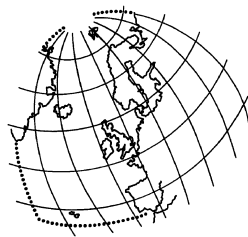


**Biodiversity Series**

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**2007 Progress Report on the  
OSPAR Network of Marine Protected  
Areas**



**OSPAR Commission  
2008**

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the "OSPAR Convention") was opened for signature at the Ministerial Meeting of the former Oslo and Paris Commissions in Paris on 22 September 1992. The Convention entered into force on 25 March 1998. It has been ratified by Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and approved by the European Community and Spain.

*La Convention pour la protection du milieu marin de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est, dite Convention OSPAR, a été ouverte à la signature à la réunion ministérielle des anciennes Commissions d'Oslo et de Paris, à Paris le 22 septembre 1992. La Convention est entrée en vigueur le 25 mars 1998. La Convention a été ratifiée par l'Allemagne, la Belgique, le Danemark, la Finlande, la France, l'Irlande, l'Islande, le Luxembourg, la Norvège, les Pays-Bas, le Portugal, le Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, la Suède et la Suisse et approuvée par la Communauté européenne et l'Espagne.*

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## Executive Summary/Récapitulatif

In the 2003 Bremen ministerial statement, OSPAR agreed to identify a first set of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2006, establish what gaps then remain and complete by 2010 a joint network of well-managed marine protected areas that, together with the Natura 2000 network, is ecologically coherent. For this purpose OSPAR 2003 adopted Recommendation 2003/3 on a network of Marine Protected Areas which has the aim of establishing the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas and ensuring that by 2010 it is both ecologically coherent and well-managed.

*Dans la déclaration ministérielle de Brème de 2003 OSPAR est convenue de définir un premier groupe de zones marines protégées (ZMP), en 2006 au plus tard, de déterminer les lacunes qui subsistent alors et de parachever, en 2010 au plus tard, un réseau commun de ZMP bien géré qui, avec le réseau de Natura 2000, soit écologiquement cohérent. A cette fin, OSPAR 2003 a adopté la Recommandation 2003/3 concernant un réseau de zones marines protégées dont l'objectif est de créer un réseau OSPAR de zones marines protégées et de s'assurer que, en 2010 au plus tard, il s'agisse d'un réseau écologiquement cohérent et bien géré.*

This report, which has been prepared during the first half of 2008, presents the third evaluation of the progress made in the development of the OSPAR network of MPAs reflecting the progress made up to end of 2007. By the end of 2007 8 Contracting Parties (Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK) had reported on the selection of 106 MPAs as components of the network. Additional MPAs were added to the network in 2007 by Denmark, Portugal and Spain.

*Le présent rapport, qui a été préparé durant le premier semestre de 2008, présente la troisième évaluation de l'état du réseau de ZMP d'OSPAR et fait état des progrès accomplis jusqu'à la fin de 2007. Jusqu'à ce jour, 8 Parties contractantes (Allemagne, Danemark, Espagne, France, Norvège, Portugal, Royaume-Uni et Suède) ont soumis des rapports sur 106 ZMP sélectionnées en tant qu'éléments du réseau. D'autres ZMP ont été ajoutées au réseau durant l'année 2007 par le Danemark, l'Espagne et le Portugal*

Although the sites selected so far provide a good basis for the network, most of the sites reported by EU member states are either wholly or partially Natura 2000 sites, although Portugal have selected four non-Natura 2000 sites. The majority of sites reported so far are in the nearshore zone with only Germany Norway and Portugal reporting sites within their Exclusive Economic Zones. Only Portugal has selected a site on the continental shelf beyond the EEZ. No proposals have been received so far for MPAs in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

*Bien que les sites sélectionnés jusqu'à présent constituent une bonne base pour le réseau, la plupart des sites qui font l'objet d'une notification de la part des états membres de l'UE sont soit totalement soit partiellement des sites Natura 2000. Toutefois, le Portugal a sélectionné quatre sites qui ne sont pas des sites Natura 2000. La plupart des sites notifiés jusqu'à présent se trouvent dans la zone côtière. Seuls l'Allemagne, la Norvège et le Portugal notifient des sites dans leurs zones économiques exclusives et seul le Portugal a sélectionné un site du plateau continental au-delà des zones économiques exclusives. Jusqu'à présent, aucune ZMP située au-delà des juridictions nationales n'a été proposée.*

The report also includes an initial assessment of the ecological coherence of the network employing three initial spatial tests, which are described in a parallel background document (OSPAR publication 2008/360). The application of these tests, which should be seen as a first basic step in a multi-staged assessment, indicates that the OSPAR network of MPAs is not yet ecologically coherent.

*Le présent rapport inclut aussi une évaluation de la cohérence écologique du réseau effectuée à l'aide de trois tests spatiaux initiaux, qui sont décrits dans un document de fond parallèle (publication OSPAR 2008/360). L'application de ces tests, qui doivent être considérés comme une première étape de base dans une évaluation multi-stade, montre que le réseau de ZMP d'OSPAR n'est pas encore écologiquement cohérent.*

Identification and selection of further sites is therefore necessary before the network can be considered as having met the aims of being ecologically coherent and well managed. OSPAR has therefore agreed that to monitor progress further annual reports on the status of the OSPAR network of MPAs should be prepared in the period up to 2010.

*Il est donc nécessaire de déterminer et de sélectionner des sites supplémentaires avant de considérer que le réseau a atteint son objectif, à savoir être un réseau écologiquement cohérent et bien géré. OSPAR est donc convenue que de nouveaux rapports annuels sur l'état du réseau de ZMP d'OSPAR devront être préparés avant 2010 afin de surveiller les progrès accomplis.*

## Background

OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 sets out that in years subsequent to 2005, Contracting Parties (CPs) should report by 31 December to the OSPAR Commission on any OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that they have selected (or deselected) in that year, on any management plans that they have adopted or substantially amended in that year. BDC 2006 agreed that annual reports on the status of the OSPAR network of MPAs should be prepared in the period up to 2010. This document therefore presents a third status report detailing the progress made up to 31 December 2007.

The Bremen Statement adopted by the second Ministerial meeting of OSPAR (2003) included the commitment to, through working with HELCOM (Helsinki Convention) and the European Community, identify the first set of MPAs by 2006, establish what gaps then remain and complete by 2010 a joint network of well-managed marine protected areas that, together with the European Natura 2000 network, is ecologically coherent.

The Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Helsinki and OSPAR Commissions in 2003 (JMM 2003) agreed a Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Work Programme on Marine Protected Areas with the purpose of ensuring that by 2010 there is an ecologically coherent network of well managed marine protected areas for the maritime areas of both HELCOM and OSPAR ("the network").

OSPAR 2003 adopted OSPAR Recommendation 2003/03 on a Network of Marine Protected Areas, which set out that each Contracting Party that is a coastal state of the OSPAR maritime area should:

- a. consider whether any areas within its jurisdiction justify selection as marine protected areas under the criteria set out in the identification and selection guidelines and, if so,
- b. report to the OSPAR Commission the areas that it has selected as components of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas;
- c. develop for each area selected a management plan, in accordance with the management guidelines, to achieve the aims for which the area has been selected.

The first deadline under OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 for reporting on the selection of MPAs by Contracting Parties was 31 December 2005. Following this deadline, OSPAR 2006 examined and agreed to the publication of a first report on the progress made in establishing the OSPAR network of MPAs (OSPAR publication 2006/268). This reported on the selection of 81 sites as components of the OSPAR network by France, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and the UK. Although this provided a good basis for the network, all the sites reported by EU Member States were either wholly or partially Natura 2000 sites. The network could not be considered to be either ecologically coherent or well managed.

A second report on the progress made in developing the network in 2006 noted the selection of six further MPAs by Portugal, all in the seas around the Azores, which brought the total number of sites within the network to 87 (OSPAR publication 2007/319). The total area of the OSPAR MPAs network increased correspondingly from 25 426 km<sup>2</sup> to 26 619 km<sup>2</sup>. Contracting Parties were reminded of the requirement under OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 to report to the OSPAR Commission any management plans that they had adopted for MPAs included in the network. In approving the second OSPAR 2007 endorsed the following recommendations to achieve the aims set out for the OSPAR network of MPAs in OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3:

- a. the size of the OSPAR network of MPAs needs to be increased substantially and therefore Contracting Parties should progress their work to identify and select MPAs and endeavour to set clear timelines for reporting MPAs;
- b. sites further offshore and especially in the Contracting Parties' EEZs should be selected;
- c. Contracting Parties should begin the process of identifying and selecting sites beyond existing Natura 2000 areas, so as to fully address the OSPAR selection criteria for MPAs;
- d. OSPAR should continue to intensify its efforts to identify sites in need of protection in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- e. to improve quality control and accuracy, Contracting Parties should cross-check information provided in the MPA nomination database with supporting GIS data before submitting these to OSPAR;
- f. Contracting Parties should report to MASH 2007 on the development of management plans for sites included in the network and submit any management plans that they had adopted to the OSPAR Commission.

## Overview of the OSPAR Network of MPAs

A map showing all MPAs reported by Contracting Parties, new and previous, is provided at Annex 1 of this document, and a full listing of sites is given in Annex 2.

In 2007, the OSPAR marine protected area network increased from 87 to 106 sites, increasing the total area from 26 619 km<sup>2</sup> to 38 178 km<sup>2</sup> (Table 1).

	MPAs	Sq. km.
Belgium	0	0
Denmark	18	5399
France	8	275
Iceland	0	0
Ireland	0	0
Germany	4	11923
Netherlands	0	0
Norway	6	1905
Portugal	8	5698
Spain	1	85
Sweden	6	972
UK*	55	11921
TOTAL*	106	38178
OSPAR area**		13 618 510

\*Areas for the three Northern Ireland UK sites are estimates based on Natura 2000 marine area. Actual OSPAR numbers have not yet been received.

\*\*Not all of the OSPAR Maritime Area is navigable waters, with significant ice cover in the Arctic region.

## Third Annual Reporting of new MPAs (01 January 2007 - 31 December 2007)

In 2007, Denmark reported its first OSPAR MPAs, 18 sites totalling 539 866 ha; Spain also reported its first OSPAR MPA, a conglomerate of four sites under the name *Islas Atlánticas de Galicia*, totalling 8542 ha; and Portugal reported its eighth and also largest site, Sedlo Seamount at 401 253 ha, bringing its total up to 569 825 ha.

Seven of the 18 Danish sites are within their EEZ; the Spanish site is within its territorial waters; the new Portuguese site is within its EEZ.

The Danish sites are all Natura 2000 sites with the same boundaries; the Spanish site is also a Natura 2000 site, with similar boundaries, but somewhat larger (8524 ha. vs. 7138 ha.); but the new Portuguese site is not a Natura 2000 site at all. As noted in last year's status report, of the EU Member States, only Portugal Azores has nominated sites that are not wholly Natura 2000 sites, which was an important development. Of the eight Portuguese sites, four are not Natura 2000 at all, and the remaining four are larger and more extensive than the smaller Natura sites contained within them.

In 2007 the UK submitted updated GIS files and provided area calculations for all of its sites, except for its three Northern Ireland MPAs. One site was withdrawn, due to its negligible marine area, reducing the total number of UK sites to 55. However, with the new calculations, the total area of the UK sites increased from the 2005 estimation of 985 841 ha to 1 192 127 ha. The UK has not yet submitted their sites in the OSPAR nomination database, and thus its reporting remains incomplete.

## Second Annual Reporting of MPAs (10 April 2006 - 31 December 2006)

In the 2006 reporting period, Portugal reported six additional areas as components of the OSPAR network of MPAs. These six new MPAs increased the total number of OSPAR MPAs to 87, and the total network area<sup>1</sup> increased from 25 426 km<sup>2</sup> to 26 619 km<sup>2</sup>.

The six 2006 Portuguese nominations are in the waters surrounding the Azores, of which two sites (Faial-Pico channel, Corvo Island) are in territorial waters, three in the EEZ (D. João de Castro seamount, Lucky Strike hydrothermal vent field, Menez Gwen hydrothermal vent field), and one on the extended continental shelf (Rainbow hydrothermal vent field). This amounts to 49 742 ha in territorial waters, 64 088 ha in Portugal's EEZ, and 2215 ha on the extended continental shelf, totalling 116 045 ha (1160 sq km). Only Portugal has made a continental shelf nomination beyond the EEZ.

