Specialisation Strategy.

# GOALS 2030

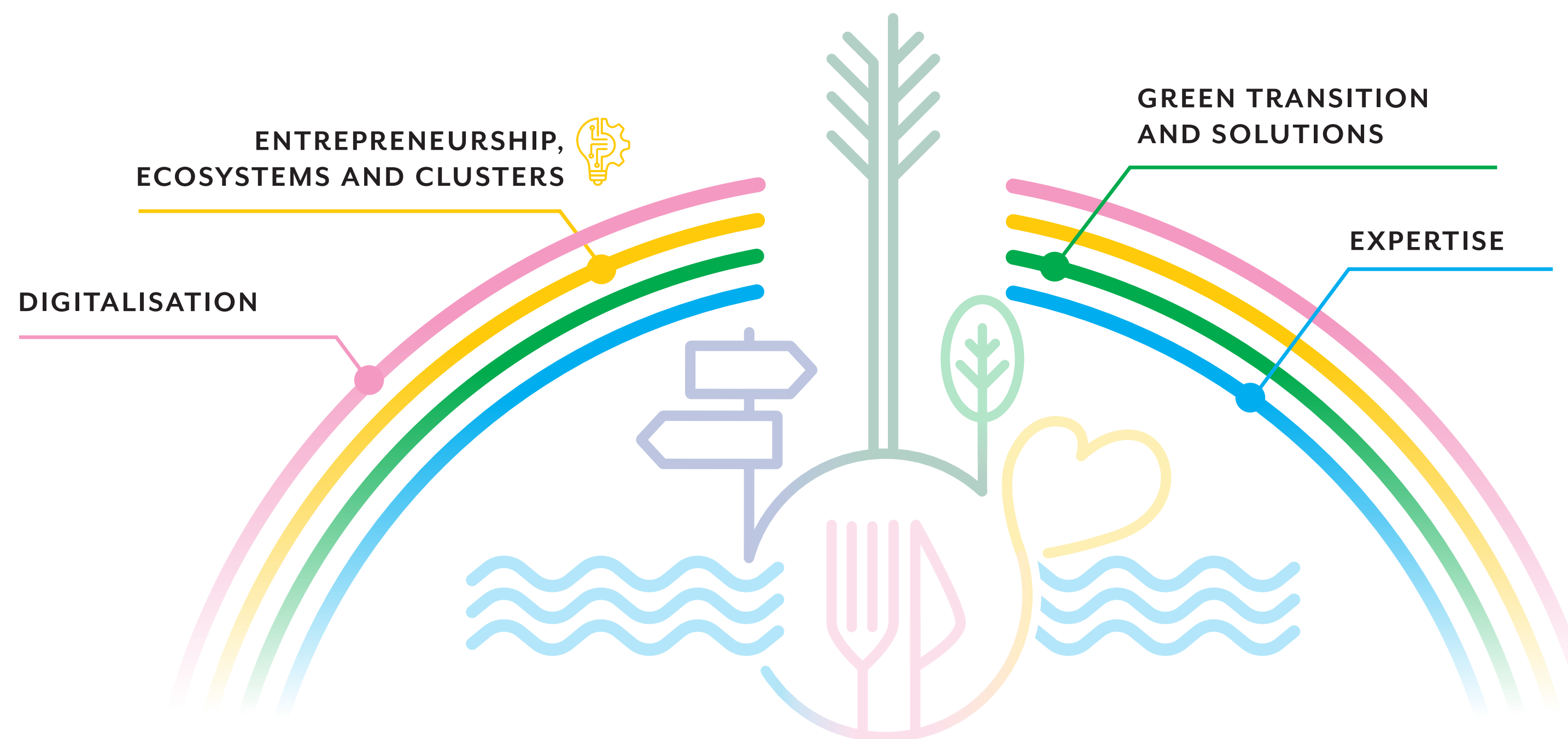
The Smart Specialisation Strategy relies on the identified strengths of **South Savo**: forest, water, food, tourism, and well-being which form the foundation for the growth and progress of South Savo.

## South Savo STRATEGY 2030





# ENABLERS OF SMART SPECIALISATION



## Digitalisation

We create new and sustainable digital services that support the strengths of South Savo: forest, food, water, tourism, and well-being.

## Entrepreneurship, ecosystems and clusters

We create a favourable environment for business life and international growth through ecosystems of companies, research organisations and other operators.

## Green transition and solutions

We prevent climate change through innovations that decrease carbon emissions and use natural resources in a sustainable manner.

## Expertise

We improve our professional and R&D expertise and ensure the availability of skilled labour through foreseeing, high quality education and training as well as the cooperation between education providers and working life.

