

FEEDBACK ON THE MARITIME SPATIAL PLAN AND ITS CONSIDERATION

Finland's national draft Maritime Spatial Plan 2030, covering its territorial waters and exclusive economic zone, was completed on 18 May 2020 in keeping with the Land Use and Building Act (132/1999). The draft plan was drawn up by coastal Regional Councils and includes the following three parts:

1. Gulf of Finland: Regional Council of Kymenlaakso and Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council;
2. Archipelago Sea and southern Bothnian Sea: Regional Council of Southwest Finland and Regional Council of Satakunta;
3. Northern Bothnian Sea, Quark and Bothnian Bay: Regional Council of Ostrobothnia, Regional Council of Central Ostrobothnia, Council of Oulu Region and Regional Council of Lapland.

The board of each coastal Regional Council decided to request statements from public authorities and bodies involved in sectors or duties materially relevant to the plan and to present the draft for public consultation in accordance with Land Use and Building Act section 67 c.

The draft Maritime Spatial Plan and its key preparatory materials were on display online at merialuesuunnitelma.fi between 18 May and 17 June 2020. The materials were available in Finnish and Swedish and, in essential respects, in English.

The draft Maritime Spatial Plan was only provided in a digital format, but the draft plan map, the draft plan's zones and markings, a report entitled *Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan* and many background reports were also available as printable PDF versions.

Statements and opinions were requested on the vision development work, the draft plan and the impact assessments of the area-specific maritime spatial plans. The reports on planning area characteristics and their summary story maps and the scenario development work had already been made available for public consultation between 10 April and 10 May 2019.

The public authorities and bodies that received requests for statement submitted their statements using an online form accessible through a link provided in the request. Requests were sent to a total of 360 recipients and 87 statements were received.

Opinions on all planning areas were submitted during the presentation period using a feedback form available in the *Draft plans* section of the digital plan and as part of the draft plan map. A total of 54 general feedback responses were received.

This document shines the spotlight on feedback received on the draft Maritime Spatial Plan and its consideration as part of finalising the proposal for the *Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030*. The plan proposals are due to be adopted by the assemblies of the coastal Regional Councils in November and December 2020. The Ministry of the Environment will report on the final plan to the European Union in March 2021.

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1. Statements

Requests for statement were sent on 15 May 2020 to a total of 360 recipients, including 10 ministries, 11 Regional Councils, 150 local authorities (incl. 61 coastal municipalities), 15 Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres), 46 government agencies and research institutes, and 128 other bodies.

Within the consultation period, a total of 87 statements were received from 4 ministries, 25 coastal municipalities, 7 ELY Centres (from 5 different ELY Centres), 18 government agencies and research institutes, and 33 other bodies (see Figure 1). Counting only coastal municipalities, statements were received from a total of 31% of recipients of requests for statement. Figure 1 shows a more detailed breakdown of bodies that submitted statements as a percentage of all recipients of requests for statement.

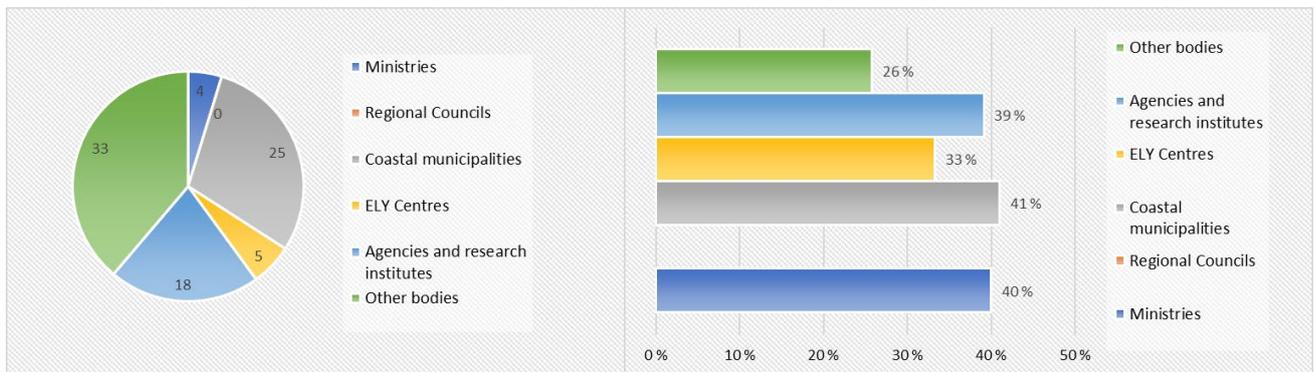


Figure 1. Number of bodies that submitted statements on the left and their percentage shares of all request recipients on the right. Of local authorities, only coastal municipalities were included in this analysis.

Ten of the statements received did not give rise to further measures, as they were essentially statements of the existing situation.

A total of 77 statements were considered as part of finalising the draft plan. These statements included proposals for supplementing or amending the draft plan. Among the statements:

- 52 concerned the entire draft plan in general;
- 33 focused on the Gulf of Finland planning area;
- 31 focused on the planning area comprising the Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea;
- 32 focused on the planning area comprising the northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay;
- 32 concerned vision development and sectoral roadmaps; and
- 32 addressed the impact assessments of the maritime spatial plans.

The statements included proposals for supplementing and amending the plan with regard to different themes as shown in Figure 2. The classification matches the map markings used in the draft maritime spatial plan. In this classification, the map marking for significant underwater natural values is extended to cover all types of feedback on the marine environment and its protection.

In addition to the sectoral classification shown in Figure 2, the statements received included:

- 19 on land–sea interactions;
- 3 on the ecosystem approach; and
- 7 on climate change.

