



Country Fiche

Norway

Updated January 2015

1. General information on marine areas under Norwegian jurisdiction

(following the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS)

Norway has established three zones of 200 nautical miles: an exclusive economic zone around the Norwegian mainland (EEZ), a fishery protection zone around Svalbard, and a fishery zone around the Jan Mayen island. All three zones were created pursuant to the Act of 17 December 1976 relating to the economic zone of Norway (“The Zone Act”).

1.1. Governance of Norwegian waters

The Norwegian [Ministry of Climate and Environment](#) has the main responsibility for ensuring integrated governmental climate and environmental policies. This ministry, and the underlying [Environment Agency](#), has the main responsibility for the management plans for Norwegian waters, see below.

The [Ministry of Transport and Communications](#) has the overall responsibility for, among other areas, “coastal management, the marine environment and port and sea transport policy” in Norwegian waters.

The [Norwegian Coastal Administration](#), an agency under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, has as its main objective to ensure safe and efficient navigation in the fairways along the coast and into ports, as well as national preparedness for acute pollution. They have a GIS/mapping service (only partly in English)

<http://kart.kystverket.no/default.aspx?gui=1&lang=1>

Fisheries.no, an official web site provided by the [Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries](#), includes information on MSP:

http://www.fisheries.no/resource_management/Area_management/

1.2. Contacts

MSP in general: The Norwegian [Ministry of Climate and Environment](#)
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2. General information on legislation

There is limited legislative authority behind Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Norwegian EEZ in form of the integrated ecosystem-based management plans for the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea, and the North Sea.

The most important legal tool for integrated coastal zone planning in Norway, which includes sea areas out to the baseline (i.e., a straight line between the outer islets and reefs), 90 000 km² of sea, is the Act relating to Planning and the Processing of Building Applications ([Planning and Building Act](#), 2008). The purpose of the act is to bring about uniform planning for national-, county- and municipal activities. The municipalities (there are 428 in total) have the main responsibility for coastal zone planning.

3. General applicability (e.g. territorial Sea, EEZ, other distinctions)

The integrated ecosystem-based management plans apply to the parts of the Barents, Norwegian, and North Seas that lie within the Norwegian EEZ, not including the coastal zone, which may be covered by local and regional plans.

4. Maritime spatial planning

4.1. Integrated ecosystem-based management plans for Norwegian EEZ

4.1.1. Legal basis

There is limited legislative authority behind Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Norwegian waters. Each sector (in particular shipping, fisheries and aquaculture, petroleum and energy) is managed separately through specific legislations and dedicated ministries.

The *Act relating to the management of wild living marine resources* ([Marine Resources Act, 2008](#)) has been designed with this in mind and addresses, e.g., MPAs. Chapter 1, Section 1 of this act states: "The purpose of this Act is to ensure sustainable and economically profitable management of wild living marine resources and genetic material derived from them, and to promote employment and settlement in coastal communities." Ch. 4, Sec. 19 states that: "The King may establish marine protected areas where harvesting and other forms of use of wild living marine resources is prohibited. Exemptions may be granted for harvesting activities and other forms of use that will not be in conflict with the purpose of protecting the area".

Further, MSP is anchored in government reports to the parliament and in government declarations. Also, a number of area-based management tools are in place, with a basis in various legislations (e.g. provisions on MPAs in the Nature Diversity Act, fisheries closures based on the Marine Resources Act and routing measures/shipping regulations).

4.1.2. Legal impact

There is limited legislative authority behind MSP in Norwegian waters.

4.1.3. Area covered

The integrated ecosystem-based management plans apply to the parts of the Barents, Norwegian, and North Seas that lie within the Norwegian EEZ, not including the coastal zone.

- Total (Norwegian continental shelf): 2 039 951 km²
- Marine internal waters: 89 091 km²
- Territorial sea (12-nm zone): 145 458 km²
- Exclusive Economic Zone: 787 640 km²

4.1.4. Historical development

The foundation for integrated, ecosystem-based management of Norwegian coastal and marine areas was laid in the coming to power declaration to the parliament of the government elected in September 2001, followed by a more in-depth government white paper in 2002 («Protecting the riches of the sea»). The first Norwegian integrated management plan for a large marine area covers the the Norwegian part of the Barents Sea and the sea areas off Lofoten. It was developed in 2002–2006 adopted by the Norwegian Parliament in 2006. A similar plan for the Norwegian Sea was adopted in 2009 and a plan for the Norwegian part of the North Sea and Skagerrak was adopted in 2013. Each of the plans are to be updated at regular intervals, the Barents Sea-Lofoten plan was fully revised in 2010, a revision of the Norwegian Sea plan is close to being finalized.

