

# MARINE IBAS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



V.1.0

BirdLife International

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Please consider this report as a live document that will be revised every 6 months. A version code will always be printed on page 1 of each report for clearer identification. There is no printed version of this report and it can only be distributed as PDF.

This report does not deal with the methodological process involved in the identification of marine IBAs, as this is covered in another BirdLife document titled “Marine IBA Toolkit”<sup>1</sup>.

The Marine IBA Toolkit is enclosed here as an Annex.

**Notes of version 1.0:**

At the time of printing this version, Romania hadn't sent enough information to produce their country profiles.

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<sup>1</sup> BirdLife International (2010). Marine IBA toolkit: standardised techniques for identifying priority sites for the conservation of seabirds at-sea. BirdLife International, Cambridge UK. Version 1.1: May 2010

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# A drop of fresh water

**ANGELO CASERTA, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN DIVISION**

Dear reader,

It is hard to imagine the storm of emotions that invaded Yuri Gagarin's heart when, first in the history of human kind, he watched the Earth from the outer space. Our planet is a tiny blue spot in the vast universe... About 71% of its surface is covered by water, mainly oceans and seas. Life within the oceans and seas evolved 3 billion years prior to life on land. It still keeps evolving and we are gradually discovering and understanding the fundamental role played by our oceans and seas in creating, preserving and ensuring the evolution of life on Earth.

As anything else on our beautiful planet, oceans and seas are endangered by human activities. Acting now to protect oceans and seas means securing a sustainable future.

With this publication we give our contribution to the protection of our seas, as we have been doing for years on land. We do it in our unique way, using birds as indicators and applying a rigorous methodology to identify and protect Important Bird Areas. Marine IBAs are home to a wide range of species that together ensure healthy ecosystems and healthy seas.

BirdLife Marine IBA work is a drop of fresh, clean water, that together with the work of other Civil Society Organisations, Academies and research institutes, Governments, European Institutions, responsible fishermen, form a flow of hope for our seas and our future.

We are doing our part. It is now up to the EU Member States government to protect these sites, not as a consequence of bureaucratic and legal obligations, but as a result of care and passion for our seas and our future.



# BirdLife Global Seabird Programme

**BEN SULLIVAN, COORDINATOR**

The terrestrial Important Bird Area (IBA) has been a flagship programme of BirdLife International since the 1980s and is globally recognised as a powerful and effective conservation tool. In recent years, the BirdLife Global Seabird Programme (GSP), particularly in Europe, led the way in developing robust criteria for the identification of important seabird conservation sites in the marine environment. This process was pioneered in Portugal and Spain and has now been rolled in more than 20 EU countries.

Marine IBAs have a particular relevance in the EU because of the potential under the Wild Birds Directive of the European Union to provide rigorous and scientifically defensible evidence to support the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and to help deliver key objectives of Natura 2000.

The Marine IBA network identified in this report will make a significant contribution to the conservation of seabirds and their habitat in the EU. Seabirds are excellent indicators of the state of marine ecosystems and because of their high visibility and ubiquitous distribution in coastal and pelagic marine ecosystems, data on their distribution and habitat use is a valuable tool for understanding the broader marine environment. The GSP is proud to have been able to support the many people involved in the development of this document and believe that the publication of the Marine Important Bird Area in the European Union sets a benchmark standard for the identification and potential protection of concentrations of seabird and important marine habitat in EU waters.



# The first European marine IBA summary

**IVAN RAMIREZ, EUROPEAN MARINE COORDINATOR**

Dear reader,

What is the real commitment of the EU countries towards seabird conservation? How many marine IBAs, as identified by BirdLife partners, are legally protected? These are just some of the questions we raise and for which this report, the first pan-european marine IBA summary, is being launched.

The following pages will help you to:

- I. Review the latest information on marine IBA networks across the EU
- II. Present BirdLife Partners' National priorities in terms of marine IBA identification
- III. Review EU Governments' support for the establishment of Marine SPAs

More than 20 countries have collaborated at this report; marine conservationists across Europe have given us their most up-to-date data and the overall summary is very clear:

**European Union seabird populations are far from being sufficiently protected. The application of the European Wild Birds Directive to the countries Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZ) or fishing management areas is very poor and immediate action is needed to safeguard the future of our marine species.**



# Important Bird Areas

The Important Bird Areas programme of BirdLife International seeks to identify, document and conserve sites that are key for the long-term viability of bird populations. BirdLife International has successfully implemented a network of terrestrial Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and has obtained general recognition that these sites represent prime sites for bird conservation. This European network of IBAs has formed an important scientific reference for the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Wild Birds Directive of the European Union. Because of their selection according to solid scientific criteria, BirdLife promotes the classification of all IBAs as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) to implement the Birds Directive – one of the key elements in establishing Natura 2000. The BirdLife inventories of Important Bird Areas have been recognized four times by the European Court of Justice as the list of sites that should be classified as Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive in the absence of other scientific evidence. This has been in cases against the Netherlands (Case C-3/96), France (Case C-202/01), Finland (Case C-240/00) and Italy (Case C-378/01).

Over the past 6 years, BirdLife Partners have intensively studied the migration, feeding and moulting patterns of all seabird species. The implementation of small data-loggers attached to the birds' body, together with intensive boat and/or plane seabird surveys plus the refining of the latest environmental modeling methods, has allowed Birdlife to become a major player on seabird research.

With the success of the IBA approach in both the terrestrial and freshwater environment in various continents and the development of new monitoring techniques that favour a better understanding of the marine environment, BirdLife International is now actively compiling the seabird information available in Europe and elsewhere to enlarge the IBA network into the Marine Environment.

# Natura 2000 in the Marine Environment

EU Member States have to protect marine areas as part of the Natura 2000 network in all the marine areas under their jurisdiction. The Council of Ministers recognised the need for implementation of the nature directives in the EEZ as a key element for the protection of the marine ecosystem (Council Conclusions, 2001)<sup>2</sup>.

This acknowledgement supports the application of N2000 at a) The internal waters and the Territorial Sea b) The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and/or to other areas where Member States are exercising equivalent sovereign rights (fishing protection zones, environmental protection zones...) c) The Continental Shelf.

In the case of the Atlantic, The EEZ could extend up to 200 nautical miles (370,4km). In the Mediterranean and Black Seas the situation is still unclear, given the fact that there are no official EEZ declared by most countries, and therefore N2000 remains constrained to territorial waters (normally 12 nm from the coastline)

Following on the Message from Malahide and the 2010 target, the EU Biodiversity Plan stated the following calendar for Member States' implementation of the Marine N2000 network: "complete marine network of Special Protection Areas (SPA) by 2008; adopt lists of Sites of Community Importance (SCI) by 2008 for marine; designate Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and establish management priorities and necessary conservation measures for SACs [by 2012 for marine]; establish similar management and conservation measures for SPAs [by 2012 for marine]".

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<sup>2</sup> Extract from the Annex to Council Conclusions on the Strategy for the Integration of Environmental Concerns and Sustainable development into the Common Fisheries policy, -Luxembourg, 25 April 2001: Point 15. The Habitats and Birds Directives( 5), and specially the associated network of protected sites in the marine environment "Natura 2000", constitute a key element for the protection of the marine ecosystem which may have consequences on fisheries. Member States are encouraged, in co-operation with the Commission, to continue their work towards the full implementation of these directives in their exclusive economic zones.  
[http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/agricult/ACF20DE.html](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/agricult/ACF20DE.html)



# How to read this report

Each country profile has been split into the following 6 sections:

1. **Summary:** this is a 1-2 page text summarizing the current state of the country's marine IBA network and the most recent projects/reports available.
2. **Marine IBAs:** A detailed table specifying the number of marine and/or coastal IBAs and the IBA criteria met is presented as well as the "type of marine IBA" according to the Marine IBA Toolkit<sup>3</sup>. Within this table "Coastal IBAs" refers to Terrestrial IBAs that already have a marine extension and that were identified in national terrestrial IBA inventories, whereas "marine IBAs" refer to IBAs specifically identified using the methods described in the marine IBA Toolkit and that are present at national marine IBA inventories.
3. **National Priorities:** this section summarises the BirdLife Partner top priorities to achieve a complete network of marine IBAs and SPAs.
4. **Government's Support:** This section presents the BirdLife Partners view on the current work that each EU Member State is doing towards the implementation of N2000 at sea.
5. **References:** A list of the most relevant publications is given
6. **Map:** A detailed map is presented for each country containing the most up-to-date information on marine IBAs, Marine Protected Areas (such as those identified by OSPAR or the Barcelona Convention), Marine SPAs (if they exist) and Economic Exclusive Zones. EEZs not officially declared by EU Member States are also shown with footnotes explaining the present situation. For some countries, marine IBA networks are not very visible due to map-scale restrictions. Detailed shapefiles (Arc Gis 9.3) of these networks are available from the report's editor on request.

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<sup>3</sup> See note 1

## Breakdown of number of candidate marine IBAs by European Country

Country	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria <sup>4</sup>			Type of marine IBA			
	Total	Global	Regional	Type 1 Extension	Type 2 Non-breeding	Type 3 Bottleneck	Type 4 Pelagic
<b>Belgium</b>	4	2	2	4	0	0	0
<b>Bulgaria</b>	14	2	5	14	0	0	0
<b>Cyprus</b>	2	1	1	2	0	0	0
<b>Denmark</b>	60	36	24	23	49	0	8
<b>Estonia</b>	17	12	5	9	14	0	0
<b>Finland</b>	19	8	11	18	1	0	0
<b>France</b>	84	11	73	50	23	3	8
<b>Germany</b>	24	24	24	5	24	0	1
<b>Greece</b>	27	22	21	11	2	0	0
<b>Ireland</b>	46	0	46	46	0	0	0
<b>Italy</b>	41	18	23	41	0	0	0
<b>Latvia</b>	6	5	1	0	6	1	0
<b>Lithuania</b>	5	5	0	0	5	0	0
<b>Malta</b>	10	4	6	0	0	0	0
<b>Netherlands</b>	10 <sup>5</sup>	1	9	4	0	0	6
<b>Poland</b>	12	12	0	2	9	0	1
<b>Portugal</b>	17	12	5	14	1	0	2
<b>Romania</b>	3	2	1	2	2	0	0
<b>Slovenia</b>	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Spain</b>	42	27	15	37	18	5	42
<b>Sweden</b>	32	23	9	28	4	0	0
<b>United Kingdom</b>	111	58	53	101	36	0	0

<sup>4</sup> Please see section “How to read this report” for clarification on the Coastal and/or Marine Concept for IBAs.

<sup>5</sup> Please see page 48 for more details

# Estonia, Latvia & Lithuania

## 1. SUMMARY

The Baltic Sea is a unique and fragile ecosystem, containing many species and habitats of European interest and of global importance for biodiversity. An EU LIFE funded project over the period 2005-2009 and managed by the Baltic Environmental Forum, involved BirdLife Partners in Estonia (EOY), Latvia (LOB) and Lithuania (LOD) and focused on the identification and revision of the Important Bird Areas existing on the coastal areas of these three countries. This project built upon earlier studies of marine IBA identification in the Baltic.

Threats to seabirds, including fisheries bycatch, pollution and coastal development/construction were addressed by the project in order to reduce their biodiversity impacts. These project actions do continue after the end of the project and offshore seabird counts are a core activity. BirdLife International and its local Partners have been especially involved in ensuring that all candidate marine IBAs are included in the Natura 2000 designation, and that, as a result of the project, adequate protection under national legislation is established for the IBAs.

The seminar "Protecting the marine ecosystem - Lessons learned from project activities in Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian marine waters" that took place on 27-28 October 2009 in Sigulda, Latvia, marked the end of this project.

The main results of the LIFE-Nature project were:

- In Estonia the borders of existing MPAs were confirmed
- In Latvia 7 new MPAs were proposed, 5 of them SPAs
- In Lithuania the borders of the MPAs were specified and for one site quite big extension proposed. A new SPA was also proposed new SPA (adjacent to the already existing SPA along the Curonian Spit). This new SPA mostly falls within the boundaries of the original IBA along the Curonian Spit ("Seashore at Nida")
- All three Baltic States gained first experience with development of management plans for MPAs
- Public Awareness: almost 100 articles in media, news on TV, DVD about marine ecosystem "See the sea!" info stands about MPAs and their nature values, seminars for stakeholders etc

Also, within the frame of ESTMAR project (financed by Norwegian Financial Mechanisms), new open sea areas (still in the territorial waters, not EEZ) are currently being investigated in Estonia. The preliminary results show already that there are nature values worth protection on some of the investigated offshore shallows. The data received are very valuable because there were no data before about those offshore areas. During the ESTMAR project also 6 more management plans will be developed for the existing MPAs in coastal waters.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Country	Total	Global	Regional	Extension	Non-breeding	Bottleneck	Pelagic
<i>Estonia</i>	<b>17</b>	12	5	9	14	0	0
<i>Latvia</i>	<b>6</b>	5	1	0	6	1	0
<i>Lithuania*</i>	<b>5</b>	5	1	0	5	0	1

\* It must be noted that two of these original IBAs stretch beyond the Lithuanian national boundaries into Russian and Latvian waters.

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES (LATVIA)

Presently 4 IBAs fully overlap with SPAs. Part of Irbe strait IBA (Bezimjannij bank) lies in the EEZ and still has no legal protection. Further investigation of the EEZ part and checking whether remaining IBAs (e.g. Salacgrva-Vitrupe) deserve becoming SPAs would be a task for the near future.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT (LATVIA)

LOB appreciates the good collaboration of the Ministry of Environment has with NGOs, which has resulted in approval of 5SPAs (2 of them with site management plans) in early 2010. Support for elaborating management plans for remaining sites and ensuring real protection and monitoring would be the next thing we expect from Government.

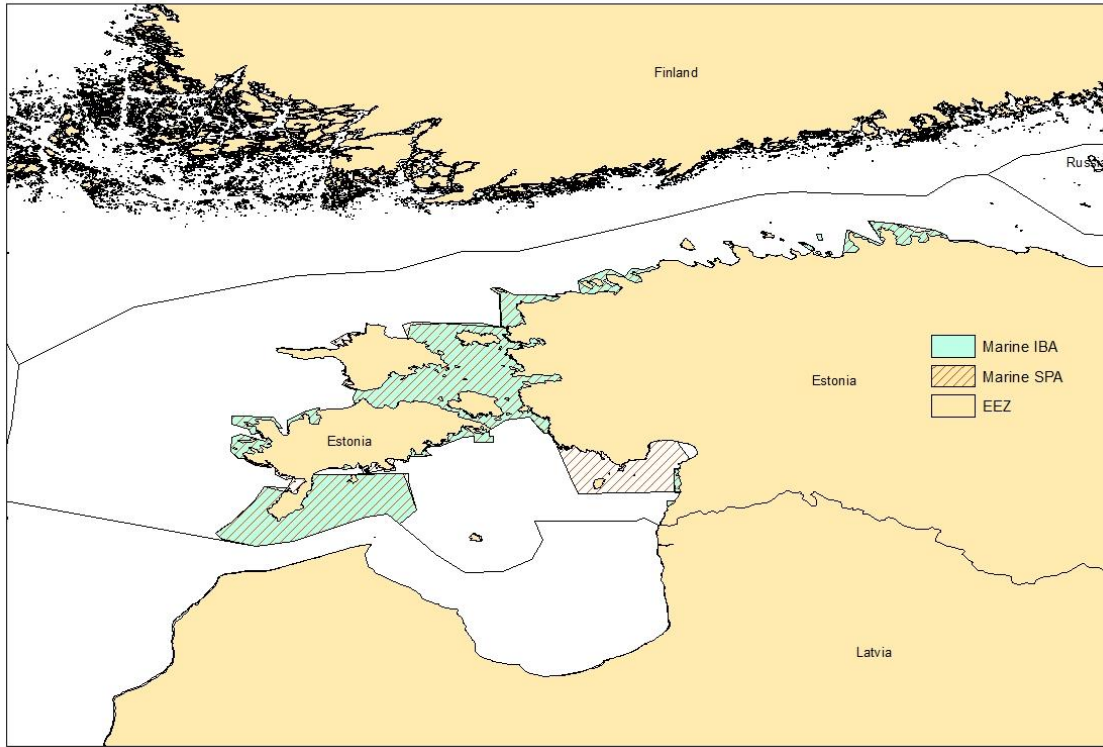
Note: at the moment of writing this report, Estonia and Lithuania hadn't submitted their national priorities

## 5. REFERENCES

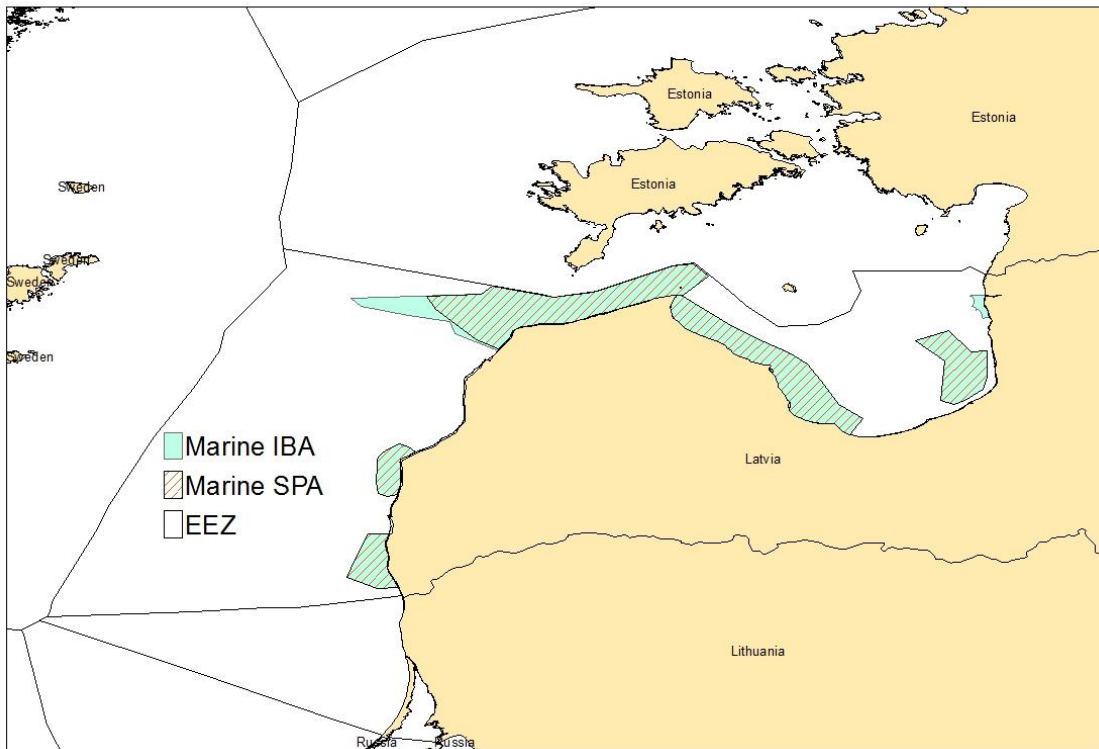
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- [www.balticseaportal.net](http://www.balticseaportal.net);
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6. MAP

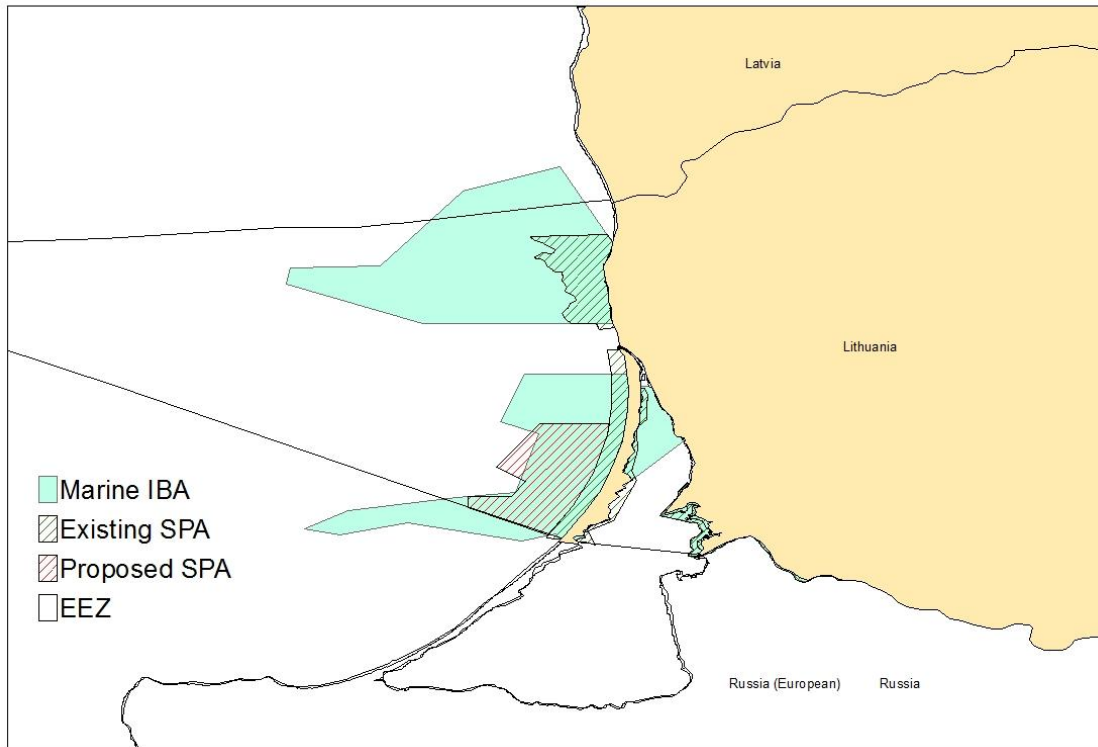
Marine IBAs & MPAs in Estonia



Marine IBAs & Marine SPAs in Latvia



Marine IBAs & Marine SPAs & Proposed SPAs in Lithuania



# BELGIUM

## 1. SUMMARY

In Belgian marine waters, several marine protected areas exist with sometimes overlapping boundaries, all within the 12 nm territorial limits. These MPAs comprise one area established under the Ramsar Convention, and several areas under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, and one marine reserve. In Belgian marine waters, a delineation based on a certain distance from the coast seems most straightforward given the distribution and densities of key species.