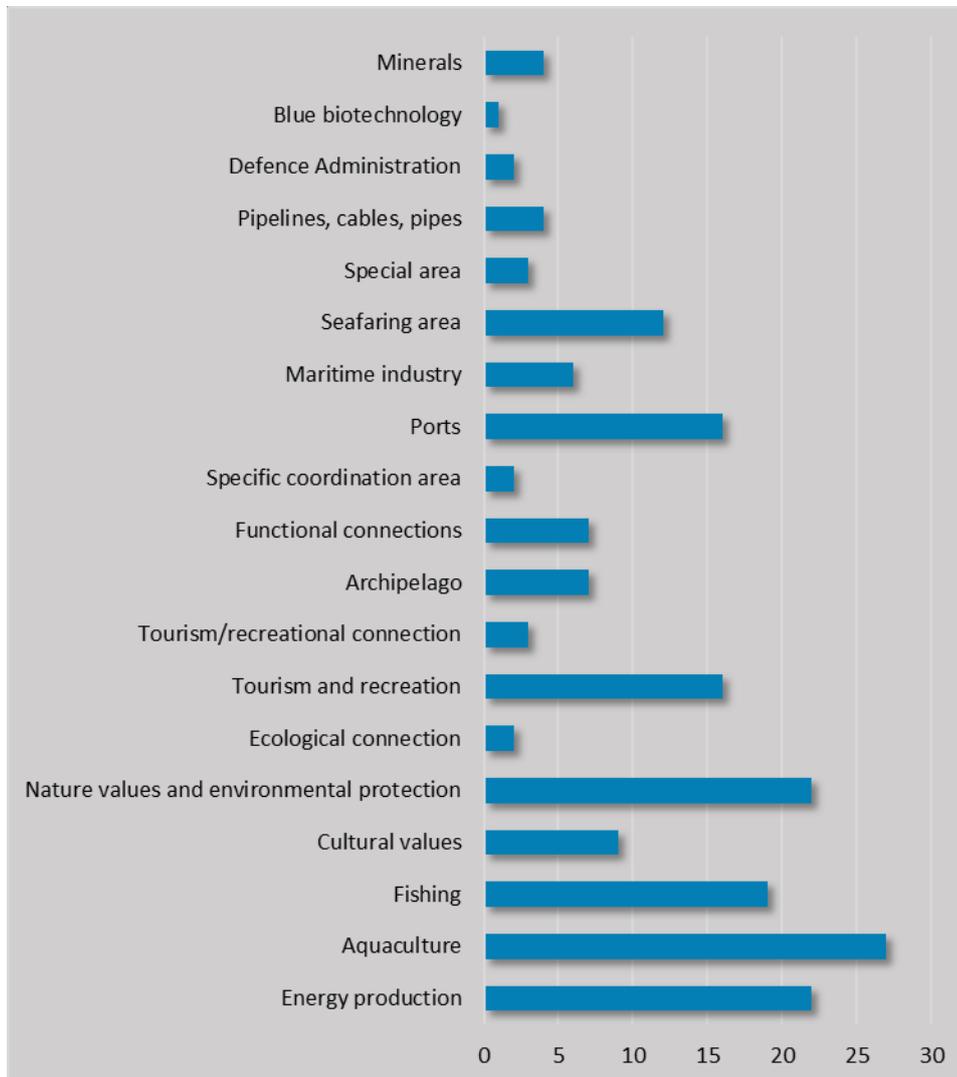


Figure 2. Proposals put forward in statements for supplementing and amending the plan with regard to different themes. The classification matches the map markings used in the draft maritime spatial plan. 'Nature values and environmental protection' covers the map marking for *significant underwater natural values*.

Consideration of the statements as part of finalising the Maritime Spatial Plan is discussed in Chapter 4.

As a public consultation on the scenario development work and the reports on planning area characteristics and their summary story maps had been organised earlier between 10 April and 10 May 2019, statements concerning these were not considered during this second consultation. It should be noted, however, that the *Draft plans* section of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 includes a situational picture for each planning area, which summarises the contents of the characteristics report. These situational pictures have now been amended and supplemented on the basis of the statements received.

2. General feedback

The draft Maritime Spatial Plan was presented for public consultation over the period from 18 May to 17 June 2020. The opportunity to submit opinions on the draft plan was communicated via the following channels:

- media releases by the coastal Regional Councils and the Ministry of the Environment on 18 May 2020;
- a media briefing held on 18 May 2020;
- on the front page of the maritime spatial planning website (www.merialuesuunnittelu.fi) under 'News' on 14 April and 18 May 2020;
- in Newsletters 1/2020 and 2/2020 sent on 22 April 2020 and 4 June 2020, respectively, to the network of partners totalling about 380 individuals;
- on social media channels on Facebook and Twitter on 19 May 2020 and in several posts between 16 April and 7 May;
- in a national stakeholder webinar on 20 May 2020.

In all, 54 feedback responses were received during the consultation period, including:

- 17 concerning the entire draft plan in general;
- 14 focused on the Gulf of Finland planning area;
- 13 focused on the planning area comprising the Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea;
- 29 focused on the planning area comprising the northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay;
- 19 concerning vision development and sectoral roadmaps; and
- 12 addressing the impact assessments of the maritime spatial plans.

General feedback contained proposals for supplementing and amending the plan with regard to different themes. While most of the feedback concerned offshore wind (24 responses) and fish farming (18), some responses also addressed fishing (7), tourism and recreation (6), and nature values and marine environmental protection (5). Other themes were mentioned in individual responses. The feedback also raised the issues of taking account of climate change and land–sea interactions.

All of the general feedback responses were such that they were considered as part of finalising the draft plan. Consideration of feedback as part of finalising the Maritime Spatial Plan is discussed in Chapter 4.

As a public consultation on the scenario development work and the reports on planning area characteristics and their summary story maps had been organised earlier between 10 April and 10 May 2019, feedback concerning these were not considered during this second consultation. It should be noted, however, that the *Draft plans* section of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 includes a situational picture for each planning area, which summarises the contents of the characteristics report. These situational pictures have now been amended and supplemented on the basis of the feedback received.

3. International feedback and its consideration

The draft Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 and its key preparatory materials were on display for international consultation online at merialuesuunnitelma.fi between 18 May and 17 June 2020. The materials were available in Finnish and Swedish and, where relevant, in English. The draft plan was presented at an international information and consultation event on 20 May 2020.

Feedback was received from Sweden, Denmark and Estonia. Sweden submitted remarks on contents and sectors, while Denmark and Estonia commented on the draft plan in general. Remarks from the Åland Islands were discussed in the coordination group, in which the region has representation. Discussions with the Åland Islands focused specifically on coordinating seafaring areas on the plan maps of Mainland Finland and the Åland Islands. In their statements, the neighbouring countries noted that there were no significant conflicts between the national plans. The outer boundaries of the exclusive economic zone defined in the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan were found to have some inaccuracies, which were subsequently corrected in the plan proposal. The plan received positive feedback on its comprehensive and strategic approach and digital presentation format. The solution to divide the sea area into planning zones and link the planning solutions to these was considered excellent.

A statement submitted by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management compiles and considers statements from other Swedish authorities, which were also provided separately. These raised considerations relating to transport, wind power, fishing areas, aquaculture, nature and impact assessment and the question of the nature and role of the Maritime Spatial Plan relative to other types of spatial planning. This chapter aims to briefly address these questions from an international perspective. National feedback is discussed in Chapter 4 of this feedback summary, which addresses these questions in more detail.

The feedback identified a potential need to have discussions on coordination and conflict minimisation with regard to various activities in the vicinity of national borders, such as potential or linear functions in energy production areas in terms of seafaring areas and pipes and cables, etc. This should be welcomed as a good proposal. Finland is happy to cooperate with a view to coordinating maritime spatial plans. Realisation of the potential areas for energy production now put forward in the Maritime Spatial Plan will always require even more precise planning, including relevant impact assessments. The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan only includes existing pipes and cables. Finland considers it important to cooperate with neighbouring countries and with the broader international community when electricity transmission networks are planned as part of maritime spatial planning. The Baltic Sea countries are further improving coherence between their maritime spatial plans, including cross-border linear connections. Improving coherence will contribute to coordinating the maritime spatial plans moving forward and when the plans are due for review within a few years.

Sweden pointed out that Finland's plan does not indicate any potential fishing areas where Swedish fishers tend to fish. Nor does it designate any potential areas to other sectors that would compete with fishing.

As for aquaculture, the Swedish statement notes that aquaculture should not compromise marine ecosystems or achievement of good marine environmental status. The Maritime Spatial Plan aims to reconcile the objectives of blue growth and good marine environmental status. The planning solution designating a potential aquaculture site points out that it is important to determine the most suitable areas when developing aquaculture, taking account of marine environmental status and nature values. Based on

the feedback received on aquaculture, some revisions were made to the plan, which are discussed in further detail in Chapter 4 of this feedback summary.

