



Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland

Consultation Document

September 2024



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

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To request an alternative format, please contact us:

Email: marineconservation@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 90569421

If you have a hearing difficulty, you can contact the Department via **Text Relay**.

Dial: 18001 028 9052 4528

Post: Marine Conservation

DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
BT3 9ED

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Front cover image credit: Gary Burrows – Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) feeding on fish shoals west of Portrush.

Ministerial Foreword



I am delighted to launch a public consultation into the creation of the first ever Seabird Conservation Strategy for Northern Ireland. Seabirds are in decline globally as they continue to be impacted by man-made activities as well as climate change. Furthermore, recent outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza have had devastating effects on seabird populations. Urgent action is required to halt the further decline of seabirds, improve resilience, and make steps towards recovery.

The Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland has been developed to improve and restore seabird populations within our marine area. Alongside other Seabird Strategies for England, Scotland and Wales, it aims to restore and improve the conservation status of seabird populations in the UK.

By adopting an innovative co-design approach, my department has worked closely with key stakeholders to agree and develop the objectives and specific actions that are required to best meet the conservation needs of key seabird species. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those stakeholders that have been involved in the development of this strategy so far. I would also like to strongly encourage anyone who feels they can contribute, in words and also in actions, to respond to this consultation so that together we can produce an achievable and effective Seabird Conservation Strategy that has the potential to help contribute to the recovery of our marine environment.

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About this consultation

This strategy reviews the current status of Northern Ireland’s seabird populations, focusing on key species and their evidence gaps, including measures required to address these. Global and national biodiversity targets have been taken into consideration in the development of objectives. In addition, the strategy’s objectives have been developed using a co-design approach with the Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy Advisory Group¹, hereafter the Advisory Group, through two workshops that took place during 2022 and 2023. The objectives are supported by a number of actions and the Department will work closely with key stakeholders to deliver these.

Timing and duration of this consultation

The consultation will commence on the 23rd September 2024 and close on the 16th December 2024.

How to respond

You are invited to respond to this consultation online by complete the Citizen Space response template which can be accessed using the link below. Please supplement your response with any relevant supporting information, evidence and/or analysis.

<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/ni-seabird-conservation-strategy-and-action-plan>

If you are unable to complete the survey online, please contact the team by email: marineconservation@daera-ni.gov.uk or call 028 90569421.

¹ Refer to Annex A for the list of Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy Advisory Group members.

Introduction

Northern Ireland hosts internationally important populations of seabirds and waterbirds, many of which are declining or under threat of decline. During the summer breeding season, 22 species of seabird breed on our coastline, on islands, cliff faces, and harbours, as well as at inland lakes and in urban areas. These include a diverse range of species such as Gulls, Terns and Auks which arrive to colonies in terrestrial habitats during the spring and summer to nest. Adults forage in the sea to provide for their growing chicks until fledging in the late summer. After the chick-rearing period, the seabirds will disperse from breeding colonies around the coast, out to open sea or migrate across the globe until the following spring.

In the non-breeding season, waterbirds, waders and wildfowl migrate from across the globe to overwinter in Northern Ireland's loughs and estuaries due to the rich feeding opportunities and mild climate. The range of birds present around our coast is dependent on a healthy and varied environment to provide food and suitable habitats.

As top predators, seabirds play a vital role in regulating healthy marine ecosystems and provide an indicator of ocean health. Additional to this ecological value, they also have wider societal benefits: seabird colonies attract large numbers of visitors engaging in wildlife watching. This Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (hereafter the Strategy) outlines areas where action is required to improve the evidence base for key species and what management may be necessary to address population decline and help facilitate their recovery.

Current protection for seabirds in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's important seabird populations and areas are protected through designation of sites as Special Protection Areas (SPA) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended)², Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) under the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013³, and Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)

² [The Conservation \(Natural Habitats, etc.\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 1995](#)

³ [Marine Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#)

under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002⁴. Additionally, both coastal and inland wetlands of international importance are designated under the Ramsar Convention⁵. These sites undergo regular monitoring, condition assessment, and management by the Department. Regulations are in place regarding usage and development to protect the designated features. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended)⁶ from unlawful killing or injury. This includes making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure any wild birds or take, damage, destroy or disturb a nest whilst it is being built or in use.

Current international, regional and national status of seabirds

Seabird populations are under threat and declining both nationally and globally. In the last UK Marine Strategy assessment, seabirds have been assessed as not meeting Good Environmental Status (GES)⁷. The next UK Marine Strategy Assessment is due to be published in 2024. Furthermore, the 2023 OSPAR Quality Status Report⁸ indicated that marine bird abundance and breeding productivity for the Celtic Sea regions were in poor status (with the exception of water-column feeder and grazing feeder abundance). Seabirds Count⁹, a census of breeding seabirds in Britain and Ireland from 2015 to 2021, showed a mixed picture for breeding seabird populations at a Northern Ireland level ([Annex B](#)). Four species showed a greater than 10% decline in breeding numbers while nine species showed a greater than 10% increase in breeding numbers. Six species remained stable, while for the remaining eight species, a change could not confidently be assessed.

⁴ [The Environment \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2002](#)

⁵ [Ramsar Convention](#)

⁶ [Wildlife \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1985](#)

⁷ [Marine strategy part one: UK updated assessment and Good Environmental Status](#)

⁸ Marine Bird Abundance <https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/quality-status-reports/qsr-2023/indicator-assessments/marine-bird-abundance/>

⁹ Burnell, D., Perkins, A.J., Newton, S.F., Bolton, M., Tierney, T.D. & Dunn, T.E., 2023. *Seabirds Count: a census of breeding seabirds in Britain and Ireland (2015-2021)*. Lynx Nature Books, Barcelona.

Why has Northern Ireland developed a Seabird Conservation Strategy?

Urgent action is required to reduce the further decline of seabirds, improve resilience, and make steps towards recovery. Seabirds have the potential to be impacted by a wide range of anthropogenic activities and pressures including infrastructure development¹⁰, prey reduction¹¹, bycatch¹¹ and pollution¹². Climate change¹³ is predicted to have an enormous impact on our seabirds' breeding and feeding habitats and the wider marine environment in the coming decades, further highlighting the need to take action.

Recent outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) have presented new challenges to seabird populations. Non-breeding birds in winter 2021/ 22 were heavily impacted and unusually the outbreak continued into the summer breeding season 2022, decimating a number of seabird breeding colonies around the UK with large impacts seen in Gannet, Common Guillemot, Terns and Great Skua. In 2023, HPAI continued to affect seabirds with significant impacts recorded for Black-headed Gulls, Common and Sandwich Terns, Kittiwakes and Guillemots.

DAERA has reviewed the current information on Northern Ireland's inshore seabird populations, outlined pressures and activities (where evidence is available) which have the greatest impact on species, and developed an Action Plan to address key evidence gaps and potential management going forward.

The Strategy has been developed alongside similar strategies for England, Scotland and Wales to restore and improve the conservation status of seabird populations in the UK as outlined in the programme of measures in the UK Marine Strategy¹⁴. Furthermore, this will

¹⁰ Peschko, V., Mendel, B., Muller, S., Markones, N., Mercker, M., & Garthe, S. 2020. Effects of offshore windfarms on seabird abundance: Strong effects in spring and in the breeding season. *Marine Env. Research* vol 162.

¹¹ Votier, S.C., Sherley, R.B., Scales, K.L., Camphuysen, K. and Phillips, R.A., 2023. An overview of the impacts of fishing on seabirds, including identifying future research directions. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 80(9).

¹² [Birds and pollution | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#)

¹³ Burton, N.H.K., Daunt, F., Kober, K., Humphreys, E.M. and Frost, T.M. (2023) Impacts of Climate Change on Seabirds and Waterbirds in the UK and Ireland. *MCCIP Science Review* 2023, 26pp

¹⁴ [Marine strategy part three: UK programme of measures](#)

help us deliver international obligations to protect and preserve the marine environment under the OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy¹⁵.

Question 1: Do you agree that a Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy is necessary?

A Co-Design Approach

The Strategy has been developed using a co-design approach with stakeholders supported by DAERA. This approach, taking account of the views of a wide range of stakeholders and agreeing buy-in for proposed actions, represents a balanced model to deliver effective and sustainable policies for the protection of our seabird populations. Stakeholder engagement in marine conservation creates potential opportunities for community led conservation initiatives and builds support for potential solutions to challenges as they emerge. This provides a foundation for successful and adaptive management approaches. The co-design process began in January 2022 with the first workshop involving the Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy Advisory Group. A broad range of stakeholders with an interest in marine policy were included in the Advisory Group ([Annex A](#)) and their purpose was to consider proposed draft objectives and proposed species for inclusion. The co-design process included two half-day workshops and written correspondence between the Department and stakeholders.

Broader Strategic Context

The co-design and development of this Strategy supports several high priority, high-level and interlinked policies and strategies relating to nature recovery and biodiversity on a global, UK, and Northern Ireland level.

¹⁵ [Strategy of the OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic 2030](#)

Global and North-East Atlantic Region

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

At an international level, the development of the Seabird Conservation Strategy will contribute towards a number of biodiversity targets within the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), agreed at the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022¹⁶, particularly:

- **Target 2** which aims to “ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity”,
- **Target 3** to “ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas”, and
- **Target 14** to ensure that the multiple values of biodiversity are integrated into decision-making at all levels.

