



NEW ACTION: Multi-use of marine areas in Finnish MSP

Short description

The new action looks at how the concept of MariParks and marine multi-use areas can be integrated into the MSP planning process and the resulting MSP Plan. The MSP planners are engaged to consider the different aspect of marine multi-use, the possible ways it could be considered in the Finnish MSP Plan and what types of actions need to be taken during the planning process to be able to make sustainable planning decisions.

Project partner(s) responsible for the preparation of the new action

FI RCSW

Action typology

(iii) Process-related practice (i.e. creation of working groups, consultation, workshops)

And

(vi) others: the new action is focused on the planning process of the MSP planners in Finland.

Topics addressed

Cross-cutting

The new action does not address any of the EGD core elements directly. Instead, through the consideration of multi-use and the MariPark concept it can address the ways these elements are considered in the MSP Plan.

Geographical scope

National, including the three planning areas. The Åland Islands has jurisdiction of their own MSP and is responsible for preparing its own plan and is not covered in this new action.



Sectors/Activity involved

Multisector: the new action is focused on the MSP planners.

How does the new action support the Green Deal in MSP

The promotion of the European Green Deal (EGD) objectives in Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) can be challenging. One of these

challenges is created by the limited amount of space at sea where activities that support these objectives can be realized. In addition, aligning different objectives can be challenging. Multi-use of marine areas and MariParks have been presented as a solution for overcoming some parts of these challenges. Currently, the Finnish MSP does not actively support the co-existence of different sectors, which could provide further opportunities to support the different EGD objectives.

The new action has the potential to support the promotion of multiple EGD related objectives at sea. For example, the increase of human activities at sea such as offshore wind energy production or fish farming can cause challenges to objectives on the protection of marine biodiversity or achieving the good status of the marine environment. In this example, the promotion of multi-use could consider aspects of climate change mitigation, sustainable sea-food production and biodiversity and ecosystem service protection and restoration. In addition, the principles of nature-inclusive design associated with MariParks can increase the resilience of marine environments and support both protection and restoration of marine biodiversity and the capacity of nature to adapt to climate change. Lastly, marine multi-use can support the objective of just and fair transition through ensuring the continuity of small-scale entrepreneurs, such as fishers, in areas where energy production might otherwise block these activities that are integral to local livelihoods.

To answer to the gap, the new action focuses on how the concept of multi-use of marine areas and MariParks could be utilized in the MSP process and how these issues should be implemented in practice in the resulting MSP Plan. The current MSP plan for Finland 2030 is a strategic development document illustrated by a map. The Plan map shows the values of marine areas, significant existing activities and potential future sites for new activities and their alternative placement. These markings are not intended to reserve areas for particular purpose and operations may also take place in other areas than in those identified in the plan. In the current MSP Plan, multi-use of the sea area is a key principle in the plan and many of the zonings are overlapping. But instead of actively planning the multi-use of certain areas, the plan has a more passive approach to identify that certain areas are either significant and/or potential for certain sectors or the marine environment.

The need for more active planning was identified during the first MSP round. Therefore, the map marking of the Special Areas states that it is important to identify possibilities of multipurpose use when developing the areas. Such Special Areas include, for example, data centres and nuclear power plants, where there is potential to exploit waste heat from condensation water.

The new action challenges the MSP Planners to consider ways in which the plan could more precisely promote multi-use in certain areas and what should be done in the MSP planning process so that these topics are considered in a viable way. Or in other words, how to go from passively indicating spatially overlapping sea-uses to active promotion of synergies through MariParks in the Finnish MSP plan. As a byproduct of this process, the focus will also be on the identification of synergies between sectors and how they could be considered in the MSP Plan.

Governance context

The new action focuses on the MSP authorities in Finland, including the Ministry of Environment and the eight coastal regional councils. These are the key actors responsible for the implementation of the MSP process and the revision of the MSP Plan. Therefore, they have direct impact on how multi-use and MariParks are considered in



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MSP in Finland.

Other stakeholders to be involved in the new action

No other stakeholders were directly involved in the new action. Multiple actors from different sectors participated in the events organized prior to the new action and contributed to the identification of the possibilities and challenges related to multi-use of marine areas and MariParks in Finland. In addition, a local-level case study has been carried out in order to gain a deeper insight into the possibilities of developing a MariPark from the perspective of maritime entrepreneurs, public-private partnerships, marine strategy and management and licensing.

In the work that will follow this new action, stakeholders from all relevant sectors will be engaged into the planning process and the definition of the possibilities of multi-use in practice.

Description of the new action

The new action focuses on how the multi-use of marine areas and MariParks could be considered in the MSP process and the resulting Finnish MSP Plan. Finland is currently going through the second cycle of MSP with the aim of adopting the new plan by 2026. It is important to consider the timing of the new action. A lot of work has been done internationally under the eMSP NBSR -project to develop the concept of MariParks, which together with national workshops in Finland and a local case study have provided understanding on what multi-use could be in the Finnish sea areas and what opportunities and challenges are related to it. Learning from these experiences and discussing the possibilities of multi-use for MSP in the beginning of the second planning cycle provides an excellent opportunity to develop the planning process into a direction where these topics are considered more deeply and become more visible in the upcoming plan.