There were calls for including existing nature conservation, Natura 2000 and other such areas in the Maritime Spatial Plan to provide a broad overview. The plan mostly presents new potential sites for different activities. Existing protected and other such areas are presented in its background data, including the Quark's UNESCO World Heritage Site. Sweden's statement pointed out that it would be important to safeguard ecological conditions for fish across the Baltic Sea while strengthening cooperation in small-scale fishing. The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan presents ecologically significant marine underwater areas ('EMMA areas') for biodiversity. These are considered to have potential for protecting ecological diversity and fish spawning areas and migratory pathways.

Sweden's statement drew attention to the impact assessment of the Maritime Spatial Plan. The EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive has been transposed into national law such that maritime spatial plans will not set the framework for implementing projects. Consequently, the plans do not fall within the scope of application of the EU SEA Directive and the UN SEA Protocol. As a result, neither the environmental impact assessment procedure, nor the transboundary consultation under the SEA Directive and the SEA Protocol are applicable to Finland's maritime spatial plans.

Nevertheless, Finland's EIA legislation includes another type of requirement concerning environmental impact assessments, which is in line with the SEA Directive and the SEA Protocol. This requirement is a general obligation to study the environmental impacts of plans and programmes that are not included in the scope of application of SEA Protocol Article 4 and EIA Directive Article 3 but may likely have significant environmental impacts. This obligation is more generic and does not include more specific requirements. The environmental impact assessments of Finnish maritime spatial plans have been carried out accordingly. In other words, environmental impacts have been assessed at a generic level as required by the generic and strategic nature of the maritime spatial plans. The environmental impact assessment report is included as part of the digital Maritime Spatial Plan.

The [Maritime spatial planning](#) section of the digital plan provides a more detailed description of the nature and role of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan in relation to the spatial planning system and other types of planning.

Finland warmly welcomes Sweden's proposal to continue and improve maritime spatial planning cooperation and dialogue among the neighbouring countries with a view to developing the sea area. Likewise, the exchange of information and cooperation in terms of data and methods as well as cooperation in concrete planning and project development issues proposed by Sweden are to be welcomed.

4. Consideration of statements and general feedback

4.1 Nature and purpose of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan

The draft Maritime Spatial Plan was only provided in a digital format, but the draft plan map, the draft plan's zones and markings, a report entitled Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan and many background reports were also available as printable PDF versions. The digital draft plan consisted of five parts, and consultation on them involved parts 3, 4 and 5.

- 1) *Maritime spatial planning section* including e.g. legislative framework, application of ecosystem-based approach in MSP, used terms in planning and description of the planning process. This part of the digital plan was not available during the public consultation period.
- 2) *Scenarios*; Potential and alternative scenarios for the future of marine areas up to 2050.
- 3) *Vision* for the sustainable use of marine areas up to 2050, and sector-specific visions and roadmaps up to 2030.
- 4) *Draft maritime spatial plan* including situational picture, development vision, draft plan map together with the marking card library, planning solutions and impact assessment for each planning area.
- 5) *Assessment of the indirect impacts* of the maritime spatial plan as regards maritime sectors and planning areas.

Generally speaking, the digital plan was well received, and it was given a great deal of positive acknowledgment for its illustrative approach. Moreover, this digital planning made it possible to exemplify the linking of the various parts and the often-complex connections of a variety of factors. On the other hand, there was criticism of the fact that it was challenging to become familiar with the plan due to its overwhelming content and multiple paths.

The statements and general feedback responses received on the plan raised several reflections and requests for clarification concerning its nature and purpose. Any misunderstandings have been taken into account as part of finalising the *Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030* proposal while also clarifying the plan's nature and purpose in its written and cartographic sections.

The nature of the plan is described in the section entitled [Draft Maritime Spatial Plan 2030](#) under the *Draft plans* section of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 as follows:

A maritime spatial plan is a strategic development document for blue economy operations that fosters the good status of the marine environment and is shown on a map. Markings are used to show by the values of marine areas, and the future potentials of existing and possible new operations and their alternative placement in all of Finland's marine areas. The plan is not legally binding but evaluation of its indirect effects and its impact is part of the planning process.

The Maritime Spatial Plan is a new spatial planning tool, but it is not included in the spatial planning system or the plan hierarchy. The plan has no legal effect, nor does it have a binding effect on permit and other procedures based on other legislation.

Maritime spatial planning examines the sea comprehensively, mainly focusing on collecting and sharing information and holding discussions with stakeholders. The plan's effectiveness is based on increased knowledge about the marine area, as well as on cooperation between the authorities and other parties and their possible commitment to consider the plans in their own operations. Its effectiveness stems from its linkage to national, regional and sectoral policies and strategies, as well as from its support for achieving the objectives of regional development programmes and their implementation efforts, regional land use planning, regional development projects, as well as natural resource plans and other marine and maritime management plans.

As a maritime spatial plan may only have indirect steering effects, it is necessary to specifically examine impact paths in order to assess its impacts. These indirect impacts and impact chains are already described in the digital plan's [Impact assessment](#) section and have now, following the process of finalising the plan, been included in the [Maritime spatial planning](#) section and a report entitled [Monitoring and evaluation model for maritime spatial planning](#).

The process of drawing up and adopting a maritime spatial plan does not cover a Natura assessment referred to in the Nature Conservation Act (1096/1996), section 65, subsection 1. The Maritime Spatial Plan identifies potential sites for existing and new activities that may, if implemented, have an impact on the nature values based on which sites have been included in the Natura 2000 network. The assessments under the Nature Conservation Act need only be carried out as part of plans and projects, such as spatial planning and permit procedures, that compromise the nature values used as protection criteria for Natura 2000 sites. An expert opinion on the requirement to produce a Natura assessment is available at the end of the report entitled [Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan](#).

It is important to note that the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. This international and national operating environment of marine sectors is described in the [Maritime spatial planning](#) section of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 website. The development visions and regulatory framework of the marine sectors are also covered in the materials collected at a national workshop organised during the vision development work, which are included in the digital plan for everyone to review.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan was prepared in cooperation between three planning areas. Land Use and Building Act section 67a requires taking the characteristics of marine areas into account in planning. Each marine area is unique, creating different natural parameters and opportunities for human activity. **Such characteristics – i.e. each planning area's key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for different sectors in each planning area.** These premises are described in the characteristics reports (Story Map summaries; [Gulf of Finland](#); [Archipelago Sea and southern Bothnian Sea](#); and [Northern Bothnian Sea, Quark and Bothnian Bay](#)) and the *Draft plans* section's situational pictures for the [Gulf of Finland](#); [Archipelago Sea and southern Bothnian Sea](#); and [Northern Bothnian Sea, Quark and Bothnian Bay](#).

To clarify the plan's nature and purpose, the [introduction under the Draft plans](#) section has been clarified with the following explanations:

- The maritime spatial plan was prepared in three parts. 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.

- 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.

Land Use and Building Act section 67a requires taking **land–sea interactions** into account in planning. During the drafting phase, the reflections were available for review in the [sector-specific roadmaps](#) under the *Visions* section and in the draft plan map’s [marking cards](#). Now this analysis is featured more prominently, both in the [Land–sea interaction](#) subsection under the *Maritime spatial planning* section and in a report entitled [Application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP](#).