# WHAT IS A CLUSTER?

A cluster is a network of companies, research, education and development organisations, authorities and other stakeholders in the same sector or field that promotes growth and internationalisation by jointly developing smart and sustainable products and services.

## Clusters & Smart Specialisation Strategy

Clusters further the implementation of the Smart Specialisation Strategy.

# CLUSTERS OF SOUTH SAVO

## Clusters approved by ECCP

**WATER:** Blue Economy Mikkeli  
– EcoSairila centre of water management and circular economy  
**FOOD:** South Savo Food Cluster: network of responsible food sector

## Coming clusters

**DIGITALISATION:** Memory Campus – centre of archiving, digitisation, accessibility and data management in archive, library and museum sector

## Cluster opportunities in South Savo

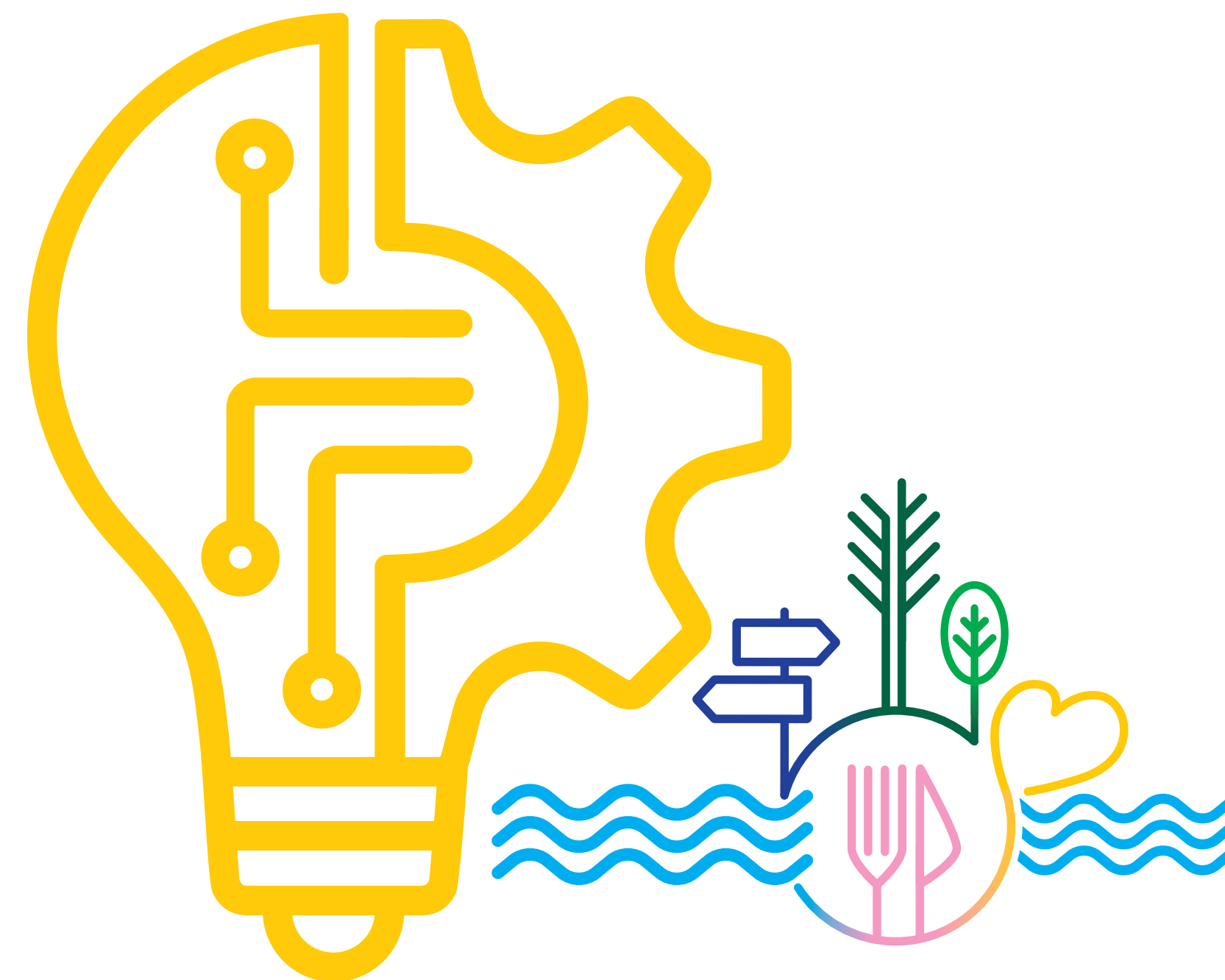
**FOREST:** Centre of fibre and process technology and forest expertise and business

