

# Conservation and sustainable use of marine resources: the legislative and steering perspective

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# Legislative frame for conservation and sustainable use of marine areas

- International treaties and conventions, including HELCOM
- EU legislation
  - Habitats & Birds Directive
  - Water Framework Directive
  - Marine Strategy Framework Directive
  - Maritime Spatial Planning Directive
- National legislation
  - Nature Conservation Act
  - Water Act
  - Act on the Organisation of River Basin Management and the Marine Strategy
  - Land-use and Building Act

# Increase of economic activities at sea

- Energy (windpower)
- Aquaculture and fisheries
- Harbours and maritime traffic
- Tourism, recreation
- Mineral and biotic resources



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- In fact:
  - 19 marine species (HD)
  - 8 marine habitats (HD)
  - 19 marine bird species/all species (BD)
  - 2 coastal habitats (Water Act)
  - MSFD habitats
  - WFD: ecological quality of water bodies

# Habitats & Birds Directives species and habitats

- Member States are required to protect the species and habitats listed in HD Annex I&II
- In practise, if an activity does not have direct impact on species/habitats distribution, no impact is considered to occur (reproduction, moulting)
- The impact is often described on a national level, i.e., does a specific activity impact the status of a species/habitat in Finland.
- Clear status indicators lack for habitats.



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# Water Act: flads and glov lakes

- Small flads and glov lakes on the coastal areas harbour extremely high BD.
- Often heavily used in recreation: summer houses, recreational use of water areas.
- Small-scale dredging and reef-cutting impact the marine environment.



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# Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- Assessment unit is a marine area.
- Environmental impact assessment often results in other activities having also a major impact on the marine nature.
- No indicators describing the BD status.
- No judgements yet from the Court of Justice of the European Union regarding biodiversity.
- Role in environmental permitting is currently not significant.





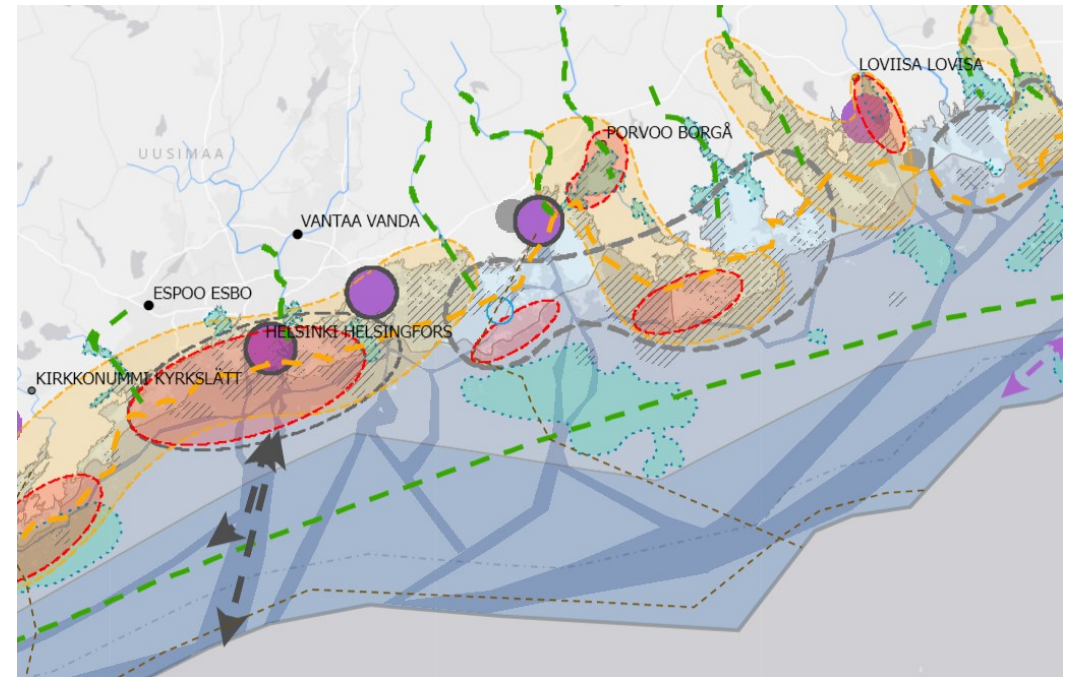
# Water Framework Directive

- Assessment units are water bodies, including coastal marine areas
- Indicators describing ecological water quality
- Court of Justice of the European Union judgement C-461/13 concerning the Weser river
  - One out-all out
- Currently WFD has strong impact on environmental permitting.