4.1.5. Objectives of the plan

The main goal of the plan is to allow for sustainable use while ensuring the health of the ecosystem. The latter part of the goal is the basis for environmental protection. Coordination across sectors is sought through the establishment of regional integrated management plans. The management plans set an overall framework for both existing and new activities in these waters, and facilitates the co-existence of different industries, particularly the fisheries industry, maritime transport and petroleum industry. The aim of the plan is to establish a holistic and ecosystem-based management of the activities in the seas around Norway. Thus, the ideal goal is that marine spatial planning is not carried out as a separate process, but as a tool with an ecosystem-based, integrated approach to the management of marine areas.

4.1.6. Map

Integrated ecosystem-based management plans for the Norwegian EEZ (Figure 1)

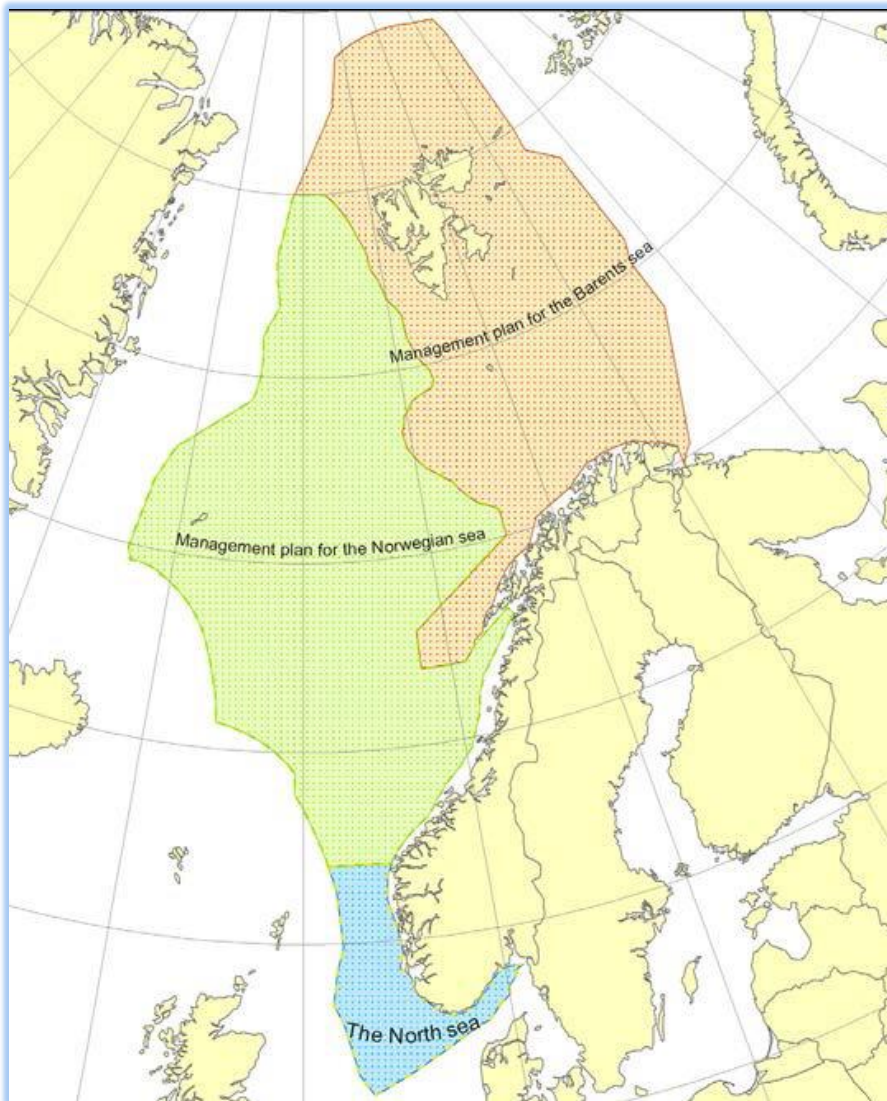


Fig. 1. The areas covered by the three integrated ecosystem-based management plans. The parts of the Barents, Norwegian and North Seas within the Norwegian EEZ.

