

# Phalacrocorax carbo -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- SULIFORMES -- PHALACROCORACIDAE

**Common names:** Great Cormorant; Black Shag; Cormorant; Grand Cormoran; White-breasted Cormorant

## European Red List Assessment

### European Red List Status

LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)

### Assessment Information

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Assessor(s):	BirdLife International
Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
Compiler(s):	Ashpole, J., Burfield, I., Ieronymidou, C., Pople, R., Tarzia, M., Wheatley, H. & Wright, L.

### Assessment Rationale

**European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)**

**EU27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)**

In Europe this species has an extremely large range, and hence does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the range size criterion (Extent of Occurrence 10% in ten years or three generations, or with a specified population structure). The population trend appears to be increasing, and hence the species does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (30% decline over ten years or three generations). For these reasons the species is evaluated as Least Concern in Europe.

Within the EU27 this species has a very large range, and hence does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the range size criterion (Extent of Occurrence 10% in ten years or three generations, or with a specified population structure). The population trend appears to be increasing, and hence the species does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (30% decline over ten years or three generations). For these reasons the species is evaluated as Least Concern in the EU27.

## Occurrence

### Countries/Territories of Occurrence

#### Native:

Albania; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); Greenland (to DK); Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland, Rep. of; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Gibraltar (to UK)

#### Vagrant:

Liechtenstein; Canary Is. (to ES)

## Population

The European population is estimated at 401,000-512,000 pairs, which equates to 803,000-1,020,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 224,000-258,000 pairs, which equates to 448,000-516,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

## Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size is estimated to be increasing. For details of national estimates, see [Supplementary PDF](#).

## Habitats and Ecology

Throughout its range the species is sedentary or locally dispersive, with northerly populations also making strong migratory movements (Orta et al. 2014). The species frequents both coastal and inland habitats (Brown et al. 1982, Johnsgard 1993, Snow and Perrins 1998, Nelson 2005, Orta et al. 2014). In marine environments it occurs in sheltered coastal areas on estuaries (Orta et al. 2014), salt pans, coastal lagoons (Johnsgard 1993,

Orta et al. 2014), deltas (Johnsgard 1993) and coastal bays (Brown et al. 1982), requiring rocky shores, cliffs and islets for nesting (Orta et al. 2014) but generally avoiding deep water and rarely extending far offshore (Snow and Perrins 1998). It also inhabits fresh, brackish or saline inland wetlands (Nelson 2005) including lakes, reservoirs, wide rivers, flood waters (Orta et al. 2014), deep marshes with open water, swamps and oxbow lakes (Johnsgard 1993), requiring trees, bushes, reedbeds or bare ground for nesting (Orta et al. 2014) and avoiding overgrown, small, very shallow or very deep waters (Nelson 2005). The species's diet consists predominantly of fish, including sculpins, Capelin, gadids (Gremillet et al. 2004) and flatfish (Leopold et al. 1998) as well as crustaceans, amphibians (Orta et al. 2014), molluscs and nestling birds (Brown et al. 1982). At sea the species preys mostly on bottom-dwelling fish, occasionally also taking shoaling fish in deeper waters (Orta et al. 2014).

<b>Habitats &amp; Altitude</b>		
Habitat (level 1 - level 2)	Importance	Occurrence
Marine Coastal/Supratidal - Coastal Brackish/Saline Lagoons/Marine Lakes	suitable	breeding
Marine Coastal/Supratidal - Coastal Brackish/Saline Lagoons/Marine Lakes	suitable	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Estuaries	suitable	breeding
Marine Neritic - Estuaries	suitable	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Macroalgal/Kelp	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Macroalgal/Kelp	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Pelagic	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Pelagic	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Seagrass (Submerged)	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Seagrass (Submerged)	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Loose Rock/pebble/gravel	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Loose Rock/pebble/gravel	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Rock and Rocky Reefs	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Rock and Rocky Reefs	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy	major	non-breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy-Mud	major	breeding
Marine Neritic - Subtidal Sandy-Mud	major	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	major	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands	major	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	major	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)	major	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Saline, Brackish or Alkaline Lakes	major	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Saline, Brackish or Alkaline Lakes	major	non-breeding
Altitude		Occasional altitudinal limits