While each of the Maritime Spatial Plan’s planning areas begins at the coastline, the obligation to take account of land–sea interactions sets the framework where the planning process has also explored land-based activities and the extent to which these can be influenced through maritime spatial planning. The plan map’s marking for ecological connections extends inland along rivers, indicating significant spawning areas for migratory fish. The markings for ports, maritime industry and functional connections also extend into land due to the nature of the relevant activities.

4.2 The plan map and marking card library

The statements and general feedback responses received on the plan raised several reflections and requests for clarification concerning the plan map and its support library of marking cards of spatial planning zones and markings. During the plan’s finalisation process, special efforts were made to clarify the rationales for the plan map’s markings as well as the role of the background data presented with the plan and its relationship with the plan.

The plan map includes area and line symbols, which are used to describe the values of marine areas and the future potential areas for significant existing and possible new activities and their alternative placement options. The plan is forward-looking. Its scale of 1:750,000 sets parameters for the map’s presentation method. In this context, it must be stressed that the plan markings are not area reservations; nor should they be interpreted as such.

The plan map does not take a stand on the placement of existing activities in marine areas. Planning solutions were developed taking account of administrative areas, such as the established protected areas or the Defence Forces’ protection, restricted and danger zones, which can be viewed as background maps simultaneously with the plan on the same base map.

The plan map’s user instructions were raised to a more prominent position [in the introduction to the Draft plans](#) section in order to clarify how to interpret the map. To improve the visibility of the background data, an information box was added to the plan map, describing the information provided in the map service. A note about the viewable background data was added under a heading entitled ‘Starting points and surveys’ in the marking cards of plan markings and in each planning area’s planning solutions under the *Draft plans* section.

The thematic details included in the background data are listed below, with data added on the basis of feedback on the draft plan highlighted using *italics*:

- Navigation lines of merchant shipping (1st and 2nd class);
- Fishing ports and significant fyke net fishing points used by Category I fishers;
- *Existing fish farms;*
- Restricted areas of Finnish Defence Forces (protection zones, restricted zones, danger zones);
- *Wind power markings and offshore wind power projects in effective regional plans;*
- Lighthouses, wrecks, protected sites of Antiquities record, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, protected buildings of built heritage register (RKY), national landscapes (marine);
- Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA), Finnish Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (FINIBA), and protected sites, including Natura 2000 sites (SAC, SPA, SCI), private nature reserves, nature reserves on state land, and wilderness areas;
- *Navigation lines of boating (3rd to 6th class);*
- *Municipality borders.*

In order to ensure correct interpretation of the plan map, it is advisable to view the [marking card library](#), which is an essential part of the maritime spatial plan map and can be accessed and downloaded via the digital plan. Marking card entries were clarified on the basis of feedback, while also featuring the thematic background data more prominently. The marking cards describe the following details for each map marking:

- general definition;
- marking description;
- planning principle;
- special characteristics and priorities of the planning areas;
- land–sea interactions;
- starting points and surveys used in planning to indicate the specific theme on the map.

The marking card library also includes definitions of zones, describing the characteristics of the following marine area zones and planning challenges and other considerations based on these: 1) inner archipelago and inner coastal waters; 2) outer archipelago and outermost coastal waters, and 3) open sea. To make it easier to view the zones more effectively, the plan map's background data now also includes 'Highlighted marine area zones'.

All of the Maritime Spatial Plan's map markings are governed by the following principles, of which the last two were added to the principles concerning all the markings to clarify the plan's nature and purpose as follows:

- Markings are generally used to indicate already existing significant and future potential areas for the different needs of the various uses of marine areas. The placement of various activities in the potential areas requires more detailed planning.
- The goal of ensuring the good status of the marine environment must be taken into consideration when planning and developing the operations.
- Markings may overlap with other markings.
- Markings do not exclude operations in other areas.
- Significant and potential areas for industry and marine nature may also exist outside the places identified in the plan.

- The plan does not comment on the existing locations of maritime activities in coastal and sea areas.

4.3 The Maritime Spatial Plan, marine environmental status and marine nature

Maritime spatial planning solutions promote the sustainable use of the marine environment and the achievement of good marine environmental status. At the same time, the environmental objectives specified in international agreements and EU and national legislation are supported by available means of planning. Based on the statements and general feedback, it was noted that it would be advisable to clarify and specify the relationship between maritime spatial planning and promotion of good marine environmental status.

The objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive are applicable to seas. The MSFD aims to achieve good environmental status in the marine environment. National and maritime spatial planning can indirectly contribute to several descriptors of good marine environmental status. Examples include biodiversity loss, status of commercial fish stocks, changes in marine food webs, seabed destruction and disturbance, changes in hydrographical seabed characteristics, control of non-indigenous species, levels of substances in the marine environment, increase in marine litter, and amounts of energy and noise carried into the sea. The process of drafting the Maritime Spatial Plan involved describing each planning area's situational picture for the marine environment and the interaction chains identified between sectors and the environment by available means. This analysis is described in more detail in the report entitled [Application of the ecosystem-based approach in MSP](#). Data was collected in cooperation with stakeholders during the *vision development phase* and the outcomes of this work are also presented in the [maritime sector roadmaps](#) and summarised in the *table of synergies and conflicts* between maritime actors and the marine environment and marine life. A review on the ecological state of surface waters and on their state in relation to the best that can be reached from 2016 to 2022 (assessment completed in 2013) and from 2022 to 2027 (assessment completed in 2020) has been introduced to the situational pictures specific to each planning area.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive imposes an obligation to use the ecosystem approach in order to achieve good marine environmental status. The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, in turn, requires application of the ecosystem approach. The general goal is to use ecosystems within their limits so as to preserve them. This goal has been addressed by means available for maritime spatial planning, i.e. by taking the structure, functioning and characteristics of the marine environment into account as part of the maritime spatial planning process and planning solutions. In practical terms, the ecosystem approach can be put to use by ensuring that the spatial planning system will eventually take issues into account at the right planning level.

A more detailed analysis of how to take good marine environmental status into account in maritime spatial planning is included in the report entitled [Application of the ecosystem-based approach in Finnish MSP](#).

A comprehensive analysis of international and national programmes, strategies and legislation concerning marine nature values was prepared for the subsection entitled [Preservation, conservation and improvement of the environment and nature](#) under the *Maritime spatial planning* section. This overview was supplemented by preparing a [thematic map on protected areas](#), illustrating the network of marine nature values. Combined with various forms of cooperation, these create favourable conditions for the preservation, protection and improvement of the environment and nature in maritime spatial planning.

The plan map shows the ecologically significant marine underwater areas ('EMMA areas') based on internationally unique data from the Finnish Inventory Programme for the Underwater Marine Environment (VELMU), contributing to identifying significant underwater nature values in relation to human-induced pressure on the sea. The plan map's background data includes Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA), Finnish Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (FINIBA), and protected sites, including Natura 2000 sites (SAC, SPA, SCI), private nature reserves, nature reserves on state land, and wilderness areas. This makes it possible to view the existing ecologically valuable sites in parallel with the planning solutions.

The Maritime Spatial Plan will be reviewed no later than within ten years. The Baltic Sea countries cooperate in maritime spatial planning and, among other things, explore opportunities to take cross-border themes into account in national maritime spatial plans. These include ecological corridors in territorial seas and climate change.