The legislation to designate Marine Protected Areas in Belgian waters dates from 20/01/1999, and was later updated in 2005. In 2001, a Royal Decree was issued in Belgium legally protecting all birds in Belgian marine waters. This legislation includes licensing of any industrial or public activities at sea on the basis of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In 2003, Belgium issued a Masterplan for the Belgian Part of the North Sea (BPNS) effectively creating the 'eleventh province of Belgium'. It includes a user-oriented spatial planning of human uses at sea.

Haelters et al. (2004) proposed three SPAs targeting the protection of seven species (three Annex I species and four migratory species). These areas were assessed firstly on the concentration of birds they host, resulting in the identification of the most suitable habitats for great skua and little tern. For the other five species (sandwich tern, common tern, great crested grebe, common scoter, and little gull) the most suitable habitats in number and size were selected for each species and the areas overlaid to assess the final area for possible SPA status. From this analysis, three areas were identified, two of which extend from low water mark out to 6 nm offshore (Nieuwpoort and Ostend); the other area is focused around the harbour of Zeebrugge.

The latest and most up to date publication dealing with Marine Protected Areas in Belgium is the 2009 North Sea Report, commissioned by WWF and to which Natuurpunt has contributed extensively.

At the moment a new scientific survey is being organised to review the SCI. Scientists suggest an extension of the Trapegeer Stroombank-SCI towards the Hinder Banks. This would be a representative area for the 1110-habitat. Natuurpunt welcomes this proposal but urges also to designate the Vlakte van de Raan as 1110-habitat (next to the Dutch MPA suggestion) and the Baai van Heist as 1140-habitat. The designation would be made as SCI but scientific evidences are proofing that protecting the habitats will enrich the basis of the marine ecosystem and therefore also the marine & coastal birds.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Belgium	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
		4	2	2	4	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- The designation of Marine SPAs and marine IBAs in Belgium is insufficient according to Natuurpunt, Birdlife partner in Belgium. Further identification of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) should concern areas with high numbers of waterbirds (also including the Black Scoter *Melanitta nigra*) as well as areas of high species diversity and feeding areas, and must give due consideration to migration bottlenecks. Natuurpunt therefore proposes, based on scientific research in Belgium and the Netherlands, the designation of the Vlakte van de Raan and the Baai van Heist as additional MPAs.
- Natuurpunt's priorities for Marine SPA declaration are condensed on page 50 of the North Sea Report, which includes the designation of the Vlakte van de Raan en de Hinderbanken as an SPA.
- Natuurpunt also advocates – together with WWF and the NorthSea Foundation - for the designation of “Blue Belts”, which are meant to be specially managed areas which do not necessarily have to be designated as an MPA but are comparable to IUCN Category IV-VI

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- Natuurpunt asks the government for the designation of the Vlakte van de Raan and the Baai van Heist as additional MPAs.
- Natuurpunt urges the government (at national and European level) to realise adequate management plans, otherwise the designation would just remain lines on a map / an empty box of which the only result will be that Belgium won't obtain a GES in 2020

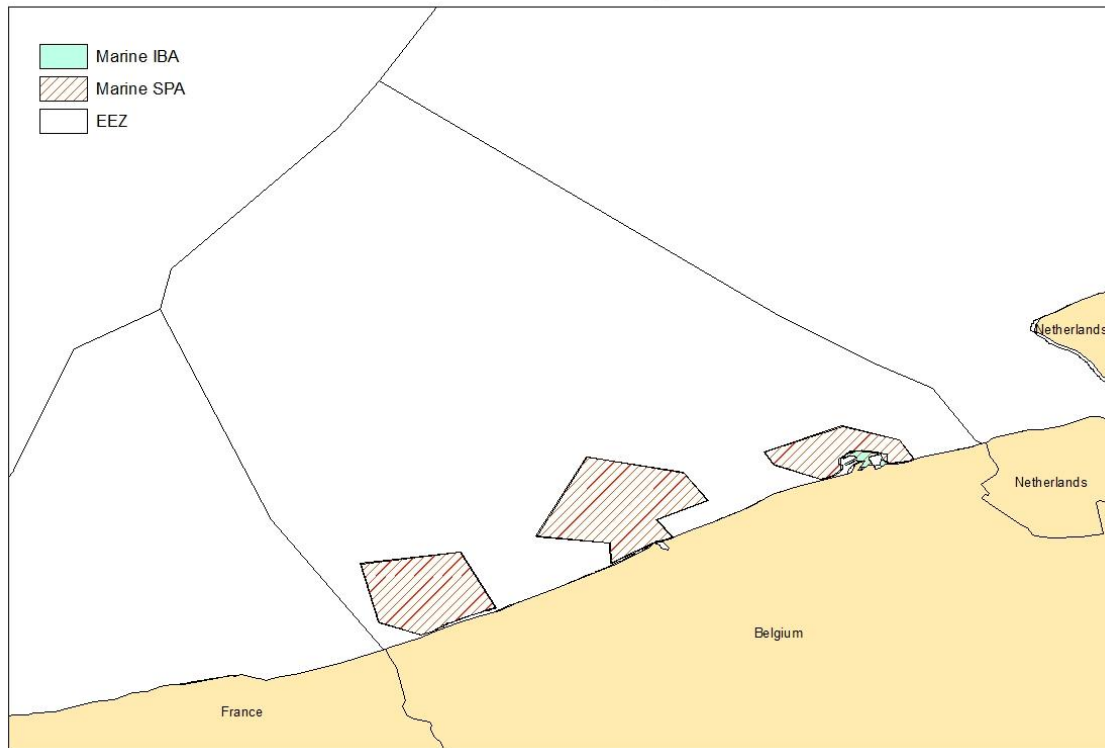
## 5. REFERENCES

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## 6. MAP

Marine IBAs & MPAs in Belgium



# BULGARIA

## 1. SUMMARY

Bulgaria comprises Black Sea biogeographical marine region, where the Bulgarian jurisdictional waters cover an area of 27 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The Bulgarian part of the Black Sea marine area is not well studied in terms of sea birds and no special studies have been carried out for the identification of marine IBAs. However species such as Mediterranean shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii* and Yelkouan shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan* occur regularly along the Bulgarian Black sea coast and the coastal shallow water are specifically important for wintering waterfowl, as well as terns and gulls all the year round.

Fourteen of the 114 IBAs so far identified in Bulgaria are situated along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast and include coastal marine area of 540 km<sup>2</sup> in order to ensure the conservation of water birds, migratory routes of birds, as well as specifically the known breeding and feeding areas of the Mediterranean shag and Yelkouan shearwater. The only breeding colony of the Mediterranean shag along the Black Sea coast is situated in Kaliakra IBA, and that IBA is identified to include the breeding colony and main roosts of the species. Two other IBAs – Drankulak Lake and Shabla Lake Complex are identified for waterfowl congregations both in the lakes and coastal areas, including regular roosting and feeding areas of the Mediterranean shag. The species is recorded occasionally in small numbers in another six coastal IBAs, where it is not recognised as trigger species – Galata, Kamchia Complex, Pomorie Lake, Mandra-Poda Lake Complex, Emine and Ropotamo Complex.

The Yelkouan shearwater is insufficiently studied in Bulgaria. The only confirmed feeding area for the species is situated in Emine IBA. There is evidence that the species may breed in this IBA, as well as in three other IBAs – Bakarlaka, Ropotamo Complex and Galata, however breeding colonies have not been found so far. All these IBAs are identified also to protect the Yelkouan shearwater. The species is recorded in big numbers also in the marine area of Kaliakra IBA, which is why it is also important qualifying species for this area.

All the coastal IBAs are approved as SPAs by the government, however some of them are still under procedure of designation, including Shabla Lake Complex, Durankulak Lake, Galata, Bakarlaka. The marine area of IBAs fully overlaps with the marine areas of the approved SPAs.

BSPB has been actively involved in studying, monitoring and the conservation of Black Sea Coastal wetlands since its foundation in 1988. The annual mid-winter counts started since then include also coastal marine areas up to 2-3 km from the coast, which allow for the identification of coastal areas important for wintering waterfowl. The colony of Mediterranean shag is subject of regular monitoring of the number of the breeding birds. As BSPB recognises the importance of protecting the habitats of sea birds, especially the marine area, where takes into account the vast insufficiency of scientific information, the organisation start to look for possibilities to improve the knowledge about the species and their protection. It participates in workshops and meeting organised by countries with significant experience in identification and protection of marine IBAs in order to improve the knowledge of best practices and to plan its priorities for action for the future.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Bulgaria	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	14	2	5	14	0	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Identify key sites for Yelkouan shearwater and confirm breeding status. The occurrence of the species in Bulgaria is confirmed by numerous observations, but it is not well studied and it is necessary to identify first its key areas of foraging, staging and possibly - breeding, as well as movement patterns. It requires detailed studies off shore with application of the best methodologies and practices developed in other countries
- Mapping breeding distribution of shag. The only colony of species is well known, but the areas where the shag forages are not well studied. Detailed studies are needed to identify and map the key areas for the species during the breeding period, as well as its movement patterns outside the breeding season along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.
- Identify all major threats to seabirds, especially, loss of breeding and foraging habitats, overfishing and accidental bycatch, competition related to competitive species as well as oil and chemical pollution, windfarms, predation.
- Gain legal protection for marine IBAs - reassess the boundaries of coastal IBAs and eventually designate new marine SPAs.

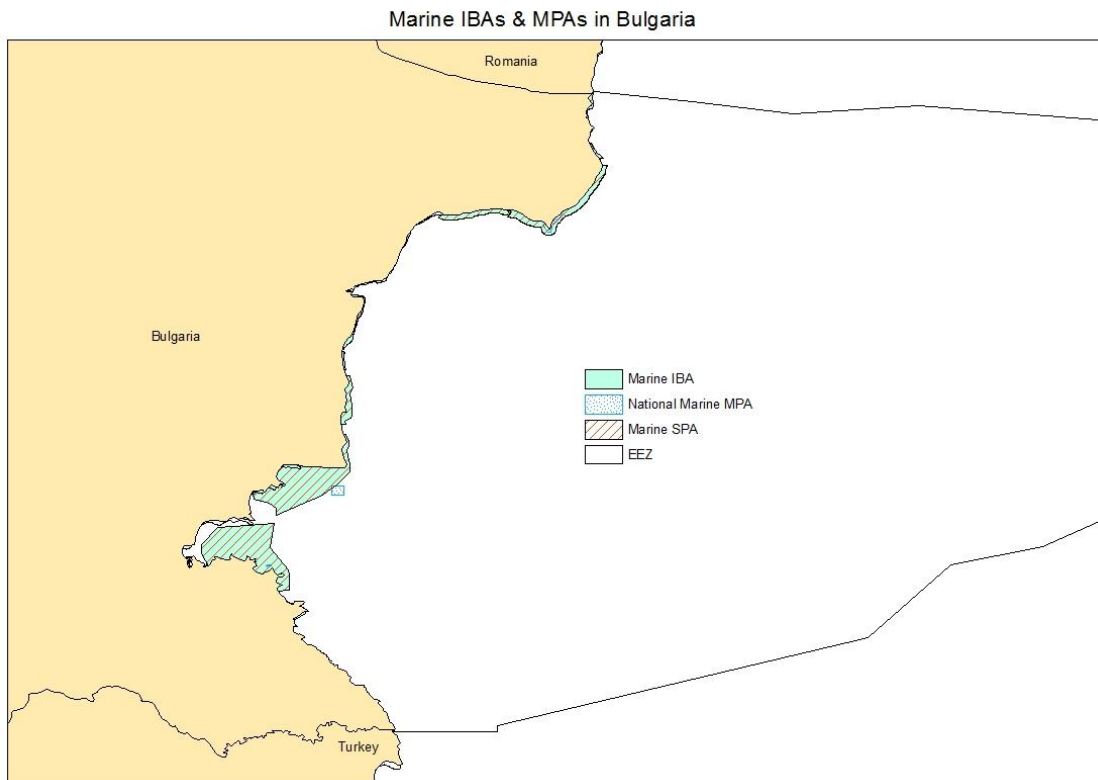
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- The National Biological Diversity Conservation Strategy adopted in 1998 set four priority actions to stimulate the conservation of the Black Sea Basin, and one of them is "Identification of biologically important areas not yet included in the protected areas network. This clearly shows that the identification of marine SPAs fits in the national long-term priorities for conservation of Black Sea ecosystems.
- At this stage the Bulgarian Government does not take concrete actions relating to the identification and designation of marine SPAs and does not have short-term goals related to this. However in the framework of the priorities of the National Biological Diversity Conservation Strategy, mentioned above and following requirements to enlarge Natura 2000 into marine areas and the the process of identification of marine SCIs, it is expected that this action will be set as priority one in the next National action plan for conservation of biodiversity.

## 5. REFERENCES

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## 6. MAP



# CYPRUS

## 1. SUMMARY

The sea around Cyprus is oligotrophic, so it supports few fish, and thus very few seabirds. Some current terrestrial IBAs do have a coastal marine element but the population and number of species that they protect is small.

Cyprus has only three breeding seabird species nesting on the island – the Mediterranean shag, Yellow-legged and Audouin's Gulls. BirdLife Cyprus has identified three terrestrial IBAs where these species nest (CY007 Akrotiri Peninsula – Episkopi Cliffs, CY011 Cape Aspro and CY001 Karpasia Peninsula – Kleides Islands) and since 2004 conducts annual breeding surveys of the birds in the first two and since 2007 in CY001 Karpasia also. However, two of those IBAs are not presently under Cypriot government control (CY007 being within the British Sovereign Bases on the island, and CY001 under Turkish occupation). The survey of Karpasia (CY001) has been conducted since 2007 in collaboration with the Turkish Cypriot Ornithological Society KUSKOR.

There are no SPAs that are strictly marine in Cyprus but there are two SPAs with terrestrial and marine components. These SPAs are: 1) Cape Greco (CY3000005) with Terrestrial component 10.73 km<sup>2</sup> and Marine component 9.29 km<sup>2</sup>. Total Cape Greco SPA area (Terrestrial and Marine) is 20.03 km<sup>2</sup>. 2) Cape Aspro (CY5000005) – Petra tou Romiou with Terrestrial component 6.70 km<sup>2</sup> and Marine component 20.91 km<sup>2</sup>. Total of Cape Aspro SPA area (Terrestrial and Marine) is 27.61 km<sup>2</sup>

BirdLife Cyprus, the local partner of BirdLife International, affirms that Shags at Akrotiri and Cape Aspro IBAs are showing a dramatic decline (up to 50% since 2004 – from 14 pairs to 6 pairs currently), while the shag and Audouin's colonies at Kleides islands-Karpasia are in a stable condition or even slightly increasing. Additionally, Shags at Kleides islands (14 pairs) produce more young [chicks] each year compared to Akrotiri and Cape Aspro birds, indicative of the very fish-rich waters there. BirdLife Cyprus suspects overfishing as the main cause for the decline of the shag in Akrotiri and Cape Aspro, as well as the operators of a fish farm nearby who have been reportedly shooting Cormorants and possibly Shags, attracted to the fish rearing pens set out at sea.

As regards to pure offshore IBAs, Cyprus, as most other Mediterranean countries, has not started any seabird mapping projects or research that could deliver a proposed network of marine IBAs in the EEZ. This work is urgent and is currently lacking well behind its optimal agenda.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Cyprus	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
		2	1	1	2	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Protect the island's declining Mediterranean shag and the Audouin's Gull populations
- Undertake annual population surveys of these species so as to be able to continuously update their population numbers and trends, status and reproductive success
- Identify extensions to breeding colonies for the three coastal IBAs in order to provide safe feeding grounds for the shag and Audouin's Gull
- Consider organizing a survey of the EEZ for marine IBAs, maybe together with the government

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

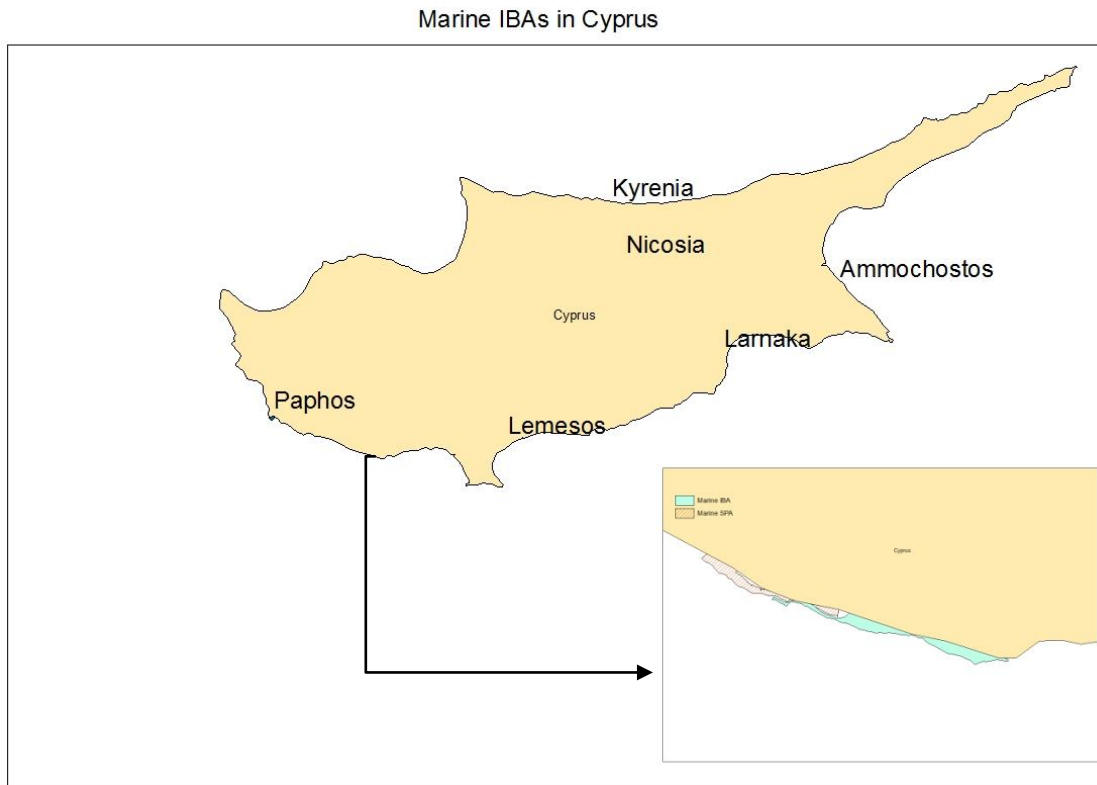
- The Cyprus government currently has declared two small marine extensions to terrestrial SPAs, but they have no plans to declare any more Marine SPAs, or to survey the EEZ. The two marine extensions were included in the boundaries of relevant SPAs not because of value for the Annex I seabirds (Shags, Audouin's gulls) per se, but rather because the SPA boundaries were, for reasons of administrative ease and political palatability, designated to match the boundaries of already-declared SCIs, some of which included marine areas for Poseidonia beds.
- There is therefore much work to be done in getting Marine SPAs identified and designated, not least because the task of declaring all terrestrial SPAs is not yet completed. This delay in completing the terrestrial SPA network means there is likely to be a fatigue factor involved for the government when it comes to the marine part, i.e. the "torturous" nature of terrestrial SPA designation (hostile reactions from local communities, infringement from the EC) is likely to mean the government will be keen to be "done" with SPA designations and reluctant to launch into a new round of marine site designations. On the other hand, the previous reactions from the EC in particular regarding the inadequacies of the terrestrial SPA network may spur the government to seek a more correct marine SPA designation.
- The size of the task involved is magnified by the fact that Cyprus has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and therefore has a much larger area of sea for which Marine SPAs must be designated. The potential for oil exploration/extraction (the reason for the EEZ) is likely to mean there will be economic pressures working against the designation of protected areas for wildlife. Such economic and non-scientific considerations have been decisive in limiting the extent of the terrestrial Natura 2000 network to date.

## 5. REFERENCES

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- Miltiadou, M. 2009. Populations of Breeding Coastal Birds of Cyprus, including 2009 Survey of Kleides islands. Cyprus BirdLife Magazine. Autumn 2009. Nicosia.

## 6. MAP



# DENMARK

## 1. SUMMARY

According to BirdLife International Danish partner DOF, 57 IBAs have a marine component, although only 8 are truly marine.

All but 6 of those 57 IBAs are also classified as SPAs. Those that are not SPAs are: Hyllekrog & Femer Belt (where the terrestrial and coastal part, Hyllekrog, is an SPA, but the marine part, Femer Belt, is not), Smaalandsfarvandet, Rønne Bank (part of the Danish/German/Polish IBA Pomeranian Bay), Skagerrak & South-western Norwegian Trench, Little Middelgrund and 169 Jammerbugten.

