

Marine birds in the North-East Atlantic are in trouble. The OSPAR Regional Action Plan for Marine Birds (RAP-Bird) identifies the most important protection and conservation actions to be implemented on a regional scale for the recovery of marine birds within the North-East Atlantic. This briefing note highlights OSPAR's work to deliver best practice for mitigation/compensation for offshore wind developments and introduces us to the experts leading this important work.



## What is the issue?

We are in the midst of both a climate change and a biodiversity crisis. Nations across OSPAR regions are rapidly developing large-scale offshore wind energy (OWE) to mitigate climate change and contribute to various emissions reduction (including net-zero) targets. However, the rapid and significant expansion of OWE production could threaten marine biodiversity and are a particular threat to marine birds. Marine birds are at risk of large-scale habitat loss as a result of displacement from OWE footprints, and for those that are not displaced there may be a risk of collision with moving turbine blades. There are also likely to be indirect effects via impacts of OWE on ocean systems and processes. Understanding of how OWE can be sustainably expanded at scale, whilst fully mitigating any impacts on marine birds is required in order to ensure we do not address one crisis at the expense of another.

For more information on OSPAR and marine birds, visit our website:

[www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/species-habitats/marine-birds](http://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/species-habitats/marine-birds)



Northern gannet in flight.

## How will the successful completion of this action benefit marine birds?

This task will review existing information and practice on minimising and compensating for impacts of OWE on marine birds and pull together information into a single resource. This can be used by OSPAR Contracting Parties to minimize impacts, and where required, compensate for impacts on marine birds which cannot be avoided. This work also links with OSPAR (ICG-ORED) which is conducting a pilot project to assess the cumulative impacts of offshore wind development on birds. If the pilot project identifies significant cumulative impacts at OSPAR regional scale, then the outputs from this action can aid OSPAR in identifying suitable mitigation and compensation measures.

## Meet our expert

Julie Black, Senior Marine Ornithologist, Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), United Kingdom.