4.4 The Maritime Spatial Plan and blue growth sectors

Energy

A total of 22 statements and 24 general feedback responses were submitted on energy production. In addition, a few statements and feedback responses took a stand on pipelines, cables and pipes and on land–sea interactions in terms of energy production needs.

The general definition in the marking card for energy production was supplemented with a reference to the fact that areas suitable for offshore wind can also be found outside the potential sites designated in the Maritime Spatial Plan. The planning principles were likewise supplemented with a comment pointing out that offshore wind development may trigger a radar compensation requirement and that it is important to take nature values such as significant fish spawning areas into account when developing offshore wind.

In keeping with the principles of maritime spatial planning, the most potential future sites for offshore wind were identified using the best possible knowledge, which is represented in Finland by Zonation modelling developed by the Finnish Environment Institute. In addition to the data produced by modelling, expert knowledge was also used on both marine status and national defence needs. The potential sites identified on the plan map are in 10–50 metres deep areas to minimise effects on sensitive shallow areas of high nature value. A method known as viewshed analysis was used to minimise harmful landscape effects, taking account of 200 m high wind turbines. The application of and planning solutions derived from modelling are described in more detail for each planning area in Sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3. The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

The Maritime Spatial Plan does not take a stand on any existing offshore wind farms or land use or spatial plans. The wind power sites in currently effective regional land use plans and offshore wind projects have now been added to the plan map's background data to make it easier to view these in relation to potential future wind power sites identified in the Maritime Spatial Plan and to other human-induced pressure on the sea.

Main grid development and radial connections to land-based points will be discussed in the second maritime planning round. It is advisable to design electricity transmission networks in international cooperation with Sweden and Estonia.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for [the Gulf of Finland](#); [the Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and [the northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#).

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Energy](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Maritime logistics

A total of 12 statements and a few general feedback responses were submitted on maritime logistics.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

The agenda for the second maritime spatial planning round will include the temporal dimension relating to the annual cycle – maritime transport needs are different during ice-cover and open-water seasons. Other topics for further discussion will include underwater noise and the need to set speed limits for maritime transport in ecologically sensitive areas.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#).*

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Maritime transport](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Ports, functional connections, maritime industry and special areas

A total of 16 statements and a few general feedback responses were submitted on ports. In addition, six statements took a stand on the maritime industry while another few commented on functional connections and special areas. The statements highlighted reflections on land–sea interactions.

The following revisions were made on the basis of the statements received:

- The marking for 'internationally significant port (TEN-T)' was amended to 'TEN-T port'.
- The marking for 'International functional connection (TEN-T)' was amended to 'TEN-T functional connection'.

The following sentence was added to the marking card: 'The marking also includes those industrial plants that use the port.'

A preliminary study on [Sustainable disposal options for dredging spoils in Finnish sea areas](#) (in Finnish), dealing with identifying the most suitable marine disposal sites for future dredging needs in ports and Class 1 shipping lanes is featured more prominently in both written and cartographic plan sections.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#).*

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Maritime transport](#) and [Maritime industry](#) subsections under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Fishing

A total of 19 statements and seven general feedback responses were submitted on fishing. In addition, a few statements and feedback responses took a stand on fishing ports and on land–sea interactions, especially in terms of the required infrastructure. The feedback also raised the importance of fishing as part of cultural heritage and vital archipelago areas.

The Maritime Spatial Plan aims to support fishing as a viable livelihood of the future. However, it is recognised that the plan has challenges in this respect, mostly due to the limitations of the planning process and the plan map in terms of identifying potential future sites.

The plan map's net-fishing areas used by Category 1 fishers remain unchanged, whereas the overview of the marking for open-sea trawling was further clarified by supplementing the previously used 2016 AIS data with ICES VMS data on fishing intensity from 2013.

The visibility of fishing ports and significant fyke net fishing points used by Category I fishers was improved by featuring the map reading instructions more prominently.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

The second maritime spatial planning round will involve building effective connections with fisheries regions while also harmonising, where possible and necessary, the way in which fishing is treated in the Maritime Spatial Plan so as to support the management plans of fisheries regions.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Fishing](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Aquaculture

A total of 27 statements and 18 general feedback responses were submitted on aquaculture, i.e. fish farming. As a marine sector, fish farming attracted plenty of statements and opinions both for and against the activity.

The general definition in the marking card for aquaculture was supplemented with a reference to the fact that suitable fish-farming areas can also be found outside the potential sites designated in the Maritime Spatial Plan. The marking card's planning principle was likewise supplemented with a comment pointing

out that the objectives of river basin and marine management may restrict the use of potential fish-farming sites.

In keeping with the principles of maritime spatial planning, the most potential future fattening sites for fish farming were identified using the best possible knowledge, which is represented in Finland by FINFARMGIS modelling developed by the Natural Resources Institute Finland. In addition to the data produced by modelling, expert knowledge was also used on both marine status and the planning area's fish farmers. The application of and planning solutions derived from modelling are described in more detail for each planning area in Sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

The Maritime Spatial Plan does not take a stand on any existing fish farms, land use or spatial plans or development projects. The sector is growing and technological advancements are strengthening its future outlook. Existing fish farms have now been added to the plan map's background data to make it easier to view these in relation to potential future fish-farming sites identified in the Maritime Spatial Plan and other human-induced pressure on the sea.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for [the Gulf of Finland](#); [the Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and [the northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#).

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Aquaculture](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Archipelago

A total of seven statements and a few general feedback responses were submitted on archipelago areas. Many of the proposals for amending and supplementing the archipelago section also concerned cultural heritage, tourism and recreation, as well as tourism and recreational connections.

In order to demonstrate the significance of vital archipelago areas and of supporting their vitality in the maritime spatial planning process, the marking card entries were clarified as part of finalising the Maritime Spatial Plan while also preparing an analysis of archipelago areas based on data produced by the Monitoring System of Urban Structure (YKR). [A report on the maritime spatial planning zones, archipelago marking areas and YKR data](#) (in Finnish) identifies permanent and holiday populations, labour force and jobs. The analysis can be put to use, in particular, in more detailed regional development work.

Marinas, road ferry and cable ferry sites, and ferry routes and harbours are incompatible with the scale and presentation method of the Maritime Spatial Plan, but boating routes were made available for viewing as part of the plan map's background data.

In the second maritime spatial planning round, it will be important to take better account of permanent inhabitants and holiday residents in archipelago areas and their significant logistics and infrastructure needs in order to guarantee a good quality of life. Efforts will also be made to improve communications.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

Tourism and recreation

A total of 16 statements and six general feedback responses were submitted on tourism and recreation. In addition, a few statements and feedback responses took a stand on tourism and recreational connections and on land–sea interactions. Many of the comments on tourism and recreation also dealt with archipelago areas and cultural heritage.

The existing map view in each planning area's planning solutions under the *Draft plans* section was supplemented with national marine landscapes alongside UNESCO World Heritage Sites, national urban parks and marine national parks.

The planning principle in the marking card for tourism and recreation was likewise supplemented with a comment pointing out that the use of sites identified for tourism and recreation may be restricted by national defence needs.

Marinas, road ferry and cable ferry sites, and ferry routes and harbours are incompatible with the scale and presentation method of the Maritime Spatial Plan, but boating routes were made available for viewing as part of the plan map's background data. A [web map of built and unbuilt shores](#) was made available for viewing in each planning area's situational picture.