The Danish Agency for Spatial and Environmental Planning (Ministry of the Environment) is the administrative body responsible for classifying Danish SPAs. In marine areas, designation has been effected primarily with reference to Article 4.2 of the EU Birds Directive; i.e. migratory species that occur in internationally important concentrations.

In 1983 an initial list of 111 areas were designated as SPAs in 1983, but it wasn't until 1994 that all those sites had their boundaries officially declared. Of these 111, 47 were intertidal/near-shore areas or shallow marine waters and constitute around 60% of the entire area covered by SPAs.

In 1994 Ornis Consult Ltd (owned by DOF) together with the National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) published "Important Marine Areas for Wintering Birds in the Baltic Sea" (Durinck, Skov, Jensen & Pihl 1994), a report to the European Commission, which identified all the Danish marine IBAs in the Baltic Sea.

In 1995 BLI published "Important Bird Areas for seabirds in the North Sea" (Skov, Durinck, Leopold & Tasker 1995) which identified further 3 Danish IBAs, viz. nos. 121, 123 and 169. Unfortunately, IBA no. 169, Jammerbugten, by error was omitted from BLI's European IBA directory (Heath & Evans 2000).

In 2000, BLI together with the Danish Ministry of the Environment published "Important Bird Areas in the Baltic Sea" (Skov et al. 2000) which more precisely defined the borders of the Danish marine IBAs in the Baltic. Two errors affecting Danish IBAs and published on 2000 (Heath & Evans) were corrected in this inventory: IBA no. 122, Kiel Bay, had been included as a Danish IBA, where in fact it is outside the Danish borders, meanwhile IBA no. 168, Lille Middelgrund, had been deleted from Heath & Evans, and so was included again.

There were other significant differences between Skov et al. (2000) and Heath & Evans (2000). Skov merged many coastal IBA to form as few marine IBAs as possible, but DOF has recently reversed this process again for two reasons, 1) so that local IBA caretakers can count the waterbirds in coastal waters belong to the coastal IBAs themselves (while NERI has to count the open sea from boats and planes), and 2) to keep the boundaries of IBAs as identical to the SPAs as possible

With regards to bird monitoring, NERI has established a national monitoring programme with the aim of assessing whether those species for which SPAs have been classified are in favourable status. As part of this programme, waterbirds are monitored every three winters (January/February) in all inner Danish waters, as far as possible. Similarly, moulting diving ducks are monitored in selected areas every sixth summer (August), as far as possible. As part of the ongoing Danish IBA Caretaker Project, collaborations have been built to assist with data collection from oceanographic surveys, ferries, coastguards, etc. The project has also paid for an aerial survey of a part of the Danish Wadden Sea.



## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA*			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Denmark	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
		60	36	24	23	49	0

\*Many Danish IBAs contain both extensions of seabird colonies and non-breeding areas for water birds and are here classified under both headings

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Keep monitoring the marine IBAs
- Get the above-mentioned 5 IBAs declared as SPAs declared

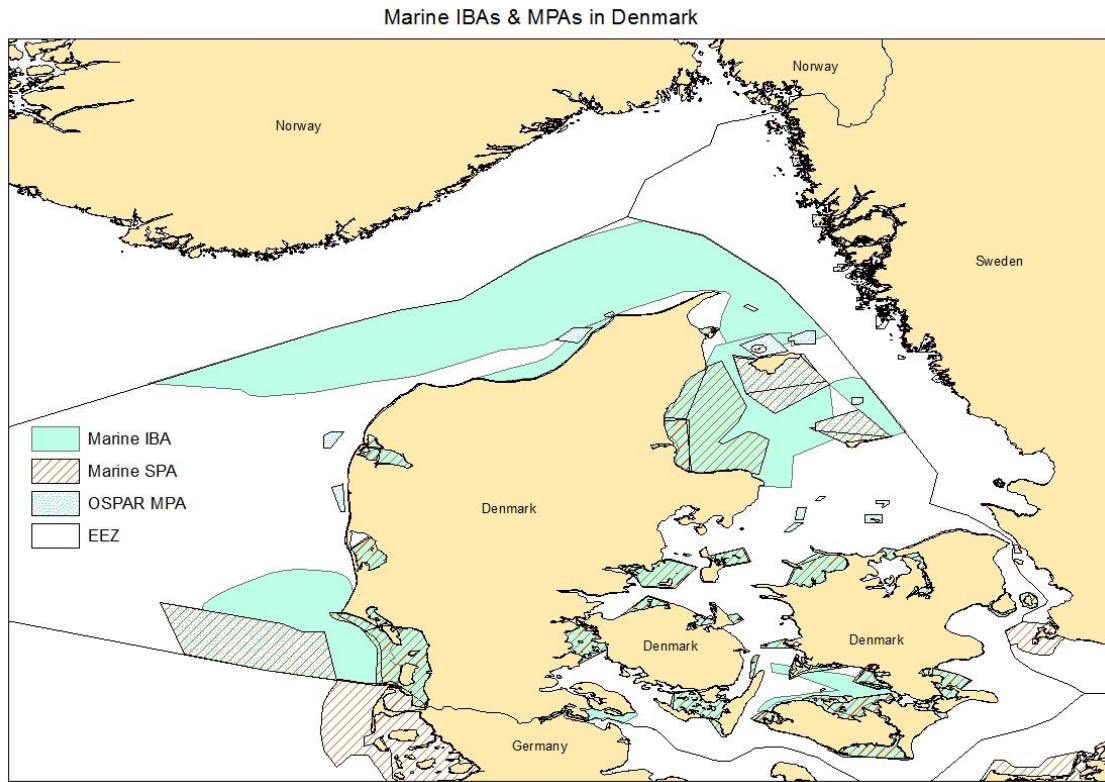
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- Today DOF's priorities are mainly in the terrestrial environment so its interaction with Government's plans in the marine environment and marine SPA designation is rare.

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- Skov et al. (2000) Inventory of coastal and marine Important Bird Areas in the Baltic Sea. BirdLife Denmark, Danish Ornithological Society, Copenhagen.
- Skov H., Durinck J., Leopold, M.F. and Tasker M.L. (1995): Important Bird Areas for seabirds in the North Sea including the Channel and the Kattegat. Ornis Consult Ltd. for BirdLife International
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- <http://www.blst.dk/English/>

6. MAP



# FINLAND

## 1. SUMMARY

The Finnish sea area belongs to brackish and eutrophic Baltic Sea. It mainly lacks truly pelagic seabird species with few exceptions (Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Common Murre and to a lesser extent other species). Finnish marine IBAs were identified during pan-European IBA-inventories in the 1990's and since then 19 (out of 97) IBAs have been classified by BirdLife Finland as marine.

The total area of those IBAs is 6131 sq km, including surface of islands (253 sq km). So far, no special marine IBA-project has been carried out in Finland (with proper gap analyses). However, most breeding sites of seabird species are covered by the existing IBA-network. It covers both key archipelagos with islands/islets and the waters around them.

Finnish marine IBAs are populated by high proportion (25-50 % of EU population) of breeding Caspian tern *Sterna caspia*, Arctic tern *Sterna paradisaea* and Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*. Other important species include Velvet scoter *Melanitta fusca*, Eider *Somateria mollissima*, Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* and Common Gull *Larus canus*.

The total area of designated marine IBAs, as well as SPAs, is relatively extensive compared with the total size of the EEZ (8 %, mostly shallow waters) or even more compared with the surface suitable for marine birds representativeness. Historically, quite a high proportion of archipelagos important for colonially breeding seabirds have been strictly protected. Main threats for seabirds are disturbance, persecution, alien species and oil pollution. Funds used for research, monitoring and conservation management is far from what is actually needed in Finnish marine areas.

The obvious gap in the Finnish marine IBA-network is the offshore areas with shallow waters, less than 25 metres deep. As these areas of interest lay mainly far away from islands and coastline, they have not been efficiently monitored so far. However they are potentially very important for staging seaducks with arctic breeding range, especially for Long-tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis*. Additionally these areas could include important feeding areas of some breeding birds, which foraging behaviour is poorly known so far (eg. Razorbill *Alca torda* and Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*).

The gap in knowledge about offshore sandbanks and shallow waters will be analysed probably during 2011 and hopefully new marine IBAs will be identified.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Type 1</i>	<i>Type 2</i>	<i>Type 3</i>	<i>Type 4</i>
<b>Finland</b>				<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	19	8	11	18	1	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- BirdLife Finland's priority is the revision and evaluation of existing IBA-areas (condition, representativeness) and looking for new potential areas in the outer sea area.
- Success of latter will depend highly on input of governmental organisations, as field studies are expensive to recognise remote staging and feeding areas of seabird.

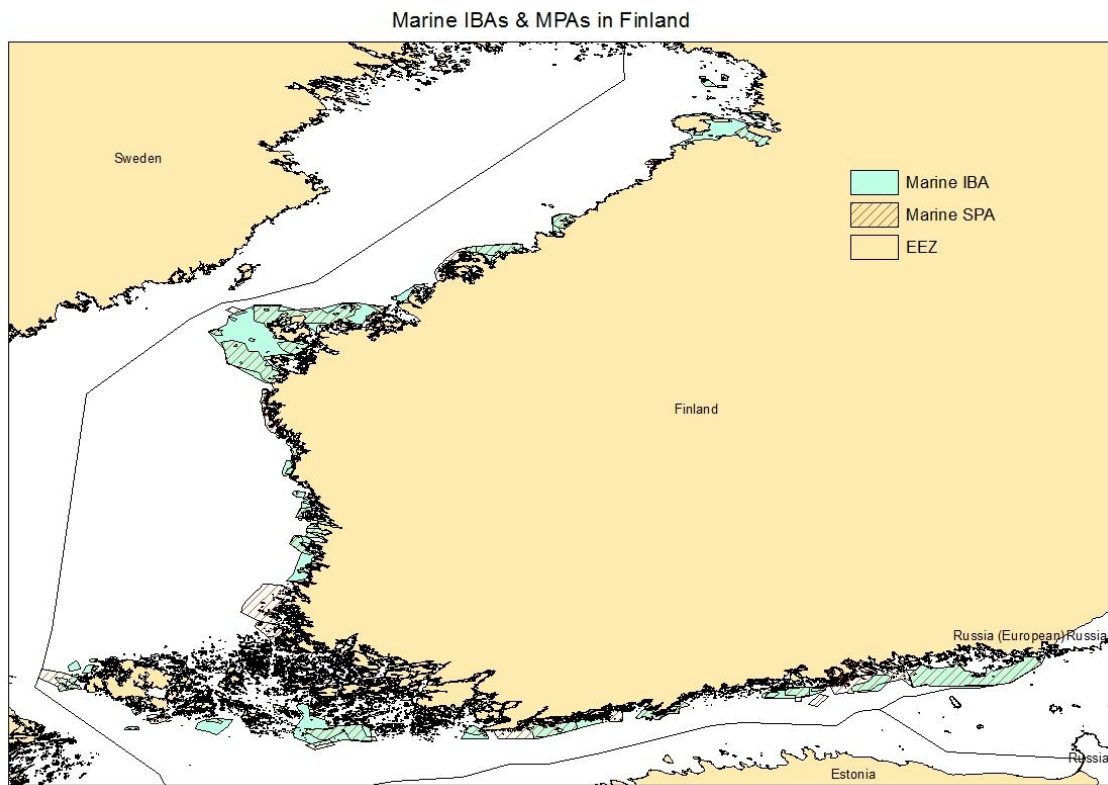
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- According to Birdlife Finland, field surveys to recognise potential SPAs have not been extensive enough, especially outside winter period, so the government should increase their investment on data gathering and analysis.

## 5. REFERENCES

- Ellermaa, M. 2008: IBA-vuosi 2007. - Linnut-vuosikirja 2007:140:144. (<http://www.birdlife.fi/suojelu/paikat/iba/IBA-raportti-linnut-vuosikirja-2008.pdf>)
- Heath, M.F. & Evans, M. I. (ed.) 2000: Important Bird Areas in Europe. Priority sites for conservation

6. MAP



# FRANCE

## 1. SUMMARY

LPO work on marine IBAs is part of the general IBA Monitoring Programme. LPO co-ordinates bird censuses (breeding, migratory and wintering birds) on IBAs and SPAs in France.

In 2007, the new National Agency of Protected Marine Areas-(AAMP) contracted LPO to identify marine IBAs in order to designate them as SPAs (Deceuninck & Micol 2007). As a result of that contract LPO prepared an inventory of existing data which showed priority marine sites for birds. Data was collected from boat and aerial surveys in the Bay of Biscay, foraging areas around breeding colonies and data on Cory's and Balearic shearwaters staging locations along the coasts. Nevertheless data is largely lacking to identify and document off-shore marine IBAs which meet criteria of international importance.

In order to level this unbalance, LPO prepared with CRMM (Research Centre on Marine Mammals) a LIFE Project using seabirds and marine mammals to identify priority zones for these species under the Birds and Habitats Directives. However, the AAMP proposed LPO submit it by itself, which seemed prove of good engagement with the French government. Both LIFE projects failed in the 2008 and 2009 attempts. LPO believes failure of these two proposals is due to the lack of focus on themes relevant to LIFE goals (protecting Annex I seabirds by designating SPAs and SCAs) which were initial objectives of LPO.

Meanwhile, the European Commission assessed the marine SPA network of France and considered it as largely incomplete. This is why the National Museum of Natural Histories is now preparing a programme of data gathering which will be set up by AAMP. LPO and other French NGOs hope that the French project will consider every existing data, Interreg FAME results (see below) and expertise of NGOs such as LPO.

From LPO expertise, precise data are missing on some designated SPAs and also to propose correct management of some SPAs. Interreg Atlantic IV project on Future of Atlantic Marine Environment should complete information on these sites.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
France	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
		84	11	73*	50	23	3

\* 27 coastal IBAs contain seabird colonies, but IBA trigger species are not seabirds

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Involvement in identification, designation and management of future SPAs
- Monitoring of seabird population at marine SPAs
- Management plan for existing and future SPAs
- Analysis of threats at marine sites
- Sign a memorandum of understanding with French governmental agencies, such as the AAMP.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

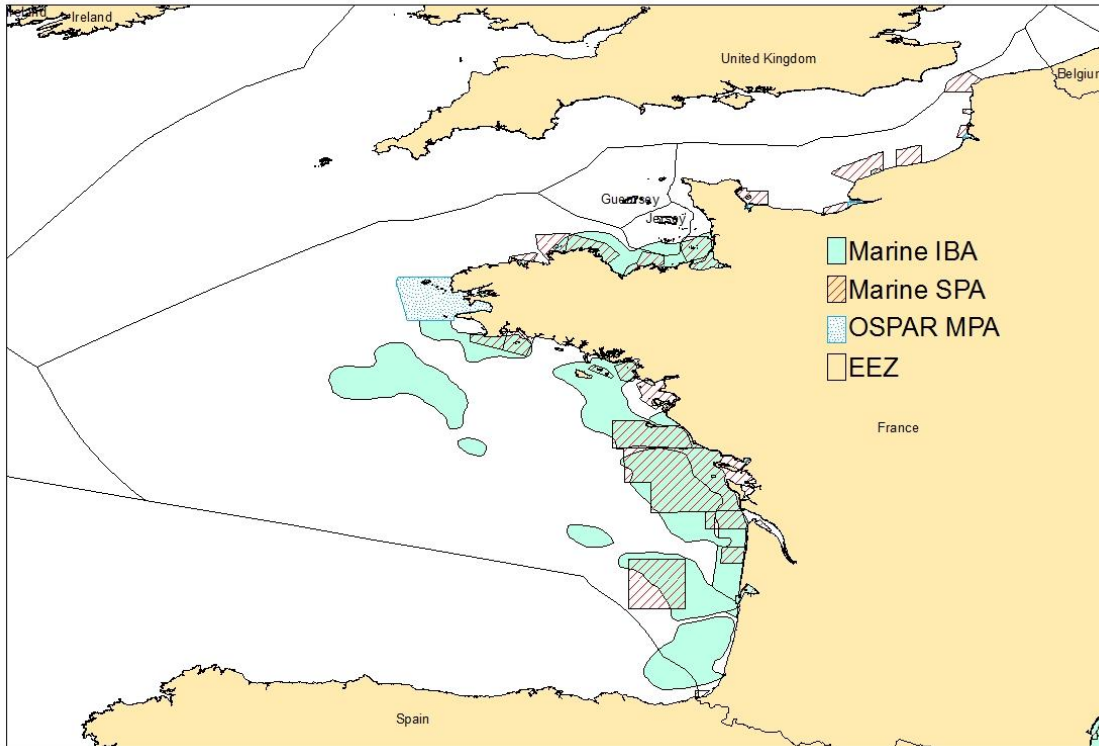
- Designation and management of marine sites is under the authority of AAMP and work of LPO on marine IBAs will depend on the MoU with AAMP.
- For the first list of marine SPAs designated last year, LPO made proposals of sites, which are today only partially designated. Much further work is needed in order to work on identification of offshore IBAs and marine SPA designation.
- Unfortunately, as for March 2010, the French Ministry of Environment does not consider IBA criteria scientifically sound to identify marine SPAs.

## 5. REFERENCES

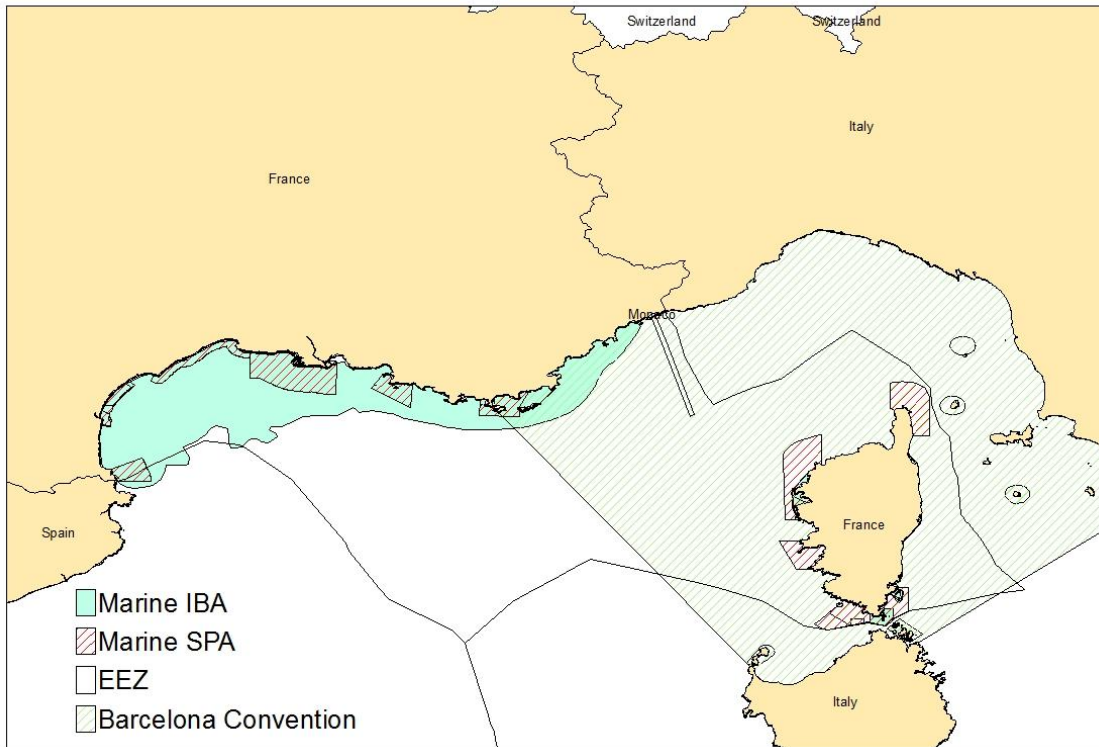
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6. MAP

Marine IBAs in France - Atlantic



Marine IBAs in France - Mediterranean





# GERMANY

## 1. SUMMARY

In Germany, responsibility for designating MPA is split between different administrations. Generally, nature conservation is the responsibility of the Federal States rather than the national government. National territorial limits only extend out to 12 nm, and responsibility for the German parts of the North Sea and Baltic are now divided among the different Federal States of Germany and the national government for sites outside the 12 nm zone within the EEZ. This complicates the procedure of selecting suitable areas because the process is not well coordinated between the different governmental units, and also because these regions are not easily manageable.

In order to meet legislative requirements, the Federal States first designated SPAs in 1997. It was not until 2002 that it was possible to designate SPAs within the EEZ because of national legislation. At that time, the national law for Nature Conservation was changed and the responsibilities for the designation of MPAs were clarified. The Federal Agency for Nature Conservation is responsible for selecting potential protected areas, whereas the Federal Environmental Ministry is responsible for designation/submission to the European Commission. Two areas were proposed and designated in the EEZ in 2004, with further designation in some states in 2005; while other states are still in the process of designating the remaining sites.