**TOURISM:** Network for developing sustainable tourism and secondary residence opportunities

**WELL-BEING:** Network for developing communality and local well-being



Clusters registered in ECCP:  
<https://reporting.clustercollaboration.eu/all#>





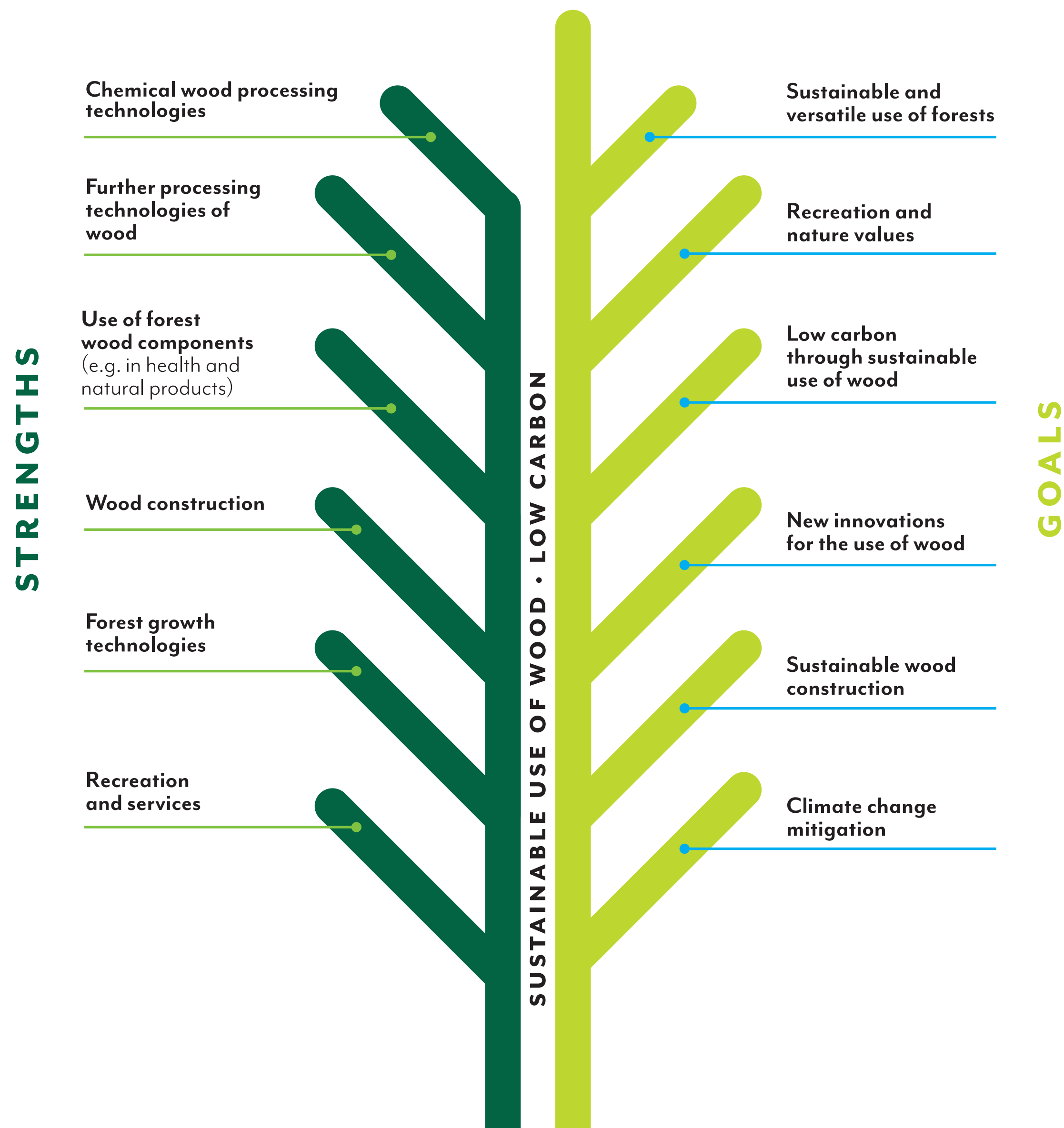


# FOREST

“South Savo has the best-growing forests in Finland as well as higher education and research in the entire forest value chain. Our companies represent the international cutting edge in process technology, engineered wood products and wood construction.”

**Lasse Pulkkinen**  
Research Director  
South-Eastern Finland University  
of Applied Sciences Xamk





# Forest

Our forests are valuable sources of economic vitality and well-being. The forests of South Savo are well maintained and their sustainable use is the basis of all operation.

Wood processing, the use of wood components, wood construction and forest growth technologies are areas of expertise in South Savo.

