



MARINE AND FISHERIES

MARINUS
LINK

Marinus Link is a proposed undersea and underground electricity and telecommunications interconnector between Tasmania and Victoria.

What is Marinus Link?

It will further connect Tasmania to the National Electricity Market, comprising Queensland, New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Marinus Link will comprise high voltage direct current (HVDC) cables, fibre-optic cables and converter stations in both Tasmania and Victoria.

Marinus Link will be about 345 kilometres long – 255 kilometres of undersea cables and 90 kilometres of underground cables.

It will have a 1500 megawatt (MW) capacity, equal to the power supply for 1.5 million Australian homes.





Figure 1 - proposed Marinus Link route

MARINUS LINK IN BASS STRAIT

Bass Strait is a body of water between mainland Australia and Tasmania with an average depth of 80 m.

Major shipping lanes pass through Bass Strait connecting coastal, regional and international trading ports.

Bass Strait supports rich fishing grounds with scallops, school shark, octopus, crayfish and finfish as the major commercial fisheries.

Fishing activities are concentrated at the western and eastern ends of Bass Strait around King and Flinders islands, and near the Tasmanian and Victorian coastlines. Fishing activities are less intensive mid-strait due to the deeper water and absence of habitat features.

PROPOSED ROUTE

Marinus Link will cross Bass Strait in a relatively straight line between Heybridge in North West Tasmania and Waratah Bay on Victoria's south coast. The proposed route crosses a part of Bass Strait, which is of low environmental sensitivity, with cables installed beneath the seabed at an estimated depth of between 1 m to 1.5 m.

Why did we choose this route?

Technical, environmental, economic and social factors guided the route selection. The process sought to minimise impacts on the environment, businesses and communities, in balance with key project objectives such as cost, efficiency and construction requirements.

A key factor for the selection of the subsea cable route was the proposed land route and shore crossing location in Victoria. The subsea cable route also avoids major fishing grounds, offshore oil and gas developments, existing Victoria to Tasmania telecommunications cables, marine national parks, conservation areas and known maritime archaeological sites.

For more information regarding the construction of the subsea cable, please refer to our Subsea Construction fact sheet: marinuslink.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/subsea-construction-Marinus-Link-web-jan23.pdf.

BASS STRAIT FISHERIES

South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA) was engaged to identify the commercial fishing sectors present in the area of Marinus Link. This work included identifying the locations and types of fisheries and the impacts Marinus Link may have on them.

The study area for this research was 16 km wide. This study area was based on the length of gillnets and accounts for Marinus Link boat movements, boat drift and fishing locations. It covers the area in which potential impacts to fisheries may occur.

