

# Maritime Spatial Planning in Finland

## Finnish Marine Waters

- Territorial sea (12 nm zone): 54 130 km<sup>2</sup> (and 4 330 km<sup>2</sup> islands, not included in water areas)
- Exclusive Economic Zone: 29 080 km<sup>2</sup>

## Governance of the Sea Space

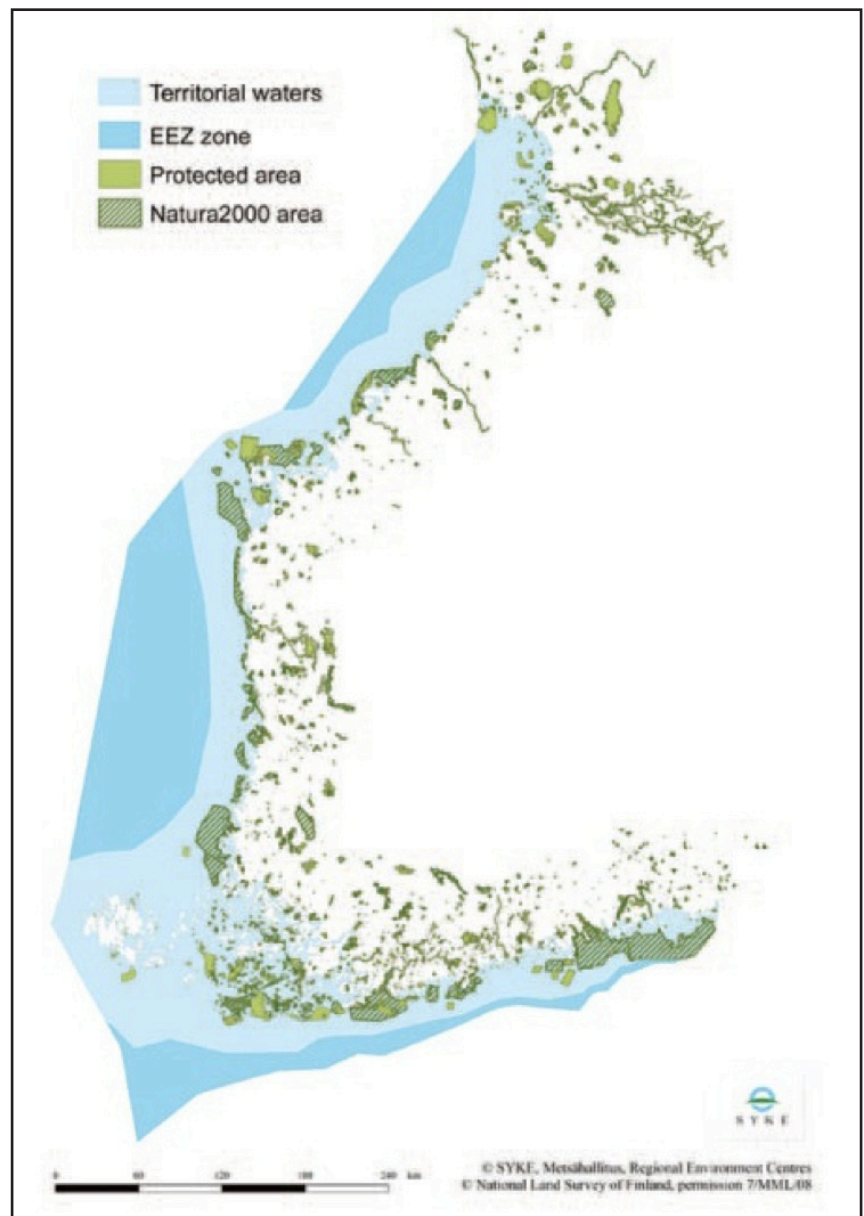
All territorial waters are a part of coastal municipalities. Accordingly, municipalities are in charge of their administration. The Finnish government is responsible for the administration of the economic zone, where the Finnish Law on the Economic Zone is applied.

## Use of the Sea Space

- Compared to other Baltic Sea Region countries, the intensity of sea space use in Finland is low - in the northern part - and moderate - in the southern part. Shipping is very active between Helsinki and Tallinn as well as to the Russian harbours along the Gulf of Finland.
- Current main uses: shipping, fishing, nature protection and recreation.
- Future uses: shipping, fishing, nature protection, recreation and energy.

## Maritime Spatial Planning Legislation

- There is no specific, single legislative act for maritime spatial planning in Finland.
- Planning on land and on waters is based on the Land Use and Building Act.
- Municipalities and regional councils have the planning mandate for their adjacent marine waters up to the border of the territorial Sea.
- There is no planning mandate for EEZ and UNCLOS is implemented through national legislation.



*Finnish marine waters*

## Maritime Spatial Plans

- Regional land use plans are the most relevant planning means for the sea area. They are drafted by regional councils, whose members are the representatives of municipalities. Individual citizens and non-governmental organisations are fully entitled to participate in the planning process. Regional councils also approve regional land use plans. These plans are then submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, where the legality of the plans is assessed before final ratification.
- A regional land use plan sets out a general framework for the more detailed local plans, which are prepared by the municipalities. Regional land use plans are legally binding, but nevertheless they leave plenty of scope for the municipalities to resolve local land use and development issues. The regional council must also ensure that the plan promotes the implementation of the national land use guidelines. Regional Land Use Planning: <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=305141&lan=fi&clan=en>
- At the moment nine coastal regional plans are under preparation, 15 coastal regional plans have already been ratified and three are awaiting ratification.
- Municipal authorities draft detailed plans. No municipal plans have been drafted exclusively for marine areas but some plans have encompassed sea areas.

## Maritime Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection

- Maritime Spatial Planning in Finland is based on the ecosystem paradigm developed and operationalised by the VASAB-HELCOM Working Group on Maritime Spatial Planning based on the Malawi Principles.
- Environment Impact Assessment is compulsory for all major offshore investments.
- By law, maritime spatial plans will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessments.

## Contact Points

- The responsible authority for the transnational consultation process Ministry of Environment.
- The responsible authority for the ESPOO Convention is the Ministry of Environment.



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