

Appendix B. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout the Marine Spatial Plan for Washington's Pacific Coast. Definitions provided here do not supplant legal definitions in state laws or regulations.

A

Aquatic lands - All tidelands, shorelands, harbor areas, and the beds of navigable waters, and must be construed to be coextensive with the term "aquatic lands" as defined in RCW [79.105.060](#). RCW 43.372.010(1)

Bioextraction – synonymous with marine product extraction, defined below.

C

Coastal counties - Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, and Pacific counties. RCW 43.43.020(1)

Coastal waters - The waters of the Pacific Ocean seaward from Cape Flattery south to Cape Disappointment, from mean high tide seaward two hundred miles. RCW 43.43.020(2)

Cumulative impact - The impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. 40 CFR. § 1508.7

D

Development - A use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures; dredging; drilling; dumping; filling; removal of any sand, gravel, or minerals; bulkheading; driving of piling; placing of obstructions; or any project of a permanent or temporary nature which interferes with the normal public use of the surface of the waters overlying lands subject to this chapter at any state of water level. RCW 90.58.030(3)(a).

E

Ecosystem services – The types of benefits humans receive from functioning ecosystems. Examples of ecosystem services include providing food and clean water; controlling climate and disease; and supporting primary production and nutrient cycling.

Effects or impacts – Terms used in regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which include:

(a) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place.

(b) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density

or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

Effects and impacts as used in these regulations are synonymous. Effects includes ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include those resulting from actions which may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if on balance the agency believes that the effect will be beneficial.

Energy production - Uses that involve the production of energy in a usable form directly in or on the ocean rather than extracting a raw material that is transported elsewhere to produce energy in a readily usable form. Examples of these ocean uses are facilities that use wave action or differences in water temperature to generate electricity. [WAC 173-26-360(10)]. For purposes of the MSP, energy producing uses and the term “marine renewable energy” are synonymous.

Exclusive economic zone waters – The marine waters from the offshore state boundary to the boundary of the exclusive economic zone, over which the United States government has primary jurisdiction. RCW 43.372.010(2)

Existing uses – Uses or activities in Washington’s coastal waters such as recreational or commercial uses (e.g. fishing, shellfish aquaculture, and shipping) that exist in the Study Area prior to final adoption of the Marine Spatial Plan for Washington’s Pacific Coast.

G

Gas hydrates - Gas hydrates are mixtures of gas and water that forms a solid ice-like structure under low temperature and high pressure conditions in marine sediment. The primary type of gas in hydrates is methane. Hence, they are often also referred to as methane hydrates.

I

Impacts - synonymous with “effects”, above

Important, Sensitive, and Unique Areas (ISUs) – Areas in state waters that are environmentally sensitive and contain unique resources that warrant protective measures. These areas have high conservation value, high historic value, or key infrastructure. The ISUs include standards to maintain the high values of these areas and to protect the ISUs from adverse effects of offshore development, while allowing existing compatible uses such as fishing. See Section 4.3.3 for complete list of ISUs and definitions.

M

Marine counties - Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Wahkiakum, San Juan, Whatcom, Skagit, Island, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, and Pacific counties. RCW

43.372.010(3). Under state law, comprehensive marine plans may be developed for marine waters within these counties boundaries.

Marine ecosystem - The physical, biological, and chemical components and processes and their interactions in marine waters and aquatic lands, including humans. RCW 43.372.010(4)

Marine interagency team or team - The marine interagency team created under RCW [43.372.020](#). RCW 43.372.010(5) Washington State used an interagency team called the State Ocean Caucus for purposes of developing the Marine Spatial Plan for Washington’s Pacific Coast.

Marine management plan and marine waters management plan - Any plan guiding activities on and uses of the state's marine waters, and may include a marine spatial plan or element. (RCW 43.372.010(6))

Marine product extraction – Harvest of marine organisms for non-food commercial industries such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and biomedical research. This definition does not include any extraction or harvest performed by tribes.

Marine renewable energy – Generating energy, especially electricity, from the marine environment using renewable resources such as wind, wave, tidal, or current action. Synonymous with the term “energy production,” above.

Marine resources committees - Those committees organized under RCW [36.125.020](#) or by counties within the Northwest straits marine conservation initiative. RCW 43.372.010(7)

Marine spatial planning - A public process of analyzing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives. Often this type of planning is done to reduce conflicts among uses, to reduce environmental impacts, to facilitate compatible uses, to align management decisions, and to meet other objectives determined by the planning process. RCW 43.372.010(8)

Marine waters – The aquatic lands and waters under tidal influence, including saltwaters and estuaries to the ordinary high water mark lying within the boundaries of the state. This definition also includes the portion of the Columbia river bordering Pacific and Wahkiakum counties, Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the entire Puget Sound. RCW 43.372.010(9)

Mitigation – Actions taken to address potential impacts from a project, including:

- (1) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;
- (2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;
- (3) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
- (4) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action;

- (5) Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and/or
- (6) Monitoring the impact and taking appropriate corrective measures. WAC 197-11-768

New ocean use – See below for definition of ocean use. The term “new” is intended to distinguish future ocean use proposals from those uses that are currently permitted or that are undergoing permitting prior to the adoption of the final MSP.