We acknowledge the importance of forests in climate change mitigation as well as in safeguarding biodiversity and cherishing our cultural environment.







# WATER

“The waste water treatment plant using the latest technology, waste water reclamation operations, biogas plant, and versatile R&D and testing environments form a comprehensive framework for creating new water business.”

**Panu Jouhkimo**  
Cluster Manager  
Blue Economy Mikkeli



## STRENGTHS

Natural waters  
Water purification  
expertise and  
technology  
Circular economy  
opportunities  
Exported water  
expertise services  
and products

## GOALS

International business  
Climate change  
mitigation  
Improving energy  
efficiency in processes  
Sustainable use,  
reclaiming and  
recycling of water

# Water

South Savo is the region of Lake Saimaa. We have the purest waters in the world, which makes South Savo an attractive region to live and visit.

We want to create wealth from water wisely. The water purification technologies and circular economy of water with digital solutions generate commercial opportunities also internationally.

The sustainable and energy-efficient use, reclaiming and recycling of water as well as solutions mitigating the climate change are the key themes in new business opportunities.

Link to other focus areas:

**CLEAN WATER IS A PREREQUISITE FOR WELL-BEING  
PURE WATERS & TOURISM**





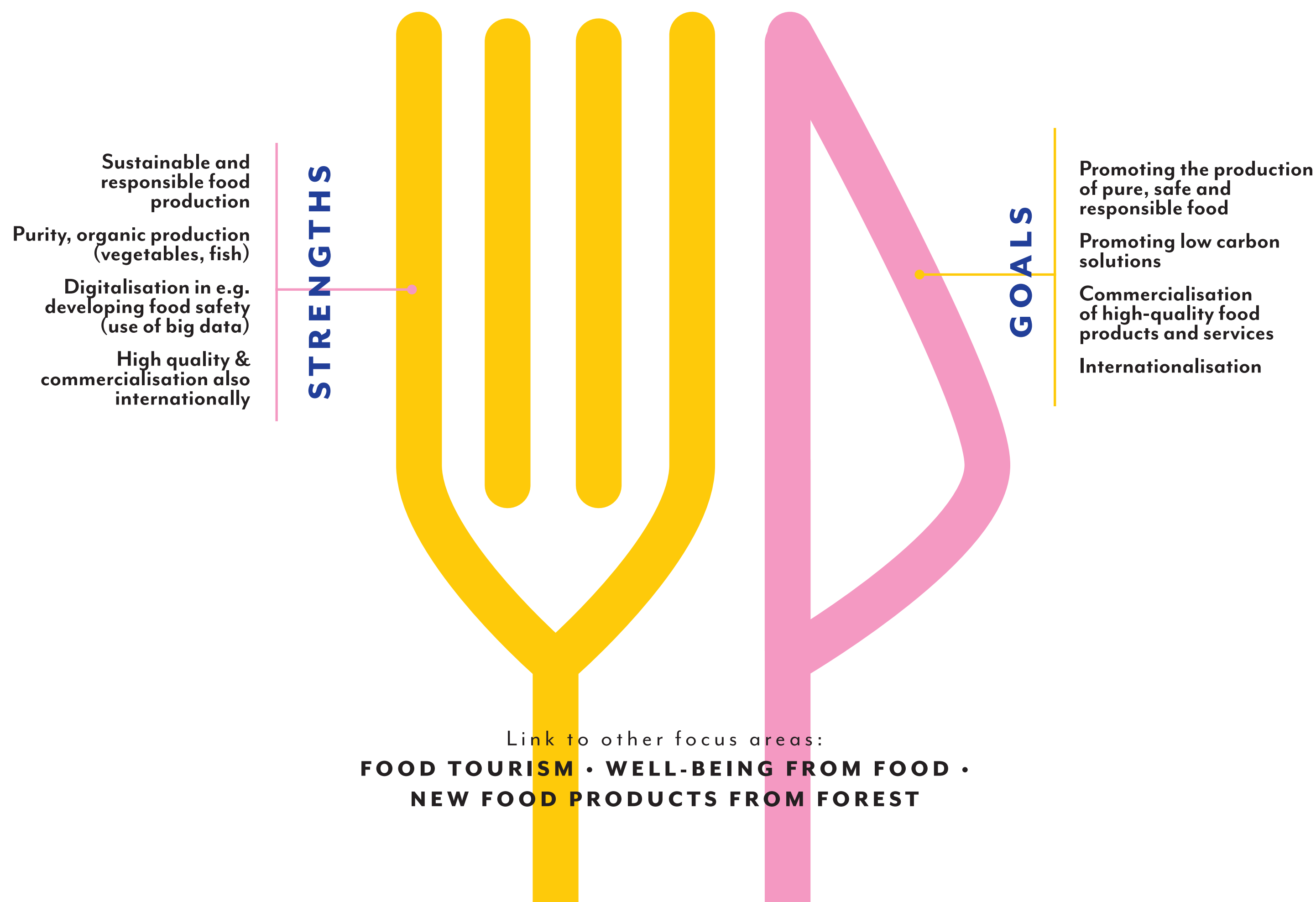
## FOOD

“Versatile primary production, high-quality food products and gastronomic experiences form a foundation for a flourishing food sector.