Data on the distribution of all birds at sea were collected between 1987 and 2002; with more than 15,000 ship km travelled. Distance sampling analyses were applied to the data for all EU Birds Directive Annex I and migratory species in order to estimate total numbers of birds present. Species distributions were modelled for each species. Individual species maps were combined to depict areas of overall importance. Boundaries between high concentration areas were determined by analysing the gradient of modelled bird density change over space, thereby allowing the identification of potential SPAs. Based on this procedure, a single large SPA of c. 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the German EEZ of the Baltic Sea has been classified. This EEZ SPA is defined by overlapping concentrations of several species, and is based on the distribution and abundance of those species. This SPA complements those identified in inshore waters of the German Baltic Sea.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Type 1</i>	<i>Type 2</i>	<i>Type 3</i>	<i>Type 4</i>
<b>Germany</b>				<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	24	24	24	5	24	0	1

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- NABU focuses on providing a better protection of SPAs against fisheries, gravel and sand extraction, oil spills and other disasters.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

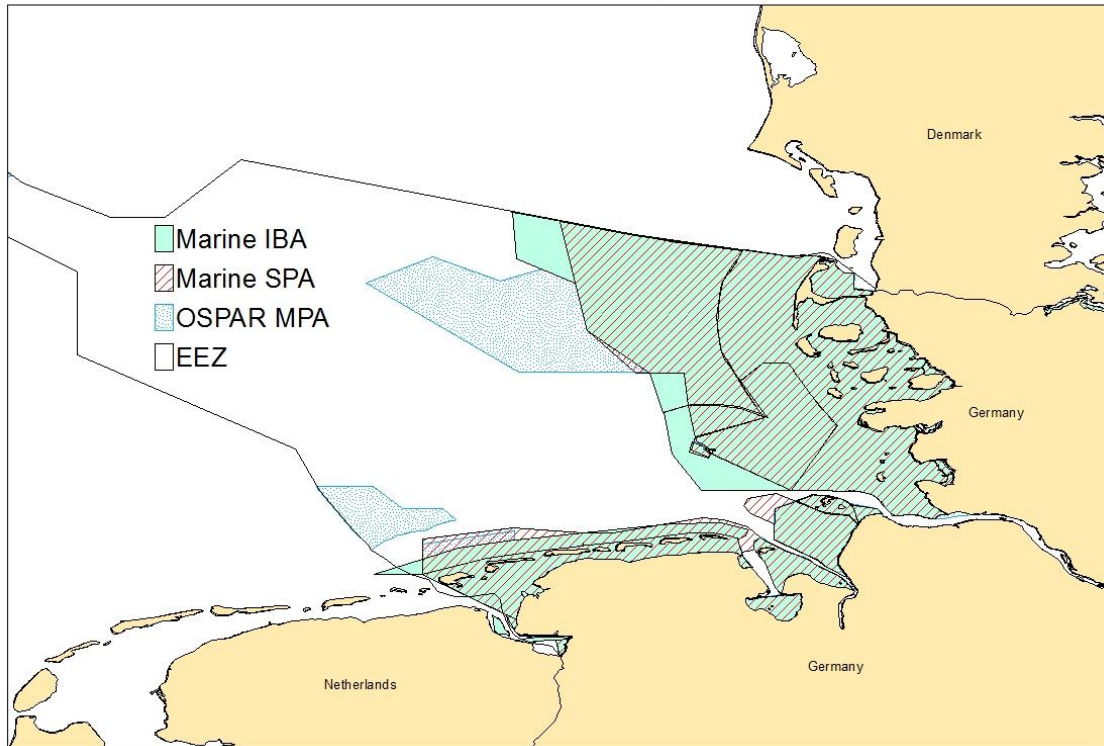
- In general, NABU is happy with the government's approach towards marine SPAs. The marine SPAs are large, they cover the most important sites, and they have already been transferred into national law. There are some gaps in the system, where areas have not been designated although they ought to be so for scientific reasons. NABU cannot see any scientific reasons behind the non designation of some parts of the Baltic Sea (within the 12 nm Zone of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) and some irregularities in the borderline of the SPA Südliche Deutsche Bucht. The non-designated areas partly coincide with plans for wind farm developments.
- Offshore wind farms within SPAs will get a much lower buyback price than offshore wind farms outside SPAs. This regulation provides a highly effective protection of SPAs against wind farms.
- NABU's main criticism is that the SPAs are factually not protected. Fisheries, shipping and other activities are permitted in the same extend as they were before the designation.

## 5. REFERENCES

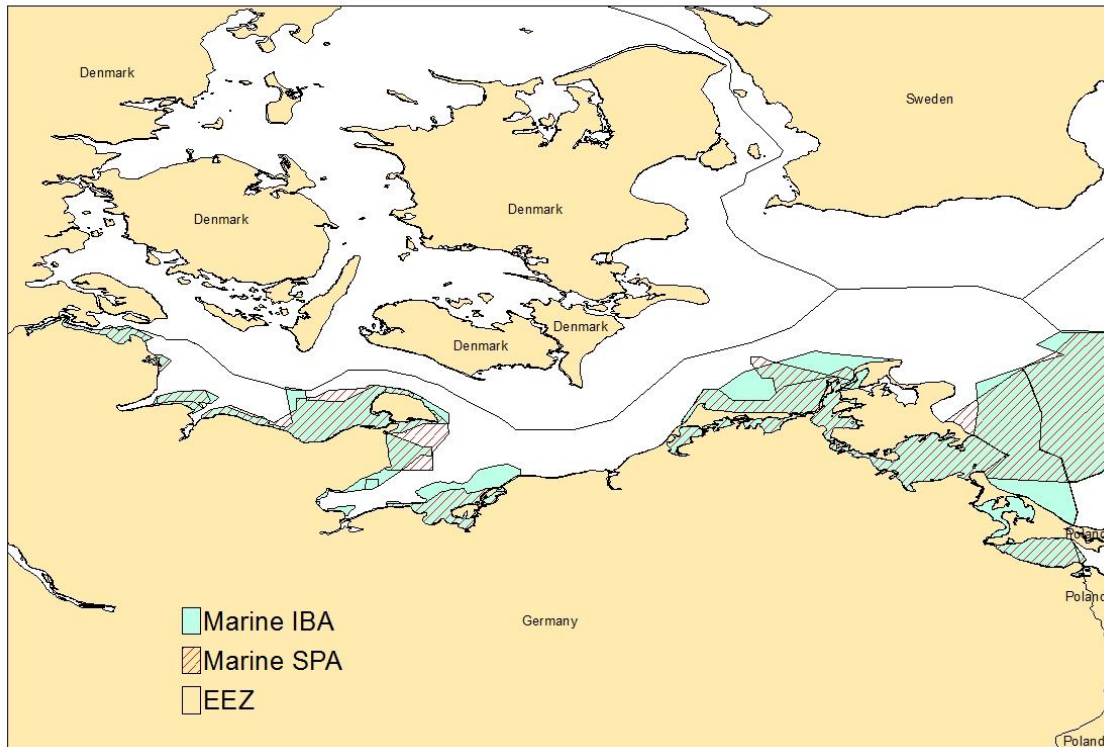
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6. MAP

Marine IBAs & MPAs in Germany - West



Marine IBAs & MPAs in Germany - East



# GREECE

## 1. SUMMARY

Greece possesses very extensive coastal and marine habitats, which are important for numerous seabird species. The Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS) has been implementing Greek seabird work for the last 15 years and has developed the Hellenic Seabird Database (GIS-linked population and breeding data for Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonorae* and six seabird species).

Work related to marine IBAs started at HOS in 2007 with a project "Surveys and Conservation of Seabirds in Greece", funded by the A.G. Leventis Foundation. Initially this project provided all vital knowledge and know-how required for effective Marine IBA process. Within this project all major actions for the marine IBA designation were initiated including boat-based surveys, telemetry and coastal counts of seabirds in collaboration with oceanographic fisheries and collecting of marine biological data which are used in the statistical analysis to identify and delineate the marine IBAs for priority seabird species in Greece, namely for the Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*), Mediterranean shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*), Cory's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*) and Yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*). The project will continue until the end of 2010.

Since 2009 the HOS in cooperation with the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk Seal (MOM), Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR), Technical educational Institution (TEI) of Ionian Islands and the Portuguese Society for the Study of Birds (SPEA) is implementing a LIFE-Nature project "Concrete Conservation Actions for the Mediterranean shag and Audouin's Gull in Greece including the Inventory of Relevant marine IBAs", LIFE Nature NAT/GR/000285. The latter project further supports the marine IBA delineation project by allowing for more extensive and detailed surveys of seabirds in Greece. The process of marine IBA designation in Greece is expected to be completed by the end of 2012 without any major problems or delays. This Project also supports the position of BirdLife's European Marine Coordinator for the period 2009-2012.

HOS has already started using the foraging radii approach for a number of its more coastal species, and also for pelagic species pre-tracking to help design boat survey routes to ensure that likely key at sea areas are surveyed. In 2009 the HOS has contributed to the production of a assessment study for designation of new and updating of existing SPAs (69 in total), 13 of which include marine components. This proposal for SPA update and expansion is currently being evaluated by the Ministry for Environment.

Finally, in 2009 the Municipality of Kothri on Andros island, together with HOS and Hellenic Ministry for Rural Development and Food, submitted a new LIFE+ application to expand and detail the marine IBAs in the Northern Cyclades archipelago named "BLUEnature: Conservation of Northern Cyclades Priority Bird Species".

If approved, this LIFE+ project will further expand the previous experience and knowledge gained through the existing projects and thereby enhancing the HOS place at the forefront of marine IBA identification in the Eastern Mediterranean.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Greece	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
		27*	22	21	11**	2***	0

\*17 IBAs were classified according to seabird trigger data, the other 10 do contain seabird colonies but IBA trigger species were not seabirds

\*\* breeding & resident status // \*\*\* wintering & non-breeding during breeding season status

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Assessment of the distribution of seabird colonies, their population size and the assessment of the distribution and activities of the seabirds at sea.
- Assessment of all major threats to seabirds, including predation by introduced mammals, loss of breeding and foraging habitats, overfishing and accidental bycatch, competition related to competitive species as well as oil and chemical pollution.
- Studies on seabird ecology, as there is a clear gap of knowledge in this country

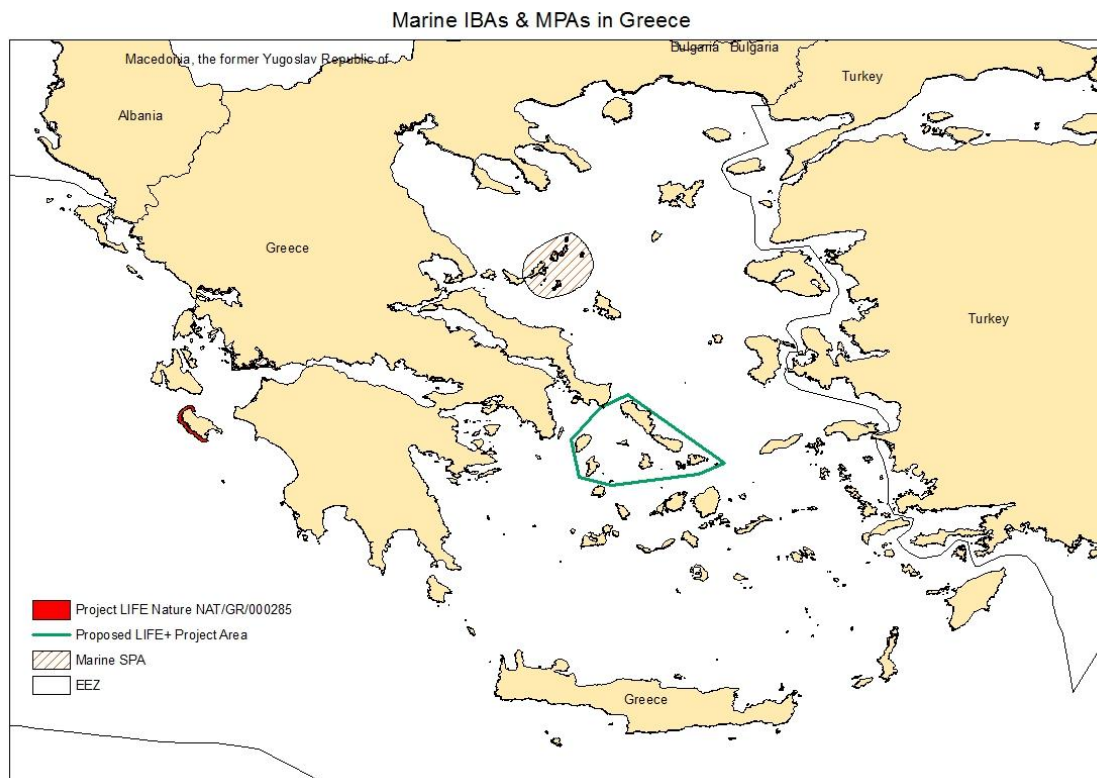
## 7. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- Both competent ministries (Ministry for Rural Development and Food and Ministry for Environment) are supporting the HOS efforts for the designation of the marine IBAs.
- Once the marine IBA inventory in Greece is produced by the HOS it will be evaluated by the Ministry for Environment as possible components of the Natura 2000 network.

## 8. REFERENCES

- Web site: <http://www.ornithologiki.gr/en/seabirds/index.php>

## 9. MAP



## NOTES:

- EEZ not officially declared.
- Coastal SPAs not visible at this scale map, but available on request.
- MPA label refers to Alonissos-Vories Sporades national marine Park, all other MPAs are coastal (map scale insufficient for visual identification in this map)
- LIFE Project Area refers to Project LIFE Nature NAT/GR/000285
- LIFE Project Area refers to proposed LIFE Nature project in the Northern Cyclades

# IRELAND

## 1. SUMMARY

BirdWatch Ireland (BWI) is responsible for IBA identification in Ireland. So far terrestrial IBAs, including coastal breeding sites, have been identified as terrestrial IBAs, and now BWI has begun research into further sites important to seabirds. Due to capacity limitations this work has so far been focused on coastal sites and not much effort has been placed to offshore areas. A recently approved Interreg Project FAME (Future of the Atlantic Marine Environment) will hopefully increase BWI capacity.

There are 11 IBAs for which breeding Auks or Manx Shearwaters are qualifying interests (with 500m seaward extensions) and a further 35 coasta/island IBAs with breeding seabird interests (with 200m seaward extensions).

93% of all IBAs already declared based on breeding seabird species, are also designated as SPAs (n=53). BWI has been consulted on seaward boundaries for these sites by the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS, part of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government) and have agreed a provisional 'rule of thumb' of 200m for colonies lacking breeding auks (*Guillemot Uria aalge*, *Razorbill Alca torda*, *Black Guillemot Cephus grylle* and *Puffin Fratercula arctica*) and 500m for those with qualifying interests of one or more of these species. The latter approach has also been applied loosely to SPAs designated for Manx shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*, where evening rafting concentrations are known to occur.

There is very little data on the distribution of pelagic seabirds around the Irish Seas with the exception of those reports produced by the UK-JNCC (e.g. Pollock *et al.* 1997) and mapping of foraging terns around the largest colonies (1998-99, Rockabill, Dublin, Newton & Crowe 2000).

The offshore wind energy industry has collected a large data set on the offshore distribution of seabirds at four shallow water areas on the east coast and although some of it is available through Environmental Assessments in the public domain, the statutory authority (NPWS) appears reluctant to use this for designation purposes ahead of windfarm construction. This basic data supports some important marine IBAs such as the Irish Sea Front (within the EEZ, running from the south tip of the Isle of Man to the north Dublin area) and two east coast sandbanks (Kish and Arklow in off Counties Dublin and Wicklow). However, the qualifying interests have not been checked.

In 2009, and in collaboration with Queens University Belfast and RSPB-Northern Ireland, BirdWatch Ireland initiated a tracking study of breeding Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla*, Guillemots and Razorbills at a single colony (Lambay, Dublin), this work is to continue until 2011 and should help delineate seaward extensions to the most important breeding seabird IBA in the country. The FAME project will extend this preliminary work to other species (see below) and other sites on the east and west coasts. Additionally, in late summer 2009, in partnership with the state conservation body NPWS, they conducted a research cruise on a large swath of our western continental shelf/shelf edge looking for concentrations of seabirds and their association with cetaceans (see below).

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Ireland	Total	Global	Regional	Extension	Non-breeding	Bottleneck	Pelagic
Coastal IBAs	46	0	46	46	0	0	0
Marine IBAs*	1	0	1	5.5 km	0	0	0

\*: Presently, Ireland has only a single, data-supported, marine IBA; this is a sea area around Rockabill Island of 5.5 km radius which is the principal foraging area for an assemblage of 3,000 pairs of Roseate, Common and Arctic Terns (Newton & Crowe 2000, Crowe et al. 2009).

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Review data to hand, from JNCC reports, 2009-2010 research cruises, offshore windfarm EIS's, and establish a national database of seabirds at sea information.
- Apply Global and Regional IBA Criteria to the above to identify target areas for 'boundary definition'.
- The FAME project (2010-2012) will supply foraging area and range data from GPS-tag deployment on 4 key species (Fulmar, shag, Kittiwake and Guillemot), each representing a particular foraging guild.
- FAME will also deliver coordinated seawatches for Balearic Shearwaters during late summer and autumn and this could identify other non-breeding or bottleneck marine IBAs for this and other species

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- The responsible authority is NPWS but to date there has been no Government led initiative to identify and designate seabird MPAs under the EU Birds Directive.
- Previously, 2000-2002, there was financial support for the national census of seabird colonies (Seabird 2000 project) and in 2006 and 2007 seasons there was funding for some pilot work on assessing breeding productivity at important coastal and island SPA for cliff-nesting seabirds.
- In August 2009 and February-March 2010, NPWS and BWI collaborated to place 'Seabirds at Sea' observers on multidisciplinary marine cruises working on the continental shelf at the western margins of the Irish Atlantic EEZ. The data gathered has yet to be analysed in detail but it may help identify some pelagic hot-spots for non-breeding and migratory seabirds.

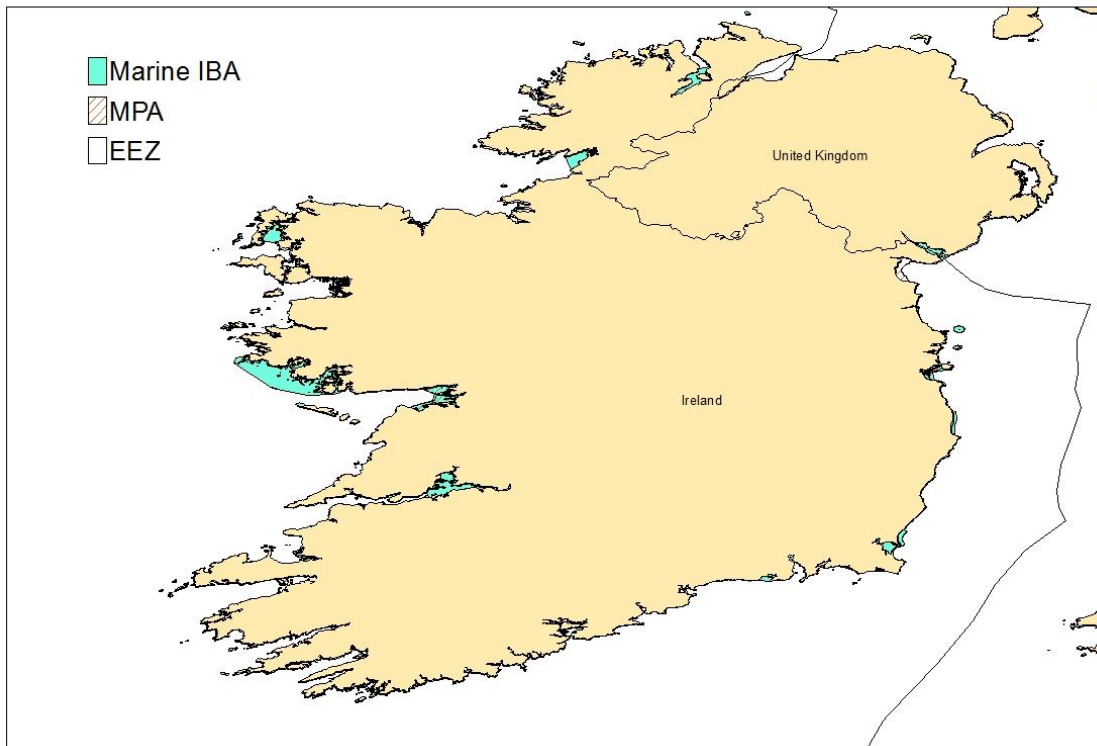
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6. MAP

Marine IBAs in Ireland



# ITALY

## 1. SUMMARY

Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (LIPU), the BirdLife Partner in Italy, has been relatively active over the past 5 years identifying coastal IBAs and offshore areas, despite the lack of funded multi-year projects. The size of the country demands a great logistical effort, and at the moment Government financial support is limited. Nevertheless the quality of the database compiled to date and the reports published by LIPU are excellent and, if more official support and funding from the government arrives, LIPU could deliver a larger assessment (similar to those of Portugal, Spain or Greece) at a relatively low-cost.

41 coastal IBAs were identified through the 2002 project “Sviluppo di un sistema nazionale delle ZPS sulla base della rete delle IBA”, funded by the Italian Government, and are based primarily upon Audouin’s Gull *Larus audouinii*, Cory’s *Calonectris diomedea* and Yelkouan shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan* breeding colonies. In late 2007 LIPU assisted in the trialling of the BirdLife Seabird Foraging Range Database, and the results and feedback produced from this project have helped form the basis of the guidelines being produced for the foraging radii approach.

