



Identifying ecologically or biologically significant marine areas: a national perspective

Elina Virtanen

Finnish Environment Institute (Syke)

Training session on SBSTTA 26 substantive agenda items
02.04.2024 / Online



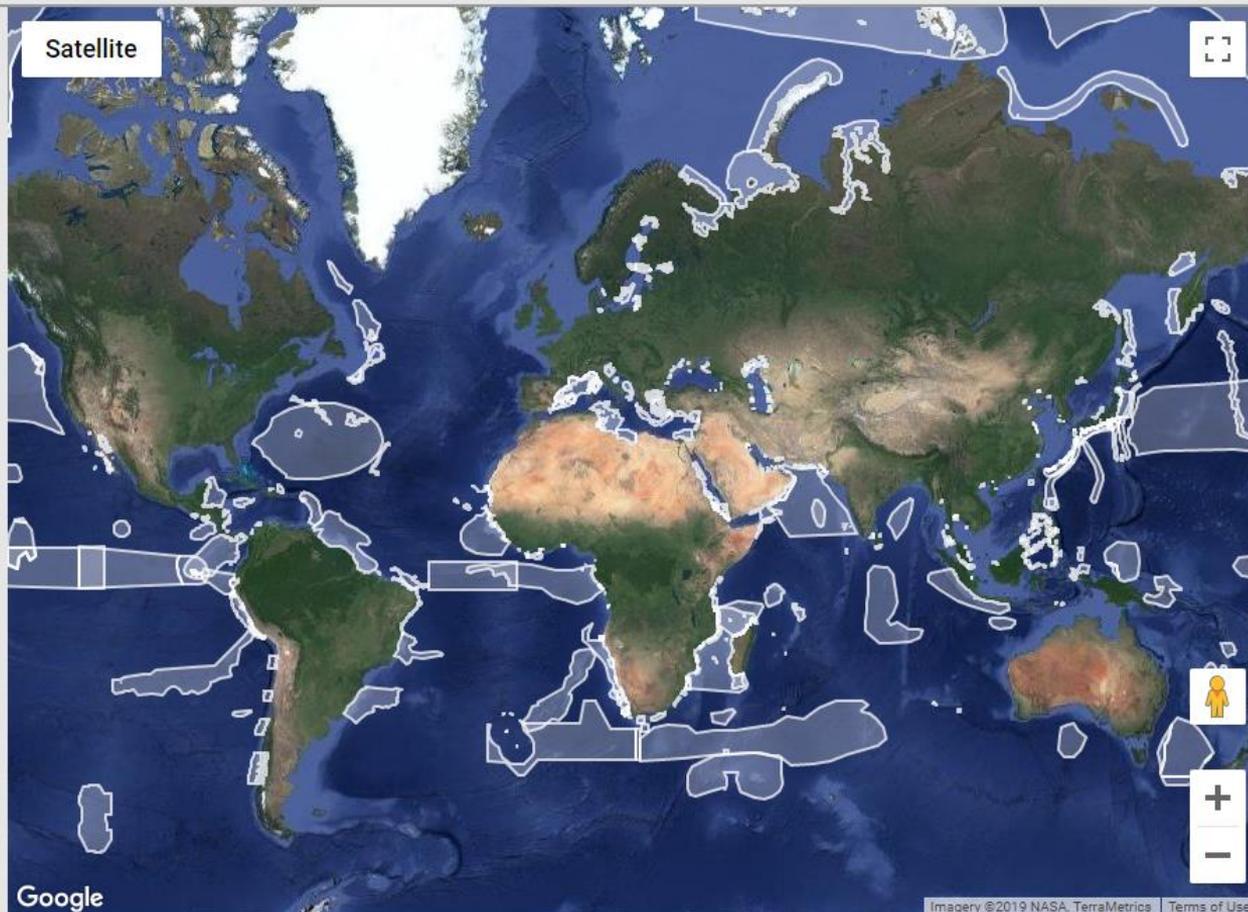
Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the EU nor the EC can be held responsible for them.