GBF Target 14 aims to ensure that the values of biodiversity are fully reflected or mainstreamed in all relevant decision-making frameworks. Biodiversity underpins a wide range of services that support economies, food production systems, secure living conditions and human health. Decision-making frameworks often do not appropriately account for biodiversity or its values, and therefore these are not always suitably reflected in relevant processes, including regulations and planning and development processes.

OSPAR Convention

The OSPAR¹⁷ Convention (Oslo-Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic), particularly the **North-East Atlantic Environment**

¹⁶ [Convention on Biological Diversity Targets](#)

¹⁷ [OSPAR Commission](#)

Strategy (2030)¹⁸ commits its contracting parties to the protection and conservation of the ecosystems and biological diversity of the maritime area of the region. This also includes targets relating to the achievement of biologically diverse and healthy seas, and restoration of degraded habitats while safeguarding ecosystem function and resilience to climate change. Specifically, the Seabird Conservation Strategy will contribute to the following targets from the Strategy of the OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic:

- **Target S5.O4:** By 2025 at the latest OSPAR will take appropriate actions to prevent or reduce pressures to enable the recovery of marine species and benthic and pelagic habitats in order to reach and maintain good environmental status as reflected in relevant OSPAR status assessments, with action by 2023 to halt the decline of marine birds.
- **Target S7.O6:** OSPAR will work with relevant competent authorities and other stakeholders to minimise, and where possible, eliminate, incidental by-catch of marine mammals, birds, turtles and fish so that it does not represent a threat to the protection and conservation of these species and will work towards strengthening the evidence base concerning incidental by-catch by 2025

OSPAR has played a primary role in coordinating the contribution to the implementation and achievement of Good Ecological Status and Good Environmental Status under the UK Water Framework Regulations and the UK Marine Strategy respectively.

United Kingdom

UK Marine Strategy

The overarching **UK Marine Strategy (2010)**¹⁹ sets out a comprehensive framework for assessing, monitoring, and using our seas to achieve the UK's shared vision for clean,

¹⁸ [North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030](#)

¹⁹ [UK Marine Strategy \(2010\)](#)

healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse marine environment. The requirement to assess, monitor and put in place measures to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status for UK seas is enshrined in legislation and demonstrates the combined commitments of the four administrations to work together to monitor and protect what are some of the most biologically diverse and productive seas in the North-East Atlantic. Good Environmental Status is defined as “the environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive”. It also means that ecosystems are properly functioning and resilient to anthropogenic induced change, biodiversity decline is prevented, and anthropogenic activities do not cause any pollution effects.

Within the UK Marine Strategy Part Three, DAERA has stated its commitment to the development of a Seabird Conservation Strategy.

UK Joint Fisheries Statement

The value of both biodiverse ecosystems and sustainable fishing are recognised within the **UK Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS)**²⁰. The JFS sets out the ambition of the UK to continue delivering sustainable management of fisheries, recognising that a healthy and resilient marine environment is the foundation for a prosperous seafood sector and thriving coastal communities. The JFS also recognises the importance of reducing bycatch and minimising incidental catches of key species such as seabirds through its sustainability, ecosystem, and bycatch objectives.

Northern Ireland

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

The **Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022**²¹ is a key statutory instrument that creates a framework that will establish a pathway to achieving emission reduction targets which will ensure that Northern Ireland makes a contribution to the achievement of the UK 2050 Net Zero target. The Act includes a target for net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 as

²⁰ [Joint Fisheries Statement \(JFS\)](#)

²¹ [Climate Change Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022](#)

well as a set of interim targets for 2030 and 2040 for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland.

The Act sets out that the biodiversity impact must be considered in setting the carbon budget; plans and policies to achieve the budget (such as sectoral Climate Action Plans) should, where practicable, use nature-based solutions that enhance biodiversity; and illustrate responsibility to protect or restore ecosystems to aid carbon mitigation efforts. The Climate Action Plan sets a roadmap to net zero, enhancing biodiversity in the process.

A reduction in emission targets can be achieved through the development and installation of offshore windfarms but requires careful consideration of their siting to reduce potential adverse impacts to seabirds. The Strategy highlights the importance of obtaining robust evidence while identifying relevant pressures and threats to support future decisions.

Draft Green Growth Strategy

The draft **Green Growth Strategy**²² is the Northern Ireland Executive's multi-decade strategy, balancing environment, climate, and the economy in Northern Ireland. It sets out the long-term vision and framework for addressing biodiversity loss (including seabirds) and climate change in an ambitious and sustainable way.

The draft Green Growth Strategy 2050 vision is that:

- Northern Ireland has taken significant action for the climate and our environment, has placed nature and biodiversity on a path to recovery, and moved from a high to a low emissions society.
- We have made this change fairly and have demonstrated a responsibility for each other and for the place in which we live.
- As a result of all our efforts, we have a more resilient environment with a healthy ecosystem and a strong sustainable economy. More people are employed in green jobs and all generations benefit from improved wellbeing.

²² [A Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland- Balancing our climate, environment, and economy](#)

Draft Northern Ireland Environmental Improvement Plan

As part of the Northern Ireland Executive's Green Growth strategy, DAERA is progressing a new **Northern Ireland Environmental Improvement Plan**, which, when finalised, will form the basis for a coherent and effective set of interventions that can deliver real improvements in the quality of the environment and thereby improve the health and well-being of all who live and work here. Legislative provisions contained within the Environment Act 2021²³ place a statutory duty on DAERA to publish the Northern Ireland Environmental Improvement Plan.

A key target in the Environmental Improvement Plan is that by 2030, 85% of designated features in the Marine Protected Area (MPA) network to be in favourable condition, with 10% of the remainder in recovering condition. The Seabird Conservation Strategy sets out the steps that we will take to protect key seabird species, many of which are protected features within MPAs, therefore making an important contribution to the Environmental Improvement Plan.

Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland

The draft **Marine Plan for Northern Ireland**²⁴ is being developed within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement to facilitate the sustainable development of the marine area. The draft Marine Plan has a number of objectives in common with the Seabird Conservation Strategy, such as promoting healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystems and promoting the marine resource, its recreational value and its wider economic, environmental and social benefits to all.

DAERA Draft Nature Recovery Strategy

DAERA is currently developing a draft **Nature Recovery Strategy** which has strong linkages to the Seabird Conservation Strategy. Protecting and restoring priority species, and, where possible, creating marine habitats whilst maintaining these as healthy functioning ecosystems for the long-term is the principal of this combined exercise. It is essential that a balance is struck, ensuring the right measures are carried out in the most appropriate places so that seabird conservation efforts do not impact societal values towards priority species, rather

²³ [Environment Act 2021](#)

²⁴ [Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland](#)

complement and enhance them. The draft Nature Recovery Strategy is also working to implement the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework²⁵.

²⁵ [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland

Species Scope and Rationale

The list of species assessed within the Strategy was initially based on a number of factors including:

- Seabirds which currently breed in the Northern Ireland area as listed in the annual Northern Ireland Seabird Report published by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA),
- Additional species which are regularly occurring in Northern Ireland waters from breeding sites in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, and
- Designated wintering waterbirds occurring in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Northern Ireland.

Upon this baseline, two workshops were held with the Advisory Group to agree the species list and draft objectives. A total of 27 species were identified (Table 1) for inclusion. These 27 species require active conservation action as the most recent assessment of the Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Gilbert et al., 2021) included 26 of the proposed 27 seabird species in Northern Ireland. Five species were on the red list (Kittiwake, Common Eider, Razorbill, Common Scoter and Puffin), and one species was on the green list (Great Black-backed Gull). The remaining 21 were on the amber list, of medium conservation concern.

In addition, four of the 22 breeding seabirds in Northern Ireland are listed as Northern Ireland Priority Species, which means that these species are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in Northern Ireland (Black-headed Gull, Herring Gull, Roseate Tern and Little Tern). However, Little Tern was excluded from the current list due to a lack of data on its distribution. [Annex B](#) illustrates the list of species, their conservation status, their association with a protected site designation and the data availability which informed their inclusion in this Strategy.

Some species have been excluded from this Strategy because they are not listed as birds of conservation concern, however, are recorded through statutory monitoring where they are qualifying features of designated sites such as SPAs or ASSIs.

The Department acknowledges that there are additional species which could be considered, for example those which previously bred in Northern Ireland (Little Tern, *Sternula albifrons*), rarer visitors with potential for increases due to climate change (Yellow Legged Gull, *Larus michahellis*) and less-frequent wintering waterbirds (Black-Throated Diver, *Gavia arctica*). However, there is a particular lack of data on their distribution and those pressures which might impact these species, therefore they were not included within this draft. Any recommendations for the protection of seabirds listed in this Strategy could also have a positive influence on these three species regardless of their exclusion within this draft.

Data and Evidence

The data for the 27 proposed species were collated primarily from the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP)²⁶ and the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)²⁷. Both monitoring projects are organised by BTO.

The SMP monitors population changes of breeding seabirds at coastal and inland sites throughout the UK and Ireland. Surveys are carried out annually by volunteers and professionals and collated into datasets managed by BTO in partnership with other eNGOs and statutory bodies. Annual reports are published of the latest data. SMP data are also further analysed as part of seabird census reporting approximately every 10 years.