It should be noted that due to the extension of the first year's reporting deadline, most of the MPAs in the initial report were actually put forward in the period between January and April 2006. This meant that the second reporting period was less than a calendar year.

## Initial MPA nominations (2005 - 10 April 2006)

The 2005 MPA nominations are summarized below in the order they were received.

**Portugal:** One site, Formigas/Dollabarát bank, within the waters of the Azores, was reported to MASH 2005. It was the first OSPAR MPA nomination. It is a nature reserve with a delimited area of 52 527 ha, extending to below 1500 metres in depth. Of that, 3628 ha is also a Natura 2000 site, down to the 200 metre isobath.

**Norway:** Six sites were reported in December 2005. Norway completed all the reporting requirements, including the electronic nomination database, on time. The six sites are: Selligrunnen (nature reserve), Røstrevet, Sularevet, Iverryggen, Tisler, and Fjellknausene, the latter five of which have fisheries closures to bottom-tending gear. The six in total are 190 539 ha.

**Germany:** Two very large sites were reported in January 2006, and two more in April 2006. The sites are: Helgoland Natura 2000 Seabird Protected Area (SPA), Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea (national park and Natura 2000 Site of Community Importance (SCI)), SPA-Eastern German Bight (Natura 2000 SPA), and Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park (Natura 2000 SPA and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)). The sites comprise a total of 1 192 278 hectares. In all, more than 90% of German coastal waters are also OSPAR MPAs, with large sections of the EEZ waters included as well.

**Sweden:** Six sites were reported in January 2006: Koster-Väderö archipelago (some enhanced protections including fisheries restrictions), Gullmarn fjord (also with enhanced protections), Nordre älv estuary (fisheries closures), Kungsbacka fjord (nature reserve), Fladen, and Lilla Middgrund. The six sites overlap Natura 2000 sites, and are a total of 97 177 hectares. Fladen and Lilla Middgrund both have portions extending into the EEZ (3762 ha and 15 921 ha, respectively).

**UK:** Fifty-six sites were reported as OSPAR MPAs in January 2006. (But one was withdrawn in 2007, due to its negligible marine area.) All sites are also Natura SACs, and total 1 192 127 ha.

**France:** Eight sites were reported in March 2006: Réserve Naturelle Nationale de la Baie de Somme, Réserve Naturelle de l'Estuaire de la Seine, Réserve Naturelle Nationale du Domaine de Beauguillot, Réserve Naturelle de la Baie de l'Aiguillon, Réserve Naturelle de la Baie de Saint Briec, Archipel des Sept îles, Réserve Naturelle de Moëze-Oléron, Réserve Naturelle du Banc d'Arguin. They total 27 453 hectares, and are also Natura 2000 sites.

## Future progress on identification and selection of MPAs

A number of Contracting Parties have reported that they are currently working on the selection of further MPAs for possible reporting during the course of 2008. Future possibilities are summarized below in alphabetical order.

**Belgium:** Progress has been delayed due to pending administrative decisions. At the 2007 meeting of the OSPAR Working Group on Marine Protected Areas, Species and Habitats (MASH 2007) Belgium presented a technical report on possibilities for the implementation of OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 in Belgian waters.

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<sup>1</sup> This 2006 total also corrects mistakes that occurred in the first year's reporting. The total in the first report which read as "25 093 km<sup>2</sup>" should have correctly been 25 426 km<sup>2</sup>.

**France:** The selection of La Mer d'Iroise marine natural park off the coast of Brittany (3550 km<sup>2</sup>) as an OSPAR MPA will be reported to OSPAR in 2008. France indicated that it will concentrate further on the identification and selection of MPAs particularly in its territorial waters as Natura 2000 sites, some of which may also be reported as OSPAR MPAs. In addition France is also considering selection of sites that are not part of the NATURA 2000 network.

**Iceland:** Iceland is in the process of submitting reports on the selection of eight OSPAR MPAs for the protection of cold water corals and hydrothermal vents. The total area is expected to be 14 053.5 ha (140.5 sq km).

**Ireland:** Twenty-six NATURA 2000 sites have been identified, including four offshore sites, which would meet the requirements of OSPAR MPAs. Ireland is awaiting a ministerial decision on the reporting to OSPAR.

**Germany:** Three new sites are being reported as OSPAR MPAs this year, 2008: Dogger Bank (~1700 km<sup>2</sup>), Stylter Outer Reef (~5 300 km<sup>2</sup>), and Borkum Reefs (~625 km<sup>2</sup>). These Natura 2000 sites in its EEZ will be likely to represent the last large areas that Germany will put forward to OSPAR for some time.

**Netherlands:** The Netherlands is seriously working on the selection of four candidate Natura 2000 sites (Dogger Bank, Friese Front, Klaverbank and parts of the coastal zone; i.e. the area between Bergen and Petten and the mouth of the Westerschelde) as OSPAR MPAs in 2008.

**Norway:** The national plan on MPAs is planned to be finished in 2009, after which Norway will then consider further reporting to OSPAR. Norway is also considering reporting a seabird site in 2008.

**Portugal:** In addition to its Azores OSPAR MPAs, several new research projects and research agreements have been signed, including a project on mitigating adverse ecological impacts of open ocean fisheries, and new international initiatives for satellite tracking of seabirds, sea turtles and marine mammals: Another LIFE project is underway in view to identify offshore Important Bird Areas in the Atlantic (OSPAR regions IV and V). There is the intention to create a full spatial database to assist the development of its Natura 2000 network, esp. for mainland Portugal, as well as including the extended continental shelf.

**Spain:** Spain is hopeful to be able to report on the selection of a sizeable MPA in 2008.

**Sweden:** It is hoped that the selection of three sites will finalized shortly. The sites under consideration are: Persgrunden; Morups / Röde Bank; and Stora Middelgrund.

**UK:** The UK hopes to build on the 55 OSPAR MPAs it has already reported by completing its contribution to the network by 2010 and that could in the first instance involve the selection of further sites in 2008/2009. The UK notes that its new marine legislation would allow that more than just Natura 2000 sites to be established.

