

## AZOREAN BARNACLE – AN ENDEMIC KEYSTONE SPECIES

### Why is this important?

The Macaronesia region is characterised by open ocean several kilometres deep and a few isolated islands. The rocky shores of these islands are home to species found nowhere else in the world, such as the Azorean barnacle (*Megabalanus azoricus*). The Azorean barnacle is a keystone species for these rocky shore communities. Without it, other species would also disappear. The Azorean barnacle population has been decreasing rapidly and is now threatened with extinction.

### What is OSPAR doing?

OSPAR is adopting a new Recommendation to strengthen the protection of the Azorean barnacle. The new measure encourages the relevant OSPAR Contracting Parties to take action to protect the Azorean barnacle and OSPAR to take collective action to increase awareness of the species and disseminate information about the threats it faces. For example, tourists visiting the Azores may not be aware that this species, which is often collected for food, is threatened.

### How will this benefit the North-East Atlantic?

Protection of the Azorean barnacle will help to ensure that the very special rocky shore communities of the Azores in Macaronesia remain functional. This will contribute to halting the loss of biodiversity.



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For more information on the Azorean barnacle visit the [OSPAR website](http://www.ospar.org)



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