The South Savo Food Cluster supports networking, internationalisation as well as creating new innovations within the sector.”

**Teija Rautiainen**  
Cluster Manager  
South Savo Food Cluster





# Food

South Savo has the best and purest ingredients in the world! Our fish, extensive expertise in organic food production and D.O. Saimaa-labelled food products of local, small producers are good examples of it.

The strong and traditional food culture is our competitive advantage also internationally. Our food production is sustainable, ethical and of high quality. We use digital solutions efficiently in innovating new food products and commercial applications, for example, for improving food safety.



The designation of origin D.O. Saimaa label tells that the product or ingredient is authentic, delicious and high-quality food from Saimaa.





# TOURISM

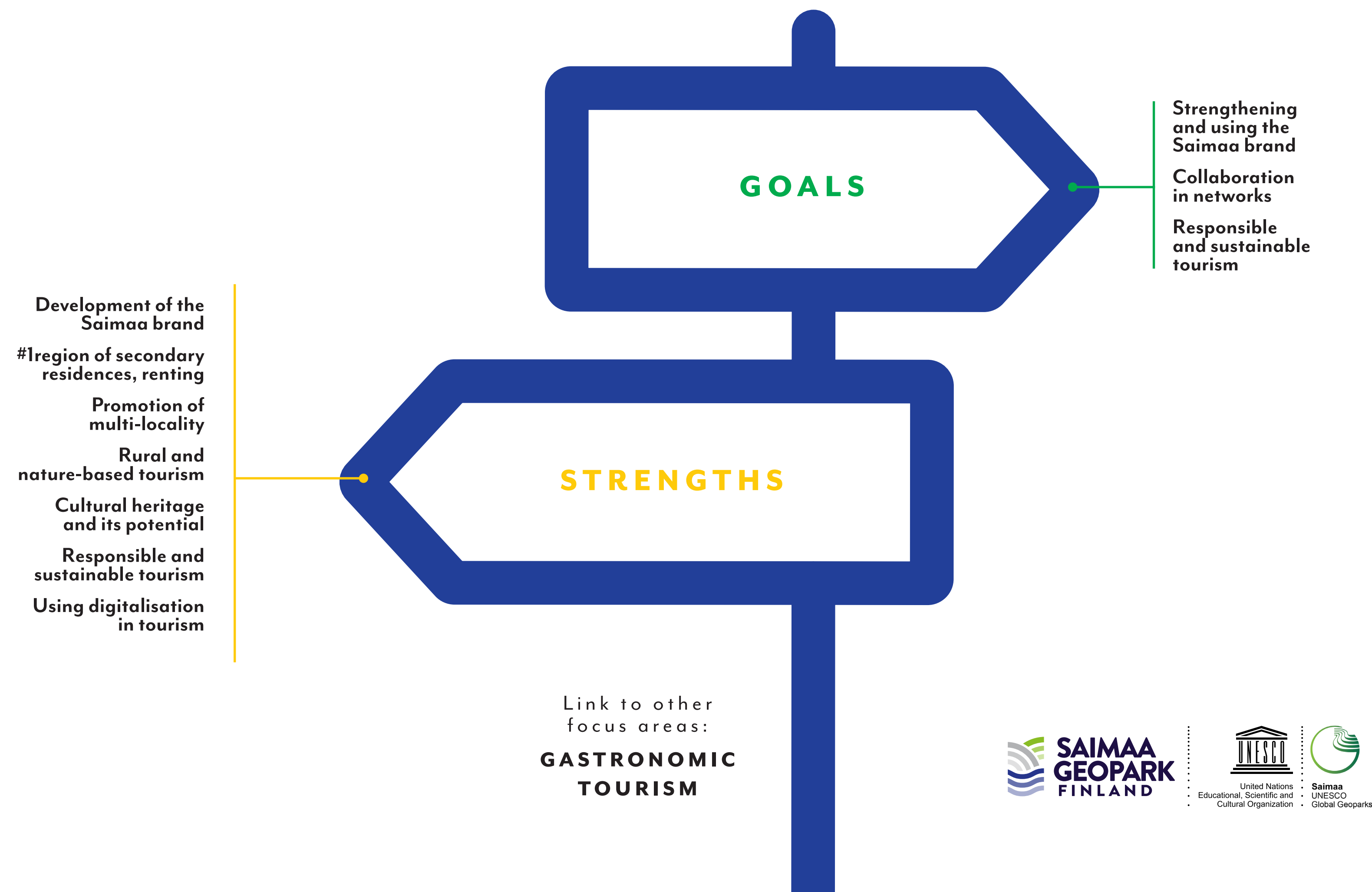
“Lake Saimaa, the daughter of ice age as it is also sometimes called, was the first tourist destination in Finland already in the late 19th century. Its story still fascinates people. Our goal is to increase tourism in a sustainable manner at the same time respecting the nature and culture of Saimaa.”