WeBS monitors non-breeding waterbirds at both inland and estuarine sites. Counts are carried out at a network of wetland sites throughout the winter by volunteers and recorded by BTO. These data provide trends in distribution and abundance where five-year average abundance and five-year peak abundance for each species at each site are calculated and reported annually by BTO²⁸.

²⁶ [BTO Seabird Monitoring Programme](#)

²⁷ [BTO Wetland Bird Survey](#)

²⁸ [BTO WeBS Report](#)

Table 1: List of key seabird and marine birds in Northern Ireland

Common Name	Scientific Name	Functional Group
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Surface Feeder
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	
European Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	
Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	
Black-Legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	Surface Feeder/ Water Column Feeder
Black Headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Wading/ Surface Feeder
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>	
Atlantic Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Water Column Feeder
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	
Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	
European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	Water Column Feeder/ Benthic Feeder
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	
Great crested grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	
Red throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	
Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Benthic/ Water Column Feeder
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	

Additional sources of data included NBN Atlas records, foraging ranges from colonies, and modelling research. Data availability and quality varied between species and sites, resulting in knowledge gaps.

Where feasible, data for each of the species were overlaid with activities data to identify any obvious pressures or threats, which was then addressed as actions to be taken forward. However, it became apparent that there was a significant gap in seabird-at-sea data where the main activities were occurring (fishing, recreation). Furthermore, data deficiencies were also apparent for certain activities, such as the inshore (<12m) fishing fleet. This limited our ability to perform vulnerability / sensitivity assessments, so instead, this was drafted into its own objective.

A series of maps showing the data collated via SMP and WeBS for the 27 species is available in [Annex E](#).

Question 2: Do you agree with the species listed in this Strategy?

Proposed Aim

The aim of this Strategy is:

To improve the conservation status of seabirds in Northern Ireland through effective management of current and emerging threats, with the overall goal of meeting Good Environmental Status.

Question 3: Do you agree with the Aim of this Strategy?

Proposed Objectives

The aim will be achieved by the following objectives to be delivered in the marine area and at seabird breeding sites:

- 1. Collate existing evidence from all seabird monitoring efforts in Northern Ireland and continue to review and update these data as new evidence becomes available.**
- 2. Identify the knowledge gaps to enhance the evidence base and data availability of seabird distribution and populations.**
- 3. Integrate the potential impacts of threats and pressures on seabirds into future management and decision making.**
- 4. Identify and deliver targeted management measures to aid the recovery of seabirds and the wider ecosystem upon which they rely.**
- 5. Bring all stakeholders and the public together to raise awareness of the importance of seabirds in Northern Ireland, and Northern Ireland's importance on a wider scale across the British Isles.**
- 6. Conduct a review of the Strategy every six years, with the ability to change species scope to reflect environmental change and species distribution where appropriate.**

Question 4: Do you agree with the objectives that have been identified in this Strategy?

Proposed Actions

Each of the above objectives is supported by a series of proposed SMART actions that are outlined in the Action Plan ([Annex C](#)). SMART actions are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound.

Co-delivery of these actions is essential. The draft actions must first be agreed among partners before realistic timelines and means of assessing achievement can be suggested.

These actions will be applied to the 27 proposed species listed as a priority in this Strategy, unless where specified to particular species within an individual Draft Action.

Question 5: Do you consider the actions are sufficient to meet the relevant objective?

Proposed Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation

Governance

DAERA is committed to reporting under several statutory requirements which align with the objectives of this Strategy, and against which a governance structure should be established. This will facilitate an ecosystem approach to the delivery of the Seabird Conservation Strategy in line with other strategies, where adaptive management can be applied as changes in condition status are detected which may affect associated seabird species.

The Advisory Group will oversee the delivery of actions required to meet the objectives of the Strategy.

A number of site-level management groups are already in place and, where applicable, will be incorporated into an agreed governance structure to reflect considerations both across the Northern Ireland marine area and wider transboundary areas. These include the Strangford Lough MPA Management Steering Group, the Rathlin Forum, and MarPAMM stakeholder groups (North Coast, Co. Down – Murlough and Carlingford Lough).

Other existing groups contributing towards meeting objectives in wider strategies, and which can be coordinated to this Strategy, include the Biodiversity and Climate Working Group involved in the co-development and co-delivery of Northern Ireland's Blue Carbon Action Plan and review of the MPA Strategy, the Elasmobranch Conservation Strategy Working Group, the Inshore Fisheries Partnership, and wider fisheries stakeholder groups, such as Co Fish.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department currently contribute to statutory reporting requirements as outlined in Figure 1 below, with timelines in Figure 2. Additional output includes the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report biodiversity metric which is published annually and details some of the species within the scope of this Strategy. This includes reporting on the condition of the MPAs which are designated for various seabird species and assemblages.

To ensure delivery of the Seabird Conservation Strategy and Action Plan, the Advisory Group will need to agree the delivery partners and timeframes for each of the actions. The Advisory Group should aim to meet twice-yearly to discuss how the objectives are being met through the delivery of the actions and identify any new proposals or work areas to contribute to the Action Plan. This will also be an opportunity to review new evidence and species for inclusion ahead of the formal six-year (aligned with statutory reporting cycles) Strategy review.

	International			UK				NI
	Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	OSPAR Convention	Bern Convention	Habitats Regulations	Birds Directive	Marine Strategy	Water Framework Regulations	Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013
Reporting cycle frequency/ next due	Intervals determined by Conference of the Parties (COPs)	Every 10 years 2030	Every 6 years 2025	Every 6 years 2025	Every 6 years 2025	Every 6 years 2024	Every 6 years 2023	Every 6 years 2024

Figure 1: Marine Protected Areas reporting requirements

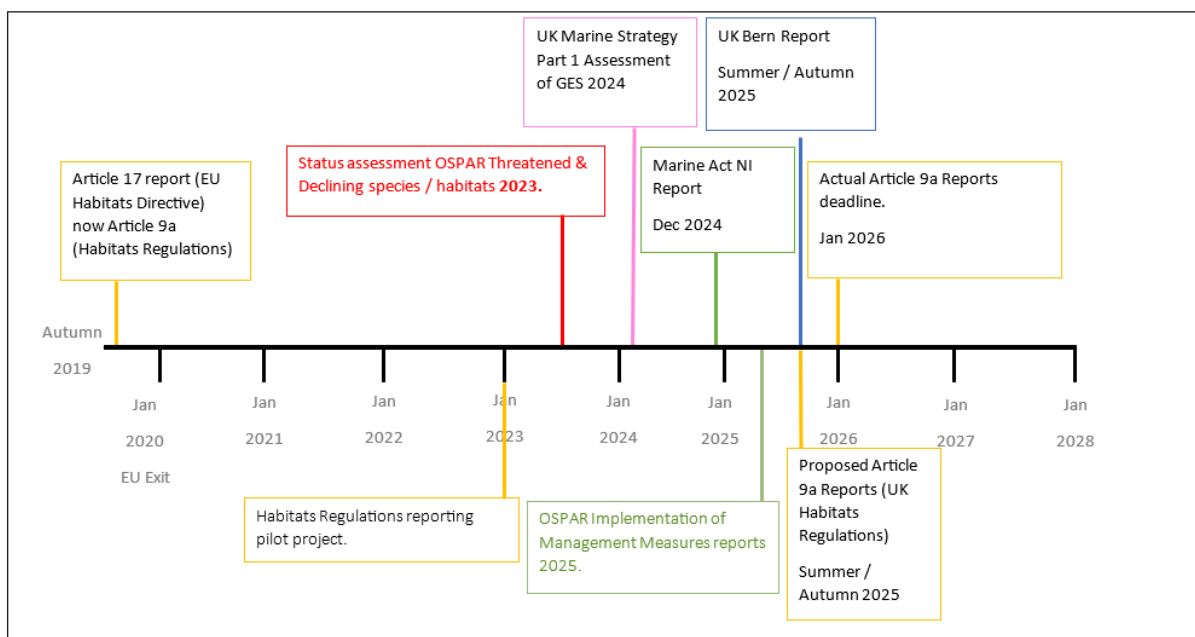


Figure 2: Marine Protected Areas reporting timeline

Question 6: Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

Conclusion

Northern Ireland’s breeding and wintering seabird and waterbird populations are internationally recognised. However anthropogenic activities, habitat loss, avian flu and climate change threaten their survival. With more reliance on the marine environment for food, travel, recreation and provision of renewable energy to mitigate against climate change, it is imperative this is done sustainably while considering wider environmental concerns. Through this Strategy we aim to promote positive conservation measures to benefit seabird populations while enabling sustainable use of the wider marine environment.

DAERA would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this consultation.

Annex A: NI Seabird Conservation Strategy Advisory Group members

The Northern Ireland Seabird Conservation Strategy (NISCS) Advisory Group is made up of:

- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
- Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation (NIFF)
- Anglo-North Irish Fish Producers Organisation (ANIFPO)
- Northern Ireland Marine Task Force (NIMTF)
- Ulster Wildlife (UW)
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- National Trust (NT)
- Seafish

Annex B: Seabird Conservation Strategy species list

Table 2: Seabird Conservation Strategy Species List

This list details the current conservation status (Birds of Conservation Concern 2020-2026), latest counts (Seabirds Count, the fourth census of Britain and Ireland’s breeding seabirds 2015-2021), association with protected areas, and data sources for the 27 species included in the Strategy.

