

# Species: Iberian Guillemot

OSPAR Recommendation 2014/16:

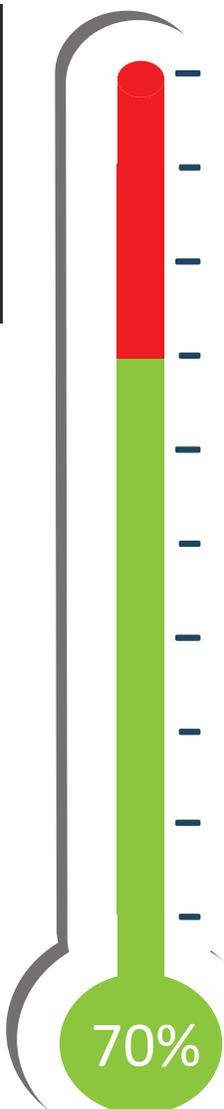
Contracting Parties are required to report progress with implementation of recommendations every six years, with initial more frequent reporting until 2019.

Measures taken by Contracting Parties to protect the Iberian guillemot include designation of a Special Protection Area, a Spanish national action plan to reduce bycatch and guidelines for reducing pollution



## Description

Iberian guillemot (*Uria aalge ibericus*) is a pursuit-diving species, reaching maximum depths of 200 m, and foraging mainly during daylight. Adults feed largely on schooling pelagic fish species during the breeding season, and apparently in winter too. Birds primarily forage over continental shelf areas. During the breeding season they can travel up to 200 km from the colony, although mean foraging range is ca. 25 km. It is only found in the bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast, well isolated from other breeding common guillemot populations, the closest being found in Brittany. At the time of listing, breeding birds were found on the coast of NW Spain and Berlengas islets off the central Portuguese coast. The number of individuals has been quoted as about 100 individuals, or a maximum of 40 pairs.



## Action Highlights

Each Recommendation requires Contracting Parties to report on the methods used to implement the measures. The methods are Legislation, Administrative action and Negotiated agreement, or any combination of these. Recent examples include:

1. Spain has implemented national legislation;
2. Spain has designated the last breeding colony as a Special Protection Area; and had a national action plan to reduce incidental bycatch in fishing gears;
3. Spain undertakes monitoring and works with researchers to improve knowledge exchanges;
4. Spain has guidelines for preventing and reducing pollution, along with a national response system for marine pollution;
5. Spain has implemented measures from the EU plan of action.

## Engagement

The engagement index (left) measures how well Contracting Parties have engaged with the national measures in the Recommendation. The higher the score the greater the number of actions that Contracting Parties, which have reported, have taken to implement the measures in the Recommendation. Click here for more information on the index.

### References:

- Background Document for Iberian guillemot (*Uria aalge*) (OSPAR Publication 613)
- OSPAR Recommendation 2014/16
- OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (Agreement 2008-06)

## Condition

Little information is available on current condition of *U.aalge* populations throughout the Iberian region. There are relatively reliable data describing the declines of this species throughout the Iberian region since the 1960s. The sharpest decline, in the 1960s (33.3% annually) coincided with the introduction of synthetic fishing nets, whereas climate conditions stayed relatively constant, and thus bycatch is considered the main factor behind the crash of the species. Marine pollution (mainly oil-pollution) is also implicated in the decline of guillemots in the Iberian region.