In 2008 the Italian Ministry of Environment funded some preliminary marine IBA research by LIPU at the Cory’s shearwater colony at Linosa (South of Sicily) and carried out some boat-based surveys. SPEA (BirdLife Portugal) was consultant during this 1-year Project. Unfortunately the Italian government refused to continue their support and so far there are not plans for completing a full-national marine IBA inventory. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Environment has forwarded LIPU experimental work to all Italian regions, supporting the methodology

In 2009 LIPU continued with internal funds to study at the Cory’s shearwater colony in Linosa by using GPS-logger, in order to strengthen the data set collected during the previous year and better identify the foraging areas. In addition, telemetry activities were carried out on Cory’s shearwater at the colony on the Tremiti islands (Adriatic Sea) during the incubation period.

In 2010, LIPU will continue the study started in 2009 at the colony of Tremiti. Moreover, it is planning to carry out a GPS-tracking study to identify the foraging areas used by Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) breeding in the North Adriatic Sea.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Italy	Total	Global	Regional	Extension	Non-breeding	Bottleneck	Pelagic
Coastal IBAs	41	18	23	41	0	0	0
Potential marine IBAs*	7	3	4	4	1	0	2

\* These 7 areas were identified within the 2008 Project but would require further research

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- A multi-year project involving the Ministry of Environment (and Regions, when relevant) aimed at completing marine IBAs identification.
- Extend research to marine areas of neighbouring European and North-African countries, used by marine birds breeding in Italian IBAs.
- Complete marine IBAs designation as SPAs

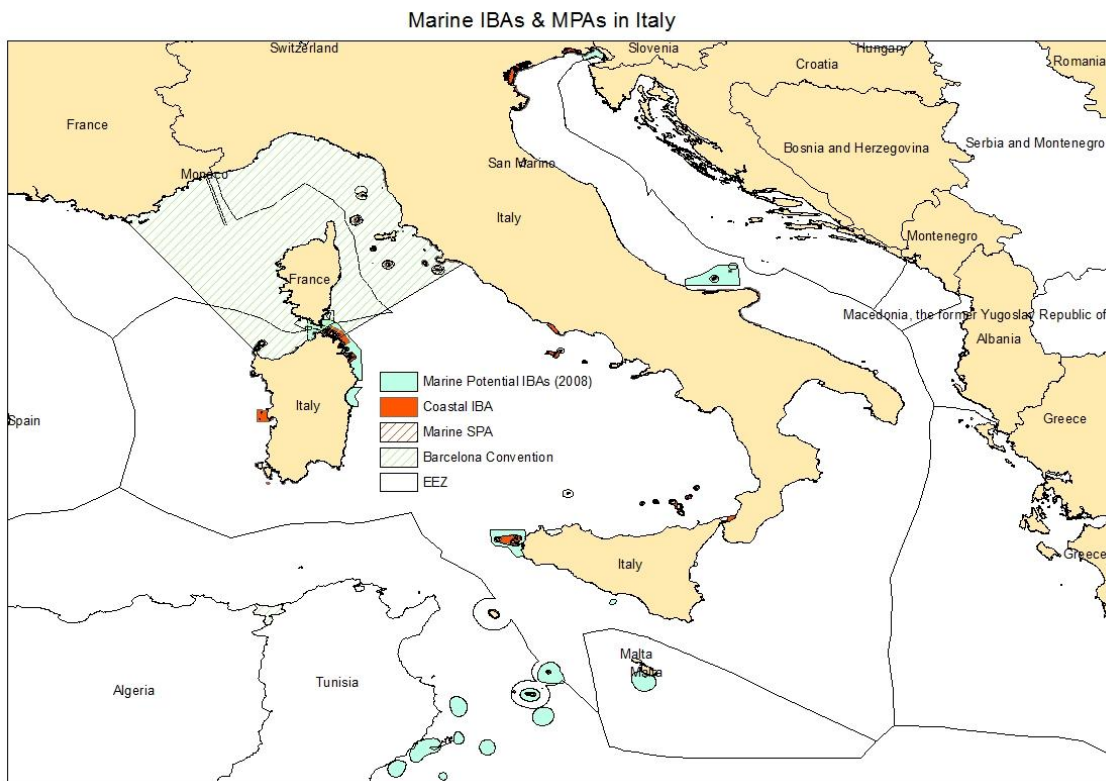
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- With regards to coastal marine IBAs, designation of these areas as SPAs is quite advanced. For some areas a more accurate definition of borders, based on bird biology, may be needed.
- In Italy, the Regions are responsible for designation of marine SPAs. However, Regions are not willing to proceed with necessary research to identify these areas, neither with marine SPAs designation. This situation makes it difficult for LIPU to proceed with all the necessary research.

## 5. REFERENCES

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6. MAP



NOTE:

- EEZ not officially declared.

# MALTA

## 1. SUMMARY

To date, seabird research and marine IBA identification in Malta is coordinated by BirdLife Malta. Most of this work started in 2006, when a seabird project entitled 'SPA Site and Sea Actions Saving Puffinus yelkouan', partly funded by the European Union LIFE Nature programme, started. The Yelkouan shearwater Project, as it is also known, is currently Malta's largest conservation initiative. The Maltese Islands are home to approximately 10% of the world's population of Yelkouan shearwater (up-listed to globally Near Threatened in 2008). The project is a collaborative effort, utilising local and foreign scientific expertise, and is a partnership of four government authorities and three conservation organisations. The Yelkouan shearwater is virtually endemic to the Mediterranean, but recent years have seen key Maltese populations declining.

In mid 2008, an interim report was produced for the Maltese Government to act as a "roadmap" for the designation of marine IBAs in Malta (Raine et al, 2008), giving the background to marine IBAs, as well as summarising the current situation and identifying the way forward.

In addition, BirdLife Malta has innovatively applied 4-km seaward extensions to current shearwater breeding site IBAs in order to cover offshore rafting activity, though recognition of these boundaries by the appropriate authorities is still pending. The information held in the BirdLife Seabird Foraging Range Database has been useful in providing background information on the rationale to using this distance as an extension.

In 2007 the EU LIFE Yelkouan shearwater Project Team also produced a report on the effect of light pollution in Malta on its shearwater populations, and possible mitigation measures both near the colonies and at a country-level.

Final results from the EU LIFE Yelkouan shearwater Project, including proposals for new marine IBAs, will be published by mid 2010 and will be widely disseminated both internally and to the EU Commission.

In 2009 BirdLife Malta, in collaboration with SPEA, the RSPB and the Maltese Government, submitted a new 4-year LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity application named "Preparing an inventory of marine IBAs for Puffinus yelkouan, Calonectris diomedea and Hydrobates pelagicus in Malta". Unfortunately this project has not been selected for LIFE funding in 2009 due to a technical reason. However, as recommended by the LIFE Unit, BirdLife Malta intends to resubmit this application in 2010. The proposed new LIFE+ project shall continue much needed research on Malta's Procellariiformes based on the experience gained in the various tracking and survey methodologies used during the EU LIFE Yelkouan shearwater Project, which has laid the groundwork for future marine IBA research in Malta. The project will also expand the research to include all three of Malta's internationally important colonies of breeding seabirds, including the Mediterranean sub-species of the European Storm-petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus mellitensis*, of which Malta holds over half of the Mediterranean population.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Malta	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	10	4	6	0	0	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Ensure continued management of the Yelkouan shearwater colony at Rdum tal-Madonna and continued monitoring of the species beyond the LIFE project.
- Identify marine habitat use for other seabirds in Malta such as *Calonectris diomedea* and *Hydrobates pelagicus melitensis* with a view to describing their ecology and habitat range
- Ensure a commitment to the conservation of all seabird species species: *Calonectris diomedea*, *Puffinus yelkouan*, *Hydrobates pelagicus melitensis* and *Larus michahellis* through the identification and declaration of marine SPAs.

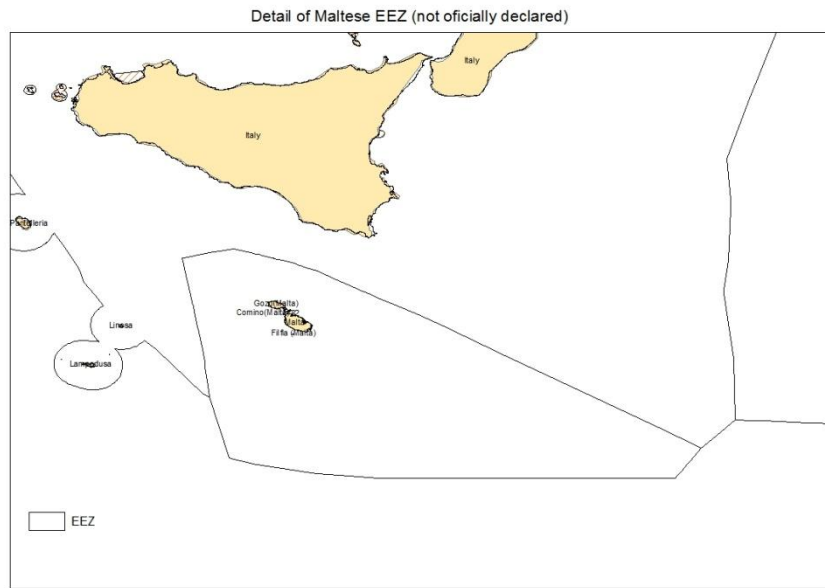
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- Four government organisations have acted as important Partners in the implementation of the EU LIFE Yelkouan shearwater Project. These are Heritage Malta, the Armed Forces of Malta, the Malta Maritime Authority (now Transport Malta) and the Malta Centre for Fisheries Sciences within the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs. The Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) has acted as a co-financer for the project.
- MEPA is the Malta's government authority responsible for declaring marine SPAs welcomes any research aimed at declaring marine SPAs.
- Up to date, although a Marine Protection Area Steering Committee has been set up with a view to declaring Marine Protection Areas including marine SPAs, no particular research by government is aimed at identifying marine SPAs. BirdLife Malta is the only entity carrying out such research and MEPA are awaiting data from projects such as the LIFE Yelkouan shearwater Project, as well as analysis of other ornithological data held by BirdLife Malta, in order to have the necessary tools to declare the first marine SPAs.
- BirdLife Malta have submitted a proposal for carrying out a marine SPA identification project for which the Government is a Co-beneficiary

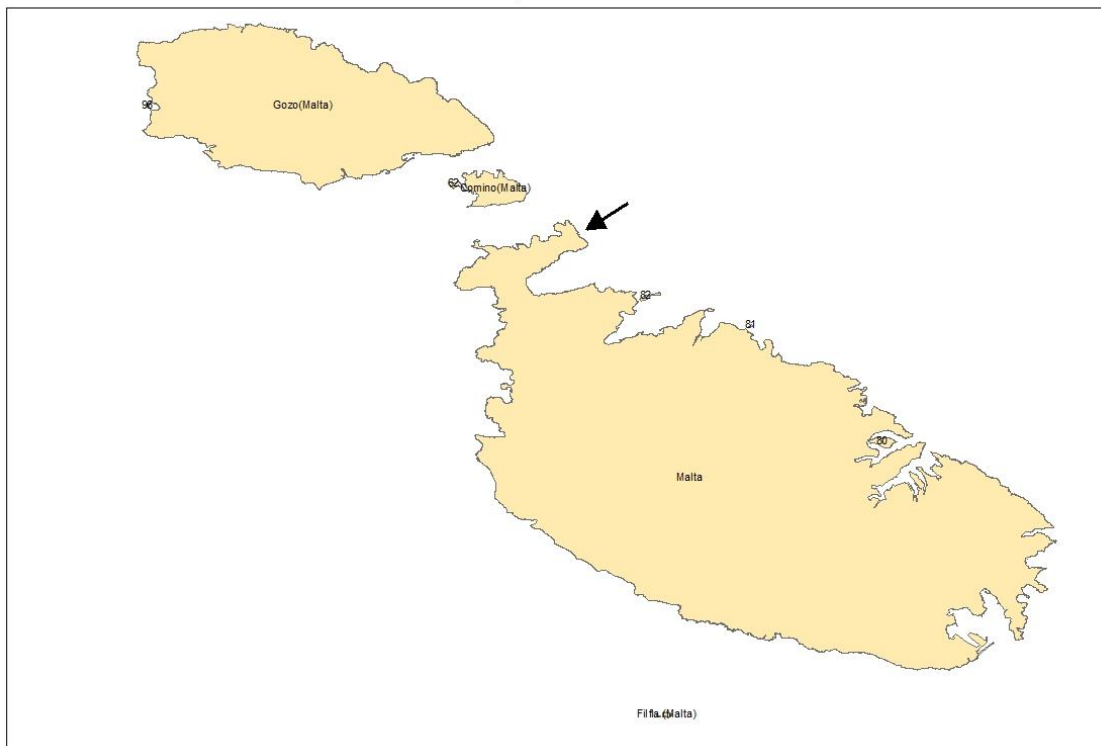
## 5. REFERENCES

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## 6. MAP



LIFE Project Location



**NOTE:**

Black arrow indicates area of Project LIFE 'SPA Site and Sea Actions Saving *Puffinus yelkouan*' 2006-2010

# NETHERLANDS

## 1. SUMMARY

The Netherlands has designated two special protection zones under both the EU Birds Directive and the EU Habitats Directive in 2004 (Delta coast and Wadden coast). Three more “Habitat areas with specific ecological values” and an extension area of the Wadden Coast have been nominated in 2008 for protection under the Habitats Directive. The offshore area Frisian Front will be designated for birds as a SPA. The definitive assignment of these areas is planned for 2010.

The two designated areas under the Birds Directive are in fact the southern and northern parts of a continuous strip of shallow (0–20 m deep) water, running along the entire length of the country. Key bird species are red-throated diver, great crested grebe, common scoter, common eider, and all *Larus* and *Sterna* species breeding along the Dutch coast, migrating along the coast, or wintering in the nearshore waters (gulls only). It is recognized that the mid-section of this area - called Mainland Coast – also potentially holds important bird numbers, with on a European scale exceptional large numbers of great crested grebes, but rather than designating all coastal waters, the Netherlands has opted for protection of what then seemed to be the richest parts. The proposed SPA Frisian Front was selected because of regularly occurring vulnerable concentrations of common guillemots with chicks in summer. The boundaries of this area is largely determined by physical and benthic features.

The Netherlands Government has decided, in the “National Spatial Strategy” that more SPAs should be identified, particularly in the offshore parts of the EEZ, taking into consideration requirements of both the Birds and the Habitats Directives and the OSPAR Convention. Lindeboom et al. (2005) identified a total of 12 areas, which could potentially qualify for protection as a Marine Protected Area (MPA), based on Natura 2000 and/or OSPAR criteria. Not all areas are proposed MPAs (yet), but are under investigation or will not be designated as a MPA. In 2009 a report was published on the conservation goals for habitats and species in the proposed SACs and SPAs (Jak et al., 2009).

In 2010, Vogelbescherming and the North Sea Foundation carried out the application of the marine IBA criteria to the 12 potential MPA sites identified by Lindeboom in 2005 (Poot et al., 2010). According to this report, 4 (Frisian Front, Delta coast, Mainland coast and Wadden Coast) of the 12 potential MPAs meet for several seabird species marine IBA criteria during multiple year-season combinations. Of the other 8 potential MPAs, 6 are likely to meet the criteria to be identified as marine IBAs as well. However, for these off shore areas only aerial based data are available and with independent data layers for these areas lacking, they can not be definitely confirmed yet. Especially more ship-based effort over different years in different periods of the year is needed.

This report also found that the Dutch Mainland Coast, that so far has not been proposed as an MPA, does actually fulfil the marine IBA Criteria for several seabird species during multiple year-season combinations and it holds internationally important numbers of several species (for example more than 20,000 Great Crested Grebes in winter, which is higher than 1% of the global population).

Vogelbescherming believes that a full marine IBA inventory is a necessary next step to fully review the importance of the Dutch part of the North Sea for seabirds.



## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Netherlands	Total	Global	Regional	Extension	Non-breeding	Bottleneck	Pelagic
Coastal IBAs	15	15	0				
Marine IBAs identified in 2010 report	4+6*	1	3+6	3+1	0	0	1+5

\* The table above identifies Dutch Coastal (terrestrial) IBAs supporting breeding and/or non-breeding seabirds where a marine component may be necessary to ensure proper protection of their qualifying interests. However, they are not considered as full marine IBA's. Seaward extensions are identified as separate SPAs with their own boundaries. In the 2010 investigation from Vogelbescherming 4 areas are confirmed as marine IBA's conform the criteria, plus another 6 that potentially meet the criteria but need multi-year data.

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- A full marine IBA inventory as a necessary next step to fully review the importance of the Dutch part of the North Sea for seabirds, including further research to candidate sites.
- Recognition of several proposed Marine Protection Areas as Important Bird Areas and incorporate them in the legal protection scheme.
- Preserve Marine Biodiversity by urgent measures: a) sustainable fishery b) reconstruction of natural processes and coastal transitions and c) avoiding habitat degradation by spatial planning of wind parks.
- Raising awareness amongst general public and decision-makers for a healthy sea full of fish, mammals and birds.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

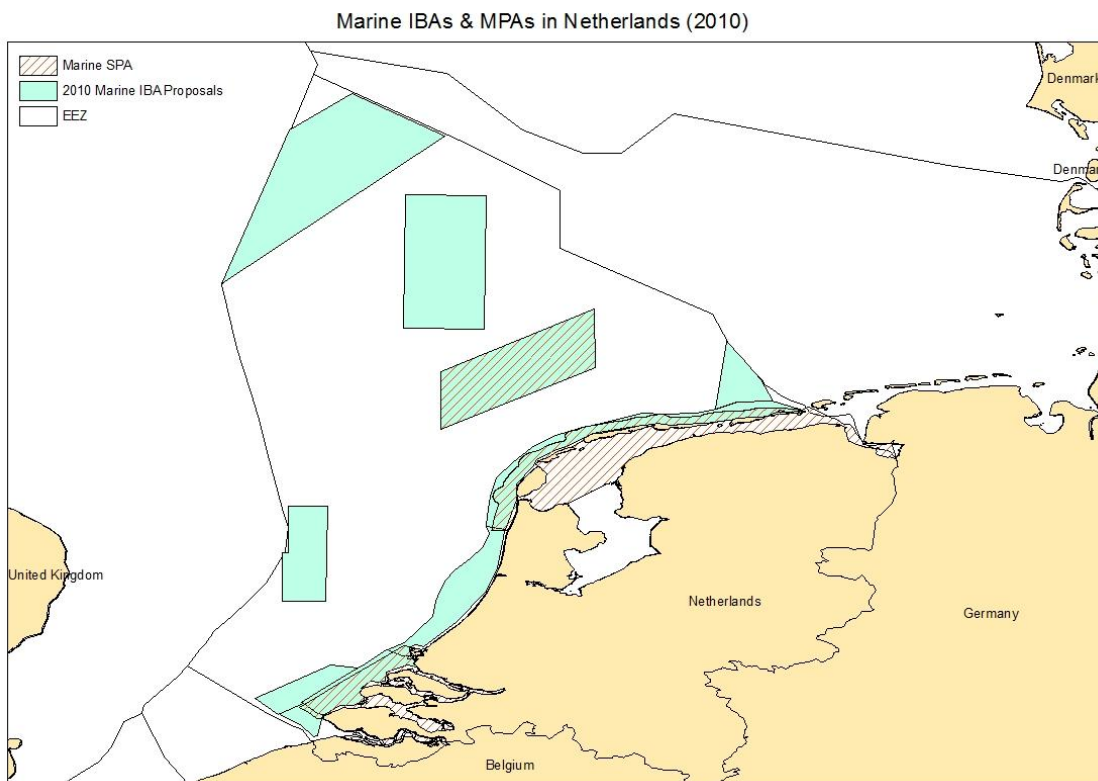
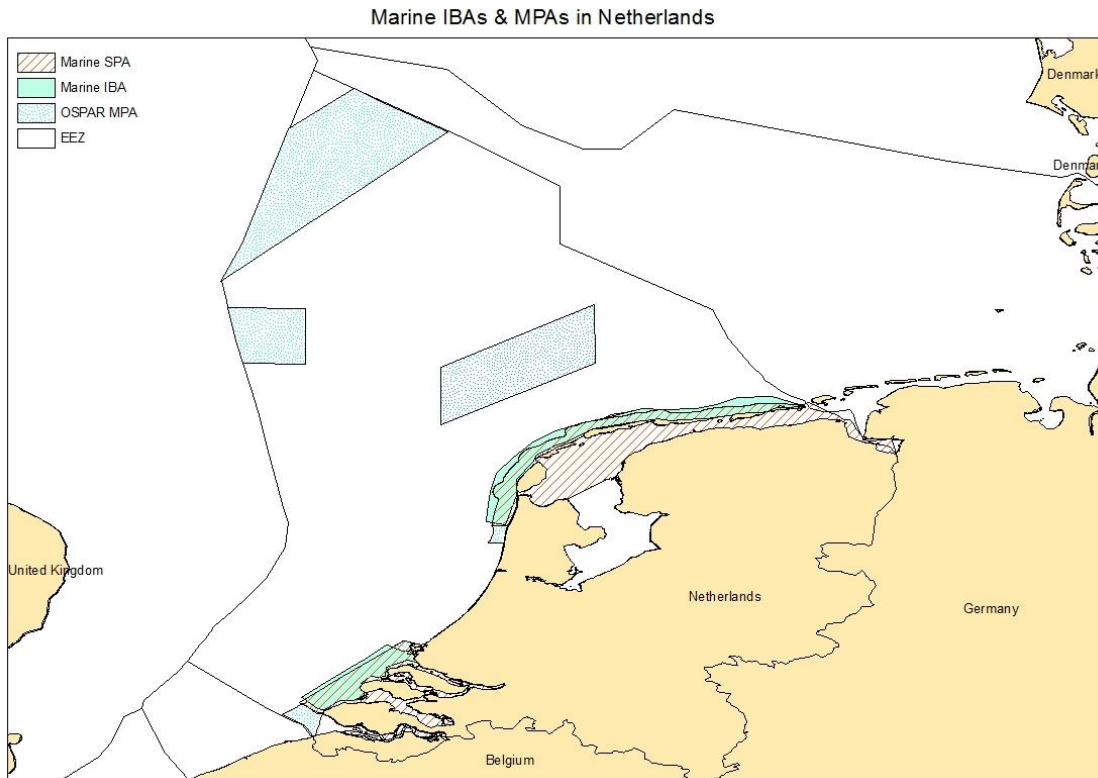
- Before the Dutch government can create protected conservation sites in the North Sea, a whole raft of tasks has to be completed. The Dutch Nature Law has to be amended to allow protection of sites on the Continental Shelf. Furthermore, research is done in close co-operation with scientific institutes, e.g. several ecosystem studies and socio-economic analyses. Priority for the government lies on assessment of consequences for fisheries, to propose necessary sustainable measures to the EU in 2011, based on the advice of ICES-institute. Finally, awareness rising is one of the priorities for the government, e.g. recently the new website [www.noordzeenatura2000.nl](http://www.noordzeenatura2000.nl) has been released.