Common Name	BoCCI4 Status	Seabirds Count status	Season	Designations	Data Availability
Atlantic Puffin	Red	>10% decline	Breeding	ASSI	SMP - NI
Black Guillemot	Amber	Stable	Breeding	MCZ	SMP - NI
Common Guillemot	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Razorbill	Red	Stable	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
European Shag	Amber	Stable	Breeding	ASSI	SMP - NI
Great Cormorant	Amber	>10% decline	Breeding/ Wintering	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Great Skua	Amber	No data	Breeding	None	SMP - NI
Manx Shearwater	Amber	No data	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Northern Fulmar	Amber	>10% decline	Breeding	ASSI	SMP - NI
Arctic Tern	Amber	Stable	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Common Tern	Amber	>10% decline	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Roseate Tern	Amber	Stable	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Sandwich Tern	Amber	Stable	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Black Legged Kittiwake	Red	>10% increase	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI

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Black Headed Gull	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding/ Wintering	Terrestrial ASSI	SMP – NI WeBS
Common Gull	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding/ Wintering	ASSI	SMP – NI WeBS
Great Black-Backed Gull	Green	>10% increase	Seabird Report – Breeding	None	SMP – NI WeBS
Herring Gull	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding/ Wintering	ASSI	SMP – NI WeBS
Lesser Black-Backed Gull	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding/ Wintering	ASSI	SMP – NI WeBS
Mediterranean Gull	Amber	>10% increase	Breeding	SPA/ ASSI	SMP - NI
Common Eider	Red	No data	Breeding/ Wintering	SPA/ ASSI	WeBS
Great Crested Grebe	Amber	No data	Breeding/ Wintering	SPA/ ASSI	WeBS
Red Throated Diver	Amber	No data	Breeding/ Wintering	SPA/ ASSI	WeBS
European Storm Petrel	Amber	Not present	Breeding	None	SMP – non-NI
Gannet	Amber		Breeding	None	SMP – non-NI
Slavonian Grebe	Amber		Wintering	None	WeBS
Common Scoter	Red		Breeding/ Wintering	None	WeBS

Annex C: Seabird Conservation Strategy Action Plan

The below tables outline the recommended actions that are required to deliver each objective.

A number of these actions have been completed as the Strategy was in draft and awaiting the formation of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2024 before the consultation launch. As such, there are some actions which are already listed as complete and should be considered the baseline upon which subsequent draft actions will be delivered.

Objective 1 – Collate existing evidence from all seabird monitoring efforts in Northern Ireland and continue to review and update these data as new evidence becomes available.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
1.1	Complete a data-mining exercise of all available records by June 2025.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed to June 2023 for the current evidence held. As new evidence is generated, this will continue to be updated. Where appropriate, datasets will be coordinated with other workstreams including the Marine Plan, Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan (OREAP) and MSPACE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA MFD - NIEA - eNGOs

Objective 2 – Identify the knowledge gaps to enhance the evidence base and data availability of seabird distribution and populations.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
2.1	Collate evidence on seabird distributions and combine with foraging distances to give an indication of	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed to June 2023 for the current evidence held. As new evidence is generated, this will continue to be updated. More data on foraging distances is required for certain species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA MFD - NIEA - eNGOs

	at-sea usage by June 2025.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement required on a clear outline of what future data collection will be undertaken by which partner. 	
2.2	<p>Assess the knowledge base of at-sea distributions and identify how and where it can be improved.</p>	<p>Knowledge gaps will hamper our ability to make sound management decisions. A better understanding is critical in the context of climate change and potential offshore energy development.</p> <p>Marine development including renewables, fisheries, and other extractive activities may potentially cause a reduction in habitat suitability and availability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake research projects to contribute to and enhance seabird at-sea data, which at present is poor. • Current relevant projects e.g. any funded through Peace Plus, should be considered, alongside best-practice and research globally, and applied to NI. • Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commissioning aerial surveys to determine key areas for foraging or loafing activities. - generate tracking data for certain species in order to substantiate important foraging locations/ key areas for prey species/ supporting habitats, and subsequent protection if relevant. - Conduct boat surveys looking at wintering distribution offshore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Other NI Departments - Academia - Fisheries industry and communities - Offshore Wind developers

Objective 3 – Integrate the potential impacts of threats and pressures on seabirds into future management and decision making.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
3.1	<p>Review vulnerability/ sensitivity assessments from FeAST (Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool, as developed by Nature Scot) for certain species, and resolve where missing.</p>	<p>All relevant activities currently/ predicted to occur in Northern Ireland waters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive list of activities (pressures/ threats) occurring in Northern Ireland waters. • Develop a dataset of sensitivities on a species-by-species basis relevant to Northern Ireland, after an improved picture of at-sea distributions of seabirds has been obtained (refer to Action 2.2). • Once developed, encourage stakeholders to use list of sensitivities when developing proposals to ensure applications fully consider options to further the conservation of seabird species and wider nature protection and recovery. Proposals should adhere to the relevant policies within the draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland including application of the mitigation hierarchy which will reduce potential impacts to sensitive seabird species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs

Objective 4 – Identify and deliver targeted management measures to aid the recovery of seabirds and the wider ecosystem upon which they rely.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
4.1	<p>Complete a prioritisation exercise to identify which seabirds and associated breeding habitats (whether coastal or inshore) require urgent measures for protection and recovery.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for species-specific action plans will be difficult to maintain due to sheer scope of managing 27 separate plans. However, through targeted habitat management which caters for multiple species concurrently, each individual species will still be positively targeted. • Develop a baseline of the status of key seabird habitat currently. • Assess the impact of future conservation actions against this as a measure of effective management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs
4.2	<p>Identify the appropriate conservation measures required for each seabird breeding habitat (whether coastal or</p>	<p>Physical habitat loss through coastal development, coastal defence, flood defences and managed realignment.</p>	<p>Main species impacted = Terns and Gulls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with site managers to improve nesting habitat quality, to increase abundance and improve productivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Public

	inshore), with particular focus on low-lying islands prone to erosion and flooding.	Protected sites management. Climate Change		
4.3	Identify which seabird breeding islands would benefit from invasive mammalian predator eradication programmes.	Mortality of adults and chicks, reduced productivity. Loss of suitable breeding habitat. Biosecurity Recreation	Main species impacted = All breeding species, in particular burrow nesting birds including Atlantic Puffin, Black Guillemot and Manx Shearwater. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using RSPB’s LIFE Raft project as a basis, develop proposals for implementation of management measures for relevant islands, in consultation with site managers. Scope opportunities for potential biosecurity hub and search facility required at other priority island sites. Workshop with Advisory Group to determine delivery partners; who will complete what role; how will measures be enforced? e.g. Invasives “Check Clean Dry” method. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Public
4.4	Identify sites which have issues with predation by native predators.	Loss of suitable breeding habitat	Main species impacted = all breeding species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue site monitoring at colonies and implement measures to manage native predators where there is an impact on conservation status. Such management measures may include e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The creation of predator- and disturbance-free tern rafts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Public

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Powers to restrict access during HPAI outbreaks to relieve pressure on colonies 	
4.5	<p>Identify sites which have issues with disturbance and develop appropriate management measures.</p>	<p>Recreational activities – disturbance (including wildlife tourism) and displacement.</p>	<p>Main species impacted = all breeding species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with the public and site users to encourage responsible recreation at protected sites and subsequent monitoring of any implemented measures to determine success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Public
4.6	<p>Identify appropriate management measures for seabird prey and foraging areas, in consultation with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Fisheries – impact on forage fish species/ prey availability.</p> <p>Climate change</p>	<p>Main species impacted = Surface and water column species which depend on forage fish, including Auks, Terns, Fulmar Shearwater, Cormorants & Shag, Gannet, Skua, Gulls, Petrels, divers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Northern Ireland inshore area evidence base and therefore collective understanding of predator/ prey interactions, diet, forage fish distribution, impacts of climate change, identification of key foraging areas, and spatial overlap of important forage areas with existing activity. • Implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries management where required, as detailed within the draft inshore Fisheries Management Plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - eNGOs - Fisheries industry and communities - Academia - SNCBs

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify overlap between foraging areas and fisheries locations. • Management measures will be coordinated with actions within the reviewed MPA Strategy where relevant. This will allow scope to consider what potential protection could look like e.g. from targeted fisheries management measure to designation (MPA, HPMA, OEEM). 	
4.7	<p>Improve the evidence base for seabird interaction with fishing vessels in Northern Ireland waters to identify levels of seabird bycatch.</p>	<p>Fisheries – mortality via bycatch.</p> <p>Ghost gear</p>	<p>Main species impacted = All species which forage for fish, particularly those which are highly interactive with fishing vessels and at higher risk of entanglement or collision e.g. Gannet, Fulmar and Gulls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current draft Fisheries Management Plans (FMP) have been developed closely between DAERA and industry. • Direct engagement with industry to determine levels of bycatch in Northern Ireland fisheries, with relevance to gear type in Northern Ireland waters. Support for I-VMS roll-out across industry. • Determine impacts on adult mortality rates, fishing effort in important foraging areas, and use this evidence to implement mitigation where appropriate. • UK Bycatch Mitigation Initiative – continued collaboration with Defra and other DAs on the implementation and delivery of this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - eNGOs - Fisheries industry and communities - Academia - SNCBs

