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Background

The first Maritime Spatial Plan for Finland 2030 will be finalized by November 2020. The Finnish maritime spatial plan proposal was prepared after going over statements and general feedback given on its initial draft between 17 May and 18 June 2020. The regional assemblies of the coastal regional councils will approve the final maritime spatial plan in November–December 2020.

The maritime spatial plan proposal was prepared in three parts. The eight coastal regional councils are responsible for drafting and adopting the plans for the three planning areas; *Gulf of Finland*, *Archipelago Sea and southern Bothnian Sea* and *Archipelago Sea and southern part of Bothnian Sea*. The national responsible authority for the maritime spatial plan is the Ministry of the Environment, which is in charge for the development and steering of maritime spatial planning, and for international cooperation with neighbouring countries.

Maritime spatial plan in Finland cover territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone from the coastline. The planning solutions were made in comprehensive and wide-ranging collaboration with stakeholders along the entire coast, and they take into consideration the special characteristics of each area.

In Finland, the maritime spatial plan is a strategic development document for blue economy operations that fosters the good status of the marine environment. Map markings are used to show the values of marine areas, and the future potentials of existing and possible new operations and their alternative placement in all of Finland's maritime areas.

Plan is available only in a digital form. One can get acquainted with Finland's first maritime spatial plan proposal at www.merialuesuunnitelma.fi (in Finnish, Swedish and English).

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the presentation.

Maritime Spatial Plan for Finland 2030 proposal

The digital Maritime Spatial Plan for Finland 2030 proposal consists of five parts.

1) Maritime Spatial Planning procedures such as legislative framework, application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP and Monitoring & Evaluation framework.

The purpose of maritime spatial planning is to promote the sustainable development and growth of different uses of the marine area, the sustainable use of natural resources, and the achievement of a good status of the marine environment.

When applying the ecosystem approach, maritime spatial planning is based on goals related to the status of the marine environment. Planning solutions support environmental goals set by EU and national legislation and international agreements by available means of planning. The concrete steps are described in [Application of the Ecosystem-based approach in Finnish MSP](#) report.

It was noted that a good and effective maritime spatial plan cannot be prepared without examining the activities between the coastal area and the marine environment. During the vision work phase *land–sea interaction* was discussed with maritime stakeholders, and in terms of mainland-based activities, such as industry, communities, agriculture and forestry, the direct and indirect impacts on marine areas were made visible.

To support monitoring and evaluation, the starting points, goals and measures of maritime spatial planning have been examined, and the related monitoring indicators and their responsible parties have been determined. The quality criteria of the EU MSP Platform have been taken into account in terms of indicators. For more information, one can consult the report on the [Monitoring and evaluation model for maritime spatial planning](#). The effectiveness and the achievement of the goals of the maritime spatial plan for Finland 2030 will be examined during the second planning round.

The maritime spatial planning process (2017-2020) has been divided into five phases: the start-up phase, the definition and data collection phase, the planning phase, the approval phase and the reporting phase. Special consideration was put on collaboration process with marine stakeholders. The future scenarios, visions, and roadmaps were prepared in cooperation with stakeholders in various national and regional-level workshops and thematic face-to-face meetings. The process was fostered by maritime spatial planning cooperation network (open to anyone), regular newsletters, interaction plan, and the use of social media channels.

2) Potential and alternative scenarios for the future of marine areas up to 2050

When the situational pictures had been created in 2018, the actual planning phase began in spring 2019 with the *Scenario work* with more than 350 participants of maritime stakeholders. [Scenarios for maritime areas 2050](#) report assessed potential scenarios for blue economy sectors and their impacts on the status of the marine environment. As a result of the scenario review, three alternative scenarios were created for the Baltic Sea to serve as a basis for setting the target state, as well as preparedness plans to support sustainable growth in marine areas.

3) Visions for the sustainable use of marine areas 2050, and sector-specific visions and roadmaps up to 2030

After the scenario review, the planning phase continued as *Vision work* in the autumn of 2019. During an interactive stakeholder cooperation period with almost 400 participants, a national sustainable use vision for 2050 was prepared for marine areas, as well as planning area-specific development visions and sector-specific roadmaps for 2030. National and regional sector-specific thematic meetings were held to support interaction, with a total attendance of 120 people.

During the Vision phase six *Future Stories for Marine Sectors* were prepared. One can get familiar with these [videos](#) (in Finnish with Swedish and English subtitles).

4) Plan proposal on the map together with the marking card library and planning solutions

The Maritime Spatial Plan for Finland 2030 proposal looks to the future and describes the target status for 2030. The plan identifies in general terms the areas' opportunities for multipurpose use and supports the harmonization of maritime operations. By its nature, the plan opens up opportunities rather than excluding them.

The maritime spatial plan identifies the needs of the marine environment and the wellbeing of maritime actors equally, without placing them in an order of importance. The sectors examined have different societal and community values, which the plan seeks to foster.

The planning solutions are based on the best available information, such as surveys, studies, modellings, expert assessments, and regional characteristics. The reports on the characteristics of the three planning areas served as the starting point for planning solutions.

The marking card library is an integral part of the [mapped plan](#). The library provides a general label for the map markings, a description of each marking, the planning principles, the characteristics and priorities in the planning areas, the interaction between the land and the sea, and the principles, surveys and studies.

5) Impact Assessment

The plan is not legally binding and does not form part of the land use planning system or land use plan hierarchy. However, the plan has indirect steering impacts - as a tool for spatial planning it supports regional land use planning and regional development by producing information about the opportunities and framework conditions of maritime industries and the marine environment. The evaluation of its indirect effects and its impact has been part of the planning process. [Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan](#) is available for further examination.

The impact of the plan arises by virtue of the planning process, in other words through the common understanding reached by the stakeholder groups, as well as through the commitment to the plan and the ownership experienced regarding it. The impact of the maritime spatial plan also arises from its link with national, regional and sectoral policy guidelines and strategies, and regional programmes and their realisation, and from supporting the goals of regional land use planning, regional development projects and natural resource plans and other maritime management plans.