During the new action, two workshops were organized for the MSP planners. The first workshop served two purposes. First, the aim was to create a common understanding and vision among the MSP planners on what multi-use of marine areas means and what MariParks are or could be in the Finnish context. This work is built based on the gained experiences on the topic and the principles of MariParks, such as nature-inclusive design, public private partnership, and shared support actions (monitoring, maintenance, communication etc.).

Secondly, the aim was to form a shared understanding of what multi-use of marine areas and MariParks mean for the MSP planning process and how they could be included in the MSP plan. Regarding the planning process, the planners need to identify what kind of information and knowledge is needed to make planning decisions on the topic. In practice, the focus is on designing the planning process in a way that will engage the maritime sectors and experts on the topic to gain the desired output.

When it comes to the MSP Plan, the focus is on how and in which part of the plan could the topic be considered. The discussion will be built on the structure of the current Maritime Spatial Plan for Finland 2030, which consists of a written part and the plan map. The planners need to consider the most impactful and practical way of considering these topics in this structure. For example, how could multi-use be presented on the plan map and at what scale should MSP consider MariParks? Additionally, the aim is to consider more deeply the principles of MSP in Finland and to consider how MSP could go beyond passively promoting current and future uses of the sea areas and start actively promoting multi-use. This is related to a wider discussion on the principles and the ways in which MSP can promote multi-use in the MSP plan.

The work will be continued in a second workshop, where the objective is to define the next steps of action. The planners need to identify what kind of further investigation and case studies are needed and how could interaction between MSP planners and marine sectors be organized in practice. In other words, which actors need to be engaged in which part of the planning process and at what scale. The actualization of the next steps and the engagement of the sectors into the planning process are not described here and will be covered by future projects. Additionally, the topics addressed in the first workshop require further consideration and practical steps to reach a solution for the integration of the concept of multi-use into the Finnish MSP plan.

Although the new action only presents the two workshops, MariParks and multi-use of marine areas in MSP will be worked on through-out the second planning cycle in Finland. The new action aims to support the definition of a planning process where these topics are included and considered whenever relevant. Supporting the planners in forming an overview of what the topic means for MSP and how the approach could lay the foundation for these further actions.

Possible challenges/risks related to the new action

The new action requires the MSP planners to consider how MSP is done in Finland. As MSP is a relatively new planning tool, its role in the planning system is still being defined and new approaches to planning are constantly developed. Challenges might arise if the inclusion of the concept of multi-use would require significant changes to the current MSP planning process or the resulting plan. The most efficient use of the available resources and the prioritization of planning actions that will be undertaken during the second cycle of planning also need to be considered.

Challenges for the planning process might also arise from the practical complexities of multi-use at sea. It can be difficult to make planning decisions with sufficient confidence and based on comprehensive information supporting the decisions. For example, licensing practices, their possibilities and limitations, must be taken into account with sufficient precision already at the MSP. It might also be challenging to define the suitable scale at which MSP should or could promote multi-use. The actual realization of MariParks for example, will happen at the local scale, which requires more detailed planning than the strategic MSP Plan developed at a more general scale. Although the new action is based on extensive work on the topics, the engagement of the different actors representing both traditional sea users and technological innovations and their views on the possibilities it provides are crucial for the practical implementation of multi-use and MariParks.

Gaps or elements that the new action does not consider

During the designing and implementation of the new action a few elements were identified that could be improved in the future.

- ✓ The new action does not cover in detail the actions that are required to collect sufficient understanding on the possibilities of multi-use at sea and the synergetic opportunities existing between sectors, which is required to make the planning decisions. For example, further engagement of the sectors and actors that would collocate in a certain area is required to better understand the prerequisites of the actions of the sectors.
 - Governance framework, permitting, insurance issues and social acceptance are not raised as they do not fall directly under the scope of MSP. However, in order to realize MariParks these



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aspects need to be carefully considered in other processes.

- ✓ The new action presents the beginning of a complex process where the results are currently challenging to evaluate. To evaluate the success of the new action in supporting the EGD objectives and its impact on MSP, an evaluation of the process can be done after the second cycle of planning.

Replicability /Elements which can be capitalised

The designed new action includes the following elements that could be capitalised in other contexts.

- ✓ The new action presents one approach, which could aid in the integration of the concepts of MariParks and multi-use marine areas into MSP. The principles or parts of them could be applied in other context to, at the minimum, raise discussion on the possibilities of these topics in supporting the EGD objectives.
- ✓ Engagement of regional authorities can aid in the identification of the relevance of the topic for the regional level. Applying this approach can aid in identifying the possibilities for multi-use in practice.

If the action is implemented there are the following potential challenges.

- ✓ The new action is structured around the MSP planning process in Finland. Therefore, it might be challenging to replicate the new action in detail in another context where the scope and mandate of the MSP Plan are different.
- ✓ The work presented in the new action is built around the experiences gained from work done in other projects. Without this experience the replication can be challenging. It is likely that resources need to be first directed to the creation of supporting information on the topic before it would be optimal to apply the approach presented by the new action.
- ✓ Challenges with varying regional and geographical conditions should be taken into account. Planning decisions and criteria may vary depending on the sea basin or environmental characteristics.