R

Resources or Ocean Resources - The biotic and abiotic features of the environment, such as species, habitats, aesthetics, and chemical, physical and biological functions and processes (e.g. upwelling) of the marine ecosystem.

O

Ocean disposal – The deliberate deposition or release of material at sea, such as solid wastes, industrial waste, radioactive waste, incineration, incinerator residue, dredged materials, vessels, aircraft, ordnance, platforms, or other man-made structures. WAC 173-26-360(11)

Ocean mining - Uses such as the mining of metal, mineral, sand, and gravel resources from the sea floor. WAC 173-26-360(9)

Ocean research – activities that involve scientific investigation for the purpose of furthering knowledge and understanding. WAC 173-26-360(13)

Ocean resources – same as “resources”, above.

Ocean salvage – A use that shares characteristics of other ocean uses and involves relatively small sites occurring intermittently. Historic shipwreck salvage, which combines aspects of recreation, exploration, research, and mining, is an example of such a use. WAC 173-26-360(14)

Ocean uses - Activities or developments involving renewable and/or nonrenewable resources that occur on Washington's coastal waters and includes their associated off shore, near shore, inland marine, shoreland, and upland facilities and the supply, service, and distribution activities, such as crew ships, circulating to and between the activities and developments. Ocean uses involving nonrenewable resources include such activities as extraction of oil, gas and minerals, energy production, disposal of waste products, and salvage. Ocean uses which generally involve sustainable use of renewable resources include commercial, recreational, and tribal fishing, aquaculture, recreation, shellfish harvesting, and pleasure craft activity. WAC 173-26-360(3)

Offshore aquaculture - Any new aquaculture operation within the MSP Study Area, yet outside of the coastal estuaries (e.g. Grays Harbor or Willapa Bay). Such new offshore operations may involve cultivation of marine organisms such as fish, shellfish, or aquatic vegetation using platforms, nets, lines, cages, or other structures.

Offshore development – any development (see definition above) proposed for or occurring in the MSP Study Area that also meets the definition of a new ocean use.

Oil and gas uses and activities – activities that involve the extraction of oil and gas resources from beneath the ocean. WAC 173-26-360(8)

S

Significant - a reasonable likelihood of more than a moderate adverse impact on environmental quality. Significance involves context and intensity (WAC 197-11-330) and does not lend itself to a formula or quantifiable test. The context may vary with the physical setting. Intensity depends on the magnitude and duration of an impact. The severity of an impact should be weighed along with the likelihood of its occurrence (per the State Environmental Policy Act, or SEPA). An impact may be significant if its chance of occurrence is not great, but the resulting environmental impact would be severe if it occurred. WAC 197-11-794. The SEPA rules specify a process, including criteria and procedures, for determining whether a proposal is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact. WAC 197-11-330.

Significant adverse impacts - Chapter 197-11 WAC (SEPA rules) provides guidance in the application of the permit criteria and guidelines for WAC 173-26-360 (Ocean Management Guidelines). The range of impacts to be considered should be consistent with WAC 197-11-060 (4)(e) and 197-11-792 (2)(c). The determination of significant adverse impacts should be consistent with WAC 197-11-330(3) and 197-11-794. The sequence of actions described in WAC 197-11-768 should be used as an order of preference in evaluating steps to avoid and minimize adverse impacts.

T

Transportation - includes such uses as: shipping, transferring between vessels, and offshore storage of oil and gas; transport of other goods and commodities; and offshore ports and airports. Addresses transportation activities that originate or conclude in Washington's coastal waters or are transporting a nonrenewable resource extracted from the outer continental shelf off Washington. WAC 173-26-360(12).

Trophic levels - A class of organisms that occupy the same position in a food chain. Primary production is the bottom of the food chain, typically made of plants (e.g. phytoplankton). Primary consumers are those organisms that eat those plants (e.g. zooplankton) and secondary consumers eat primary consumers (e.g. fish that eat zooplankton), etc. Upper trophic levels refer to organisms that are higher up on the food chain.

U

Usual and Accustomed Area (U&A) – Areas that many Northwest tribes reserved the right to continue to fish, hunt, and gather in through treaties with the United States. Boundaries of each tribes' U&A are unique that tribe, but U&As may overlap with each other.