



UK priority species pages – Version 2

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SPECIES PAGES FOR 2007 UK BAP PRIORITY SPECIES

(see endnotes for an explanation of the various components of this compilation).

Cetorhinus maximus (Gunnerus, 1765)

Basking Shark

1 General information

Level 1	Marine species
Level 2	shark/skate/ray
On 1997 UK BAP list	Species Action Plan

2 UK BAP criteriaⁱ

1. International threat	2. International responsibility (2a) + moderate decline in UK (2b)	3. Marked decline in the UK	4. Other important factor(s)
True	False	False	False

3 Evidence for Criteriaⁱⁱ

Criterion 1	Global/European IUCN category VU A1ad+2d ver 2.3 (1994)
Criterion 2a	
Criterion 2b	
Criterion 3	
Criterion 4	

4 Distribution by Country

England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	International Waters
Y	Y	Y	Y	

5 Distribution Information

Distribution data source	BAP 2005 reporting
Distribution data notes	
number of sites (where less than or equal to 10)	
Units used for number of sites	

6 Actions identified by expertsⁱⁱⁱ

Action number	Action text	Reporting category
1	Continue research to understand population status and movements.	Species-specific research
2	Undertake research to determine levels of fisheries bycatch. If appropriate, introduce measures to reduce bycatch.	Species-specific research
3	Coordinate the collection of biological material from stranded specimens and dead by-catch	Species-specific research
4	Increase public awareness of legal status of Basking Shark	Species-specific awareness raising
5	Continue to support schemes which promote responsible wildlife watching operations.	Wider "landscape" action
6	Measures to avoid harrasment and collision of basking sharks by leisure and commercial craft in population hotspots.	Wider "landscape" action

8 Additional information from specialists^{iv}

Attribute	Value
NBN current scientific name	Cetorhinus maximus
NBN common name	Basking Shark
classification level 1	Marine species
classification level 2	shark/skate/ray

10 Species designations^v

Abbreviation	Reporting Category	Designation	Designation description	Year	Source	Comment
Bern:A2	Bern Convention	Appendix 2	Special protection (`appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures`) for the animal taxa listed, including: all forms of deliberate capture and keeping and deliberate killing; the deliberate damage to or destruction of breeding or resting sites; the deliberate disturbance of wild fauna, particularly during the period of breeding, rearing and hibernation, insofar as disturbance would be significant in relation to the objectives of this Convention; the deliberate destruction or taking of eggs from the wild or keeping these eggs even if empty; the possession of and internal trade in these animals, alive or dead, including stuffed animals and any readily recognisable part or derivative thereof, where this would contribute to the effectiveness of the provisions of this article.	1997	Bern Convention	Geographic constraint=Ir Mediterranean
OSPAR	OSPAR	OSPAR	OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats.	2008	OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats, 2008.	OSPAR Reg where the sp occurs= All. OSPAR Reg where the sp is under thre and/or in dec All where it occurs
England NERC S.41	Biodiversity	England NERC	Species “of principal importance for the purpose	2008	Natural	Geographic

	Lists - England	S.41	of conserving biodiversity” covered under section 41 (England) of the NERC Act (2006) and therefore need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions with a view to conserving biodiversity.		Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 - Species of Principal Importance in England (section 41) and Wales (section 42)	constraint=L is for Englan only
NI_Priority	Biodiversity Lists - Northern Ireland	Priority Species (Northern Ireland)	The Northern Ireland Priority List of threatened species requiring conservation action in Northern Ireland. Criteria have been developed to ensure that Priority Species have been chosen using a scientific basis (See http://www.habitas.org.uk/priority/criteria.html). The list is designed to assist those involved in the conservation of biodiversity by guiding decisions on where to target action and invest resources.	2010	Northern Ireland Priority Species List, March 2010	
Scottish Biodiversity List	Biodiversity Lists - Scotland	Scottish Biodiversity List	The Scottish Biodiversity List is a list of flora, fauna and habitats considered by the Scottish Ministers to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation. The development of the list has been a collaborative effort involving a great many stakeholders overseen by scientists from the Scottish Biodiversity Forum. Completion of the list is the first time such a stocktake has been done in Scotland. The Scottish Biodiversity List is a tool for	2005	Scottish Biodiversity List of species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation	Geographic constraint=L is for Scotlar only

