

OSPAR EXTENDS PROTECTION FOR SEABIRDS

Why is this important?

Worrying declines in seabird numbers shown in OSPAR's 2017 Intermediate Assessment were stark enough for OSPAR to conclude that "seabirds are in trouble". Declines were detected in many species and vulnerabilities shown in all life stages. Whilst many seabird nesting sites are protected, there is a protection gap when it comes to the feeding and foraging grounds at sea.

The North Atlantic Current is a transition zone where large oceanic gyres meet, creating currents that bring nutrients from deep waters. This area also receives influence from the Arctic Ocean, mixing in very cold, fresh, nutrient rich water. Biodiversity is high in such transitional boundary areas, and this Site is an important foraging ground for the OSPAR listed species Black-legged kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), Thick-billed murre (*Uria lomvia*) and Audubon's shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri baroli*). These species breed throughout the OSPAR Maritime Area, from the coastlines of Greenland in the north to those of the Azores in the south. The Site also provides a vital foraging ground for numerous other seabird species and is known to be frequented by other migratory species such as whales.



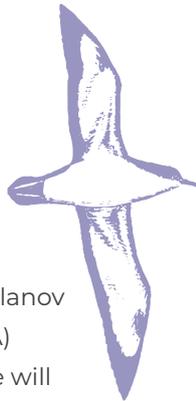
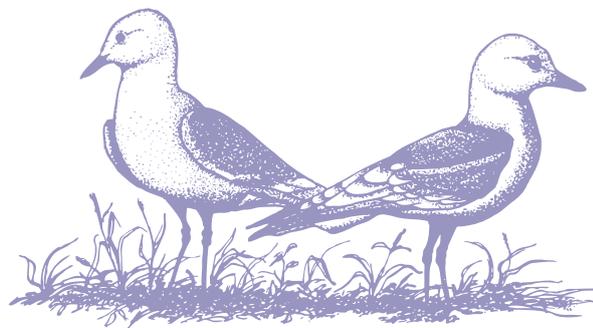
What is OSPAR doing?

OSPAR is adopting a legally binding Decision to establish the 'North Atlantic Current and Evlanov Sea basin Marine Protected Area' (NACES MPA) and management actions for the Site. The Site will protect this vitally important area for seabirds covering 595 196 km².

How will this benefit the North-East Atlantic?

The Site is an important feeding and foraging area and is used both by seabirds breeding on the coasts of the North-East Atlantic, and by those migrating across the globe or nesting in other parts of the world. The background document presents many examples of seabirds that have been tracked and found to fly across the ocean to reach this Site. Establishing this MPA will secure a large and important site in the area beyond national jurisdiction for seabirds.

By establishing this Marine Protected Area OSPAR achieves the United Nations Convention for Biodiversity 2020 Aichi target of designating 10% of marine waters as MPAs.



For more information on the NACES MPA please visit the [OSPAR website](http://www.ospar.org)



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