**Maisa Häkkinen**  
Director of Tourism  
Visit Mikkeli



# Tourism

We want to be purely the best!



Saimaa is an attractive brand for tourists and second resident owners. The diverse nature, national parks and Saimaa Geopark destinations of the lakeland, the rich cultural events, unique attractions, and local gastronomy are important, supporting factors.

The tourist industry is grown in a sustainable manner by focusing on quality instead of quantity. More opportunities are created for multi-locality, and digitalisation is used to, for example, facilitate services and make them more accessible.

Tourist industry is boosted in collaboration between various operators in the field keeping the customer and nature in the focus.





## WELL-BEING

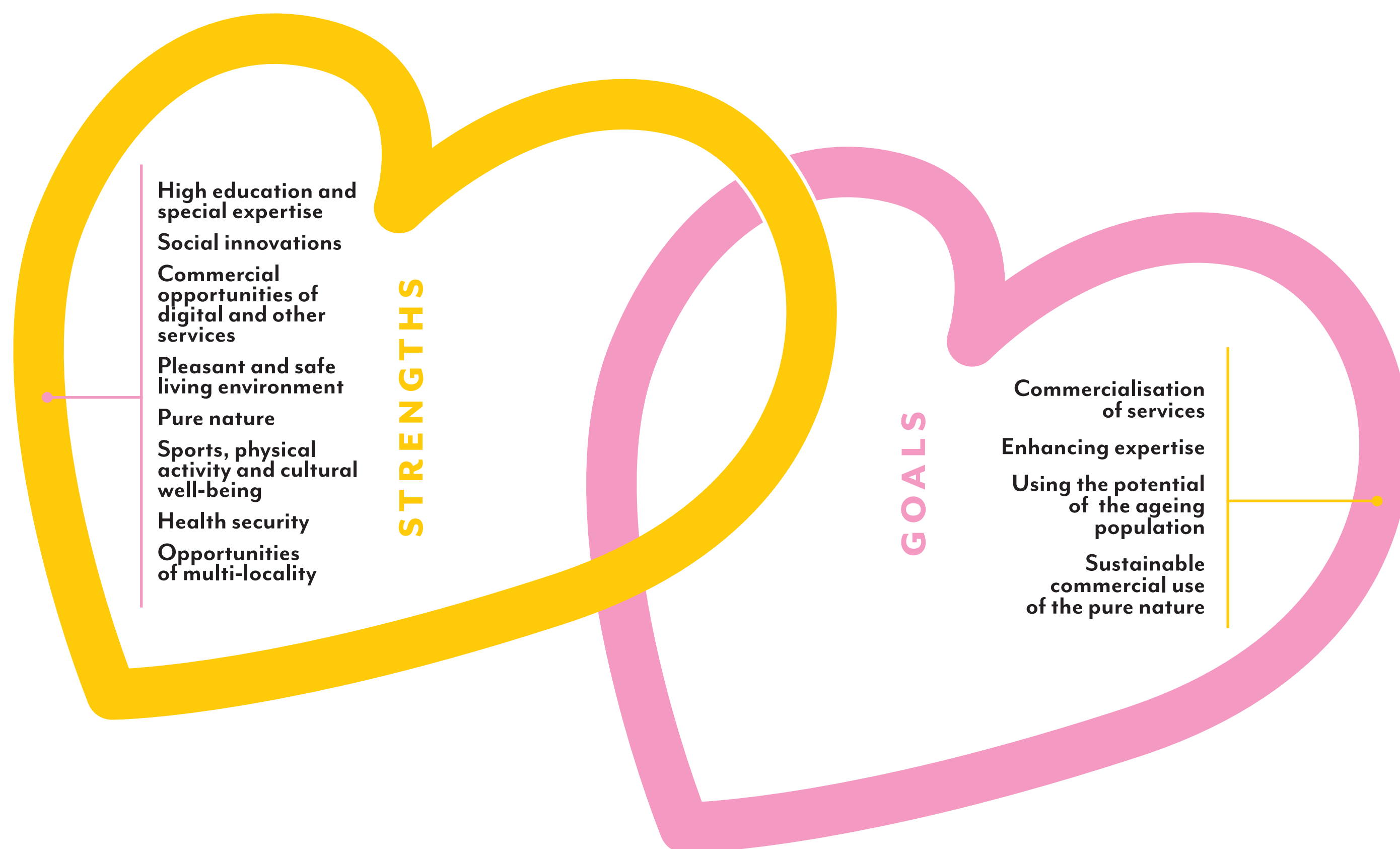
“The well-being of people living in South Savo is based on the safe and pure living environment and new ways of providing wellness services.