## OSPAR-wide overview of current MPA network

**Jurisdictions:** The vast majority of sites reported to date fall within territorial waters. Only 17 of the 105 reported sites fall within an EEZ (7 Denmark, 4 Portugal, 3 Norway, 2 Sweden, 1 Germany). One site (Portugal) is on an extended continental shelf. No sites are fully in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

**Contracting Parties:** Eight of the twelve coastal Contracting Parties have so far reported sites. [Table 1](#), above, indicates the numbers of sites per Contracting Party and associated area. Germany and the UK have reported the largest total area, both approximately 12 000 km<sup>2</sup>. Portugal has nominated about 5700 km<sup>2</sup>, closely followed by Denmark at 5400 km<sup>2</sup>. Norway has reported MPAs covering about 2000 km<sup>2</sup>, Portugal about 1700 km<sup>2</sup>, Sweden about 1000 km<sup>2</sup>, France approximately 300 km<sup>2</sup>, and Spain 85 km<sup>2</sup>.

**OSPAR Regions:** [Table 2](#), below, summarizes the distribution of reported MPAs by OSPAR marine region. The best represented region, the North Sea is a reflection of the German, UK, and Danish nominations, as well as those from Sweden, and two from Norway. (Norway's other four reported MPAs are in the Arctic Region I.) Irish Sea representation is solely due to UK nominated MPAs. The eight MPAs reported in Atlantic Region V are all from Portugal Azores. Four sites have been reported as MPAs by France and one by Spain in Region IV, the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast, but there have been no MPAs reported so far mainland Portugal. Regions I and V are by far the largest regions, including also areas beyond national jurisdiction. However, to date, there have been no accepted nominations for MPAs in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

**NEAFC fishery closures:** Also noted in [Table 2](#), below, are nine fisheries closures enacted by the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). *These are not OSPAR MPAs.* However, the areas are closed to bottom fishing, five of them from 2005 to 2007, with a one-year extension to 2008 (Hecate, Altair, Antialtair and Faraday seamounts, and a large section of the Reykjanes Ridge); and, four others from 2007



to 2009 (Hatton Bank and three areas on Rockall Bank). All the NEAFC closures fall all or mostly within the high seas, and within OSPAR Region I. If these nine closures are accounted for, they significantly increase the amount of protection in the North-East Atlantic Region, from 5698 km<sup>2</sup> to 48 440 km<sup>2</sup>. Likewise, the overall spatial protection within the OSPAR Maritime Area increases from 38 178 km<sup>2</sup> to 80 920 km<sup>2</sup>. These NEAFC closures are shown in Figure2 (see Annex 1).

*Table 2: OSPAR Regions*

	I: Arctic*	II: N. Sea	III: Celtic	IV: Biscay	V: Atlantic	Total
OSPAR Sites	4	56	34	4	8	106
Area (sq. km.)	1902	22886	7468	224	5698	38 178
Percentage	0.03%	2.97%	2.03%	0.04%	0.09%	0.28%
NEAFC closures**					9	9
Area (sq. km.)					42 742	42 742
OSPAR + NEAFC					0.76%	0.60%

\*Not all of the OSPAR Maritime Area is navigable waters, with significant ice cover in the Arctic region.

\*\*The NEAFC fisheries closures are not OSPAR MPAS -see text above.

**EUNIS:** In support of the implementation of Recommendation 2003/3 OSPAR has developed Guidance on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR marine protected areas (*Reference number 2006-3*), proposing the classification of OSPAR MPAs according to the European Nature Information System (MASH 2005 summary record, annex 7). However, the EUNIS cannot currently be used to assess the network as it is currently not spatially comprehensive throughout the OSPAR maritime area, full data have not yet been provided to OSPAR.

**ICES Eco-Regions:** Within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Commission and ICES, ICES was asked to provide information and advice about appropriate eco-regions for the implementation of an ecosystem approach in European waters. ICES convened a meeting of experts to provide a response to this request at ICES HQ Copenhagen 19-21 October 2004. In the subsequent report, ICES notes:

*In general, eco-region boundaries were set to follow the boundaries of the ICES areas, unless there were strong reasons for making a division within a given ICES area. This is because fisheries management will be a very important component of the European Marine Strategy and will have a significant effect on the ecological and operational objectives that are set for individual eco-regions. Since fisheries are largely managed on the basis of data collected by ICES areas, and since it is important to use historic data collected for ICES areas to support fisheries and environmental management, objective setting and management will be more effective if the eco-regions are aligned with ICES areas.*

Thus, these ICES eco-regions are somewhat different from either the OSPAR Regions or the Dinter biogeographic areas (see Ecological Coherence, below), though both were taken into consideration. Because different classification systems will emphasize different aspects of the marine ecosystems, one system may therefore be valuable in highlighting possible gaps in the MPA network that another system might have overlooked. Thus, it can be helpful to consider representativity using more than one biogeographic classification system. Representativity within the ICES eco-regions is presented below in Table 4.

*Table 4: ICES Eco-Regions*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	K	Total
	Greenland & Iceland*	Barents Sea*	Faroes	Norwegian Sea	Celtic Sea	North Sea	S Euro. Shelf	Oceanic NE Atlantic	
OSPAR Sites	0	0	0	4	38	52	4	8	106
Area (sq. km.)	0	0	0	1902	7552	22803	224	5698	38178
Percentage	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%	0.75%	3.26%	0.05%	0.09%	0.28%
Percentage	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%	0.75%	3.26%	0.05%	0.09%	0.28%

\*Not all of the OSPAR Maritime Area is navigable waters, with significant ice cover in the Arctic region.

\*\*The ICES Celtic Sea Eco-region extends much further offshore than the OSPAR Celtic Sea Region, which accounts for the disparity in numbers between Tables 3 and 4.

**Natura 2000:** Of the 100 sites submitted by EU Member States, 96 of them are also Natura 2000 sites. Generally, the boundaries are the same as for the OSPAR sites; however, in four Portuguese nominations, smaller Natura sites are contained within much larger OSPAR designations; conversely, for the Swedish nominations, the OSPAR sites were sometimes smaller. Of the EU Member States, only Portugal has submitted sites that are not also Natura 2000: Lucky Strike hydrothermal vent field, Menez Gwen hydrothermal vent field, Rainbow hydrothermal vent field, and Sedlo Seamount.

**Management plans:** In general, it has been stated that plans are being developed or are in place. However, in 2007, formal submission of management plans or progress reports did not occur.