The draft plan was somewhat vague about hunting as a form of recreation and, in particular, about its role in controlling the stocks of non-indigenous predators, i.e. raccoon dogs and minks, found in coastal and archipelago areas. These have now been featured more prominently as part of achieving good marine environmental status. At the same time, the role of state-owned public water areas was also highlighted in terms of providing recreational fishing opportunities for coastal and archipelago populations as well as for other enthusiasts coming from inland areas.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

In the second maritime spatial planning round, it will be important to take better account of local permanent inhabitants and holiday residents and coastal and marine sites that are significant for them. Efforts will also be made to improve communications.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Tourism and recreation](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Cultural heritage

A total of nine statements and a few general feedback responses were submitted on cultural heritage. Many of the comments on cultural heritage also dealt with tourism and recreation, archipelago areas and fishing. Due to the nature of the theme, feedback on cultural heritage was very detailed.

The sensitivity of cultural values was highlighted in the planning principle of the marking card for cultural values. The planning solutions revised on the basis of feedback provided in statements are described in more detail for each planning area in Sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3.

The revisions and additions concerning the sector are discussed in Section 4.7 for visions and roadmaps and in Section 4.8 for impact assessments.

Museums with regional responsibility will be closely engaged in the planning process in the second maritime spatial planning round.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Cultural heritage](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Extractive sector

A few statements and general feedback responses were submitted on the extractive sector. Minerals are not shown on the plan map. Consideration of the theme and its possible inclusion in the plan map will become relevant in the second planning round.

The plan's planning solutions were supplemented with a marking to the fact that any potential sites for minerals should be located in deep areas of no specific importance for biodiversity.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Extractive sector](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

Blue biotechnology

A few statements and general feedback responses were submitted on blue biotechnology. This theme is also linked to statements and feedback responses on the maritime industry and fish farming side streams.

Blue biotechnology is not shown on the plan map. Consideration of the theme and its possible inclusion in the plan map will become relevant in the second planning round.

Each planning area's characteristics – i.e. key characteristics of biogeography and cultural heritage and the current planning situation and marine area use – have contributed to planning solutions for the sector. The differences between the planning areas are briefly described in the [marking cards](#), as well as in the planning solutions for *the [Gulf of Finland](#); the [Archipelago Sea and the southern Bothnian Sea](#); and the [northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark and the Bothnian Bay](#)*.

The Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030 does not supersede the regulatory framework or permit practices currently effective in any sector. Use of a marine area will always require more detailed planning and impact assessment in order to become reality. The sector's own international and national strategic goals and regulatory frameworks are highlighted in the [Blue biotechnology](#) subsection under *Maritime spatial planning: Blue growth sectors*.

4.5 Consideration of national defence

One of the tasks of maritime spatial planning is to consider national defence needs. Consideration of national defence and comprehensive security is described in more detail in the [Maritime spatial planning](#) section of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan 2030. The section describes the Security Strategy for Society and the defence policy report; the Act on the Defence Forces (551/2007); the Territorial Surveillance Act (755/2000); the Land Use and Building Act (132/1999, as amended by Act 467/2019 section 67a); the Act on the Exclusive Economic Zone of Finland (1058/2004); the relationship between the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and national defence; the Border Guard Act (578/2005); and the Maritime Search and Rescue Act (1145/2001).

National defence needs are taken into account on the plan map, in site descriptions of map markings and in the general definitions concerning all markings in the marking card library and, in particular, in the markings for energy production and tourism and recreation.

The Lohtaja firing and military training area is identified as a special area on the plan map. The Defence Forces' protection zones, restricted zones (R-zones) and danger zones (D-zones) have been added to the plan's background data, allowing these areas to be viewed in parallel with the plan map. The Finnish Defence Forces' areas have a bearing on the use of areas both within and outside their boundaries. Permanent constructions cannot be set up in such areas without compromising national defence.

Impact assessment indicated that the Maritime Spatial Plan will not result in any changes to the current status of national defence and, subsequently, to its effects on other sea uses.

4.6 Planning solutions

Feedback concerning all three planning areas included proposals for clarification and amendment to take account of marine themes and the marine environment. Consideration of feedback received on each planning area is described below.

4.6.1 *The Gulf of Finland*

Situational picture

Factual errors concerning details such as red algae were corrected in the situational picture. A descriptor of the status of the Gulf of Finland in terms of different environmental factors was added to the situational picture. The perspective of hunting tourism was added to the situational picture for tourism and recreation. The fishing section was supplemented in terms of the management plans for fisheries regions. The maritime industry section was also supplemented.

Area-specific development vision

The development vision was supplemented with a reference to local food production and safeguarding the operating conditions for fishing.

Planning solutions

The marine environment and nature

No amendments.

Energy

No amendments to the plan map.

The language of the planning solutions concerning energy issues was clarified in terms of restrictions on wind power generation due to the Defence Forces' operations.

The Maritime Spatial Plan's solution for wind power was produced in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders to cover all three planning areas as a whole. The plan's outcome is that the best solution to implement the objectives set for the plan while taking account of its parameters is to focus large-scale deployment of offshore wind initially on the Gulf of Bothnia.

Although the Maritime Spatial Plan does not identify any potential offshore wind sites for the Gulf of Finland in this planning round, this does not exclude planning offshore wind development for the area. However, implementing offshore wind projects in the Gulf of Finland will require that adequate compensation solutions can be identified for national defence, especially radar issues, and that questions relating to environmental parameters can be solved, including issues relating to migratory routes for birds and the values used as the criteria for Natura sites.

Consideration of the future needs of Finland's electricity transmission capacity was added to the language of the planning solution.

Maritime logistics

The perspective of oil and chemical accident risks was added to the language of the marking card for seafaring areas.

Ports, functional connections, maritime industry and special areas

The marking for the Koverhar Port in Hanko was changed from 'Port' to 'TEN-T port'. The port is part of the cluster of Hanko ports, which is included in the EU Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).

The language of the planning solutions was clarified in terms of the direction of traffic to and from the HaminaKotka Port.

The marking for the functional connection designating the Scandinavian–Mediterranean TEN-T core network corridor was revised to cover the entire core network corridor and all of the relevant forms of transport. The amendment was made both to the plan map and to the language of the planning solutions.

A new TEN-T functional connection from Helsinki towards Central Europe was added to the plan map. The solution was also included in the language of planning solutions.

Specific coordination area

No amendments.

Fishing

No amendments.

The available knowledge base was checked for trawling. Based on the available data, it is not advisable to present trawling areas during this planning round.

Aquaculture

As the Maritime Spatial Plan does not take a stand on any existing fish farms, the existing fish farms in Loviisa included in the draft plan for the Gulf of Finland were removed from the plan map. The existing farms are instead included in the Maritime Spatial Plan's background data.

Archipelago

No amendments.

Tourism and recreation

National urban parks were more closely linked to planning solutions. The term 'fishing and nature tourism' was amended to 'nature and wilderness tourism'. The language of planning solutions was clarified with regard to wilderness tourism.

The Hamina tourism and recreational zone was extended to cover Hamina's historical town centre. The Raseborg archipelago tourism and recreational zone was extended to cover the Ingå archipelago, while a new marking was added for Ekenäs cultural heritage sites. The site descriptions for tourism and recreational zones were clarified.

Cultural heritage

National urban parks were more closely linked to planning solutions.