			public bodies and others doing their Biodiversity Duty. The publication of the Scottish Biodiversity List satisfies the requirements of Section 2(4) of The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.			
Wales NERC S.42	Biodiversity Lists - Wales	Wales NERC S.42	Species “of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity” covered under Section 42 (Wales) of the NERC Act (2006) and therefore need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions with a view to conserving biodiversity.	2009	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 - Species of Principal Importance in England (section 41) and Wales (section 42)	Geographic constraint=L is for Wales
BAP:2007	Biodiversity Action Plan UK list of priority species	Priority Species	The UK List of Priority Species and Habitats contains 1150 species and 65 habitats that have been listed as priorities for conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).	2007	UK list of Priority Habitats and Species	status on form BAP list: Sp Action Plan
RedList_Global_post94:VU	Global Red list status	Vulnerable	Taxa believed likely to move into the Endangered category in the near future if the causal factors continue operating. Superseded by new IUCN categories in 1994, but still applicable to lists that have not been reviewed since 1994.	2007	The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (2007)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.1(kill/injuring)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.1 (killing/injuring)	Section 9.1. Animals which are protected from intentional killing or injuring.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules	

					1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.1(taking)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.1 (taking)	Section 9.1 Animals which are protected from taking.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.2	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.2	Section 9.2 Animals which are protected from being possessed or controlled (live or dead).	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.4a	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.4a	Section 9.4 Animals which are protected from intentional damage or destruction to any structure or place used for shelter or protection.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	

WACA:Sch5Sect9.4A*	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.4A*	Ceteaca/basking shark that are not allowed to be intentionally or recklessly disturbed.	2000	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.4b	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.4b	Section 9.4 Animals which are protected from intentional disturbance while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5Sect9.4c	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.4c	Animals which are protected from their access to any structure or place which they use for shelter or protection being obstructed.	2007	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	Geographic constraint=D not apply to Scotland
WACA:Sch5_sect9.5a	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.5a	Section 9.5 Animals which are protected from being sold, offered for sale or being held or transported for sale either live or dead, whole or part.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8	

					(protected birds, animals and plants)	
WACA:Sch5_sect9.5b	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Schedule 5 Section 9.5b	Section 9.5 Animals which are protected from being published or advertised as being for sale.	1998	Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedules 1,5 and 8 (protected birds, animals and plants)	

UK BAP 2008 reporting^{vi}

(nb this only applies to species on the original 1997 UK BAP priority species list)

11 General status

Country	Attribute	Value
UK		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Data source / comments	It may be that in the UK the population has increased over the past 20 years since the cessation of the right for UK vessels to hunt and land the species. Since 2007 there has been a prohibition on all fishing for the species in all EC waters under CFP regulations. This may also have had some affect on the number of fish landed as a result of by-catch, and reduced the incentive to illegally land basking sharks. Furthermore, there is some evidence that the mean size of sharks has also increased in the past 20 years in UK waters, which may partially be as a result of the species being listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1998. Whilst localised surveys have provided minimum estimates for specific sites, we still do not know enough about the species movements and site fidelity to obtain an accurate and realistic population estimate. It is important that survey work continues to facilitate calculating a population estimate for the species.
	Edits made by reporting group	Blank status column changed to Unknown based on Yes in Status unknown column
England		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	
Northern Ireland		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	
Scotland		
	Status unknown	Yes

	Edits made by reporting group	
Wales		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	

7 Trends

Country	Attribute	Value
Scotland		
	Date	2007
	Status unknown	No
	Trend	Stable
	Accuracy	Partial survey
	Adequate data	No and not likely by 2011
	Data on NBN	Yes
	Refer to LBAP data	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	
UK		
	Date	2008
	Status unknown	No
	Trend	Stable
	Accuracy	Partial survey
	Adequate data	No and not likely by 2011
	Data on NBN	Yes
	Refer to LBAP data	Yes
	Data source / comments	Public sightings of the species and reports from effort-based watches (eg. MCS, Seawatch SW and The Wildlife Trusts Basking Shark Survey) appears to show considerably large numbers of sharks in

		known hotspots. (e.g. Gwennap Head at Lands End, The Lizard peninsula in Cornwall and Hyskier Lighthouse in the Minch). For Wales, most basking shark activity appears to be offshore in areas where most casual observations won't take place from the general public, particularly west of Pembrokeshire towards the Smalls.
	Edits made by reporting group	
Wales		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Adequate data	No and not likely by 2011
	Data on NBN	Yes
	Refer to LBAP data	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	
Northern Ireland		
	Status unknown	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	
England		
	Date	2007
	Status unknown	No
	Trend	Stable
	Accuracy	Partial survey
	Adequate data	No and not likely by 2011
	Data on NBN	Yes
	Refer to LBAP data	Yes
	Edits made by reporting group	