### Ecological Coherence

During 2007, Germany circulated a questionnaire asking Contracting Parties to report on the availability of spatial data. At MASH 2007 Germany presented the results from the questionnaire. As of 29 September 2007 only Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom had returned fully completed questionnaires indicating that spatial data were not at present a priority for most Contracting Parties. Germany therefore concluded that it was *unlikely* that OSPAR-wide spatial assessments of ecological coherence that rely on comprehensive bio-physical spatial data could be performed in the near future.

The OSPAR Biodiversity Committee has agreed upon three initial spatial tests proposed by Germany that start to look at the eco-coherence of the OSPAR MPA network. These were intended as a first basic step in a multi-staged assessment procedure to assess the eco-coherence of the OSPAR network and Germany have stressed that additional more sophisticated tests should be developed and subsequently applied as the MPA network grew. BDC agreed that, as a first basic step to assess the eco-coherence of the OSPAR network, the three initial tests should be applied and reported on in this MPA Status Report. A background document describing these three tests is being published in parallel to this report (see OSPAR publication 2008/360)

The three initial tests are designed to quickly sort out if the OSPAR MPA network has the first indications of ecological coherence, or not. These initial tests should be seen as the first step in a multiple-step network assessment and development process. Until this first step is met, however, there is no need to continue any further testing. The three initial spatial tests are ordered according to ease of assessment, as well as descriptive power, and therefore should be applied in the order given.

The threshold *limits* suggested in these tests should not be confused as being planning *targets*. These should be seen as cut-off points, beneath which eco-coherence has clearly not been achieved. For more discussion on this point, please refer to OSPAR publication 2008/360.

*Ecological Coherence Initial Test 1: is the OSPAR MPA network spatially well-distributed, without more than a few major gaps?*

Visually, it is clear that the network is not well-distributed. Coastal sites are clustered around the central latitudes, but not elsewhere. Offshore sites are largely absent, and there are no far-offshore OSPAR sites.

Using the gap guidance given in the background document (OSPAR publication 2008/360), none of the three gaps tests (coastal / nearshore, offshore / EEZ, and far-offshore / high seas waters) are met or nearly met. Thus, there is little need for more detailed or sophisticated testing at this time. The inclusion of NEAFC closures (which are not OSPAR MPAs) improves the situation in far-offshore / high seas waters, but there are still significant gaps, and the test is still not met. **Table 3** below summarises the results.

*Table 3: Spatial gaps outlined in OSPAR publication 2008/360*

Realm	Approx. no. of gaps	Max. gaps allowed
coastal	≥25	10
offshore	≥12	5
far-offshore	≥6	2
far-offshore + NEAFC	≥4	2

*Ecological Coherence Initial Test 2: Does the OSPAR MPA network cover at least 3% of most (seven of the ten) relevant Dinter biogeographic provinces?*

The relevant biogeographic provinces have been marked in bold in [Table 4](#). (All sub-provinces and most arctic provinces were omitted for this initial test. This is further explained in OSPAR publication 2008/360.) As can be seen, only two of the ten provinces meet the 3% limit –Boreal (3.72%) and Macaronesian Azores (6.10%). Thus, this test has not been passed.

*Table 3: Biogeographic Representation*

Biome	Region / Sub-Region	Province	MPAs	Sq Km	Bioregional Area
Pelagic	Arctic	N/A	0	0.0	0.00%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Cool-temperate</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>32242.0</b>	<b>0.48%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Warm-temperate</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5936.1</b>	<b>0.17%</b>
Shelf & Slope	Arctic	Barents Sea	0	0.0	0.00%
	Arctic	Barents Sea: White Sea	0	0.0	0.00%
	Arctic	High Arctic Maritime	0	0.0	0.00%
	Arctic	NE Greenland Shelf	0	0.0	0.00%
	Arctic	NE Water Polynya	0	0.0	0.00%
	Arctic	<b>SE Greenland, N Iceland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Boreal</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26671.7</b>	<b>3.72%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Boreal-Lusitanian</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3125.2</b>	<b>0.69%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Lusitanian-Boreal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>130.4</b>	<b>0.09%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Lusitanian Cool	1	85.4	0.17%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Lusitanian Warm N	1	22.0	0.05%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Lusitanian Warm S	0	0.0	0.00%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Lusitanian (cool &amp; warm)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>107.4</b>	<b>0.09%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Macaronesian: Azores</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1376.4</b>	<b>6.10%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Norway: Finnmark	0	0.0	0.00%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Norway: Skagerrak	4	543.4	2.23%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	Norway: W. Norwegian	4	1901.7	0.55%
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>Norway (all)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2445.07</b>	<b>0.56%</b>
	E. Atlantic Temperate	<b>S Iceland-Faero Shelf</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
Deep Sea	Arctic*	N/A	0	0.0	0.00%
	Atlantic	N/A	4	4321.9	0.06%

\*Bold provinces and numbers are those included in the initial test of ecological coherence.

*Ecological Coherence Initial Test 3: Are most (70%) of the OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats, and species with limited home ranges, represented in the OSPAR MPA network? "Represented" for this test shall mean at least 5% of each habitat type / species distribution for each OSPAR Region in which they occur [or at least 3 replicate sites per Region].*

This initial test, including its square-bracketed text, could not be considered for a combination of reasons:

- d. incomplete spatial data across the OSPAR Maritime Area;
- e. incomplete reporting in the OSPAR MPA Nomination database; and,
- f. the failure of one CP, with several MPAs, to yet submit its nominations in the database.

1. Better GIS data are unlikely to be available soon. However, better reporting in the MPA database would not take a great deal of effort and therefore addressing the square-bracketed text of this third test is a plausible short-term option in next year's MPA Status report.

## Conclusions

**Ecological coherence:** The first two initial tests for assessing ecological coherence were not passed. Although the third test was not completed, the results of the first two tests are already sufficient to demonstrate that the OSPAR MPA Network is currently not ecologically coherent.

**Database reporting:** in order to begin to assess the protection of species and habitats on the OSPAR Initial List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (i.e. Ecological Coherence Initial Test 3), better reporting in the MPA electronic database is required.

**Data to determine ecological coherence:** Currently, very few data have been collated by OSPAR for the OSPAR maritime area. As the number of OSPAR reported MPAs increases, it will become more possible to evaluate the ecological coherence of the network. This will require ecological data. The need for spatial data is not limited to the assessment of eco-coherence, but will be necessary for expansion of the EcoQO system, as well as monitoring requirements under the Initial OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats.