View Areas Meeting the EBSA Criteria

All Regions

[Arctic](#)[Baltic Sea](#)[Black and Caspian Seas](#)[East Asian Seas](#)[Eastern Tropical and Temperate Pacific](#)[Mediterranean](#)[North Pacific](#)[North-East Indian Ocean](#)[North-west Atlantic](#)[North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas](#)[South-Eastern Atlantic](#)[Southern Indian Ocean](#)[Western South Pacific](#)[Wider Caribbean and Western Mid-Atlantic](#)

Google

EBSA criteria

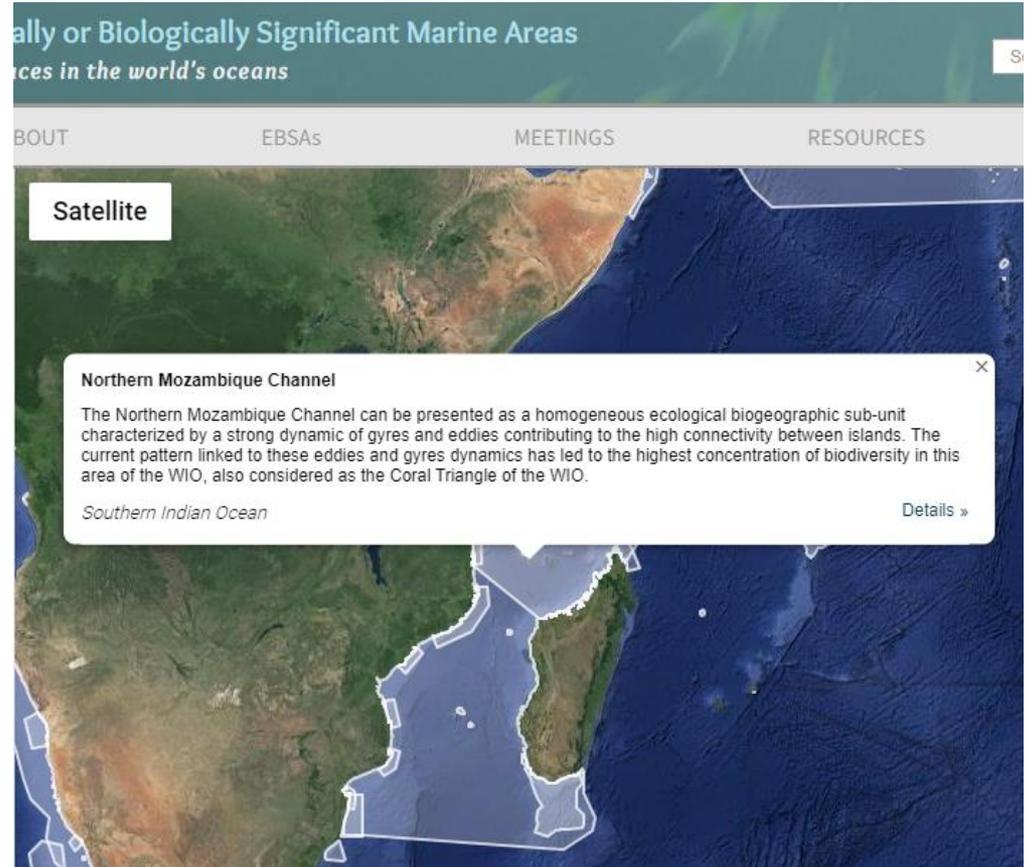
Seven criteria:

- 1) uniqueness, rarity, or notable presence;
- 2) special importance for life history stages of species;
- 3) importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats;
- 4) vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity, or slow recovery;
- 5) biological diversity;
- 6) naturalness and
- 7) biological productivity