Two new markings have been designated to the Gulf of Finland: Ekenäs in Raseborg and Barösund (Barösund Passage) in Inkoo. The description for the site of the Naval Battle of Svensksund was clarified with regard to details such as the Ruotsinsalmi Sea Fortress. A new marking for cultural heritage sites was added to Ekenäs and Pojo Bay. The cultural heritage marking for Jussarö was extended to cover the islets to the south of the island, including the Jussarö Lighthouse and the historical ship trap located in the area. The cultural heritage marking for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was extended to cover areas such as the Pentala Island.

Significant cultural heritage sites located in coastal areas were taken into account in the situational picture and as part of drafting the planning solutions and many are located in tourism and recreational zones, for example.

Extractive sector

No amendments.

Blue biotechnology

No amendments.

4.6.2 *The Archipelago Sea and southern Bothnian Sea*

Situational picture

The situational picture's section on marine environmental status was supplemented with a description of the status of grey seal and Baltic ringed seal populations. References to the wind power site included in the Satakunta regional land use plan were removed from the section dealing with energy. Details about the role of the new fisheries regions and their management plans were added to the situational picture's section on fishing and aquaculture.

Area-specific development vision

The development vision was supplemented by highlighting the importance of good marine environmental status and underwater biodiversity and the technological solutions enabling their achievement.

Aquaculture was identified as a significant fisheries industry alongside fishing.

More emphasis was placed on the area's vibrant coastal and archipelago nature and cultural heritage and pull factors for tourism.

Planning solutions

The marine environment and nature

The language of the planning solution was supplemented in terms of the significance of marine environmental protection.

Energy

The potential wind power site shown off the coast of Tahkoluoto in Pori was revised to start about ten kilometres from the coast in keeping with the planning principle applied in maritime spatial planning. The more western of the two potential wind power sites in the exclusive economic zone, located right at the Swedish border, was removed from the Bothnian Sea while the other site, located east to an area used for maritime transport, was generalised to the level of detail applied in the Maritime Spatial Plan so as to achieve a better match with the planning level.

Maritime logistics

Maritime areas were revised with minor amendments to make them compatible with the shipping areas in the Åland Islands.

Ports, functional connections, maritime industry and special areas

The description of the marking for the Uusikaupunki Port was supplemented with a reference to the maritime industry.

Terms 'TEN-T port', 'port' and 'TEN-T functional connection' were updated to match the marking cards.

The description of the marking for the maritime industry designated between Turku and Naantali in the Maritime Spatial Plan was updated, renaming the area as the 'Turku and Naantali maritime industry cluster'.

Fishing

The available knowledge base was checked for trawling. No amendments were made to the plan map based on the available data.

Aquaculture

The presentation of potential aquaculture sites was specified in the Satakunta and southern Bothnian Sea areas while the five highest-value areas produced by the FINFARMGIS model were added to the plan. The exclusion criteria included the Bothnian Sea National Park and nature conservation areas. Existing aquaculture facilities were added to the plan map's background data. As the FINFARMGIS model does not take a stand on wintering sites or coastal bases, these were also not covered at this stage of maritime spatial planning.

Three aquaculture areas were removed from Southwest Finland on the basis of the ecologically significant EMMA values and an existing Natura site.

Archipelago

The language was clarified to highlight the permanent population, vital archipelago culture, diverse economic life and year-round accessibility.

Tourism and recreation

The language was supplemented with a reference to seabird fowling while specifying that 'cultural heritage' refers to both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

In the section on tourism and recreation connections, the Syväraumanlahti Port in Rauma was added to key leisure boating ports.

Cultural heritage

No amendments.

Extractive sector

The plan does not designate any markings for mineral extraction.

Blue biotechnology

No amendments.

4.6.3 The northern Bothnian Sea, the Quark, and the Bothnian Bay

Situational picture

A reference to a grayling spawning site was added to the situational picture.

Area-specific development vision

The area's development vision was supplemented in terms of marine life as follows: 'A good marine environmental status is promoted by directing activity that alter the environment towards areas where the nature and environment are best able to withstand them. Knowledge on the underwater marine environment and cultural heritage has grown. Progress has been made in preserving the biodiversity of the unique marine nature in the northern area.'

Planning solutions

The marine environment and nature

A significant perch spawning site was added as an ecological connection to the area ranging from the River Laihianjoki to the Eteläinen Kaupunginselkä Bay south to the City of Vaasa.

Energy

The language of the planning solutions concerning energy issues was clarified in terms of restrictions on wind power generation due to the Defence Forces' operations.

Coordination of offshore wind and fishing falls within the purview of more detailed planning and permit procedures.

Maritime logistics

No amendments.

Ports, functional connections, maritime industry and special areas

The marking description in the marking card for ports was clarified to also include industrial plants using the port.

Fishing

Ostrobothnian trawling sites were slightly revised on the basis of the ICES VMS data on fishing intensity.

Aquaculture

A previously identified aquaculture area was extended in the vicinity of Simo to cover the area between the islands included in the Natura site while another site was added to the existing aquaculture area in Larsmo.

Archipelago

No amendments.

Tourism and recreation

No amendments.

Cultural heritage

A comment was added on the history of the Ulkokrunni and Valassaari islands as fishing skerries before their lighthouses were built.

Extractive sector

No amendments.

Blue biotechnology

No amendments.

4.7 Vision work

An interactive stakeholder cooperation period organised as part of the vision development phase of the maritime spatial planning process produced a national vision for sustainable use of the Finnish maritime area for 2050, as well as area-specific development visions and sector-specific visions and roadmaps for 2030. National and regional sector-specific thematic meetings were held to support interaction, with a total attendance of 120 people.

Marine sector stakeholders defined their own sector's vision for 2030. Based on the statements, the following revisions were made to the completed visions:

- The vision for cultural heritage was amended as follows: 'Marine cultural heritage is fostered, and there is now more information on marine cultural heritage. Cultural heritage promotes the conservation and development of biodiversity and the vitality of coastal regions.'

As the table of sectoral synergies and conflicts was not presented correctly on the digital platform, its presentation method was revised. Its contents were supplemented/revised as follows:

- The previous statement about the extensive negative effects of maritime logistics was toned down to 'may have extensive negative effects'.
- The following negative effect was added to fishing: 'Any overfishing of salmonids, bycatches, anchoring and ghost nets in the water will adversely affect the marine environment.'
- The positive effect of hunting on the populations of non-indigenous predators in coastal and archipelago areas was added as a point of synergy between nature conservation and management, on the one hand, and tourism and recreation, on the other.
- A point of synergy was added between fishing and tourism and recreation, as seal populations are controlled by hunting.

Each sectoral roadmap describes the sector, the steps required to achieve the sectoral vision and the future trends in the sector. In addition to general linguistic editing, this section was also specified as follows:

- The description of offshore wind was supplemented with a reference to floating foundations.
- 'A viable livelihood in the long term' was added as a key objective of fishing.
- More emphasis was placed on cooperation between maritime spatial planning and fisheries regions and on consideration of the management plans of the fisheries regions.
- The conflict between fishing and the great cormorant population was identified.
- The round goby and non-indigenous predators were added to non-indigenous species.
- The following text was deleted from the section on regional planning and infrastructure in the roadmap for nature conservation and management: 'Agricultural and forestry land will be included in the scope of spatial planning, similar to urban areas.'
- A sentence in the key objectives of recreation was supplemented as follows: 'Preserving leisure fishing and hunting as significant Finnish forms of outdoor interests, also in an urbanised society.'
- Wilderness tourism was added alongside nature tourism to the description of the tourism and recreation sector.