**Overall Area:** The MPAs reported so far cover about 38 000 km<sup>2</sup>. In relation to the overall OSPAR maritime area, this is still very small, even after icebound areas are removed<sup>2</sup>.

**Representativity:** Some biogeographic areas have better protection than others, and MPAs reported by Portugal Azores have meant that protection of the biome surrounding the Azores has 6.1% protected area. However, only two of the ten relevant biomes met the second initial ecological coherence test (>3%). Indeed, it was only these two biomes wherein MPAs exceeded even 1% of the area. Using the ICES eco-regions, only one eco-region had greater than 3% (or even 1%) coverage. Thus, the current MPA network cannot be said to be representative.

**Distribution:** Currently, the reported sites are not evenly distributed across the OSPAR maritime area. While even spatial distribution does not necessarily ensure ecological coherence, large spatial gaps can indicate ecological coherence is not being achieved. This currently uneven distribution is in part because half of the Contracting Parties have not yet reported sites. However, there is also a general tendency to nominate nearshore sites first, thus leaving the further offshore waters vacant for the time being.

**Areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ):** To date, no MPAs have been accepted in areas beyond national jurisdiction, though one reported MPA (Rainbow Hydrothermal Vent) is on the extended continental shelf claimed by Portugal, and as such, the waters above it are considered high seas.<sup>3</sup> The lack of MPAs in areas beyond national jurisdiction was recognized by MASH 2007 as a gap, and it agreed that efforts be intensified in the identification of such areas. Accordingly, one proposal by WWF / The Netherlands is undergoing review, and the identification of these sites in ABNJ will be the subject of a special expert workshop within the intersessional working group on MPAs this year (ICG-MPA, April 2008).

**Natura 2000 overlap:** The initial OSPAR MPAs reported from EU countries largely overlap existing Natura 2000 sites. However, given that the geographical scope of the OSPAR network is larger (including ABNJ), that the ecological criteria for MPA selection within OSPAR are broader (including a different list of threatened and endangered species and habitats), it is expected that if nominations are limited to existing Natura 2000 sites, exclusively, then it is unlikely that the OSPAR network's ecological goals will be met. Nominations by Portugal Azores, however, is an important exception, as four sites are not Natura 2000 at all, and for the others, a smaller Natura 2000 site(s) is nested within a larger OSPAR MPA. This approach could be seriously considered by the other Contracting Parties that are EU Member States, all of which have to date put forward only Natura 2000 sites.

**Management:** The text from last year's MPA status report remains valid again this year:

*As sites are reported, attention needs to turn to ensuring that sites are well managed through creating management plans or equivalent mechanisms, and secondly to evaluating management effectiveness. BDC 2007 adopted a score card on the management effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas as a tool for use by Contracting Parties in the self-assessment of management effectiveness of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas and urged Contracting Parties to apply it in their management of MPAs*

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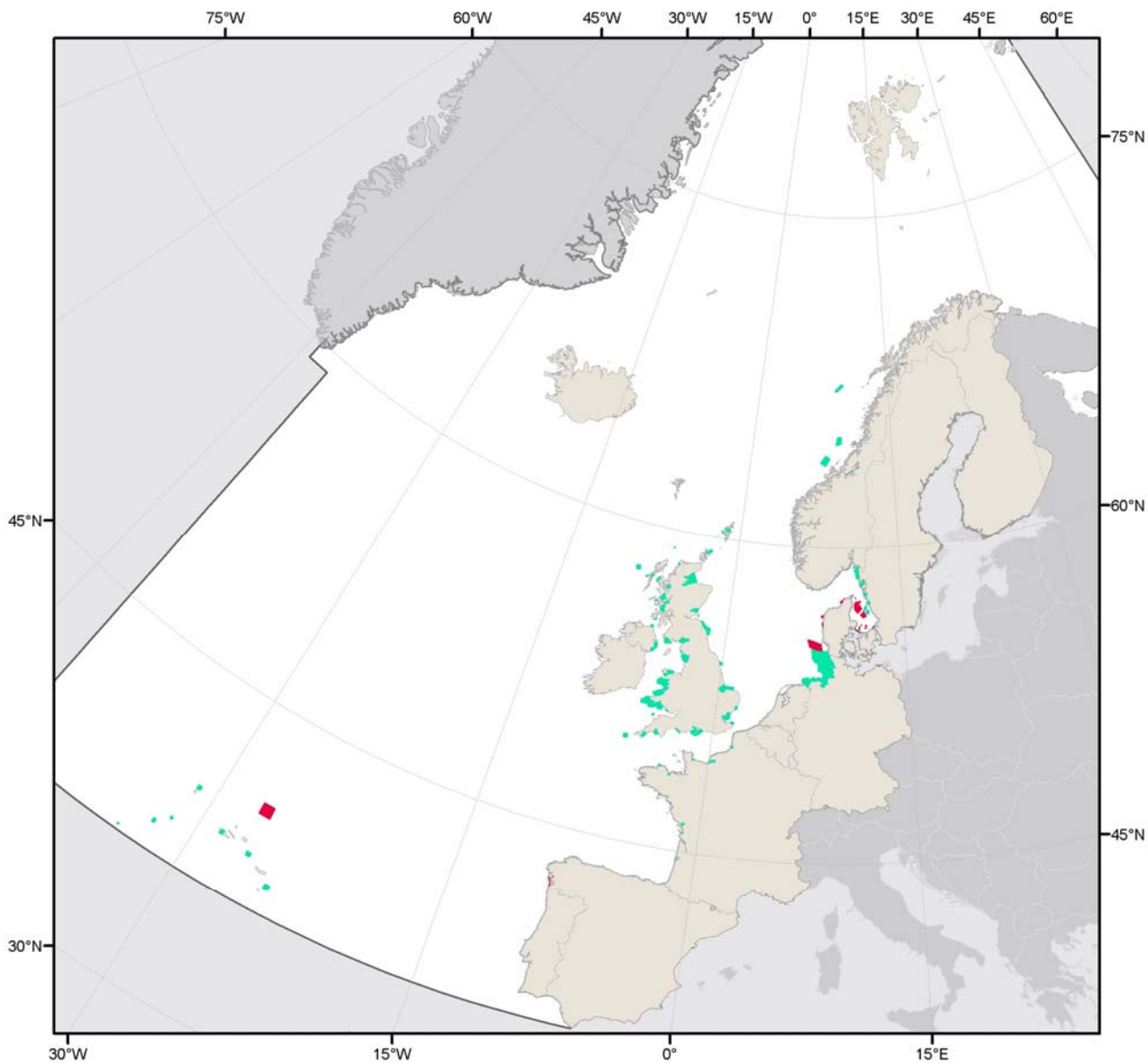
<sup>2</sup> It can be assumed that no more than 20% of the OSPAR Maritime Area is icebound.