<p>4.8</p>	<p>Improve response to the emergence, spread and impacts of disease and parasites in seabirds.</p>	<p>Biosecurity, monitoring, research.</p> <p>Mortality and reduced breeding success due to disease – HPAI</p> <p>Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement between stakeholders, conservation bodies, landowners, site managers and public in the event of an outbreak. • Reporting by site-managers – refer to the ‘Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Wild Birds: Guidance for Site Managers in Northern Ireland’ and up-to-date information on the DAERA website. Guidance can be obtained from BCSGeneral@daera-ni.gov.uk. • Reporting by public – use the DAERA Dead Wild Bird Online Form (accessed here) for effective collection of mortality data. • Ongoing monitoring of seabird populations and breeding sites to improve understanding of impact i.e. regular colony monitoring and repeat surveys in the years after a major outbreak to assess population impacts. Consider surveillance and testing of wild birds, depending on resources. • Understand potential interaction with offshore wind or novel surveys where there is no pre-outbreak baseline data – engagement with other SNCBs to advise on this. • NI HPAI in Wild Birds group includes staff from NIEA, DAERA Veterinary Service Animal Health and eNGOs. The group may be convened as a response measure to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - DAERA Veterinary Service Animal Health - DAERA Animal Disease Control Policy Branch - Academia - SNCBs
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			<p>any outbreak of HPAI in wild birds and act as a forum to discuss response measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop projects to determine potential immunity in wild birds, habitat management to reduce virus spread and other beneficial measures. 	
4.9	<p>Reduce marine litter and improve understanding of impacts on seabirds in Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>Increased mortality and reduced fitness impacts from ingestion and entanglement with litter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align actions to those relevant within the draft Nature Recovery Strategy. • Contribute to the OSPAR Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter through oversight of data provided by Keep NI Beautiful and the NI Marine Litter Report. • Monitoring of impact of litter on seabirds, from inclusion as nesting material, entanglement, ingestion and chick provisioning. • Increase awareness and stakeholder engagement with regard to waste reduction plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Academia - SNCBs - Industries - Public
4.10	<p>Continued work towards Good Environmental Status for contaminants and reduction of the impacts of contaminants on seabirds.</p>	<p>Pollution events from shore-based activities, vessels and transport, pipelines, recreation and port and harbour operations – increased mortality from lethal and sublethal levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued monitoring contaminants in marine area under Water Framework and Marine Strategy Regulations. • Implementation of pollution response plans by stakeholders. • Secure funding to implement a programme of testing contaminants in seabird carcasses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD

4.11	<p>Identification of funding streams and mechanisms to enable the delivery of the above actions.</p>	All activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options such as Peace Plus, Marine Environment and Fisheries Fund (MEFF) amongst others. • Delivery partners applying for statutory funding should match their project proposals with the priorities of the funding pot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs - Academia - SNCBs - Industries
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Objective 5 – Bring all stakeholders and the public together to raise awareness of the importance of seabirds in Northern Ireland, and Northern Ireland’s importance on a wider scale across the British Isles.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
5.1	<p>Promote the Seabird Conservation Strategy, accompanied by an effective engagement and communications workstream</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media and press campaign to highlight agreed conservation measures within first quarter of Strategy being published. • Participation in public-facing events linking with seabird conservation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs

Objective 6 – Conduct a review of the Strategy every six years, with the ability to change species scope to reflect environmental change and species distribution where appropriate.

Action Number	Draft Action	Activities/ Potential Impacts	How we will do this	Potential Partners
6.1	Review the Seabird Conservation Strategy every six years following publication.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Group will review the listed objectives and actions to determine success of achievement and whether these need to be modified in the light of new evidence. • Review of the species list will also be carried out as evidence improves to determine any changes. • Advisory Group to meet twice-yearly to ensure delivery of the Action Plan is on track. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DAERA - MFD - NIEA - eNGOs

Annex D: Glossary

Anthropogenic - effects, processes, objects, or materials are those that are derived from human activities.

Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) – are declared under The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 200235 for their species, habitat and/or geological features.

Biodiversity – is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they form part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Bycatch - Fishermen sometimes catch and discard animals they do not want, cannot sell, or are not allowed to keep. This is collectively known as “bycatch.”

eNGOs – environmental Non-Governmental Bodies

Good Environmental Status (GES) - The environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive, as defined under the UK Marine Strategy Regulations.

Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) – used to refer to MCZs designated under section 13 of the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 in the Northern Ireland inshore region and in section 116 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 in the Northern Ireland offshore region. MCZs are designated to safeguard vulnerable or unique marine species and habitats of national importance.

Marine Protected Area (MPA) – Used to describe a geographic area of the marine environment which has been designated for specific conservation objectives in relation to the features present. The ultimate aim of these sites is for long-term management to achieve sustainable use, both for marine ecosystems and associated stakeholders.

Northern Ireland Priority Species (NIPS) - Priority species require conservation action because of their decline, rarity and importance in an all-Ireland and UK context.

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) - areas that are achieving the long term and effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity outside of protected areas.

OSPAR – refers to the Oslo - Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. It is an agreement by relevant governments and the European Community to co-operate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic.

UK Marine Strategy - This strategy provides an updated assessment of our seas and sets objectives, targets, and indicators for achieving Good Environmental Status.

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention and are classified as MPAs.

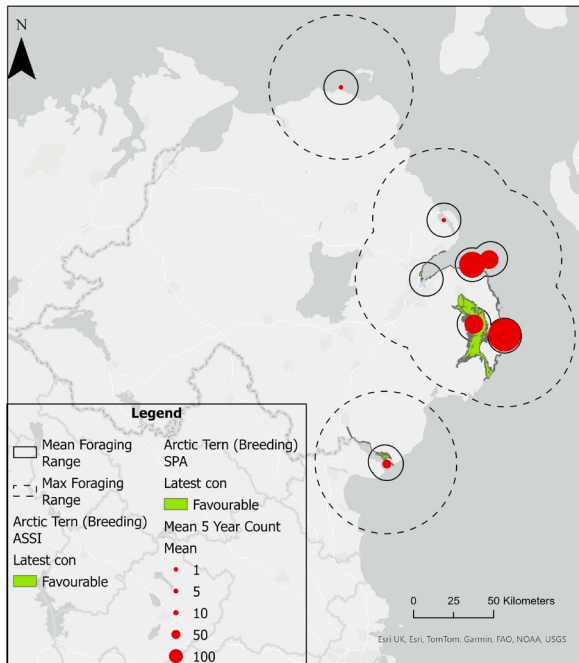
Restoration - the process of improving or returning a marine ecosystem or habitat to a healthier and more natural state after it has been damaged or degraded by human activities or environment factors.

SNCB – Statutory Nature Conservation Body

Special Protected Areas (SPAs) – are designated under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended)⁴⁰ to select sites for bird species included in Annex 1 of the Directive, and also for regularly occurring migratory species.

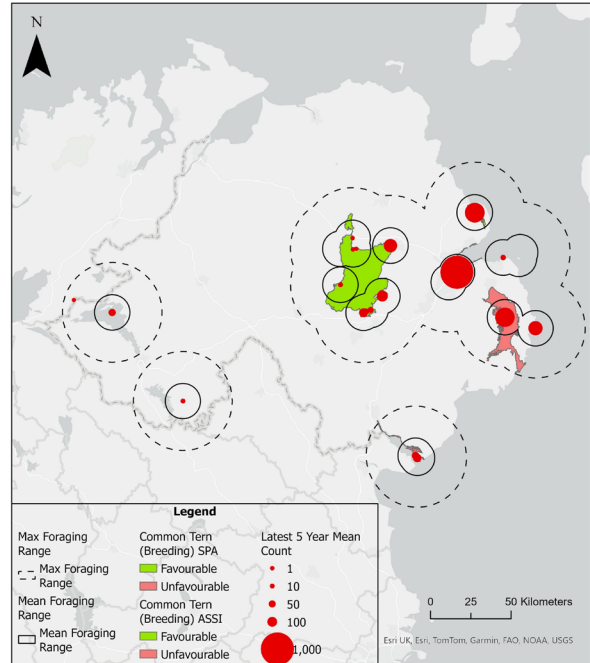
Annex E: Seabird Conservation Strategy Species distributions

Unless stated otherwise, the mean 5-year count covers the period 2017-2021.