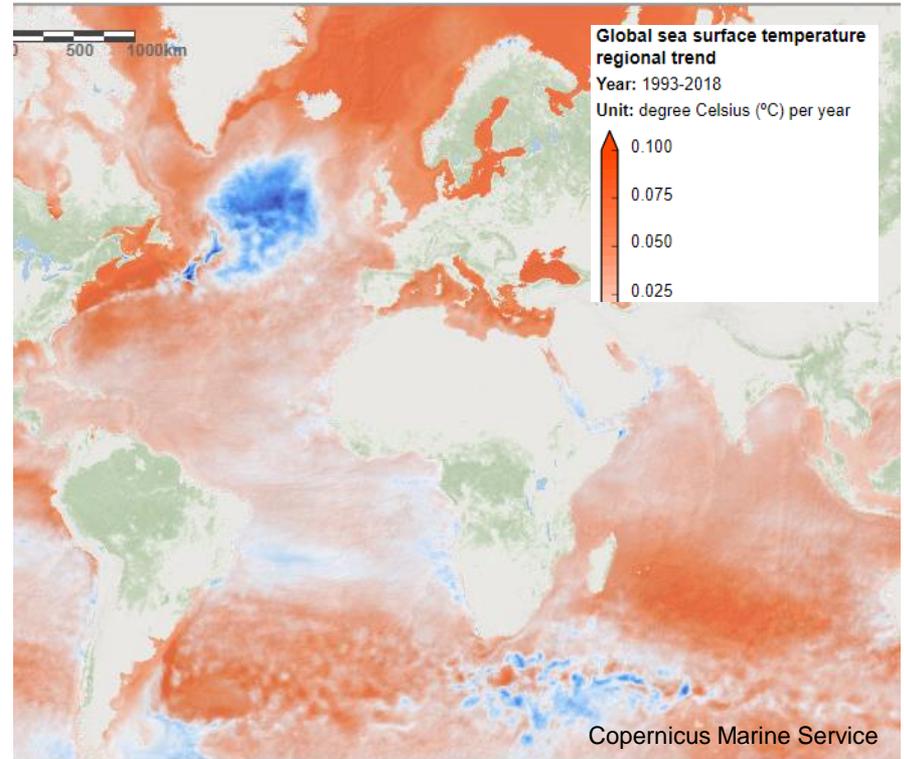
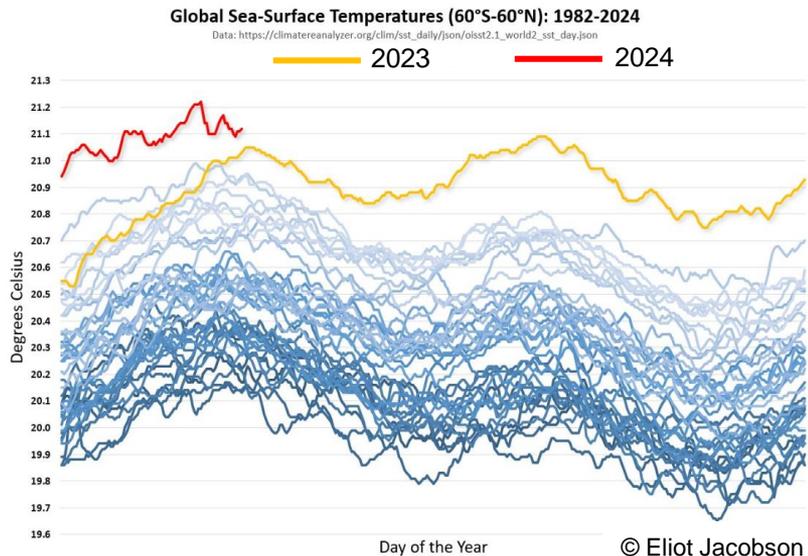
EBSA areas

- Regional workshops by the CBD
- Description of areas and polygons
- Over 300 EBSAs described



EBSA areas: static vs. dynamic?

Evolving process: improvements and updates with new evidence



EBSAs for the Baltic Sea in 2018



Adoption of EBSA criteria for national applications: 87 EMMA areas for Finland

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Marine Policy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/marpol