### Threats

The species is often persecuted by the aquaculture industry and may be shot, drowned or poisoned in attempts to control numbers (Carss 1994, ICN 2006) or for hunting (Bzoma et al. 2011). It may also suffer from disturbance and displacement from coastal wind farms (wind turbines) (Bradbury et al. 2014), and is susceptible to avian influenza (Melville and Shortridge 2006) and Newcastle disease (Kuiken 1999) so may be threatened by future outbreaks of these viruses (Kuiken 1999, Melville and Shortridge 2006). Recreational activities taking place at sea may also cause displacement from critical habitat. The species is susceptible to oil spills across its range. It is also highly vulnerable to bycatch in gillnets (Žydelis et al. 2013), and the species is also caught in longlines (Bellebaum et al. 2009) and purse seines (Oliveira et al. 2015).

<b>Threats &amp; Impacts</b>			
Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses	
Agriculture & aquaculture	Marine & freshwater aquaculture (scale unknown/unrecorded)	Timing	Scope
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)
		Severity	Impact
		Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses	
		Indirect ecosystem effects	

<b>Threats &amp; Impacts</b>					
<b>Threat (level 1)</b>	<b>Threat (level 2)</b>	<b>Impact and Stresses</b>			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Causing/Could cause fluctuations	Medium Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Species mortality			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (persecution/control)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Causing/Could cause fluctuations	Medium Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Species mortality			
Climate change & severe weather	Droughts	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects			
Energy production & mining	Renewable energy	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Minority (<50%)	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Species mortality; Species disturbance			
Human intrusions & disturbance	Recreational activities	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Species disturbance			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Avian Influenza Virus (H subtype)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Species mortality			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Newcastle Disease Virus (NDV)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing			Low Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
Natural system modifications	Other ecosystem modifications	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Causing/Could cause fluctuations	Medium Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Ecosystem conversion; Ecosystem degradation			
Pollution	Herbicides and pesticides	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Indirect ecosystem effects			
Pollution	Industrial & military effluents (type unknown/unrecorded)	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Ecosystem degradation			
Pollution	Oil spills	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Impact</b>
		Past, Likely to Return	Unknown	Unknown	No/Negligible Impact
		<b>Stresses</b>			
		Ecosystem degradation; Species mortality			

## Conservation

### Conservation Actions Underway

The species is listed under the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. The species occurs in 242 Important Bird Areas. Within the EU it is listed in 245 Special Protection Areas.

### Conservation Actions Proposed

Bellebaum, J., Röhrbein, V., Grieger, C., Erdmann, F., Schulz, N. and Pusch, C. 2009. *Bycatch of Seabirds in Gillnet and Longline Fisheries in the German Baltic Sea*. A report FKZ 3507 85 090 to Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).

Bradbury, G., Trinder, M., Furness, B., Banks, A.N., Caldow, R.W.G. and Hume, D. 2014. Mapping Seabird Sensitivity to Offshore Wind Farms. *PLoS ONE*, 9 (9): e106366.