Additions to area-specific development visions are described for each planning area in Sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3.

4.8 Impact assessment

The completed [*Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan*](#) explores the indirect impacts and impact paths of the strategic maritime spatial plan. As maritime spatial plans fall within the plans referred to in section 3 of the Act on the Environmental Impact Assessment of Plans and Programmes by the Authorities (the 'SEA Act' 200/2005), the authorities responsible for a plan or programme must ensure that its environmental impacts are studied and assessed to a sufficient extent during its preparation if its implementation may have significant environmental impacts.

The process of drawing up and adopting a maritime spatial plan does not involve conducting a **Natura assessment** referred to in Nature Conservation Act section 65, subsection 1. The Maritime Spatial Plan identifies potential sites for existing and new activities that may, if implemented, have an impact on the nature values based on which sites have been included in the Natura 2000 network. The assessments under the Nature Conservation Act need only be carried out as part of plans and projects, such as spatial planning and permit procedures, that compromise the nature values used as protection criteria for Natura 2000 sites. An expert opinion on the requirement to produce a Natura assessment is available at the end of the report entitled *Impact assessment of the Finnish Maritime Spatial Plan*.

Maritime spatial planning aims to align with other programmes, strategies and sectoral planning processes relating to the Baltic Sea. However, the framework of objectives is twofold, aiming to promote good marine environmental status, on the one hand, and blue growth, on the other. This conflict cannot be resolved by means of maritime spatial planning; its role is, rather, to highlight and coordinate these activities and conflicts so as to ensure that blue growth will be sustainable.

Maritime spatial planning is not part of the spatial planning system under the Land Use and Building Act; nor is the Maritime Spatial Plan placed hierarchically above other planning instruments. Consequently, the Maritime Spatial Plan also has no binding effect on the steering of spatial planning or project permit procedures under various sectoral laws.

However, the Maritime Spatial Plan has indirect steering effects; as a spatial planning instrument, it supports regional land use planning and regional development by providing information about the opportunities and parameters of marine sectors and the marine environment. Its overall impact will become visible in a longer term.

The impact assessment takes into account the ecological, economic, social and cultural aspects. The analysis takes into account the direction of the impact – positive or negative change – and its significance. The maritime spatial plan is a strategic document, meaning that it can only have indirect impacts. Sectoral impact path analyses have been carried out by comparing the key content of the maritime spatial plan with any executive processes and the impacts of implementation in terms of the vision, roadmap and planning solutions.

The impact assessment covers the significant indirect impacts of maritime spatial plans for the sectors considered in maritime spatial planning. The impact assessment is based on an examination of the change caused by the maritime spatial plan compared with a situation that would prevail if the plan did not exist. The analysis was carried out by planning area.

The statements and general feedback responses received on the plan put forward proposals for supplementing the impact assessment of the maritime spatial plans. The impact assessment was clarified in relation to national strategic plans as part of finalising the Maritime Spatial Plan. No need to supplement

the impact assessment in any further detail was identified in terms of blue biotechnology, mining and national defence. The assessment was supplemented for the following sectors as follows:

I. Protection and management of the marine environment:

- The objectives of the Finnish Marine Strategy and the Government Programme's objective to expand the network of national parks were raised to the fore.
- With regard to identifying land–sea interactions, the fact that the majority of nutrient loads on the Baltic Sea come from runoff from land was featured more prominently.
- The impact of climate change on biota was brought to light. It was also noted that, as the conditions change, a comprehensive network of protected areas and ecological corridors is crucial to enable species migration and adaptation. The planning process recognised that addressing climate change is a key issue for the second maritime spatial planning round, when the approach will be further clarified.
- Activities at sea have a bearing on coastal areas and ecosystems, which was also highlighted in the impact assessment.

II. Offshore wind power

- The low-carbon targets of the Government Resolution on Finland's maritime policy guidelines and Prime Minister Marin's 2019 Government Programme were raised to the fore.
- The functional requirements of shipping lanes were highlighted in the context of identifying potential offshore wind sites.
- The modelling method applied and the adverse visual effects considered were featured more prominently in the context of identifying potential offshore wind sites. In order to minimise negative social impacts, the viewshed analysis method was used to take account of the adverse visual effects of 200 m high wind turbines when identifying the areas.
- A revision was made to point out that the seabed's cultural heritage sites will be identified as part of planning the placement of offshore wind and cables. Consequently, their impact on underwater cultural heritage sites will probably be insignificant.
- The significant immovable property tax revenue collected by local authorities from offshore wind farms was identified as part of economic and social impacts.
- A previous reference to the 'glare' of wind farms was revised. In the context of wind power, 'glare' refers to the flickering alternation of light and shade caused by the varying shadows of wind turbine blades on the ground.

III. Maritime logistics:

- A reference was added to the key positive impact of maritime logistics on the competitiveness of Finnish business life and the functioning of society, also in terms of employment and social links.

IV. Maritime industry

- With regard to the maritime industry's social impacts, it was pointed out that the roles, risks and added value involved in interactions between land-based and marine sector players should be identified to make it possible to capture the significance of these relationships by way of maritime spatial planning.

V. Fishing

- The environmental impacts of fishing were clarified by pointing out that the commercial fish species with quotas only include Baltic herring, sprat and salmon. Other forms of fishing regulation include permitted catch sizes and temporal and local closed seasons.
- It was noted that the Maritime Spatial Plan does not have a bearing on the objectives of the Blue Projects fishing innovation programme for new added-value products or for adding value gained from domestic fish.
- The impact of fishing on townscapes, landscapes, cultural heritage and built environments on the Gulf of Finland was amended from slightly negative to neutral. Fishing plays a role in maintaining and supporting coastal and archipelago culture and livelihoods. Fisheries industries bring new jobs to remote areas and help maintain infrastructure in sparsely populated areas. The structures of fisheries industries are, however, frequently perceived to involve odour nuisance and adverse landscape effects, especially from the perspective of holiday residents.

VI. Aquaculture

- It was noted that, as a sector, aquaculture is dependent on good water quality and a clean marine environment. Sectoral players are committed to environmental objectives and have taken active steps to reduce the environmental impacts of activities.
- The benefits of using the Baltic Blend fishmeal to controlling nitrogen and phosphorus loads were brought to light. In the same context, it was pointed out that the authorities had not as yet approved Baltic Blend as nutrient compensation in their permit practices.
- The calculation of nutrient loads as part of the environmental impacts of aquaculture was amended to match the actual growth target of the Aquaculture Strategy 2022, i.e. a production increase of about 11–12 million kilograms.
- It was noted that the FINFARMGIS modelling used in the Maritime Spatial Plan aimed to identify areas where the environmental impacts of fish farming would remain as minimal as possible.

VII. Tourism and recreation

- The impacts of boating and related coastal construction and dredging operations on vegetated bays were brought to light. In particular, dredging shallow bays and lagoons will affect their biodiversity and value as fry production sites.

VIII. Cultural heritage

- References were added to national spatial planning objectives to protect the values of natural heritage and nationally significant cultural heritage sites and to the kyppi.fi website presenting built heritage sites and archaeological sites, etc.