Well-being comes also from culture, physical exercise and social activities. Sustainable growth builds good life.”

**Eveliina Pekkanen**

Manager, Regional Development,  
Culture and Wellbeing  
South Savo Regional Council





# Well-being

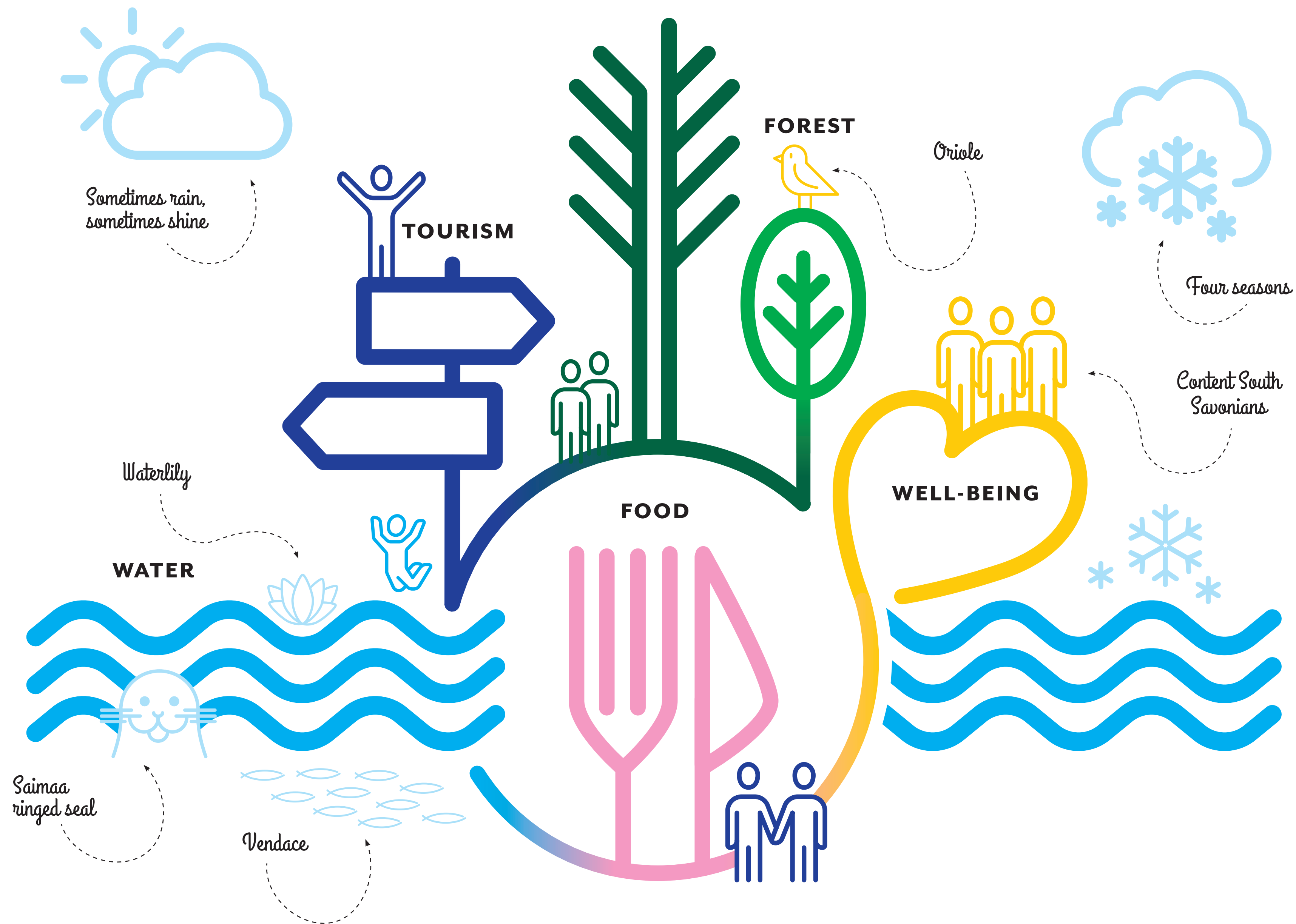
Well-being goes tightly hand in hand with the other strengths of South Savo: forest, food, water, and tourism.