4.1.7. Designation

To allow for sustainable use while ensuring the health of the ecosystem. Spatial designations have been made by the identification of areas which have been designated as Valuable and Vulnerable based on their biodiversity or biological production (e.g. spawning areas or breeding sites). These areas are subject to special considerations, e.g. when it comes to restrictions on petroleum activity, shipping lanes etc.

4.1.8. Regulations

The management plans are mainly strategic and advisory, not regulatory, and it to a large degree remains to be seen how much they actually influence the management of the seas around Norway. Each sector (in particular shipping, fisheries and aquaculture, petroleum and energy) is managed separately through specific legislations and dedicated ministries.

The plans have contributed, via the Norwegian Coastal Administration and IMO, to changes in the routing system for all non-domestic voyages of tankers and larger ships. Their routes are now to be further from the coast, reducing risk of accidents and environmental consequences of accidents.

4.1.9. Adoption

The plans have been adopted and enacted by the Norwegian parliament.

4.1.10. SEA

The SEA instrument was not used, but extensive sectorwise EIAs were carried out. The EIAs covered the impacts of fisheries, petroleum related activities and maritime transport, which were the sectors deemed most likely to affect the state of the environment. In addition, the impacts of external pressures such as climate change, long-range transboundary pollution, ocean acidification, emissions from activities in the coastal zone, and the introduction of alien species were assessed. Each EIA described and discussed the relation between the activities within the sector and external pressures. Impacts were assessed in relation to the current situation and for scenarios for projected levels of activity in the different sectors in 2020/2025.

4.1.11. Public participation

Figure 2 illustrates the process behind the development of the integrated ecosystem-based management plan for the Norwegian Sea; it was similar but not identical for the Barents and North Seas. Note that consultations with stakeholders took place at three different stages. The stakeholders responding covered a wide range, including local and regional elected authorities, organizations representing sectorial interests at the local, regional and national level, NGOs and concerned citizens.

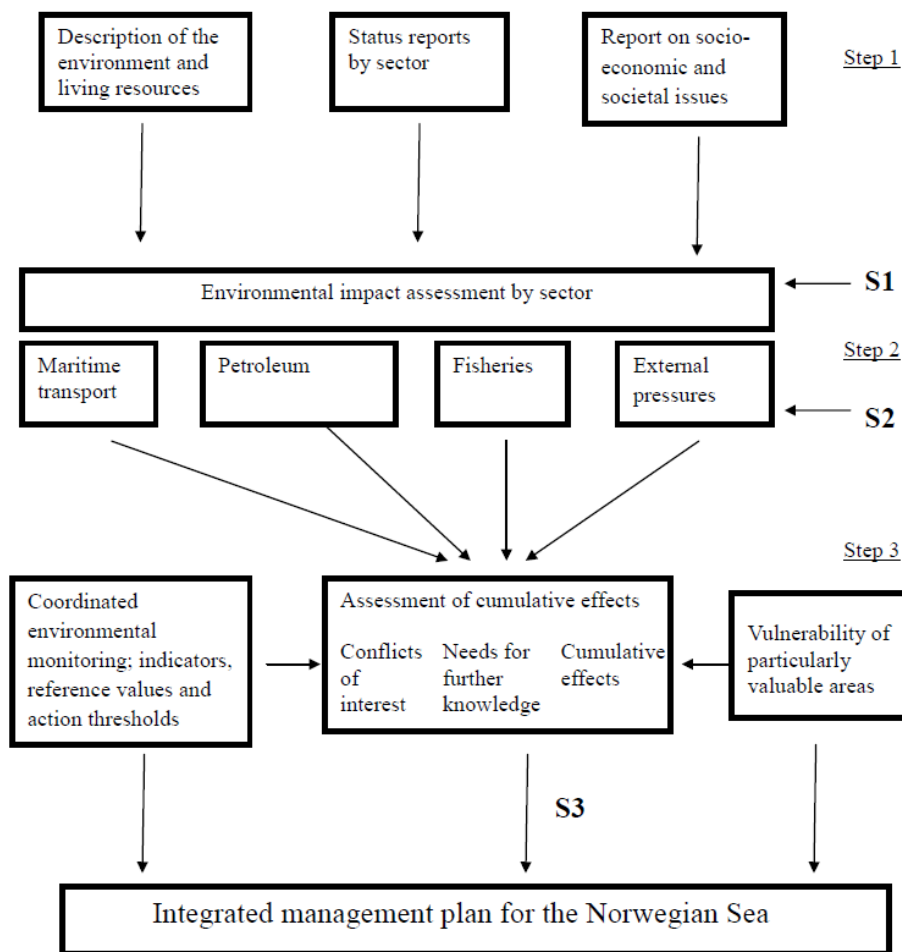


Fig. 2. The process behind the integrated ecosystem based management plan for the Norwegian Sea. S1: written feedback from stakeholders on plan for Environmental impact assessments (EIAs), 2: written feedback from stakeholders on EIAs, S3: stakeholder hearing conference on Assessment of cumulative effects.