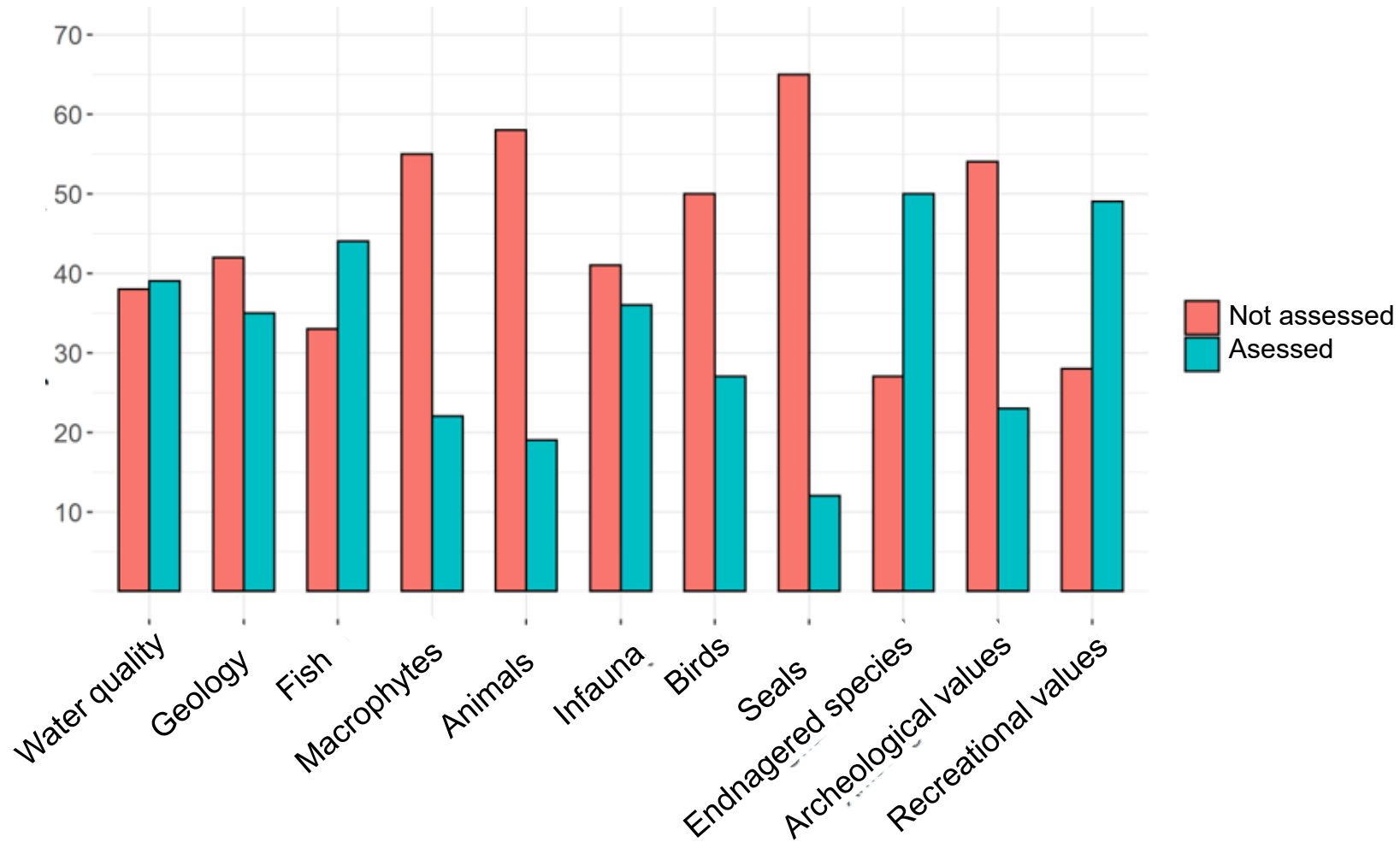


# Maritime Spatial Planning Directive and national legislation

- Finland has a 3-level spatial planning legislation at sea (national MSP + regional and local land use plans)
- Environmental parameters were included in the first national MSP, which also applied ecosystem-based approach
- Regional and local plans are legally binding: how will MSP impact their preparation and environmental parametrization?



# Environmental parameters assessed in marine permitting processes in 2014-2019



# What is needed to ensure that marine BD values are safeguarded?

- Addition of important marine values in EU and national legislation
  - Endangered species and habitats
  - Habitats/species producing ecosystem functions and services????
- National sectoral analyses/assessments of cumulative impacts
- Comprehensive integrative analyses on human impacts on environmental, socio-economic and cultural values on national/regional level before permitting
- Use of ecosystem-based approach in all land/sea use planning levels with sufficient knowledge base

# What can we do as ecologists to ensure BD conservation targets are met?

- Provide more information on the distribution, status and trends of species and habitats.
- Carry out assessments on entire ecosystems/land-sea interactions.
- Provide more knowledge on human impacts and cumulative impacts.
- Effects of CC on nature.
- Build knowledge on the economic value of marine ecosystem services and impacts on human health!

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Support of national and international decision-making processes.

Education of stakeholders and general public.

**Thank you!!**



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