

Points of Contact in Denmark, Estonia, Germany,
Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden

Information regarding preparation of the Programme of Measures of the Marine Strategy in Finland for the period of 2028-2033 and the associated Strategic Environmental Assessment

With this letter Finland as a Party of origin hereby preliminary informs about preparation of the Programme of Measures of the Marine Strategy in Finland for the period of 2028-2033 and the associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). According to Act on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (200/2005, SEA Act) the Finnish Environment Institute is responsible for consultation tasks related to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA) to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention).

Description of the programme

In accordance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC) Finland is in the process of drafting the Programme of Measures for the Marine Strategy in Finland for the period of 2028-2033. The Programme of Measures aims to improve the status of and reduce pressures on the marine environment of the Baltic Sea. In addition to measures already being implemented, the Programme of Measures will set out new measures for implementing the Marine Strategy. The new measures will address marine biodiversity, invasive species, eutrophication, seabed integrity, harmful substances, marine litter, and underwater noise. The Programme of Measures will further include results of the SEA and cost-benefit analysis.

The Programme of Measures is currently being drafted, and the assessment of environmental impacts has been concurrently initiated in accordance with the SEA Act. The purpose of the assessment is to reduce or prevent adverse environmental impacts that are likely to be significant. The SEA will assess both positive and negative, short-term and long-term impact of the Programme of Measures on the following factors: human health, living conditions; soil, water, air, vegetation, living organisms, biodiversity; urban structure, built environment, landscape, townscapes, cultural heritage; use of natural resources.

Assessment of potential transboundary environmental impacts

The SEA will further include an assessment of transboundary environmental impacts. The Baltic Sea is affected by all measures taken within its catchment area and the sea itself. Thus, all measures set out in the Programme of Measures have the potential to exert influence beyond the immediate area where they are implemented. However, the impacts range from highly local to covering wider areas, depending on the type of measure and mechanisms through which impacts may disperse.

Transboundary impacts may occur e.g. when implementing measures addressing nutrients, harmful substances and invasive species. As measures for nutrient and harmful substance reduction from land-based sources are presented in the river-basin management plans, the draft measures included in the MSFD Programme of Measures are mainly related to maritime traffic and risks. These include e.g. IMO-related work to develop international regulation on treating scrubber waters and washing waters of chemical tankers, working towards reducing underwater noise caused by maritime traffic as well as supporting IMO work on reducing introductions of invasive species as biofouling. Finland also aims to recognize areas that are sensitive to ballast water exchange and potential invasive species. In addition, a measure to develop an operational model for emptying wrecks of hazardous substances is included. Measures cover renewing and maintaining the equipment for combatting oil and chemical spills, as well as ensuring the equipment is up to date regarding new types of oil and hazardous substances.

Due to factors such as sea currents and species movement and dispersal, biodiversity measures may also have transboundary effects. Such draft measures include e.g. the establishment of a fishing restriction area in Finland's EEZ (northern Baltic Proper) to protect harbour porpoise. Finland also aims to expand the inventories of marine underwater nature to outer territorial waters and the EEZ to increase knowledge of underwater nature values to support science-based decision-making on e.g. offshore wind energy and other offshore activities.

An assessment of transboundary impacts will be undertaken during September 2026 as part of the SEA and the results will be described in the environmental report, which will be included in the public hearing. A public hearing on the proposal for the Programme of Measures, the SEA and the cost-benefit analysis is expected to be organized from 1 December 2026 to 28 February 2027.

Request for information

A notification is expected to be sent later this year. Finland has made the consideration to at least notify Estonia and Sweden in accordance with the Protocol on SEA. If your state considers that the planned programme is likely to have significant transboundary environmental, including health, effects and wishes to be notified in accordance with Article 10 of the Protocol on SEA and/or Article 7 of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), it is requested to provide a response indicating whether such notification is requested. Furthermore, for the preparation of the documentation, it is requested to indicate your preferred language for the materials to be provided.

Please send the response to the e-mail address of the register office of the Finnish Environment Institute (kirjaamo@syke.fi) and to the e-mail address of the Point of Contact in Finland (transboundaryEIA.SEA@syke.fi) by **12 October 2026** at the latest.

Further information

Authority responsible for preparing the programme and environmental report: Ministry of the Environment, PhD Senior Specialist Henna Rinne, henna.rinne@gov.fi

Protocol on SEA: Finnish Environment Institute, Senior Officer Laura Aitala-Martesuo, transboundaryEIA.SEA@syke.fi

Head of Services

Jenni Juslén

Senior Officer,
Point of Contact to the Espoo Convention
and the Protocol on SEA

Laura Aitala-Martesuo

This document has been electronically signed. The electronic signatures can be verified from the register office of the Finnish Environment Institute.

Send list**Denmark**

Ms. Maria Birkholm SØNDERMARK
 Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment
 Ministry of Green Transition
espoo@sgav.dk

Estonia

Ms. Birgit PARMAS
 Ministry of Climate
espoo@kliimaministeerium.ee

Germany

Ms. Isabel LANG
 Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action,
 Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
 Ms. Kalina PENEVA-GÄDEKE
 Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action,
 Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
GI2@bmukn.bund.de

Latvia

State Environmental Service
pasts@vvd.gov.lv

Lithuania

Mr. Vitalijus AUGLYS
 Ministry of Environment
vitalijus.auglys@am.lt

cc: Dr. Beata VILIMAITE SILOBRITIENE
 Ministry of Environment
beata.vilimaite@am.lt;
beata.vilimaite-silobritiene@am.lt;
beata.silobritiene@am.lt

Poland

Ms. Dorota TORYFTER-SZUMANSKA
 General Directorate for Environmental Protection
dorota.szumanska@gdos.gov.pl; espoo@gdos.gov.pl
 cc: sekretariat.doos@gdos.gov.pl

Sweden

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
 Ms. Åsa BLOMSTER
espoo@swedishepa.se
asa.blomster@swedishepa.se

For information

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
 Ministry of the Environment