



## Press release

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## OSPAR acts to safeguard seven seabird species and launches a socio-economic analysis of the marine environment

### OSPAR adopts a series of recommendations to protect seven seabird species

Today, Contracting Parties to the international OSPAR Convention have taken another step towards protecting species which depend on the North-East Atlantic Ocean. Agreement has been reached on a series of recommendations for actions to better understand and protect seven species of seabirds that range from the Azores in the south, in the north to the Arctic Circle. These seven seabirds are ivory gull, lesser black-backed gull, little shearwater, Balearic shearwater, black-legged kittiwake, roseate tern and thick-billed murre.

These seabirds feed at sea, often travelling far offshore to forage for their prey. With longer lifespans than many land-dwelling birds and producing fewer young, later in life, seabirds are vulnerable to the threats posed by the many competing human uses of the sea. Increases in threats such as accidentally being caught in fishing gears, and the impacts of pollution, together with the vulnerability of these seabirds make a powerful and urgent case for intervention to safeguard their survival.

BirdLife International, an Observer to OSPAR said, "We are delighted that the Recommendations for better protection and conservation of these seven seabird species have been agreed today. We now urge the OSPAR Contracting Parties to put the actions into practice as soon as possible to give these seabirds the protection they so urgently need, and allow continued enjoyment of these seabirds by people along the Atlantic coasts of Europe.

The annual meeting of the OSPAR Commission was held this week in London, UK.

### OSPAR embarks on an economic and social analysis of the uses of the OSPAR maritime area

During the same meeting the OSPAR Commission also agreed to undertake a ground-breaking regional study on the use of North-East Atlantic marine waters. This study will be prepared as part of a two-year project that will draw the attention of the public and decision-makers to the economic benefits provided by the marine environment, to highlight the growing costs of ecosystem degradation and to draw together expertise from the fields of science, economics and policy to support an ecosystem approach to management of human activities. The aim is to improve the understanding of the benefits of a good environmental status of our marine waters by linking changes in ecosystem services with

changes to human welfare. In the future this work will support the identification of the most cost-effective measures to improve the status of the marine environment.

OSPAR's economic and social analysis project will help deliver commitments made by OSPAR Ministers at their 2010 meeting in Bergen, Norway. It will also support coordination between OSPAR Contracting Parties to ensure the consideration of economic and social factors, as required by the European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), is coherent across the North-East Atlantic. The analysis is co-funded by the following OSPAR Contracting Parties: France, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

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#### Note for editors

The [OSPAR Commission](#) was set up by the 1992 OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, which unified and updated the 1972 Oslo and 1974 Paris Conventions. It brings together the governments of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, together with the European Community.

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**For further information**  
on seabird species

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on economic and social  
analysis

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