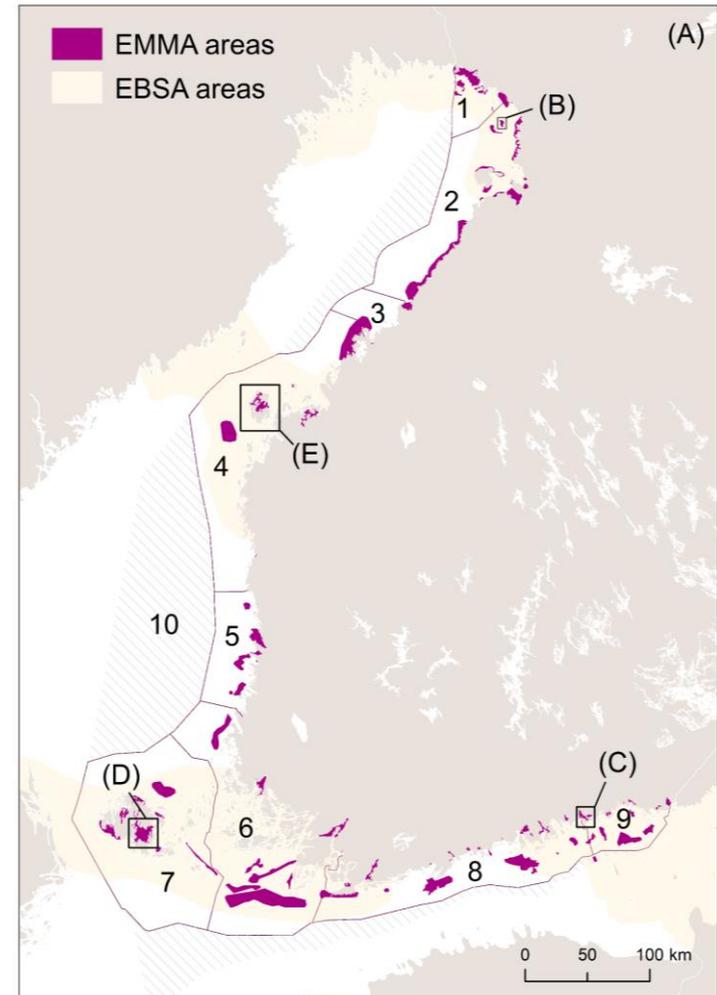
Full length article

Identifying ecologically valuable marine areas to support conservation and spatial planning at scales relevant for decision making

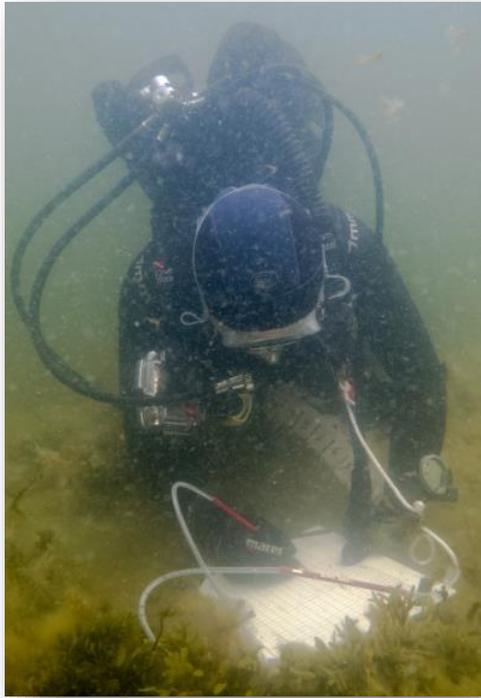
Lauri M.J. Kuismanen ^{a,*}, Elina A. Virtanen ^{a,b}, Juho Lappalainen ^{a,1}, Lasse Kurvinen ^c, Penina Blankett ^d, Markku Viitasalo ^a

^a Finnish Environment Institute (Syke), Latokartanonkaari 11, 00790 Helsinki, Finland
^b Finnish Natural History Museum, University of Helsinki, Finland
^c Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland, Finland
^d Department of the Natural Environment, Ministry of the Environment, Helsinki, Finland

