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OSPAR seeks stakeholder views on proposed expansion to the North Atlantic Current and Evlanov Sea basin Marine Protected Area (NACES MPA)

The OSPAR Commission for the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) adopted the NACES MPA for seabirds in 2021. OSPAR is now seeking views on whether to extend the NACES MPA to cover the seabed and other species and habitats.

As a part of the designation of the NACES MPA, OSPAR Contracting Parties recognised that the reason the site was so important for seabirds might also apply to other species and the habitats that support them. OSPAR therefore agreed that by 2023 it would examine the case for broadening the scope and conservation objectives of the NACES MPA.

This consultation, that starts on 1 December 2022 for a period of 3 months, invites views on new evidence presented in the revised nomination proforma that seeks to demonstrate clear linkages between the benthic and pelagic systems, explaining why this site is so important for seabirds and other species.

Information on how to contribute to the consultation and the specific questions on which views are sought is available at <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/marine-protected-areas/ospar-seeks-views-on-the-nomination-proforma-for-the-north-atlantic-current-and-evlanov-seabasin-mpa>

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Note for editors

1. [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.
2. More than 40 international non-governmental organisations are involved in OSPAR as official Observers. They represent a broad range of interests and expertise related to the marine environment and the uses of marine resources. Many contribute information, insights and standpoints. This is much appreciated feedback from civil society and the economy. The OSPAR Commission greatly values these partnerships that

help inform its decisions and other results. (See list on OSPAR website at <http://www.ospar.org/organisation/observers>).

3. More information on OSPAR's network of MPAs can be found here <https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/marine-protected-areas> and our latest summary assessment here <https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/committee-assessments/biodiversity-committee/status-ospar-network-marine-protected-areas/assessment-reports-mpa/mpa-2021/> 4. The 'North Atlantic Current and Evlanov Sea basin Marine Protected Area was designated at OSPAR's 2021 Ministerial meeting, primarily for the protection of seabirds. This reflected the fact that the NACES MPA is an important transition zone where large oceanic gyres meet, resulting in nutrient rich waters that that make it an area where biodiversity is often high. Based on tracking data the area, around the size of France, was found to be 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. Specifically, the Site is an important foraging ground for the OSPAR listed species blacklegged kittiwake, thick-billed murre, and Audubon's shearwater.
4. Image: Location of the MPA within the OSPAR ABNJ and the existing network of OSPAR MPAs.