<sup>3</sup> In cases where the continental shelf extends beyond 200 nautical miles, the seafloor may be considered under the jurisdiction of the concerned party (generally up to 350 nm extension of the continental shelf, as provided by UNCLOS), but the water column above it will already be an ABNJ. In such cases, coordination and cooperation between OSPAR and the relevant Contracting Party(ies), as well as the relevant organisations with management authority over ABNJ in the OSPAR maritime area, will be required.

*(OSPAR agreement 2007-5). Where OSPAR MPAs are also Natura 2000 sites, there is no additional requirement for management of these sites, but any management should be reported to OSPAR. To date, no Contracting Party has submitted management plans or reported evaluations of management effectiveness. Therefore, Contracting Parties are encouraged to report on the progress made in the development of management plans (does not exist / under development / completed / implemented), and when they exist, to submit these management plans in accordance with the OSPAR management guidelines (OSPAR agreement 2003-18).*

## Annex 1:

**Figure 1. Map of sites reported as components of the OSPAR network of MPAs (as of 31 December 2007)**

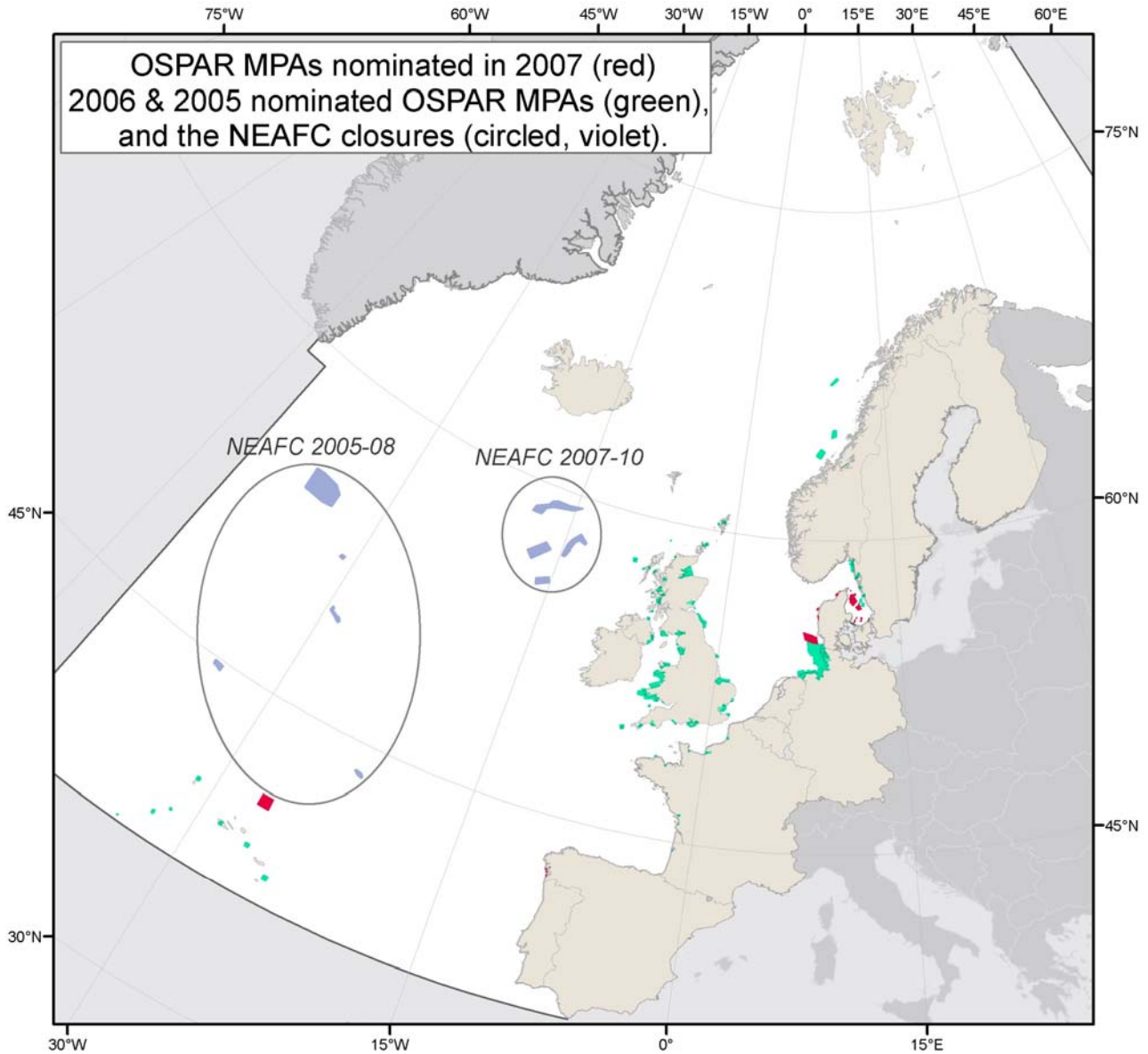


**Notes**

To increase visibility, the outlines of the reported OSPAR MPAs are outlined slightly larger than to scale.

French data are © MNHN

Figure 2. Map of sites reported as components of the OSPAR network of MPAs (as of 31 December 2007) and temporary NEAFC fisheries closures. (Note NEAFC closures are not OSPAR MPAs and are included as an example of additional protection in the high seas of the North-East Atlantic)



Notes

To increase visibility, the outlines of the reported OSPAR MPAs and NEAFC fisheries closures are outlined slightly larger than to scale.

NEAFC fisheries closures are not OSPAR MPAs.

