

## Analysis of marine bird data to identify Special Protection Areas

### Summary

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are classified under the EC Birds Directive and identified based upon detailed scientific evidence.

### Work involved

JNCC collected new data and collated existing data on the distribution of seabirds and water birds in UK waters, and analysed these datasets following rigorous scientific techniques. JNCC used the results to advise UK Governments on the location of potential marine SPAs. SPAs contribute to the creation of an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas around the UK.

Specifically, this work involved collecting new data through marine bird surveys, including aerial, land and boat based surveys, collating existing data from a wide-range of available sources, statistical analyses and/or modelling approaches and applying the UK SPA Selection Guidelines to analyse the outputs to recommend potential locations for SPAs.

In carrying out this work JNCC have developed extensive skills, experience and understanding of surveillance techniques for seabirds at sea; statistical analysis and modelling approaches applicable to seabird datasets; and providing appropriate advice to UK Governments to support MPA designation.

### Key Outcome

Scientific advice to UK Governments to support the identification of SPAs in UK inshore and offshore waters.

### Future Work

Work on SPAs in UK inshore and offshore waters is ongoing, with a range of proposals currently being considered for classification in 2017/2018.

### Identified research priorities

Conservation objectives and management of activities in SPAs. As well as monitoring of SPAs. JNCC actively seeks opportunities to collaborate with research bodies to achieve these priorities.

### Further information

[www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4184](http://www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4184)

**Country:** UK

**Main Driver:** Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC)

**Period of work:** 2000 - Present

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Red-throated diver © Mark Lewis



Common tern © Christopher Plummer



Atlantic puffin © Andy Webb

**Key words:** seabirds, waterbirds, Special Protected Areas, Marine Protected Areas