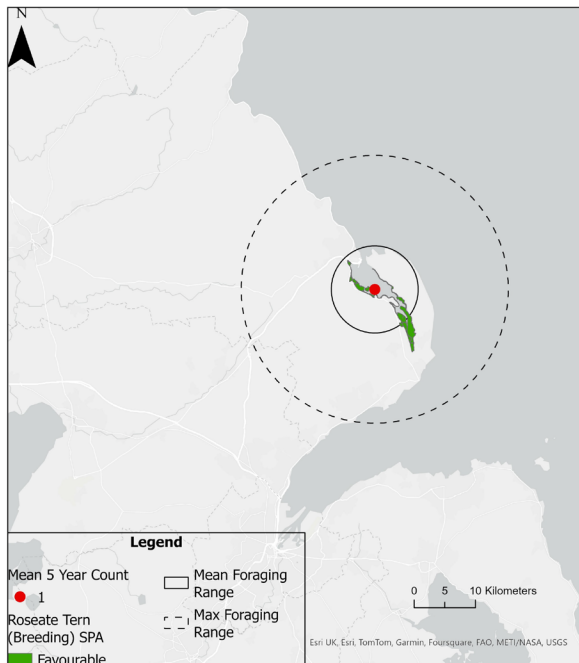
Arctic Tern Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Mean Counts

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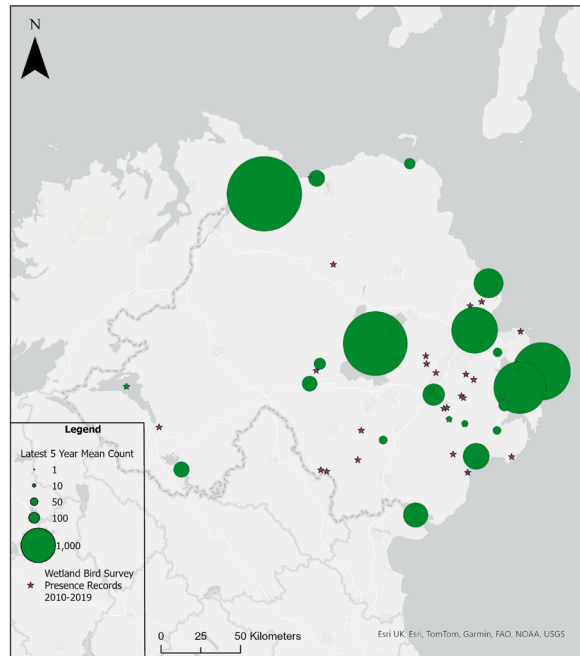
Common Tern Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Mean Counts

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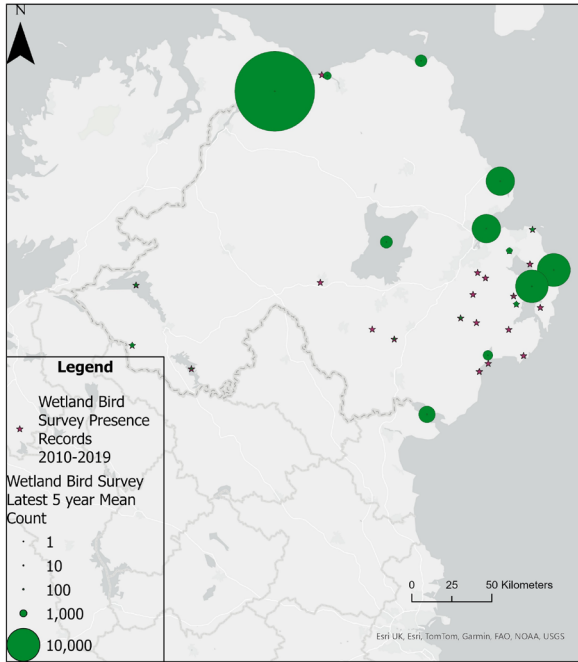
Roseate Tern Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Mean Counts

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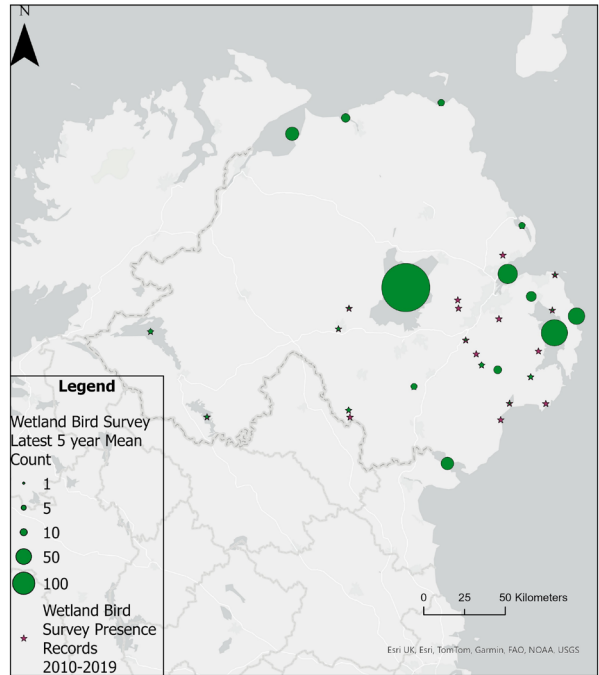
Black-Headed Gull Wetland Bird Survey Records

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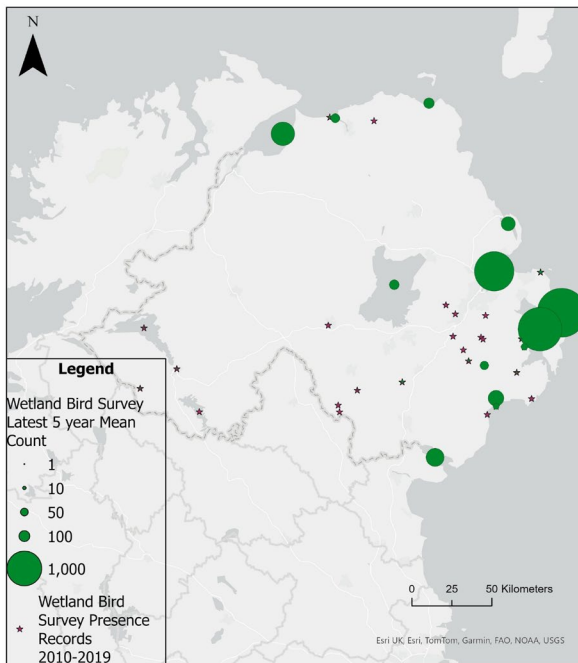
Common Gull Wetland Bird Survey Records

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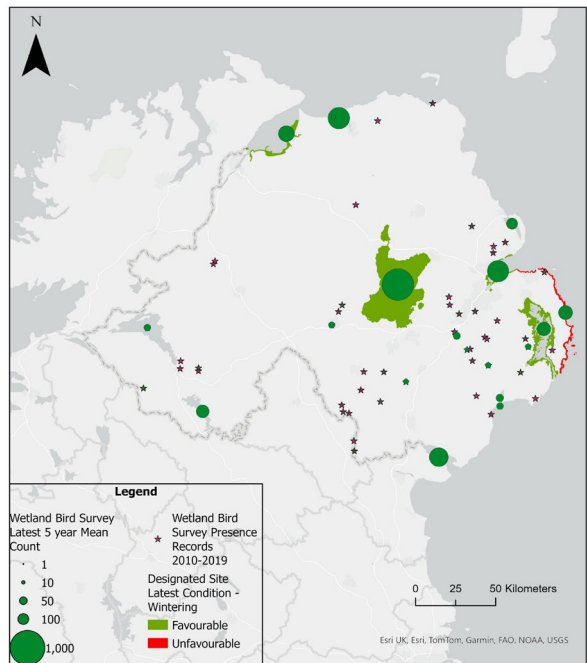
Lesser Black-backed Gull Wetland Bird Survey Records

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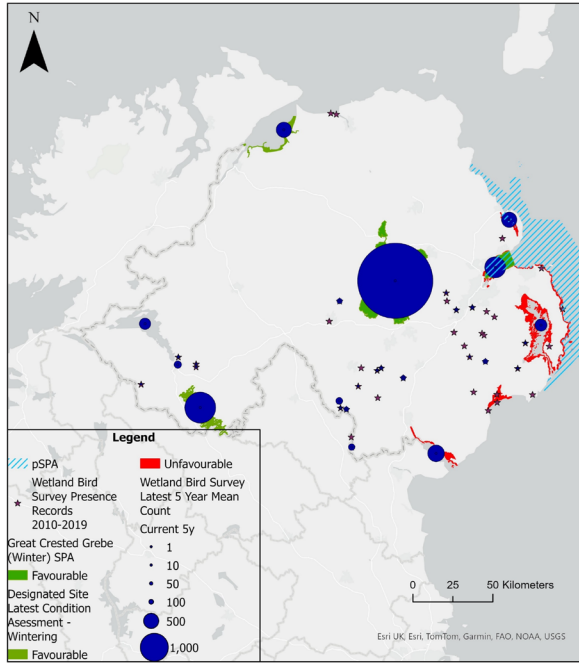
Herring Gull Wetland Bird Survey Records

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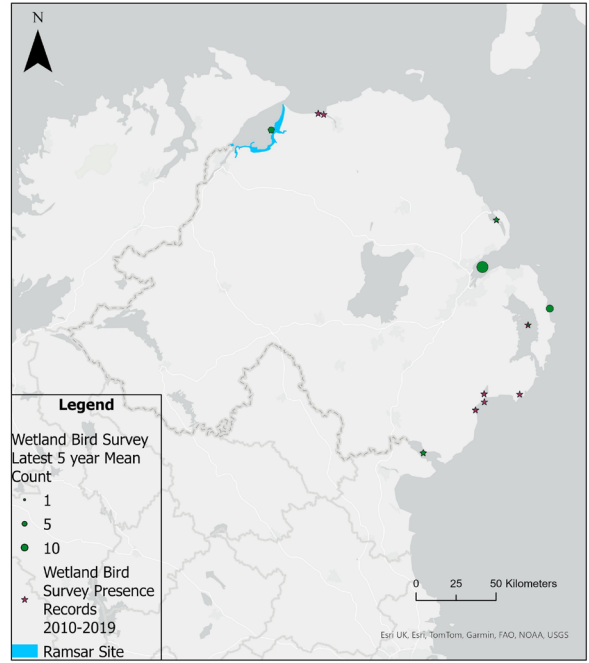