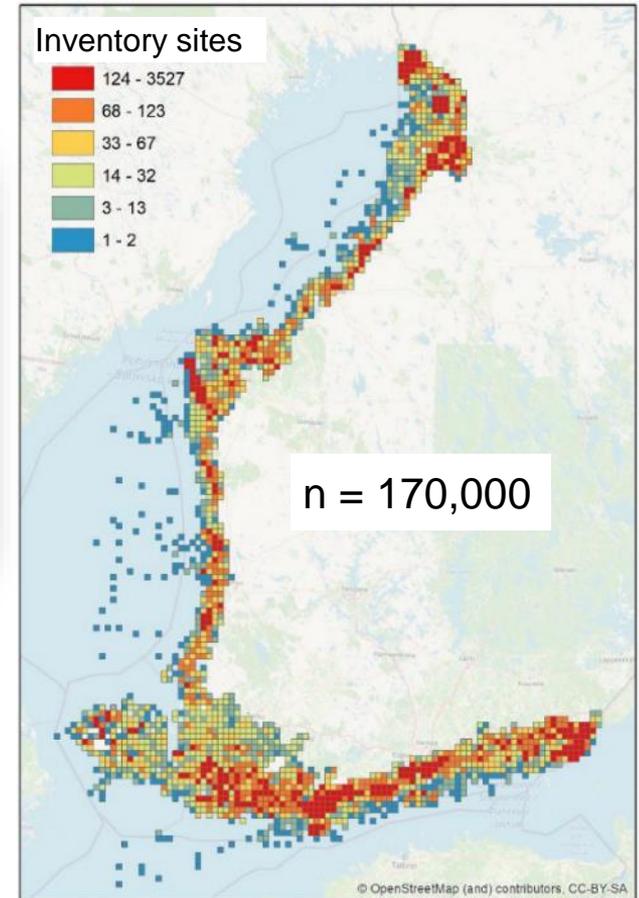
  



Finnish Inventory Programme for Underwater Marine Diversity (Velmu)



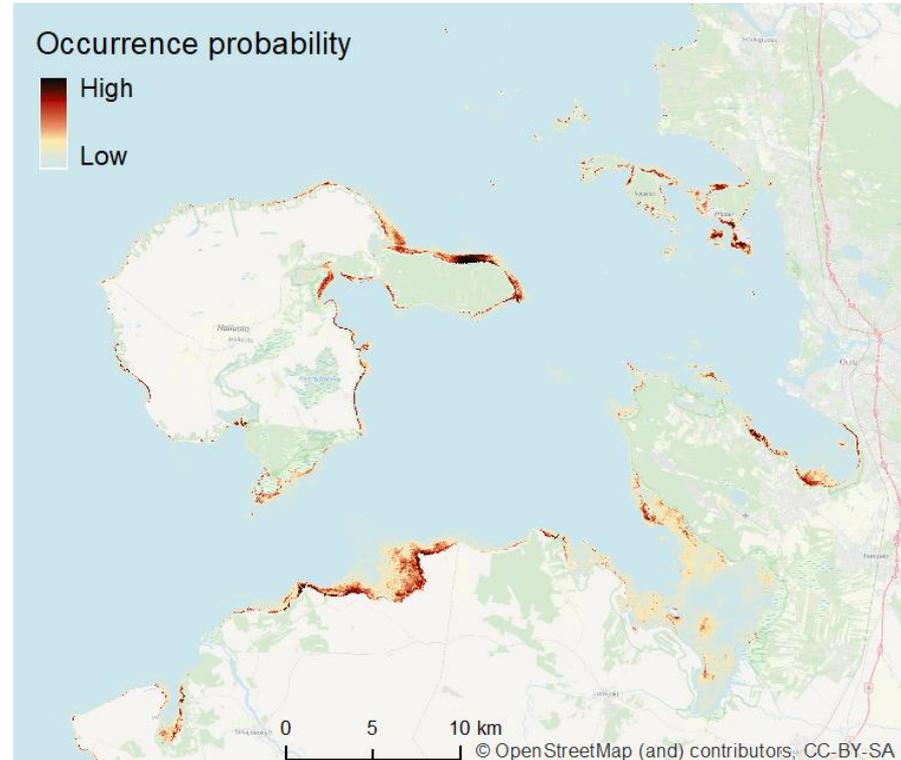
Parks & Wildlife Finland



Species distribution models



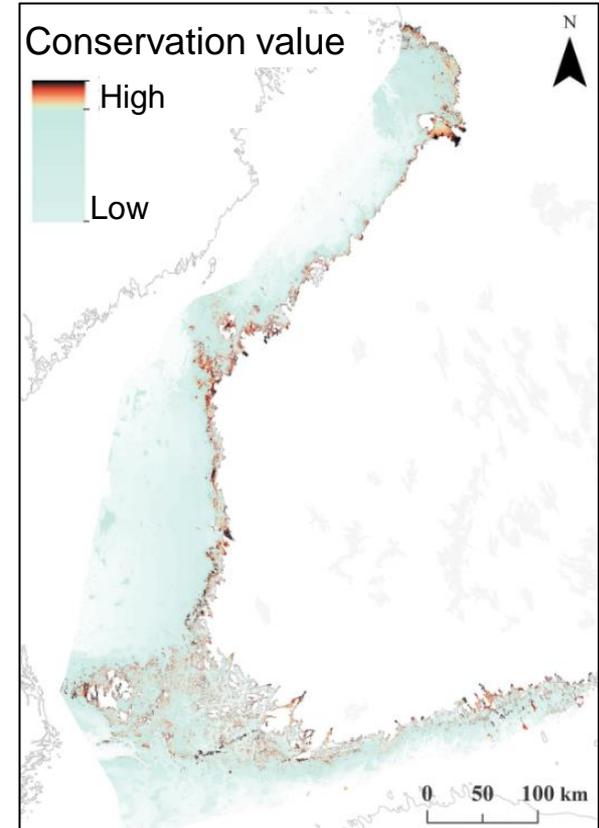
Macroplea pubipennis
-a rare leaf beetle
in EU mainly occurring in Finland