4.1.12. Transboundary consultation

No formal transboundary consultations have been conducted.

4.1.13. Harmonisation with other plans

The plans build upon sectorial plans and plans for nature protection.

4.1.14. Monitoring

Designated groups, representing the governmental agencies and research institutes involved in developing the plans, undertake continuous monitoring of the implementation of the plans. Annual reports of ecosystem status, human use and level of knowledge are provided, based mainly on an indicator reporting system. Work has been done towards assessment of environmental risk.

4.1.15. Electronic resources

The original management plan for the Barents Sea–Lofoten area (2006):

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/md/documents-and-publications/government-propositions-and-reports-/reports-to-the-storting-white-papers-2/20052006/Report-No-8-to-the-Storting-20052006.html?id=456957>

The updated management plan for the Norwegian part of the Barents Sea-Lofoten area (2011):

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/md/documents-and-publications/government-propositions-and-reports-/reports-to-the-storting-white-papers-2/2010-2011/meld-st-10-20102011.html?id=682050>

The management plan for the Norwegian Sea (2009):

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/md/documents-and-publications/government-propositions-and-reports-/reports-to-the-storting-white-papers-2/2008-2009/report-no-37-2008-2009-to-the-storting.html?id=577875>

The management plan for the North Sea and Skagerrak (2013):

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-37-2012-2013/id724746/?docId=STM201220130037000ENGEPIS&ch=1&q=north%20sea%20management%20plan&redir=true®j_oss=10&ref=search&term=north%20sea%20management%20plan

4.2 Coastal Zone planning according to the Planning and Building Act

The coastal zone within one nautical mile from the coastal base line is covered by the Planning and Building Act of 2008. The regional and local authorities (counties and municipalities) have the main responsibility for planning in these areas. The Norwegian Ministry of Local government and Modernisation is national planning authority according to this act.

Counties are responsible for preparing regional plans and regional planning provisions, and have the opportunity to prepare regional coastal plans. From 1 January 2010, the counties also have the regional responsibility for aquaculture and aquaculture interests.

The Planning and Building Act of 27 June 2008, is the central law to control land use along the coast in Norway. Planning and Building Act includes land and coastal and sea area up to one nautical mil beyond the baseline, but does not include oil pipelines in the sea or facilities for transmission / conversion of electrical energy. Ministry administers the planning part of the Planning and Building Act. Legislation provides for a system of comprehensive planning for state, county and municipal activity. Planning and Building Act regulations on environmental impact assessment includes both projects and plans, including marinas, fishing ports, aquaculture facilities and the establishment of fairways, ports and harbors.

Counties are responsible for preparing regional plans and regional planning provisions, and have the opportunity to prepare regional coastal plans. From 1 January 2010, the counties also the regional responsibility for aquaculture and aquaculture interests.

Land use in the coastal zone is regulated primarily through municipal planning under the Planning and Building Act. Through municipal plans and zoning may contain provisions relating to aquaculture facilities, for traffic on the lake, use and protection of water surface, water column and bottom and permission necessary buildings and smaller plants related to aquaculture, fishing, trapping and traffic at sea within the building restriction zone along the waterfront. Planning and Building Act also allows municipalities to plan their sea areas out to one nautical mil beyond the baseline and to pave the way for a coordinated coastal planning between municipalities and regional authorities in the various regions throughout including intermunicipal coastal plans. Fisheries conducts an annual survey of the status of coastal municipalities work with coastal planning.

4.3 Water management plans according to EU-directives

In pursuance of the Water Regulations Norway have been divided into 11 water regions, each region headed by a river basin authority which is one of the affected counties in the region. It has been prepared water management plans for 20 percent of rivers and coastal waters in Norway in 2010. Plans will be completed during 2015 the rest of the country, with environmental achievement in 2021. The plans must be reviewed every six years.

5. What countries want to share

N/A

6. New developments / current status

A full revision of the plan for the Barents Sea was published in 2011. The intent is that all plans should be updated on a regular basis.