Great Cormorant Wetland Bird Survey Records

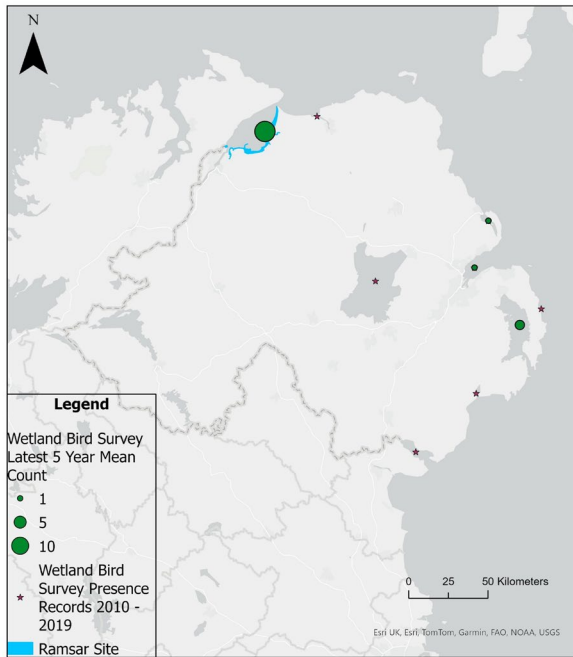
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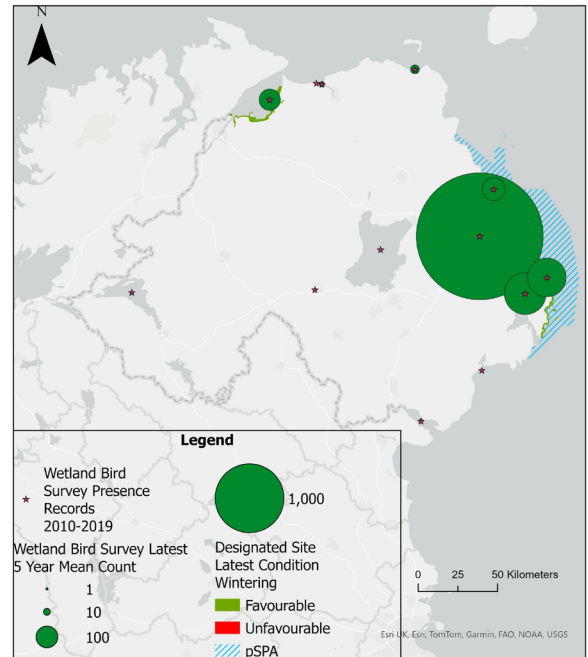
Great Crested Grebe Wetland Bird Survey Records
 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers



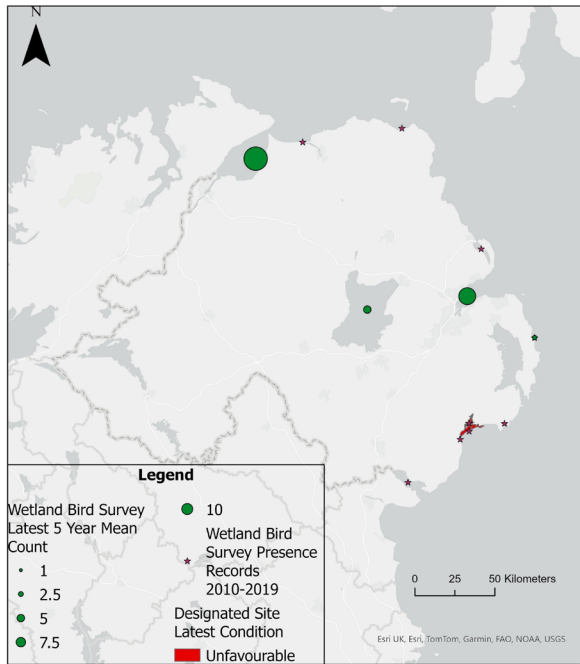
Red Throated Diver Wetland Bird Survey Records
 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers



Slavonian Grebe Wetland Bird Survey Records
 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

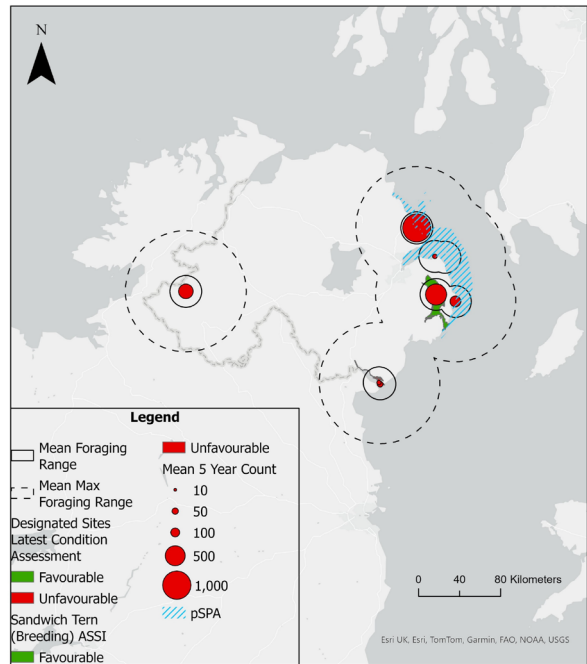


Common Eider Wetland Bird Survey Records
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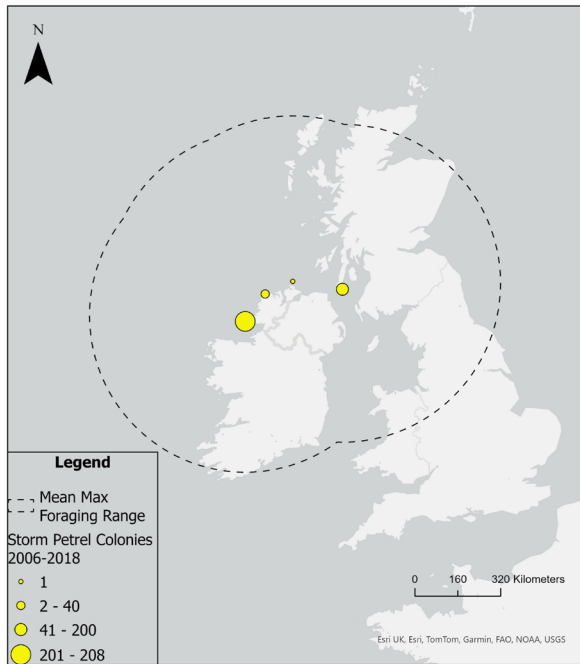
Common Scoter Wetland Bird Survey Records

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers



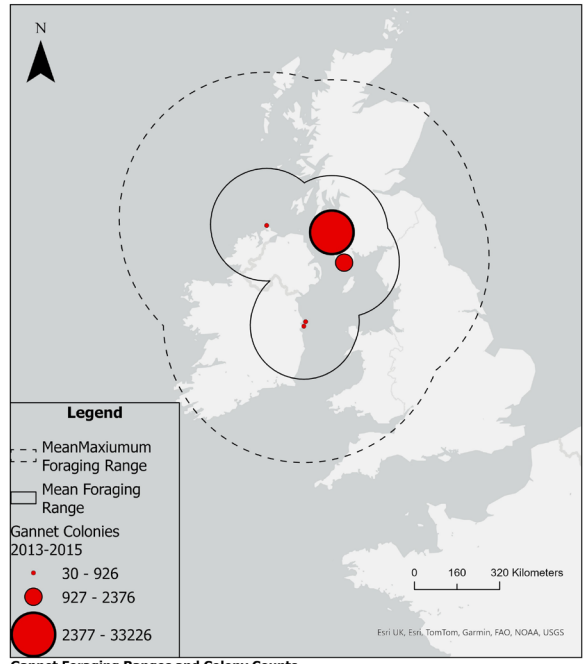
Sandwich Tern Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessment and Mean Counts

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers



European Storm Petrel Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts

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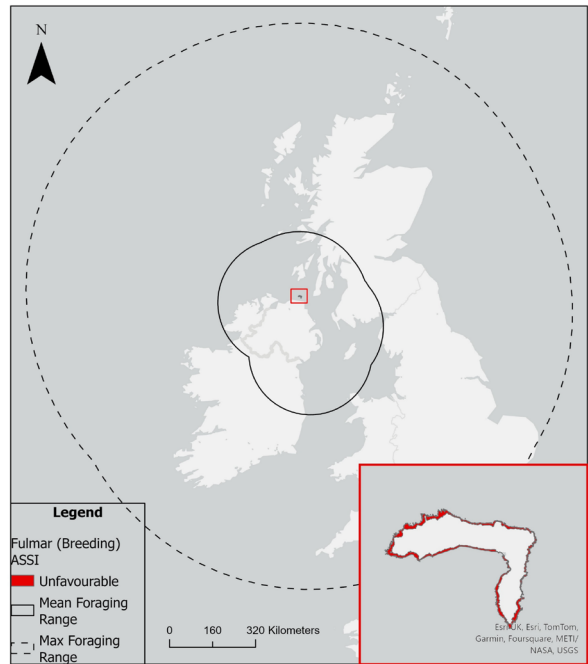
Gannet Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts