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6. MAP



# POLAND

## 1. SUMMARY

The Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP) is the body responsible for designating Important Bird Areas in Poland. On the basis of its work, 140 IBAs are recognized in Poland to date (Sidło et al. 2004). All of them were classified as SPAs by the Ministry of Environment in October 2008. Out of these 140 sites, 11 sites are located along the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea, covering near shore / marine / intertidal areas. In 2 of them qualifying species were not seabird species, so as for today there are 9 IBAs in Poland. Additionally new scientific data gathered in 2004-2009 allowed OTOP to propose 34 new areas as IBAs (Wilk et al. 2010), with one marine site encompassing open sea along the border with Russia, bringing total number of marine IBAs in Poland to 10.

The Polish coast is restricted to the southern part of the Baltic Sea. Candidate marine IBAs in Poland encompass mainly lagoons, bays, coast sections and near shore lakes. There are 3 areas (Slupsk Bank, Central Polish Coastal Waters, Pomerania Bay) which cover open sea, one of them (Slupsk Bank) having no connection with the coastline. Marine IBAs in Poland are important sites for migrating and / or wintering seabirds, primarily ducks (e.g. Smew *Mergus albellus*, Common merganser *Mergus merganser*, Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*). Two of these sites are also important breeding areas for terns, and open-sea sites are important for migrating and wintering ducks (e.g. Long-tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis*, Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*), grebes (Great-crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*, Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*) and divers (Black-throated diver *Gavia arctica*, Red-throated diver *Gavia stellata*).

Most of the near-shore IBAs are regularly monitored, especially those close to the Puck Bay (Vistula River Mouth, Puck Bay, Vistula Bay) where bird monitoring is carried out by KULING and in Western Pomerania region. Good-quality long-term monitoring data are available for Puck Bay and Vistula River Mouth, where migrating / wintering bird counts have been performed on a monthly basis since 1984 by KULING, being one of the longest standing monitoring schemes of that type in Europe. Open-sea areas are rarely monitored (only recently in 2005 and 2007 by University of Gdansk), due to the lack of funds for ship or aerial counts of seabirds.

The biggest threat to marine IBAs nowadays is intense habitat modification, especially in the coastline. Major threats appearing are coastal urban and recreational development, increasing tourism pressure in some localities and windfarms.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Poland	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	12	12	0	2	9	0	1

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- OTOP is now focusing on establish caretakers networks for all Polish IBAs, including marine sites. To this day all marine IBAs in Poland have their caretakers, who monitor the sites and provide an early warning function, and inform about the threats. In the near future one of the main priorities should focus on resolving the problem of growing pressure from the windfarm industry. Also finding the funds for ship and aerial counts is one of the main challenges.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

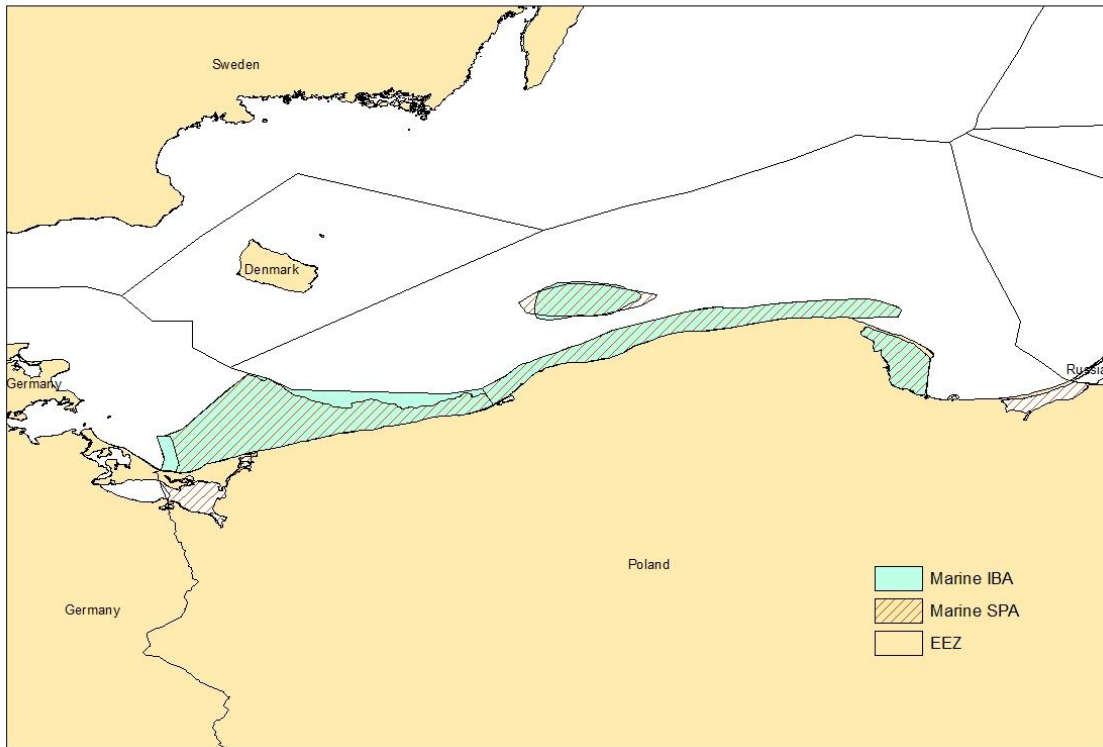
- The government fulfilled its obligations, designating all 140 IBAs proposed in 2004 as SPAs. But as new scientific data from 2004-2009 appeared, and shows that some additional sites (including 1 marine IBA) also fulfil the IBA criteria, the crucial point now is to work together with the Government to enlarge the Natura 2000 network so that it encompasses also newly proposed IBAs. The next step is to ensure the proper protection on the ground. In some marine sites no thorough ornithological surveys have been carried out recently, which is crucial for proper conservation program planning. Most of the marine IBAs do not have Management Plans – these should be created in the coming years.

## 5. REFERENCES

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6. MAP

Marine IBAs & MPAs in Poland



# PORTUGAL

## 1. SUMMARY

The oceanic area under Portuguese jurisdiction is eighteen times the size of the land area. The country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) contains many of Europe's rarest seabirds and is the largest of the European Union. The Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (SPEA) is one of BirdLife's most active marine IBA researchers and contributors and has been involved in several national and international research projects in Europe.

Over the period 2004-2008 SPEA coordinated the LIFE Project "Áreas Importantes para as Aves Marinhas". This project and its twin one coordinated by SEO/BirdLife in Spain set the general guidelines for the identification of marine IBAs and tested all census and tracking technologies available.

The results from this LIFE Project are detailed in the Project's Final Report (available on their website) and are condensed into one of the world's first marine IBA inventories, which has both printed and online versions (for the latter see <http://lifeibasmarinhas.spea.pt/y-book/ibasmarinhas/>).

In summary, SPEA identified 17 marine IBAs within the Portuguese EEZ, 4 marine IBAs located in international waters and another 6 located in other countries' EEZ. These areas comprise both coastal and truly pelagic sites, of extreme importance for the numerous pelagic seabird species that breed in the archipelagos of Azores and Madeira.

Despite this publication, in 2010 the Portuguese Government has still not declared any marine IBAs as SPAs. According to SPEA the Government plans to declare just 1 of those areas (Berlengas) in the near future but will significantly reduce the boundaries and size proposed in the inventory.

Since 2006 SPEA has been providing advice to a number of other BirdLife Partners regarding methods for tracking seabirds and defining mechanisms to enable marine IBA identification for a number of other projects. Countries like Italy, Malta, Greece, Turkey, Slovenia, etc have received support from SPEA.

In 2009, the LIFE+ Project "Safe islands for Seabirds 2009-2012" was also approved. This project implements seabird conservation actions in the island of Corvo and the islet of Vila Franca (São Miguel island), Azores. Also since January 2009, SPEA supports the BirdLife's European Marine Coordinator position.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Portugal	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	17	12	5	14	1	0	2

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Achieve full declaration as SPAs of all 17 marine IBAs published in the 2008 Inventory
- Improve seabird migration research towards the identification of bottleneck sites
- Improve methods for the identification of key areas at sea for very pelagic species of small size, such as *Pterodroma* sp, *Oceanodroma* sp or *Pelagodroma* sp.
- Understand the real threats that marine renewable energies represent for seabird species along the Portuguese EEZ
- Develop management plans for the Marine SPAs when declared

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

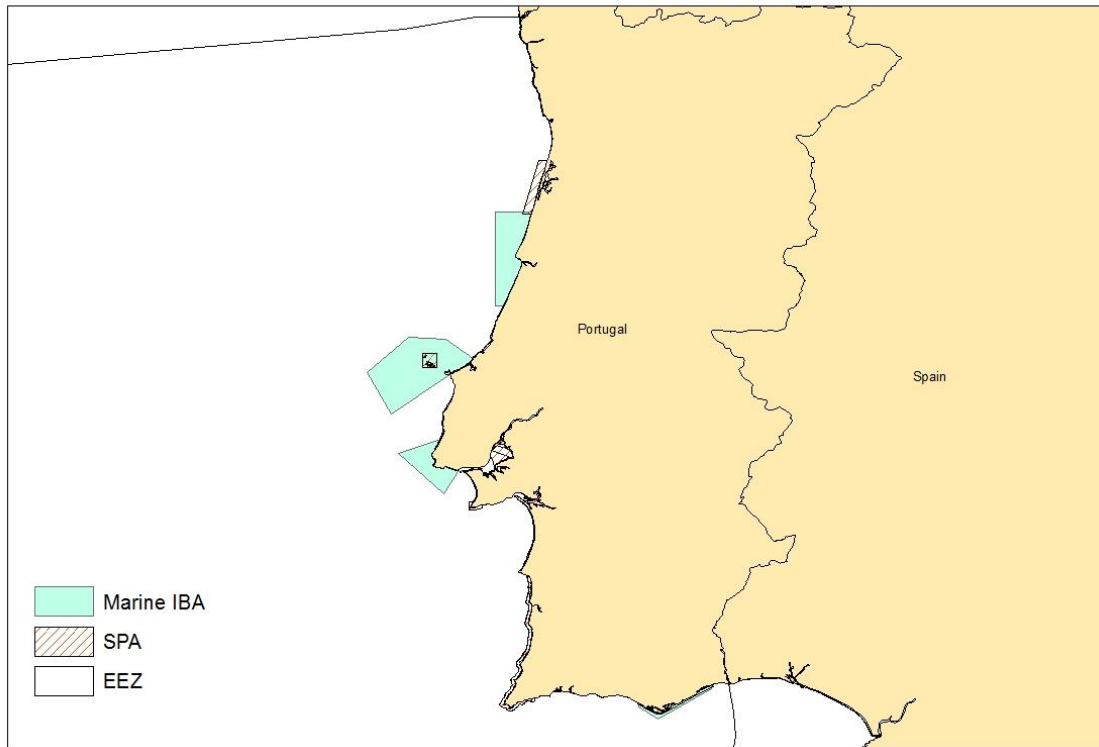
- The Portuguese Government, despite being Partners in the LIFE “marine IBAs” Project, has repeatedly questioned the methodology used by SPEA and its national and international Partners and consultants and has so far avoided declaring any of the existing marine IBAs as Marine SPAs. Although weak and not based on any science the arguments given by the Portuguese Government's officials ignore the results of the project and the statistical modelling applied by SPEA and its international Partners. According to SPEA, the Portuguese government has missed a one-chance opportunity to situate Portugal as the marine leader of Europe, based on its large EEZ and the sound scientific data available to declare Marine SPAs.
- SPEA plans to send an official claim to the European Commission on insufficient designation of Marine SPAs by mid 2010.

## 5. REFERENCES

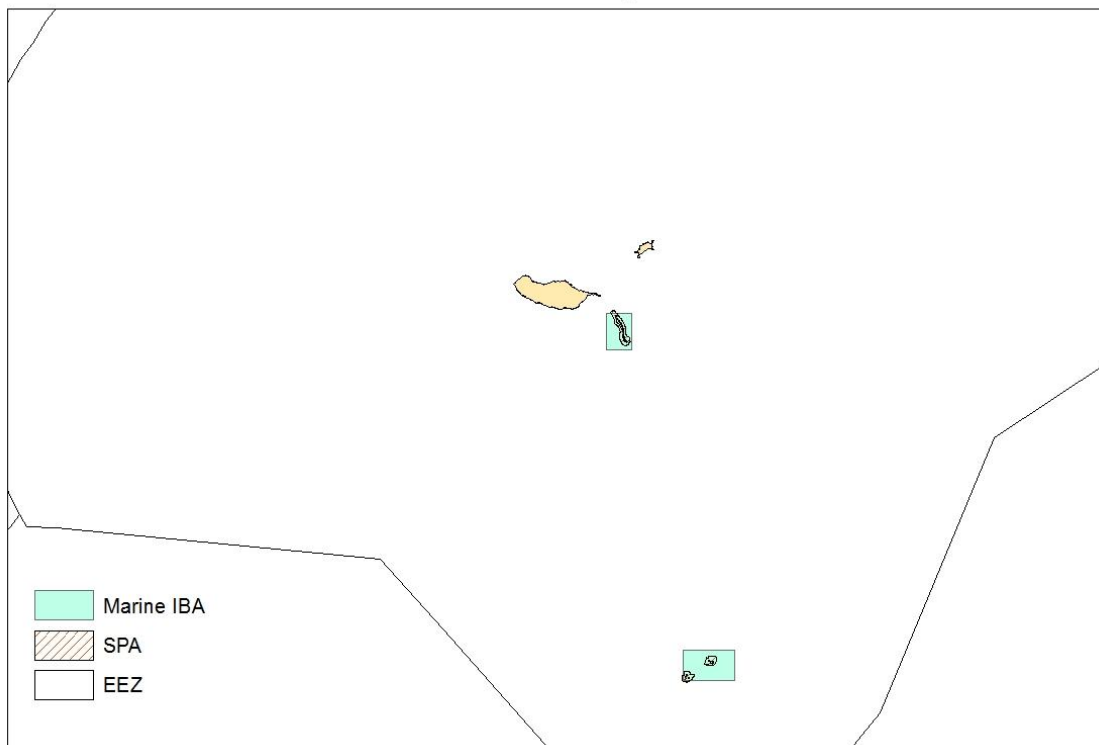
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- Digital versión of marine IBA book can be seen and downloaded at <http://lifeibasmarinhas.spea.pt/y-book/ibasmarinhas/>

## 6. MAP

Marine IBAs & MPAs in Portugal

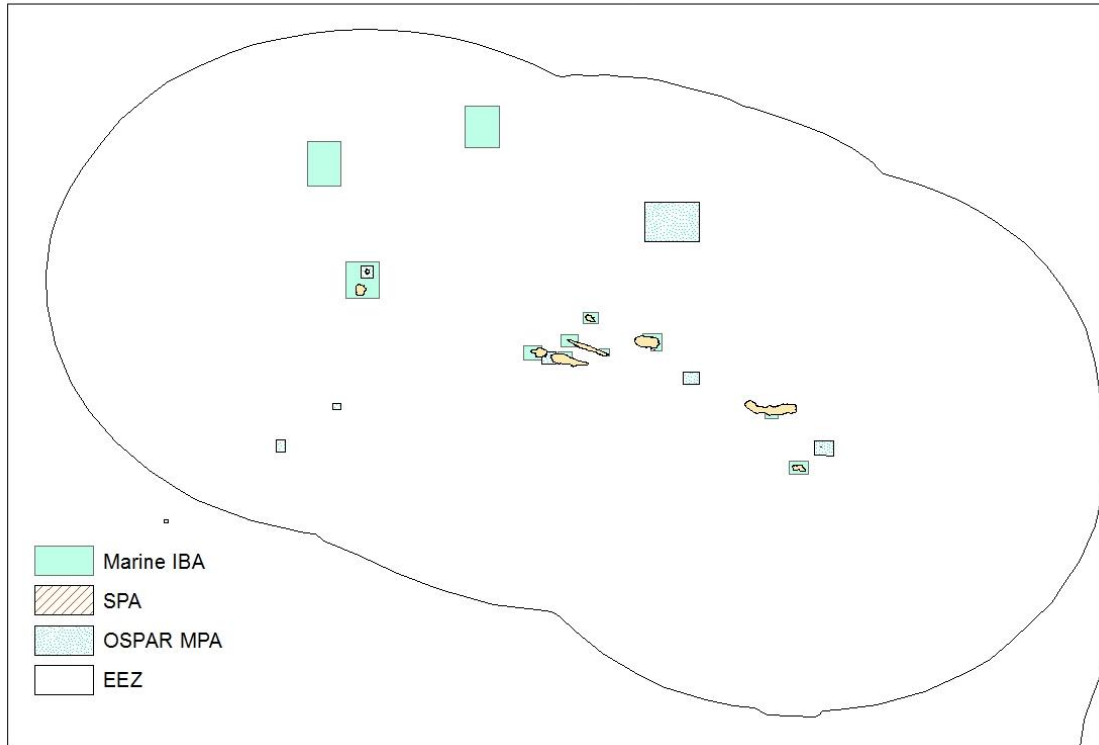


Marine IBAs & MPAs in Portugal - Madeira

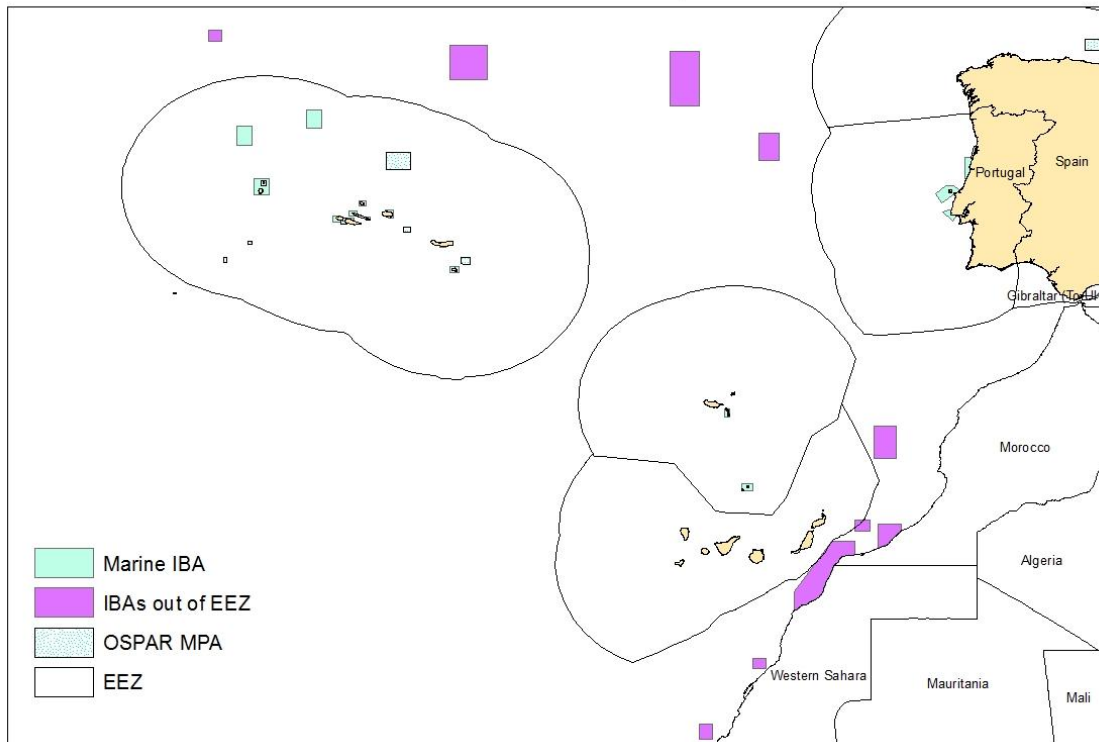




Marine IBAs & MPAs in Portugal - Azores



Marine IBAs inside and outside Portuguese EEZ



# SLOVENIA

## 1. SUMMARY

Although not very large, the Slovenian sea is very important to some seabird species, according to DOPPS Slovenia, the Birdlife Partner. Following Appendix II of the Barcelona Convention, action plans have been prepared for 15 threatened marine bird species within the region. Of these 5 seabird species have been found to be regularly frequenting the Slovenian coast in recent years. An analysis of the population size estimates was conducted in terms of the proportion of birds of the respective global populations breeding, wintering or foraging in the Gulf of Trieste, including the Slovenian sea. Those whose proportions of their global population was high (>1%) were the Yelkouan shearwater (up to 1.5%) and Mediterranean subspecies of the European shag (up to 11.4%). Both Yelkouan shearwater and Shag formed dense summer aggregations in foraging areas of the Gulf of Trieste which relatively shallow and rich with food.