The pure nature, safe environment and strong health education and research expertise are the cornerstones of well-being. The social and health sector is the biggest employer in South Savo.

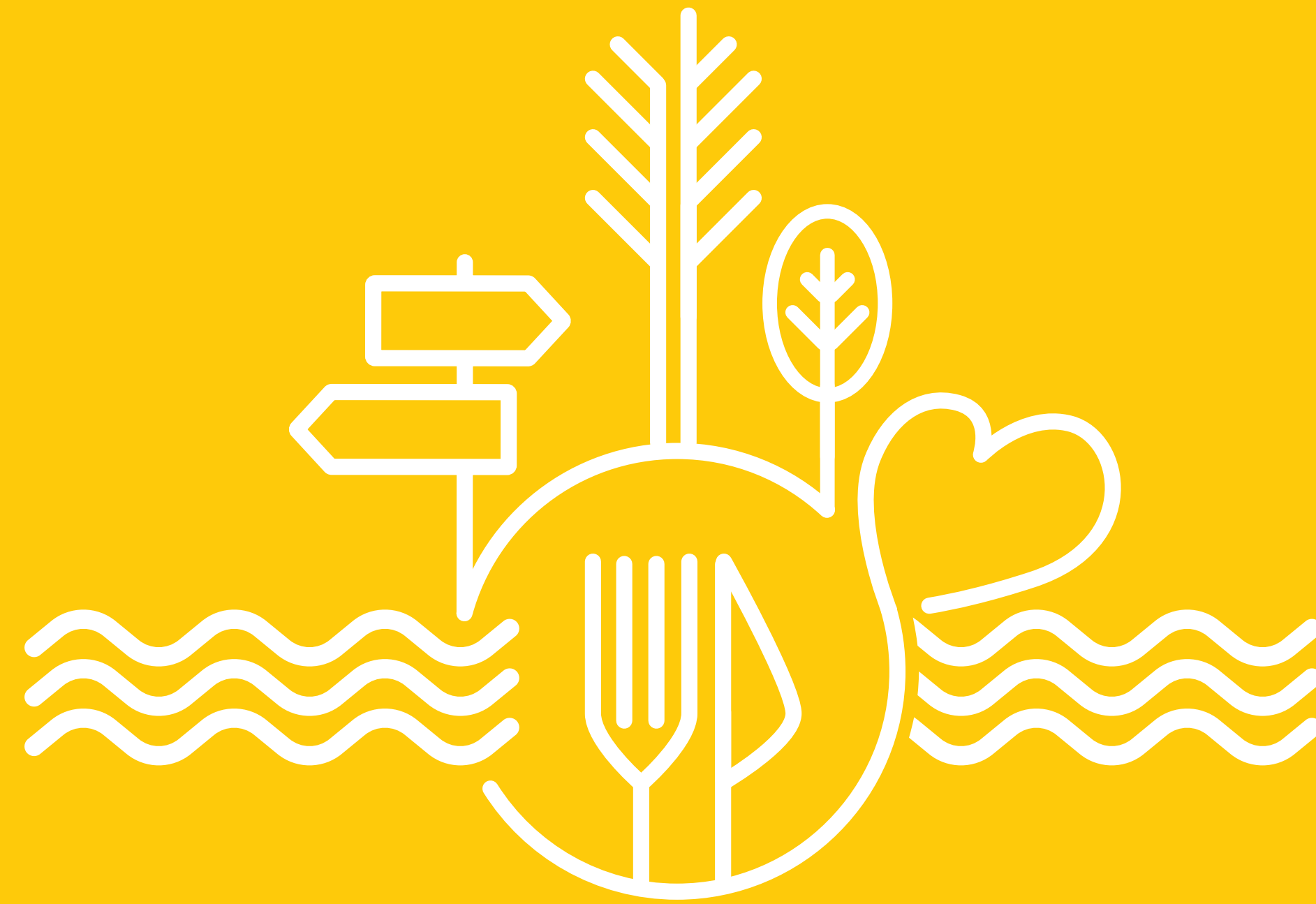
In addition to the special expertise in the health sector, also multi-local living, the ageing population, pure nature, and the related services create new opportunities in the future.



# THIS IS SMART SOUTH SAVO







## SMART SPECIALISATION STRATEGY OF SOUTH SAVO

The material was produced by the Building Clusters, Ecosystem Collaboration and RIS3 Communication in South Savo project.