8 Successes

Success text	Success category 1	Success category 2	England	NI	Scotland	Wales	Edits by reporting group
Basking shark received protection under the Bonn Convention (2005) and subsequently under CFP regulations in all EC waters in January 2007. Basking shark effort-based surveys in 2007 (seawatch-sw) elucidated use of oceanographic conditions at key oceanographic features (upwellings and tide) to support strong feeding populations. Manx Basking Shark Watch established. Basking Shark data considered in the Finding Sanctuary process for designating MPAs in SW hotspot regions. Cornwall Wildlife Trusts establishes county-level marine mega-fauna project. MCS delivers education and awareness campaign ('Cool Seas Roadshow') to over 250 schools (over 60,000 pupils) in England Scotland and Wales between 2006 and present biodiversity information on UK marine biodiversity including information on the basking shark.	Action plan process	Local-national links established	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

9 Threats

Threat category 1	Threat category 2	England	NI	Scotland	Wales	Edits made by reporting group
Changes in native species dynamics	Decline in food source / prey	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

15 Constraints

Rank	Constraint category 1	Constraint category 2	Constraint summary	England	NI	Scotland	Wales	Solution category	Solution summary
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2	Research, survey and information	Species is difficult to find or survey	Lack of ability to tag enough sharks to do capture re-capture. There are not enough images of high enough quality within the UK Basking Shark ID project to get a useful record of population movement. The assessment of population numbers would benefit from fixed and transect effort-based surveys being carried out at UK shark hotspots throughout the Spring-summer-early Autumn season in Scotland, Isle of Man and English waters.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Funding, resources and incentive schemes	Significant funding to support fixed-base effort-base recording from several key basking shark hotspots at the same time in England, Isle of Man, Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland for five years.
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10 State of Knowledge

State of knowledge category	Notes	Edits made by reporting group
Knowledge sufficient to make some impact, but more research needed	No population assessment of the basking shark exists as yet, and is unlikely given the wide-ranging nature of the species from the population in the NE Atlantic. Furthermore, telemetry studies tagged a shark in 2007 travelling from the Isle of Man to Newfoundland, so	

	it is very difficult to conclude an assessment of the UK population, as it is clearly part of a much larger population that migrates outside UK EEZ waters.	
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ENDNOTES

ⁱ An explanation of these criteria is included at Annex 3 of [UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Report on the Species and Habitat Review](#). BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock) 2007. This review was organised in two stages. Stage 1 looked at the scientific evidence for selecting the UK List of Priority Species and Habitats while stage 2 considered the conservation action needed for these species and habitats and provided signposts to the means of implementing action.

ⁱⁱ The information on evidence and the species distribution is as presented on the UK BAP website. Users can download a spreadsheet of the [Stage 1 species evidence](#) from the home page of the UK BAP website.

ⁱⁱⁱ Actions were assigned to each and every priority species by expert groups convened at Stage 2 of the Review process. These were subsequently categorised into “signpost categories”. This information is as shown on the UK BAP website See the link for [categorisation \(signposting\) of UK priority species](#).

^{iv} This information has been derived from Stage 1 of the priority species review, and is presented in the “marine”, “terrestrial invertebrates” and “other terrestrial species” sheets within the spreadsheet of the [Stage 1 species evidence](#). The information presented here varies according to the taxonomic group. Please note that some of these data have been written for other Expert Group members and may not be of great value to a wider audience.

^v Information on conservation designations has been extracted from JNCC’s collation of information on [species designations](#). The designations shown in version 2 of these pages are as at December 2010.

^{vi} As part of the 2008 UK BAP reporting round lead partners of national plans were asked to answer a number of specific questions. The data will be analysed and used for the UK and country level reports. All of the responses provided through BARS as part of the 2008 reporting exercise are available to [download](#). Note that in the December 2010 version of these pages (version 2) includes corrections to previously truncated text fields.