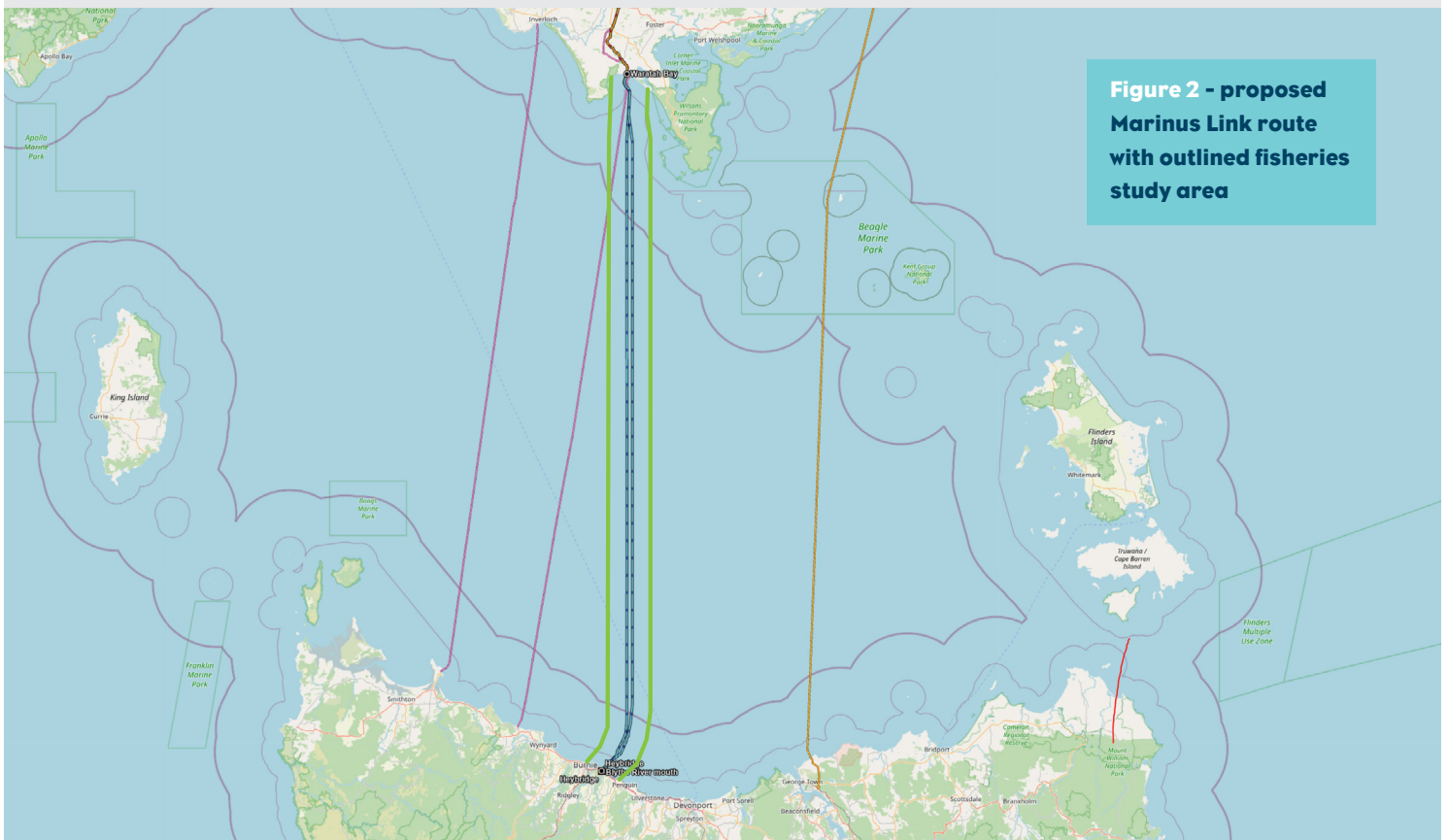


Figure 2 - proposed Marinus Link route with outlined fisheries study area

FINDINGS

There are 30 commercial fisheries permitted to work in Bass Strait, but only eleven with public records indicating they fished in the study area (outlined above) within the last 10 years.

These fisheries use at least 10 different fishing methods including: board trawling, Danish seining, cray potting, hand harvest, demersal gillnet, demersal longline, scallop dredging, auto-longline and hand line. These fisheries are managed by three different regulators and comprise:

- ◇ **Australian:** Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) Commonwealth Trawl sector, SESSF Shark Gillnet and Shark Hook sectors, Southern Squid Jig Fishery and Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery;
- ◇ **Victorian:** Abalone (Central Zone) Fishery, Ocean General Fishery, Rock Lobster (Eastern Zone) Fishery and Wrasse (Ocean) Fishery;
- ◇ **Tasmanian:** Abalone Fishery, Scalefish Fishery and Rock Lobster Fishery.

Fisheries agencies have confidentiality policies that restrict the public release of data from fisheries with less than five vessels. This is often referred to as the "five-boat rule". Due to these rules, data from the study area was restricted to four of the 11 active fisheries. Due to their size, it is anticipated that the remaining seven fisheries are low contributors.

The annual total average catch over the last 10 years of these four fisheries in the study area was 42.5 tonnes, which had an indicative value of just under \$302,000 per year.

Further information: Most catch in the study area is taken by the Australian Government managed Shark Gillnet and Shark Hook Sector, which use gillnets and longline to target gummy sharks. This sector makes up 79% of the revenue (\$182,400) and 36% of the catch weight in the study area.

- ◇ Data for the SESSF Commonwealth Trawl Sector identified an average annual catch worth \$37,363 from the study area, representing 0.05% of its overall annual catch. The fishery can operate both Danish seine and board trawl fishing methods, but due to trawling restrictions have only been observed to use Danish seine in the study area.
- ◇ Data from the Southern Squid Jig Fishery identified an average annual catch worth \$51,495, representing 2.7% of its overall annual catch.
- ◇ The Tasmanian Scalefish Fishery was identified as the most impacted by the study area, with \$30,615 per year of catch occurring within the study area, representing 4.4% of its total catch. While there is no data for fishing methods, Danish seine is likely as there is no state-licensed trawling.

The findings of the SETFIA report indicate that Marinus Link will have a low impact on fisheries in Bass Strait. These findings are also reflected in the route options report. This can be viewed on our website:

marinuslink.com.au/2021/03/marinus-link-route-options-report

The SETFIA report is one component of the engagement with fisheries to assess the potential impacts of Marinus Link.

Where there are identified impacts, Marinus Link will work with commercial fishing operators to develop a code of conduct. We will also explore options for vessels to work with us during construction.

MARINUS LINK AND FISHERIES CODE OF CONDUCT

Throughout the development of the project, the Marinus Link team will engage with key fishery stakeholders to create a code of conduct.

The code of conduct will guide the ongoing management of fishing activities within the location of the undersea cable. It will consider:

- ◇ Electronic chart overlays, providing fishers with location of the cable;
- ◇ Policy regarding anchor selection, use and replacement programs;
- ◇ Guidance around the preferred fishing methods near the cable;
- ◇ Details for fishers should they experience issues around the cable;
- ◇ Learnings from Basslink operations;
- ◇ Development of project management measures with affected fisheries.





NEXT STEPS

Consultation with key stakeholders on the development of the code of conduct will start in due course. For up-to-date information on engagement opportunities, please visit our website: marinuslink.com.au/engagement.

MORE INFORMATION

visit marinuslink.com.au
email team@marinuslink.com.au
call 1300 765 275



MARINUS
LINK