The Yelkouan shearwater is especially abundant in the autumn, when large flocks of up to 1000 individuals forage in the area, which are the largest densities, recorded in the Adriatic Sea. A large aggregation of Shags also forages in the area in the summer/autumn, with an estimated population of 1500-2000 birds, which is probably nearly half of the entire breeding population in the Adriatic Sea. This data shows that the Italian and Slovenian parts of the Gulf of Trieste area together fulfil IBA criteria, and likely qualify as a marine IBA on the basis of non-breeding congregations.

In 2009 DOPPS BirdLife Slovenia submitted a LIFE Project (LIFE09 NAT/SI/000379, "Preparatory inventory and activities for the designation of marine IBA and SPA site for Mediterranean shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii* in Slovenia") that included a complete mapping of the marine IBAs in the country, which was supported by the Slovenian Authorities. Unfortunately this project was rejected in 2010 (letter from the EC on 29 Jan 2010) and currently DOPPS is evaluating whether to resubmit in Sept 2010. The reason for rejection was that "the target area is all within 12 miles of the coast and thus is internal / inshore and not offshore" and therefore should have "25% of the proposal budget allocated to concrete conservation actions" which was not the case since it contained mainly research actions.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Slovenia	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	1	1	0	1	0	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Complete research of the Slovenian sea is conducted in order to establish the exact populations of shag and Yelkouan shearwater, their phenology and spatial use of the sea
- Marine IBA borders are defined on the basis of the above mentioned research
- The proposal for the marine SPA declaration is produced and presented to the Government for the final reading

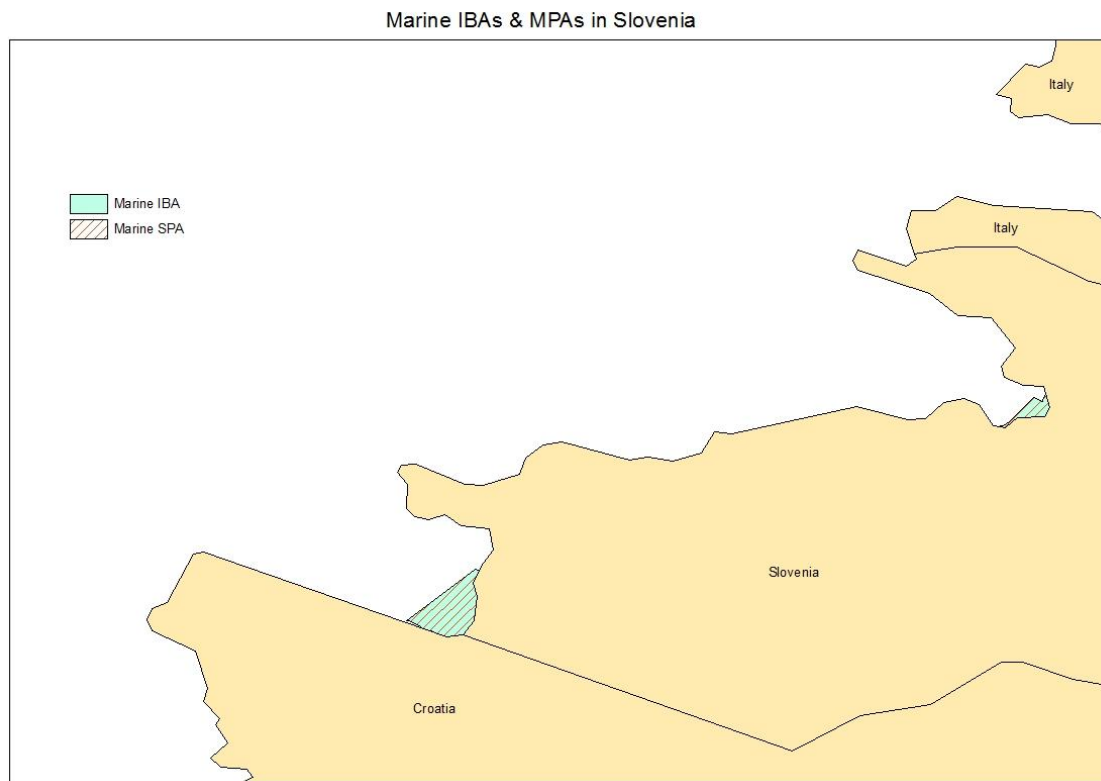
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- According to DOPPS BirdLife Slovenia, the Slovenian Government had some concerns on the possibility of on-going or planned activities at sea that could have harmful effects to seabirds, and therefore was cautious about the LIFE+ marine IBA proposal, although they supported it in 2009.

## 5. REFERENCES

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## 6. MAP



NOTE:

- EEZ not officially declared.

# SPAIN

## 1. SUMMARY

Spain has a wide marine territory, of over 1,000,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and encompasses three main biogeographical marine regions (Mediterranean, Atlantic and Macaronesia) which host a wide diversity of seabird species. The important breeding populations include 16 seabird species listed in Annex I of the EU Wild Birds Directive, with two of them also on the IUCN Red List. In addition, the country is important for migrating and wintering seabirds.

The recognition of SPAs in the marine environment by the Birds Directive is currently limited to a few tens of sites (the exact number and total area covered varies among sources, due to different criteria at allocating areas with both coastal and terrestrial component). A quick analysis by SEO/BirdLife would bring a figure of 38 sites covering 2,162 km<sup>2</sup>, all of them coastal and most often overlapping with SCIs.

SEO/BirdLife is, together with SPEA in Portugal, a key leader on marine IBA identification, methodology testing and seabird research in Europe. SEO/BirdLife coordinated a LIFE Project named “Areas Importantes para las Aves (IBA) marinas en España”, over the period 2004-2009. This was a twin project to the one delivered by SPEA and both shared the same objectives and outcomes.

As a result of this Project SEO/BirdLife presented in 2009 their national marine IBA inventory. This includes 42 marine IBAs, encompassing 42,883 km<sup>2</sup>, almost 5% of Spanish waters. Another four areas were identified as potential marine IBAs, with over 15,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and could be added to the official marine IBA inventory in the near future once more data has been collected. Finally, four areas of interest were identified beyond Spanish jurisdictional waters, totalling around 25,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The inventory includes ‘areas of high intensity use at sea’ (primarily foraging areas, both coastal and pelagic), ‘seaward extensions to breeding colonies’ and ‘migration hotspots’, all of them well distributed within Spanish marine territory.

The new inventory also reviewed previous terrestrial IBAs which did have a marine component. Most of these sites have been absorbed (and expanded) by the new inventory. However, a very few, small and coastal sites have been not included in the marine IBA inventory, but could keep strictly coastal values (e.g. for waterfowl). The final inclusion or exclusion of these sites from the Spanish IBA inventory is pending of the upcoming overall review, due in 2010.

The marine IBA inventory was supported by the relevant authorities from the beginning, and its results have been welcomed by them. This has prompted the starting of negotiations between the Spanish Government (Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs) and the Regional Governments towards the extension of the Natura 2000 network to the marine environment regarding seabirds (SPAs), a process in which SEO/BirdLife is taking active part. This process should be also accompanied by detailed studies on a site-by-site basis, directed at developing adequate management plans that ensure the preservation of the SPAs values, a task already started by SEO/BirdLife along with other institutions through Life+ Project INDEMARES (2009-2013), and to which will also contribute Interreg Project FAME.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal * and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Spain	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding/Pelagic**</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	
	42	27	15	23 (37)	15 (18)	4 (5)	42

\*This table only refers to strictly marine IBAs, as defined in this report (i.e. those identified in agreement with the "Marine IBA Toolkit" guidelines).

\*\* Spanish marine IBAs were not officially classified according to "type". The use of the site by seabirds (equivalent to IBA type) is stated in the IBAs description sheets, but is not only site-specific but also species-specific (i.e. the same area can be regarded as a seaward extension for a given species and a pelagic area for others – or even for the same). Therefore, a given IBA can match the definition of different types. In the table we note the number of areas "primarily" identified according to each type and, within brackets, the total number of IBAs that match each type type for at least one seabird species.

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Gain effective protection for marine IBAs (e.g. as N2000, but also OSPAR, Barcelona...), while also working for marine conservation at a wider scale too. This requires lobbying, involvement of stakeholders and further, detailed study of the areas and their seabirds to make adequate management proposals.
- Monitoring: assessing the long-term stability/changes in seabird distribution patterns; improve knowledge on distribution patterns for small species of Procellariiforms; improving seabird population estimates.
- Assessment of threats and working on mitigation measures, especially regarding fisheries bycatch, windfarms and predation.

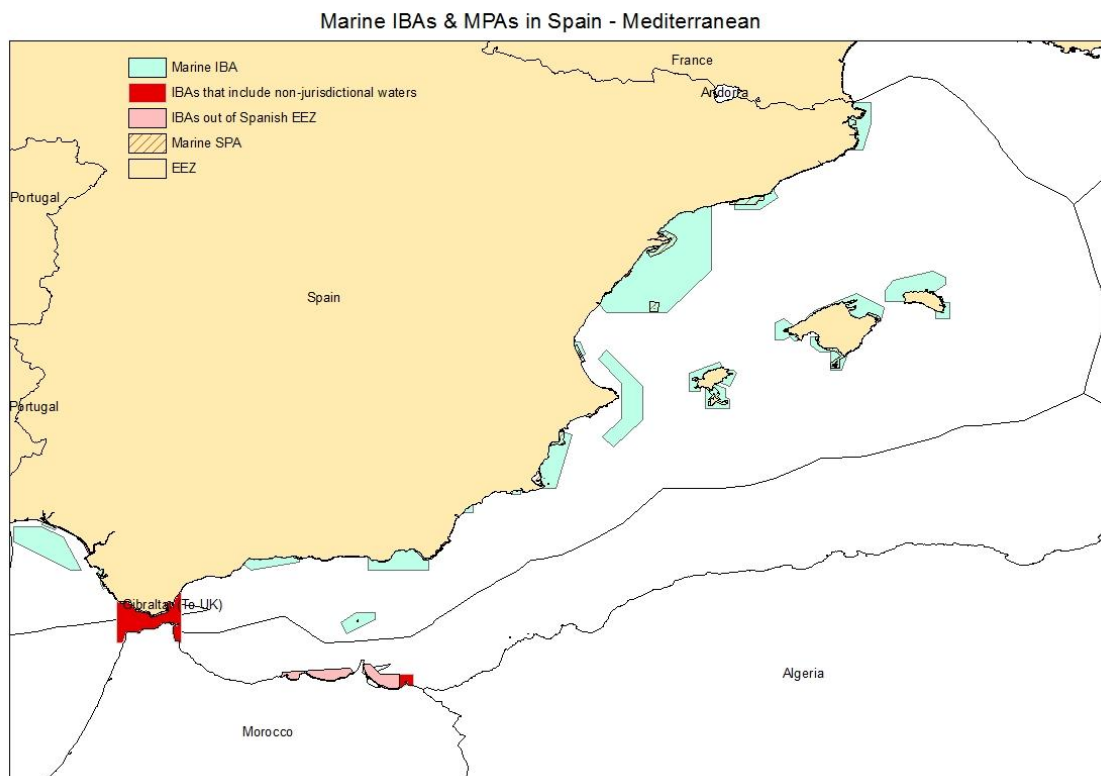
## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

- Willingness to start N2000 designation immediately and complete by 2013 (deadline of new LIFE+ Project INDEMARES). Marine IBA inventory welcomed (support to the project from the beginning), with compromise to take it as the N2000 reference regarding seabirds.
- New Law for the Protection of the Marine Environment, in transposition of the EU Marine Strategy, should set the framework of reference for marine N2000 designation. Still many uncertainties and gaps in legislation, especially after the fusion of the ministries of environment and fisheries. Also competences between regional governments and the State still unclear. Interest to disconnect MPAs from fishing, except explicitly designated fishing reserves.

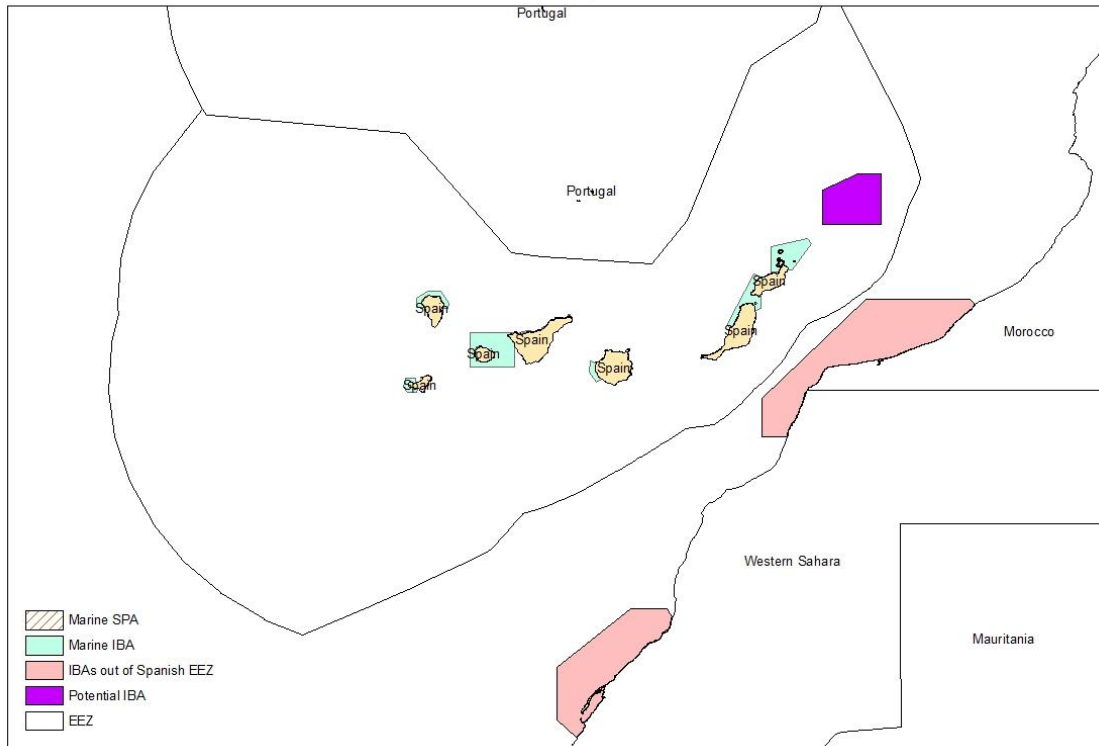
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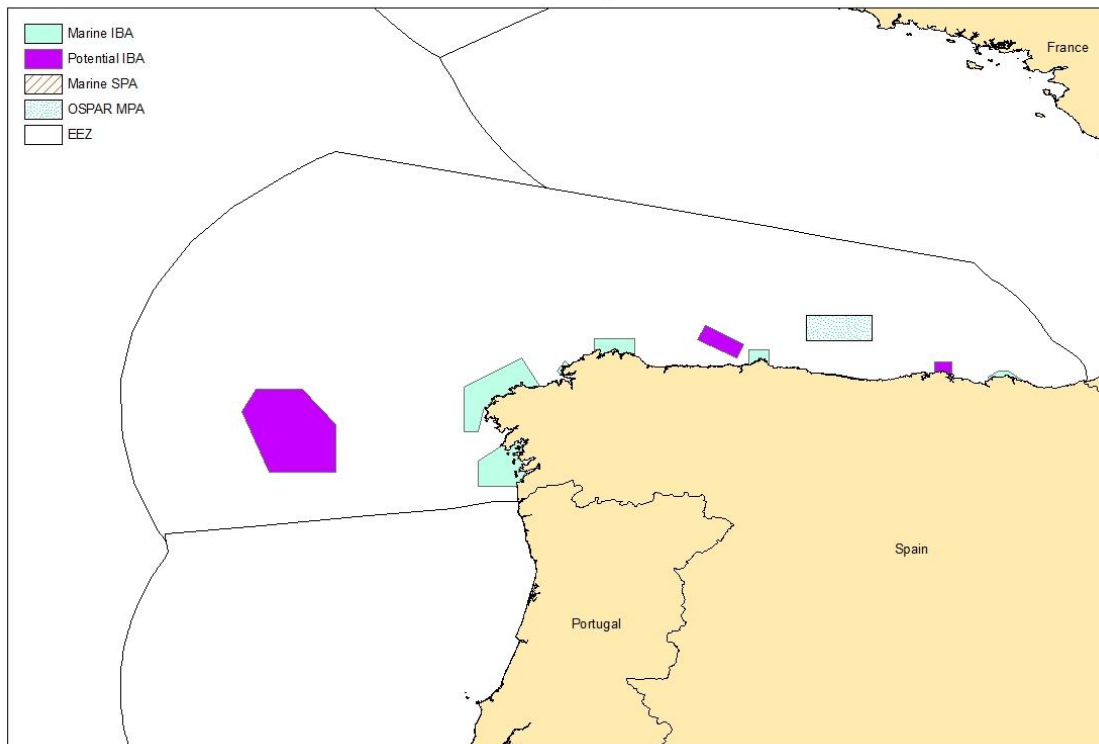
## 6. MAP



Marine IBAs & MPAs in Spain - Canaries



Marine IBAs & MPAs in Spain - North



NOTES:

- Spanish EEZ not officially declared.



# SWEDEN

## 1. SUMMARY

In Sweden there are 30 areas classified as candidate Important Bird Areas, possibly a few more, and two more areas are proposed but formally not yet accepted. The total area covers almost one million ha of which 34 % are legally protected within the framework of Natura2000.

The Swedish marine IBAs are found both in the Baltic (brackish water environment), and Skagerack and Kattegatt (marine environment). All IBAs except four are found in the coastal region including also extensive areas of archipelagos. The bird communities typical for these areas include habitats for breeding, migratory and overwintering populations. Four IBAs represent offshore banks, which mainly are important to overwintering diving ducks.

The proportion of protection of the IBAs varies from those that are not protected (four areas) to those that are covered completely within the framework of Natura2000 (eight areas). There is a need to clarify to what extent present coverage of protection supports the values identified within the IBAs.

The number of typical marine seabirds in Sweden is low, but including also species found along coasts, it may comprise some 24 species. Typical seabird habitats, e.g. seabird cliffs, are rare and only found at IBA Lilla and Stora Karlsö on the coast of the Island of Gotland. Here some of the largest colonies of Guillemots and Razorbills in the whole Baltic Sea are found. Several of the offshore banks are of international importance for overwintering diving ducks. For example, at IBA Hoburgs bank up to one million Long-tailed Duck winter every year.

The knowledge of seabird numbers and their distribution along the coasts and in the offshore areas of Sweden is to some extent restricted, which also holds for many IBAs. Today systematic surveys are lacking for many areas and the status of some species is therefore poor. As part of a recent report on integrated population assessments it was pointed out that many coastal living species and overwintering populations of seabirds are poorly monitored which suggests improved efforts is needed in the future.

Despite some shortcomings on the monitoring there is enough data to give good information on status and trends at a national level for the majority of species (24 species) typical for coastal and marine environment in Sweden. This shows that for the last 30-years period 48 % of the species have increased in number, 20 % were stable, whilst 8 % declined. If taking in account only the last 10-years 32 % of the species increased, 48 % were stable and 20 % declined.

The general picture for the majority of the seabirds is that they are doing quite well. Obviously many fish eating birds have increased markedly in recent decades as a consequence of eutrophication with more fish available. This positive effect may, however, in the long run turn to be negative along with deteriorating water quality and decreased biodiversity. For some species decreased hunting pressure during latter decades may have played a role and supported improved conditions. For some species including Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter and Lesser Black-backed Gull (*ssp. fuscus*) populations have decreased in recent years, in some cases dramatically, partly due to unknown reasons.