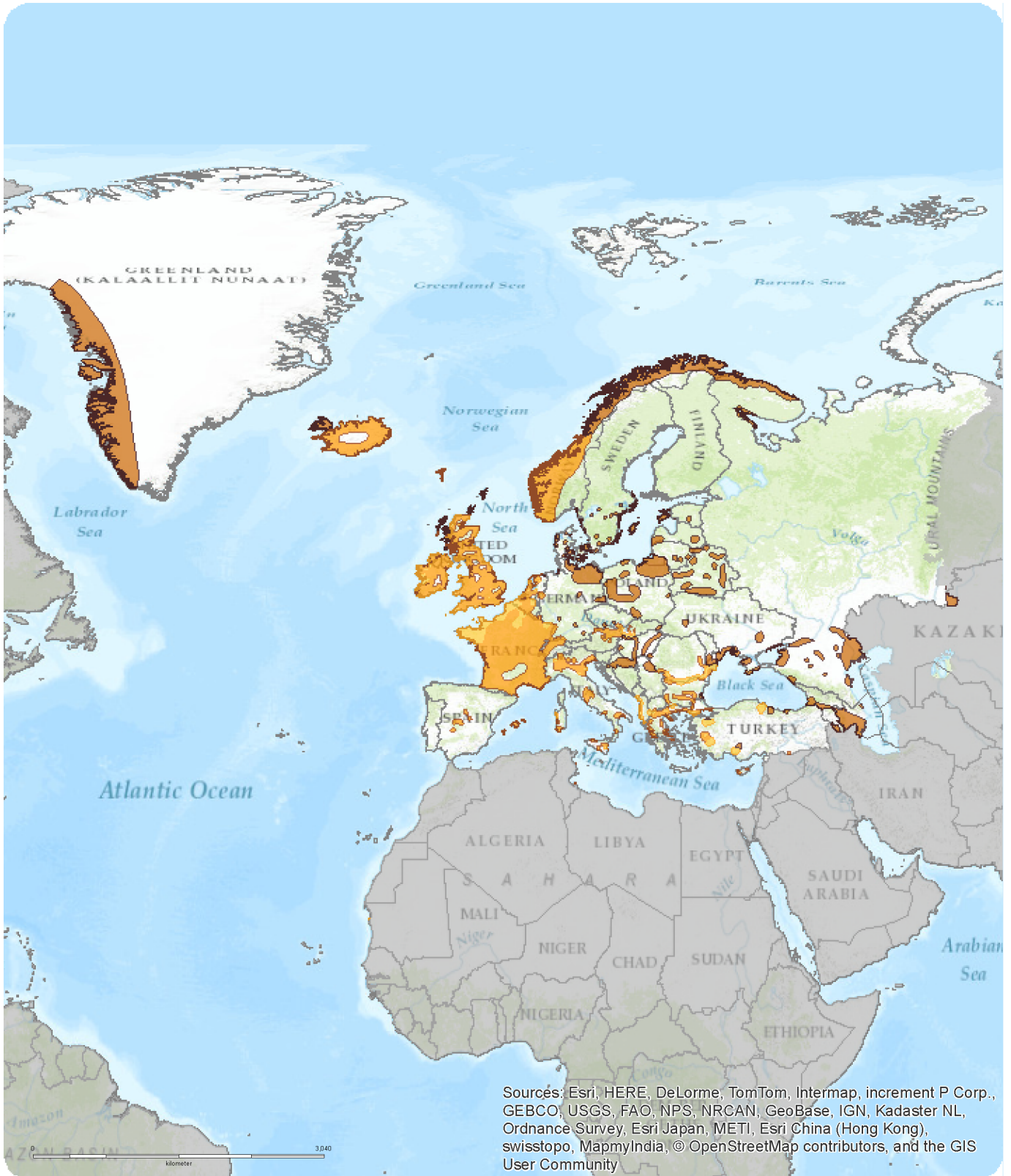
Bzoma S. 2011. *Strategia zarządzania populacją kormorana w Polsce*. SGGW Warszawa.

ICN 2006. Plano Sectorial da Rede Natura 2000. *Fichas de caracterização ecológica e de gestão dos valores naturais: Grupo das aves*. <http://www.icnf.pt/portal/naturaclas/rn2000/p-set/psrn-aves>

Orta, J., Garcia, E.F.J., Jutglar, F., Kirwan, G.M. and Boesman, P. 2014. Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. and de Juana, E. (eds.) 2014. *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/52629> on 16 April 2015).

Žydelis, R., Small, C. and French, G., 2013. The incidental catch of seabirds in gillnet fisheries: A global review. *Biological Conservation* 162: 76–88.

# European Regional Assessment



## *Phalacrocorax carbo*

### Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)
- Extant (resident)

Citation:  
BirdLife International (2015)  
European Red List of Birds

NE DD **LC** > NT VU EN CR EW EX  
LEAST CONCERN

Map created 05/12/2015



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