French data are © MNHN

## Annex2: Summary of reported OSPAR MPAs (as of 31 Dec. 2007)

Contracting Party	Name	Size (Ha)
<b>Belgium</b>	none	0
<b>Denmark</b>	Anholt og havet nord for	13 357
<b>Denmark</b>	Briseis Flak	748
<b>Denmark</b>	Farvandet nord for Anholt	46 137
<b>Denmark</b>	Hastens Grund	3 038
<b>Denmark</b>	Havet omkring Nordre R°nner	18 535
<b>Denmark</b>	Herthas Flak	1 380
<b>Denmark</b>	Hesselø med omliggende stenrev	4 193
<b>Denmark</b>	Kims Ryg	2 383
<b>Denmark</b>	Knudegrund	748
<b>Denmark</b>	Lysegrund	1 635
<b>Denmark</b>	Læsø Trindel and Tønneberg Banke	8 123
<b>Denmark</b>	Læsø, sydlige del	102 714
<b>Denmark</b>	Lønstrup Rødgrund	9 283
<b>Denmark</b>	Sandbanker ud for Thorsminde	6 364
<b>Denmark</b>	Sandbanker ud for Thyborøn	6 325
<b>Denmark</b>	Schultz Grund	2 369
<b>Denmark</b>	Strandenge på Læsø og havet syd herfor	66 238
<b>Denmark</b>	Sydlige Nordsø	246 296
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>539 866</b>
<b>France</b>	Archipel des Sept îles	280
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle de l'Estuaire de la Seine	8 528
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle de la Baie de l'Aiguillon	4 900
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle de la baie de Saint Brieuç	1 140
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle de Moëze-Oléron	6 720
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle du Banc d'Arguin	2 200
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle Nationale de la Baie de Somme	3 000
<b>France</b>	Réserve Naturelle Nationale du Domaine de Beauguillot	685
<b>France</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27 453</b>
<b>Iceland</b>	none	0
<b>Ireland</b>	none	0
<b>Germany</b>	Helgoland (S-H) seabird protection area	161 065
<b>Germany</b>	Lower Saxony Wadden Sea national park	276 700
<b>Germany</b>	S-H Wadden Sea national park	441 000
<b>Germany</b>	SPA-Eastern German Bight	313 513
<b>Germany</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 192 278</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	none	0
<b>Norway</b>	Fjellknausen	190
<b>Norway</b>	Iverryggen	62 600
<b>Norway</b>	Røstrevet	30 500
<b>Norway</b>	Selligrunnen	69
<b>Norway</b>	Sularevet	97 000
<b>Norway</b>	Tisler	180
<b>Norway</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>190 539</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	Corvo Island	25 736
<b>Portugal</b>	D. João de Castro seamount	35 370
<b>Portugal</b>	Faial-Pico Channel	24 006
<b>Portugal</b>	Formigas Bank	52 527
<b>Portugal</b>	Lucky Strike hydrothermal vent field	19 218
<b>Portugal</b>	Menez Gwen hydrothermal vent field	9 500



<b>Portugal</b>	Rainbow hydrothermal vent field	2 215
<b>Portugal</b>	Sedlo Seamount	401 253
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>569 825</b>
<b>Spain</b>	Islas Atlanticas de Galicia	8 542
<b>Spain</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8 542</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	Fladen	10 395
<b>Sweden</b>	Gullmarn fjord	11 368
<b>Sweden</b>	Koster-Väderö archipelago	42 600
<b>Sweden</b>	Kungsbacka fjord	7 867
<b>Sweden</b>	Lilla Middelgrund	17 864
<b>Sweden</b>	Nordre älv estuary	7 082
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97 177</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Alde Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC	1 108
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Ascrib, Isay and Dunvegan SAC	2 577
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC	65 035
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Cardigan Bay/Bae Ceredigion SAC	95 342
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries/ Bae Caerfyrddin ac Aberoedd SAC	63 166
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Chesil and the Fleet SAC	1 238
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Dornoch Firth and Morrich More SAC	6 933
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Drigg Coast SAC	707
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Eileanan agus Sgeiran Lios mór SAC	1 137
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Essex Estuaries SAC	38 246
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Fal and Helford SAC	6 189
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Faray and Holm of Faray SAC	721
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Firth of Lorn	20 967
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Firth of Tay & Eden Estuary SAC	15 111
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Flamborough Head SAC	6 202
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Glannau Môn: Cors heli / Anglesey Coast: Saltmarsh SAC	903
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Isle of May SAC	332
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Isles of Scilly Complex SAC	26 708
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Kenfig/ Cynffig SAC	269
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Limestone Coast of South West Wales/ Arfordir Calchfaen de Orllewin Cymru SAC	199
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Loch Creran SAC	1 226
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Loch Laxford SAC	1 211
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Loch Moidart and Loch Shiel Woods SAC	284
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Loch nam Madadh SAC	1 837
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Lochs Duich, Long and Aish Reefs SAC	2 367
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Luce Bay and Sands SAC	47 920
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Lundy SAC	3 055
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Mòine Mhór SAC	288
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Monach Islands SAC	3 282
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Moray Firth SAC	151 341
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Morecambe Bay SAC	55 136
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Mousa SAC	527
<b>United Kingdom*</b>	Murlough SAC	10 474
<b>United Kingdom</b>	North Rona SAC	512
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Papa Stour SAC	2 064
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Pembrokeshire Marine/ Sir Benfro Forol SAC	137 086
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau/ Llyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC	144 109
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC	5 702
<b>United Kingdom*</b>	Rathlin Island SAC	3 111
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Sanday SAC	10 966
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Solent Maritime SAC	9 339
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Solway Firth SAC	42 328
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Sound of Arisaig (Loch Ailort to Loch Ceann Traigh) SAC	4 556

<b>United Kingdom</b>	South Wight Maritime SAC	19 587
<b>United Kingdom</b>	South-East Islay Skerries SAC	1 483
<b>United Kingdom</b>	St Kilda SAC	24 607
<b>United Kingdom*</b>	Strangford Lough SAC	10 009
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Sullom Voe SAC	2 691
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Sunart SAC	5 486
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Thanet Coast SAC	2 761
<b>United Kingdom</b>	The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC	104 412
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Treshnish Isles	1 856
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Tweed Estuary SAC	155
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Y Fenai a Bae Conwy/ Menai Strait and Conwy Bay SAC	26 450
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Yell Sound Coast SAC	822
<b>United Kingdom*</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 192 127</b>
<b>OSPAR*</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3 817 807</b>

\*Areas for the three Northern Ireland UK sites are estimates based on Natura 2000 marine area. OSPAR numbers have not yet been reported.