There are several factors that can be identified out as potential threats to seabirds in Swedish waters but there is little data to suggest the relative importance of different factors. For a majority of the IBAs in Sweden data is lacking on threats. However, one obvious and documented threat for some areas is the accidental introduction and spread of the American Mink which have had a

powerful effect on the distribution of some sensitive species. In recent years an unknown disease has killed considerable numbers of seabirds, and possibly affected reproduction of some species. Thiamine deficiency has been suggested as a possible factor but is at the same time disputed. Recently the drift-net fishery was abandoned in the Baltic which in earlier years had killed thousands of auks. Still, thousands of mainly other seabird species are still accidentally killed in fyke-net and gill-net fisheries in Sweden.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Sweden	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	32	23	9	28	4	0	0

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Gain effective protection for those coastal and marine IBAs which still are not legally protected (not yet included in the N2000/SPA -network). This requires both lobbying towards authorities and the public and involvement of other relevant stakeholders.
- Improve monitoring which is insufficient for some species and areas. The latter holds in particular for the off-shore banks. As part of a recent evaluation SOF supports proposals to improve monitoring schemes for some birds, including sea-birds, which are insufficiently covered by the current monitoring programs.
- Assessment of threats and working on mitigation measures, especially regarding eutrophication, oil spill, fisheries bycatch, windfarms, etc.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

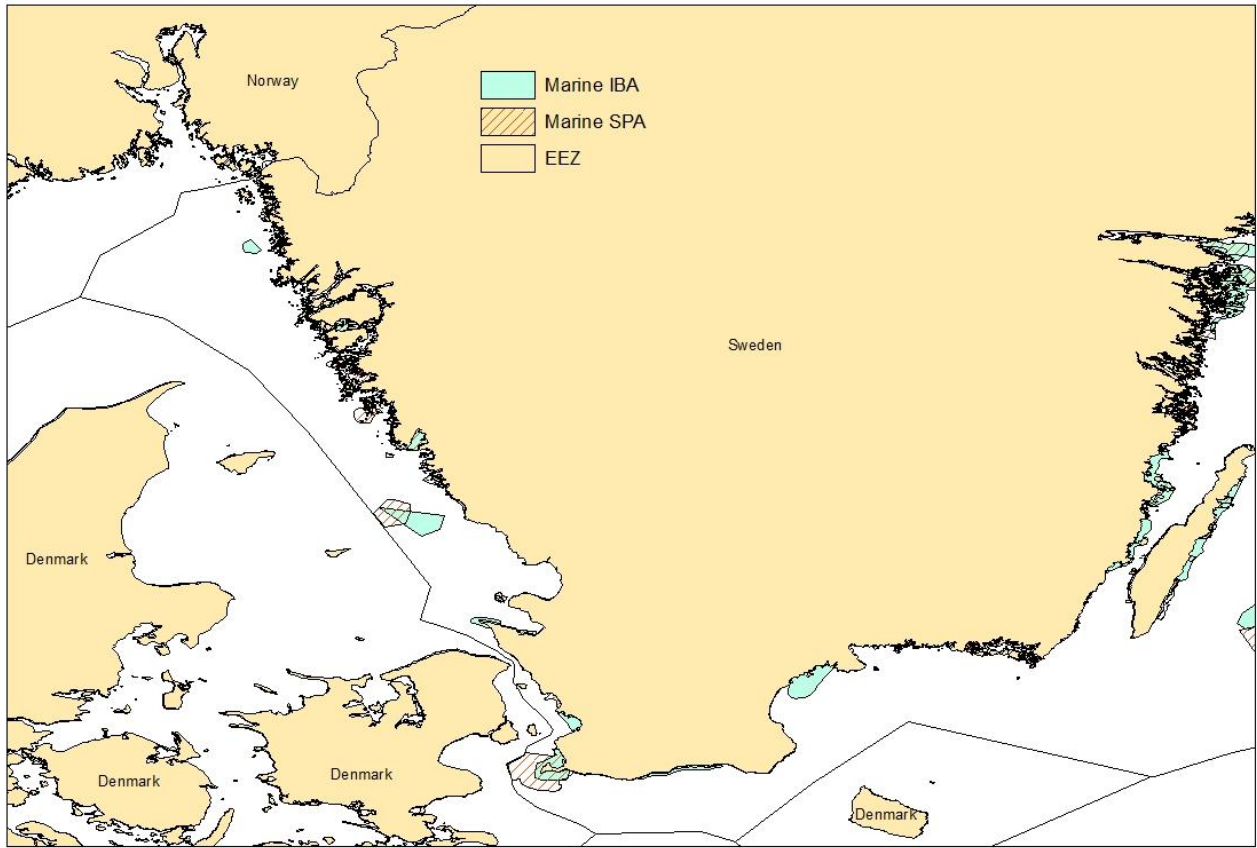
- Willingness to start N2000/SPA designations.
- Take actions on all levels, nationally and internationally, to counteract the water pollution and associated threats to sea-birds.

## 5. REFERENCES

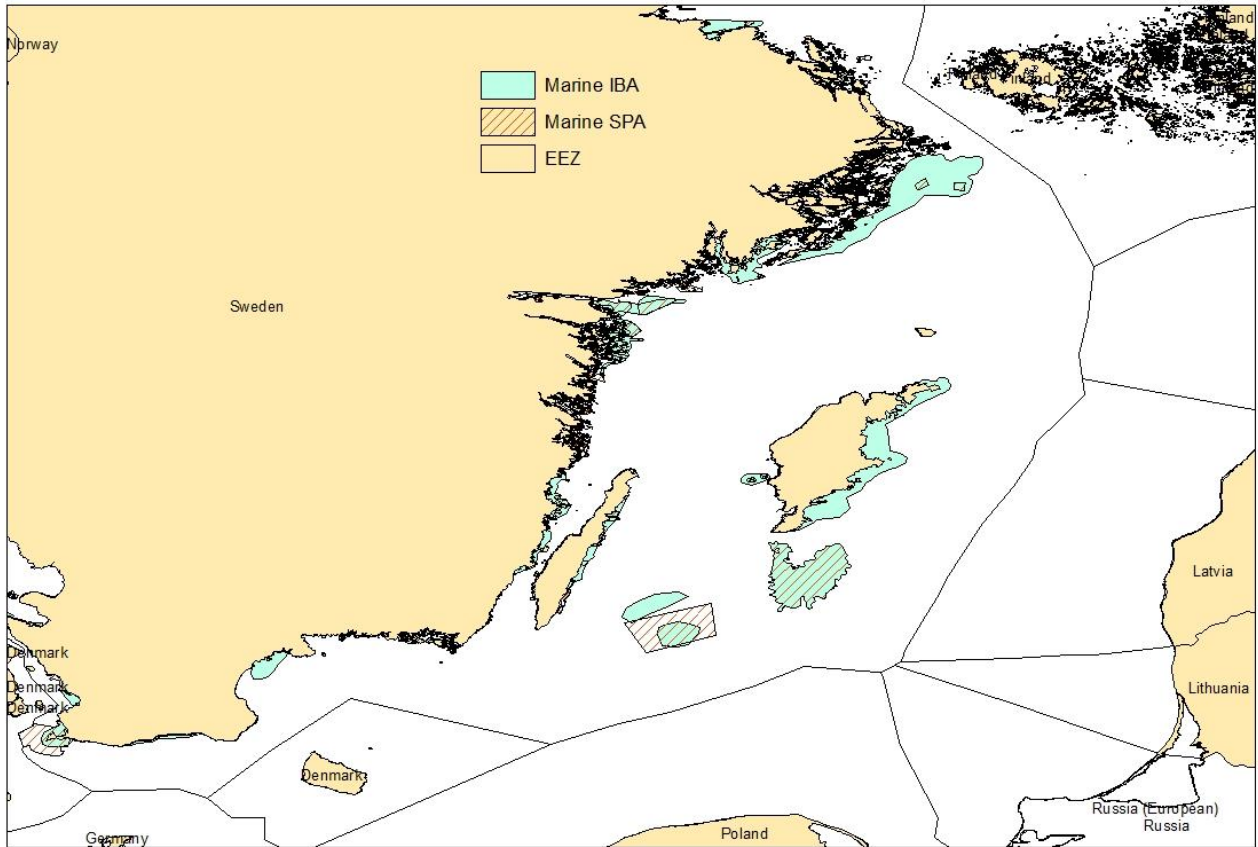
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6. MAP

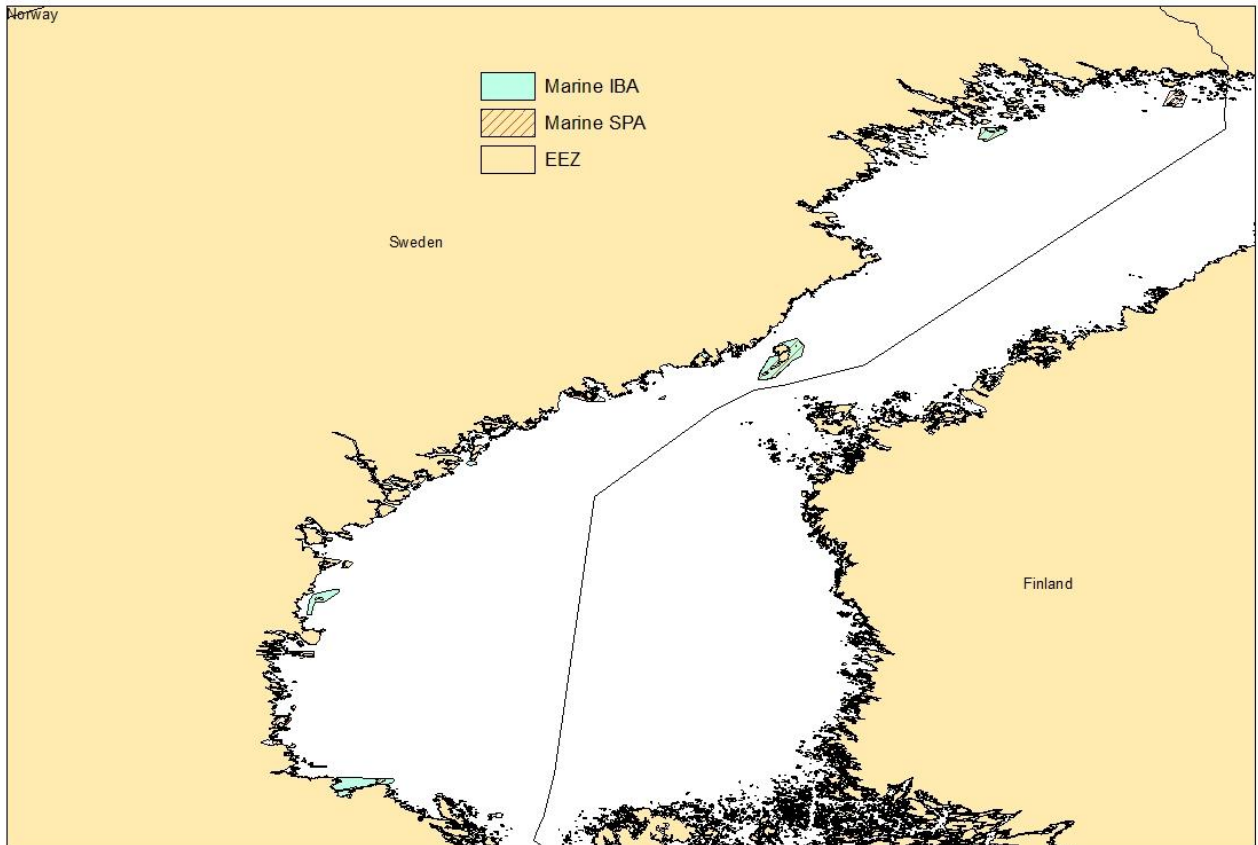
Marine IBAs in Sweden - South



Marine IBAs in Sweden - SouthEast



Marine IBAs in Sweden - North



# UNITED KINGDOM

## 1. SUMMARY

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, RSPB, has updated all its IBA information, and extensive feedback has been provided on the candidate marine IBA list produced in Howgate & Lascelles (2007). Guidelines to determine terrestrial SPA qualification in the UK are well-established (Stroud et al., 2001). As far as has been possible these guidelines have been applied in the marine environment. The RSPB's marine IBA work is being pursued primarily through its advocacy to identify and implement a UK marine SPA network under the EU Birds Directive. This is achieved mainly through discussions with the UK Government and its advisors (the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and the country administrations and nature conservation agencies). The RSPB is advocating that the UK Government take the lead on the identification of marine SPAs within the UK EEZ. To date the Government's approach has been characterised by foot dragging and inaction.

The RSPB has identified its terrestrial and coastal IBAs using significant bird survey datasets that, to a large extent, have been gathered by volunteers. Such reliance on volunteer survey effort is not possible in the marine environment, where considerable resources are required to carry out a coherent research and survey programme. It is the RSPB's view that the UK Government and its conservation agencies should resource and co-ordinate this work. Consequently, in the absence of the necessary data it has not been possible for the RSPB to identify a comprehensive set of marine IBA boundaries yet. Therefore, the maps accompanying this account should be considered indicative at this stage. Given the lack of adequate data in much of the inshore and offshore marine environment, it can only provide a partial picture of a potential UK marine IBA network as it mainly relates to existing seabird IBAs/SPAs that are likely to require seaward extensions, including the classification of associated foraging areas, the extent of which remains under discussion. A particular concern is the identification of offshore foraging areas, and especially those related to breeding seabird colonies.

In respect of seaward extensions, the RSPB is currently working with the JNCC proposal to implement generic radii extensions based on maintenance behaviour adjacent to breeding seabird SPAs. Recommendations have been made and endorsed to extend existing SPAs for common guillemot, razorbill, and Atlantic puffin by 1 km into the marine environment, by 2 km for northern fulmar and northern gannet SPAs, and by at least 4 km for Manx shearwater SPAs. To date, maintenance extensions for these species have only been made for 31 Scottish SPAs: no extensions have come forward for relevant SPAs in England, Northern Ireland or Wales. The RSPB is keeping this approach under constant review to see if it proves sufficiently robust to ensure the protection of relevant seabird species.

JNCC has carried out an analysis of the ESAS data to try to identify potential offshore SPAs. The RSPB has welcomed this as a starting point but expressed concern that it identifies a severely limited network of sites and underlines the significant limitations of relying on ESAS data because of both its age and very incomplete spatial and temporal coverage. An aerial survey programme covering the important inshore areas around the UK continues.

To date, the marine SPAs that have been designated in the UK include Carmarthen Bay SPA (for wintering common scoter) and maintenance extensions to 31 Scottish breeding seabird SPAs.

Two other marine SPA proposals were consulted upon in late 2009/early 2010, many years after the sites were first identified. These are Liverpool Bay (wintering common scoter and red-throated diver) and the Outer Thames Estuary (wintering red-throated diver). The RSPB has signalled its support for these sites but is critical of the omissions of other qualifying features e.g. foraging terns from adjacent SPA colonies.

The RSPB, along with Partners in France, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, is part of a major seabird monitoring and tracking project called the Future of the Atlantic Marine Environment (FAME). In the UK, FAME will involve the RSPB monitoring and remote tracking European shag, black-legged kittiwake, common guillemot, Northern fulmar and gannet at their breeding colonies. Among other things, the RSPB will use the findings to inform its advocacy with the UK Government and its conservation agencies on the survey, identification and delineation of potential marine SPAs for the relevant species.

The RSPB has created foraging fact sheets for 23 out of 43 UK breeding seabirds based on information held in the BirdLife Seabird Foraging Database, with an aim of providing standardised information to marine projects within the UK that are charged with bringing forward recommendations for national level marine protected areas i.e. not marine SPAs. The scope of these factsheets will be such that they may prove useful to BirdLife Partners working on these species in the rest of the world.

## 2. MARINE IBAS

	Total number of Coastal and/or marine IBAs & Criteria			Type of marine IBA			
				Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
United Kingdom	<i>Total</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Extension</i>	<i>Non-breeding</i>	<i>Bottleneck</i>	<i>Pelagic</i>
	111	58	53	101	36	0	0

NOTE: The table above identifies UK terrestrial and coastal IBAs supporting breeding and/or non-breeding seabirds where a marine component may be necessary to ensure proper protection of their qualifying interests. It excludes marine extensions to three IBAs: two in the Channel Islands (one global, one regional) and one in the Isle of Man (regional)

## 3. NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Designate those sites already identified as meeting SPA requirements;
- Carry out data gap analysis and targeted survey work offshore to identify foraging areas for breeding and non-breeding seabirds; and
- Invest in a coherent seabird survey and monitoring programme to facilitate both the identification of SPAs and monitoring of their condition once designated.

## 4. GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

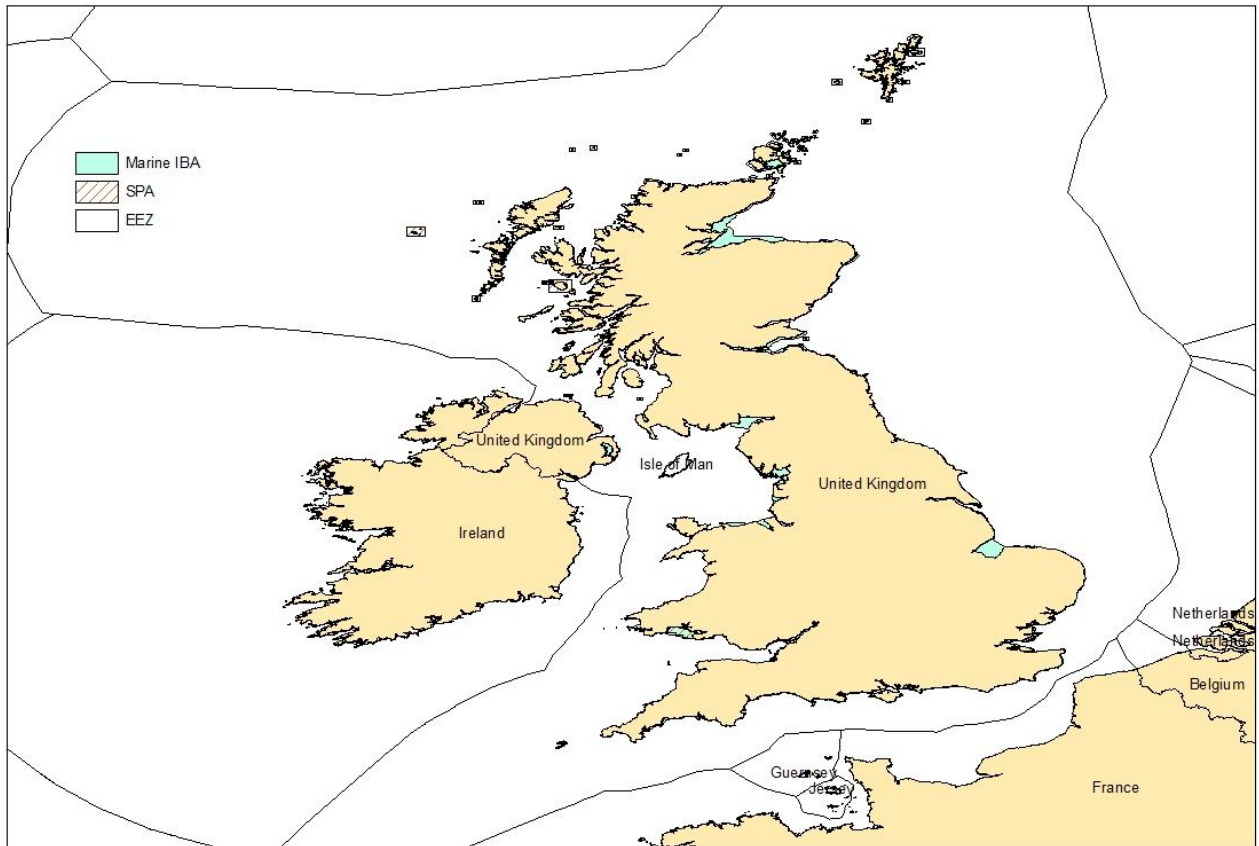
- Considerable investment is needed by the UK Government to carry out the necessary research and survey to identify non-breeding coastal concentrations and offshore foraging areas. At present the UK Government is providing substantially insufficient resources to JNCC for essential survey and analysis in order to identify the most important areas for marine SPA designation.
- The RSPB's main concern lies with spatial and temporal deficiencies in the data being relied upon by JNCC to identify and designate offshore foraging areas, especially for breeding seabirds. Such deficiencies have the potential to result in an inadequate and poorly located network of marine SPAs.

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## 6. MAP

Marine IBAs & MPAs in the UK





## Annex 1: BirdLife International marine IBA contacts

Country Name	BirdLife International Partner	Name of contact	Email address
Belgium	BirdLife Belgium (Natuurpunt - natagora)	Wallonia: Jean-Yves Paquet Flanders: Wim Van den bossche	<a href="mailto:jean-yves.paquet@aves.be">jean-yves.paquet@aves.be</a> <a href="mailto:wim.vandenbossche@natuurpunt.be">wim.vandenbossche@natuurpunt.be</a>
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB)	Irina Mateeva	<a href="mailto:irina.kostadinova@bspb.org">irina.kostadinova@bspb.org</a>
Cyprus	BirdLife Cyprus	Michael Miltiadou	<a href="mailto:michael.miltiadou@birdlifecyprus.org.cy">michael.miltiadou@birdlifecyprus.org.cy</a>
Denmark	Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (DOF – BirdLife DK)	Thomas Vikstrøm	<a href="mailto:thomas.vikstroem@dof.dk">thomas.vikstroem@dof.dk</a>
Estonia	Estonian Ornithological Society (EOS)	Riho Kinks	<a href="mailto:Andres.Kalamees@eoy.ee">Andres.Kalamees@eoy.ee</a>
Faroe Islands (to Denmark)	Faroese Ornithological Society (FOS)	Janus Hansen	<a href="mailto:ffff@kallnet.fo">ffff@kallnet.fo</a>
Finland	BirdLife Finland	Margus Ellermaa	<a href="mailto:margus.ellermaa@birdlife.fi">margus.ellermaa@birdlife.fi</a>
France	Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO)	Thierry Micol Alison Duncan	<a href="mailto:thierry.micol@lpo.fr">thierry.micol@lpo.fr</a> <a href="mailto:alison.duncan@lpo.fr">alison.duncan@lpo.fr</a>
Germany	Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)	Hermann Hötker	<a href="mailto:nabu-inst.hoetker@t-online.de">nabu-inst.hoetker@t-online.de</a>
Greece	Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS)	Tasos Dimalexis	<a href="mailto:adimalexis@ornithologiki.gr">adimalexis@ornithologiki.gr</a>
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