Identification of key areas of conservation importance

- Biodiversity features (species, habitats, ecosystems)
- Threats and stressors
- Ecological connectivity
- Impacts from sea use

Zonation 5



ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Front. Mar. Sci., 08 November 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2018.00402>

Evaluation, Gap Analysis, and Potential Expansion of the Finnish Marine Protected Area Network

Elina A. Virtanen^{1,2*}, Markku Viitasalo¹, Juho Lappalainen¹ and Atte Moilanen^{2,3}

¹Marine Research Centre, Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki, Finland

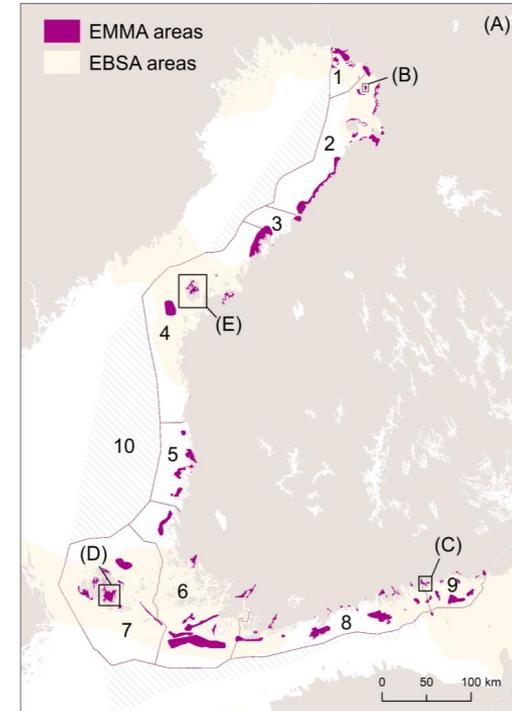
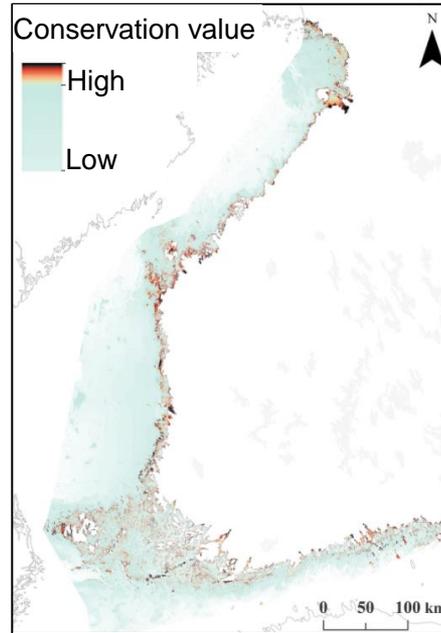
²Department of Geosciences and Geography, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

³Finnish Natural History Museum, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Virtanen *et al.* 2018

Approaching 30 by 30

- Conservation areas
 - strict 10%
 - 20% other protection
- Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)
- Multi-use areas
- Marine spatial planning



What should be taken into account in identifying ecologically or biologically significant areas?

- Representative data, expert knowledge and key tools (e.g. spatial prioritization) to support the identification of areas of importance for biodiversity
- Conservation should not only concentrate on achieving area-based targets, but to maximize benefits for biodiversity
- The importance of scales: national, regional vs. global conservation efforts

Thank you for your attention!

Elina Virtanen

elina.a.virtanen@syke.fi