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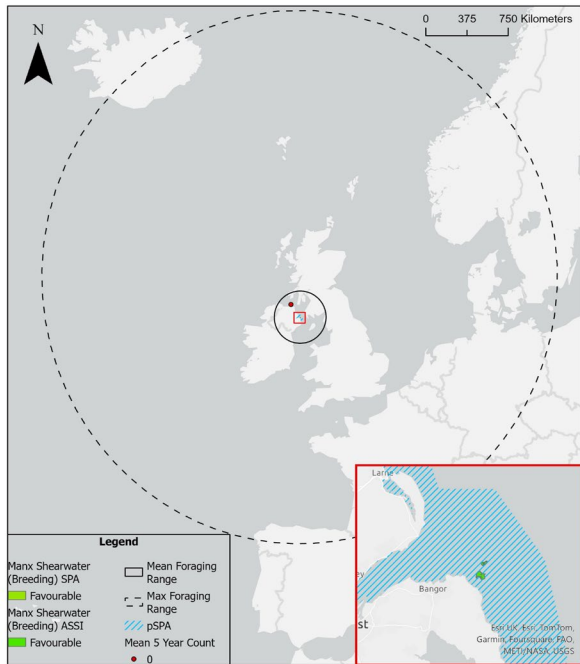
Great Skua Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts

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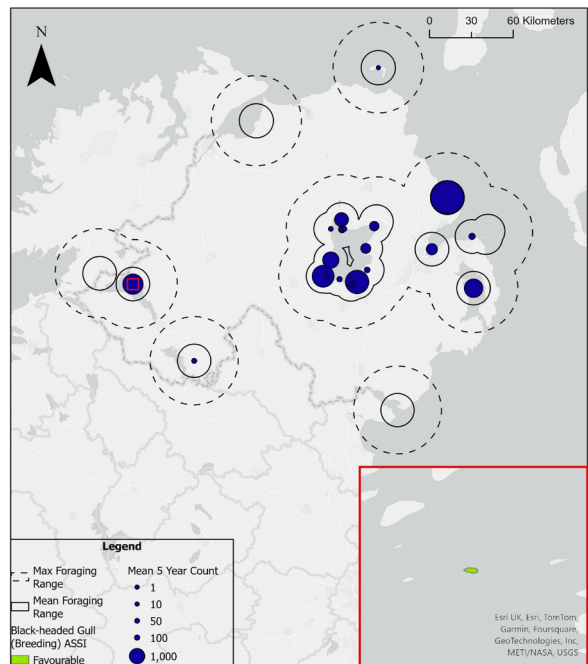
Northern Fulmar Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Colony Counts

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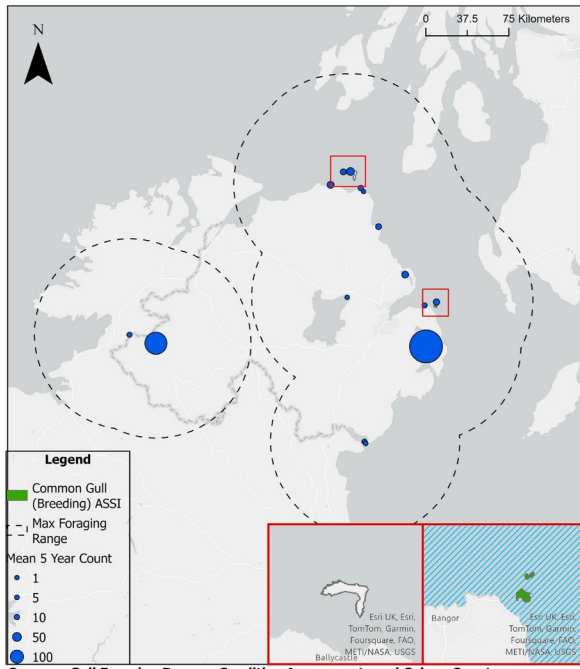
Manx Shearwater Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Colony Counts

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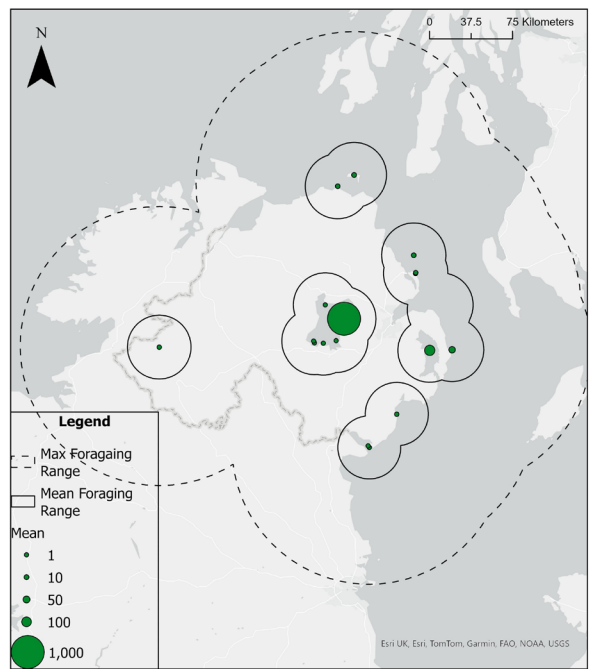


Black-headed Gull Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Colony Counts

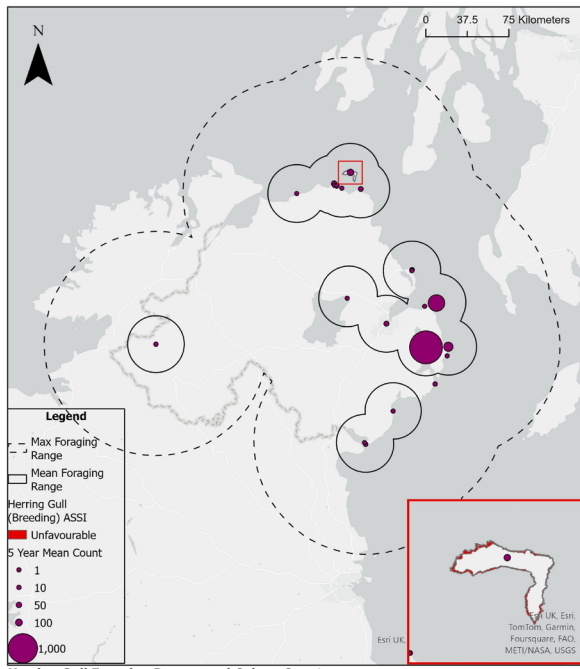
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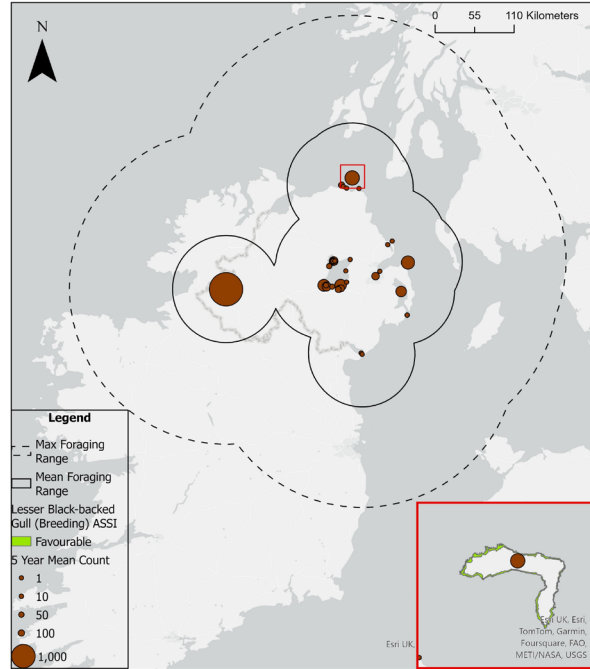
Common Gull Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessments and Colony Counts
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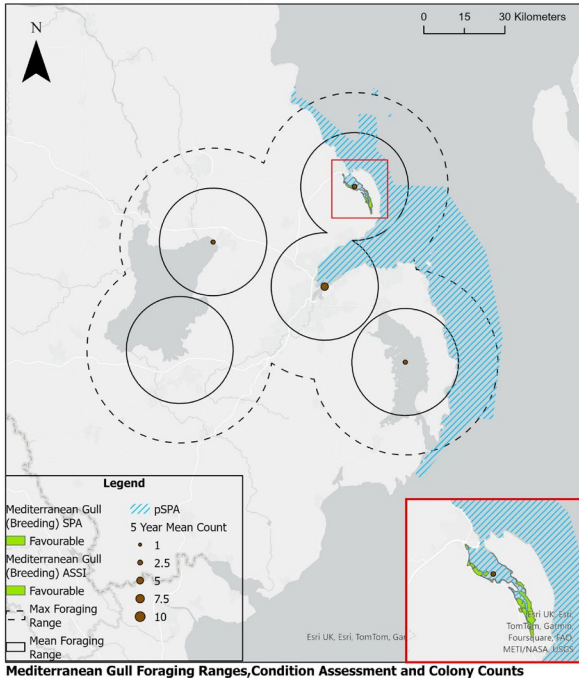
Great Black-backed Gull Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts
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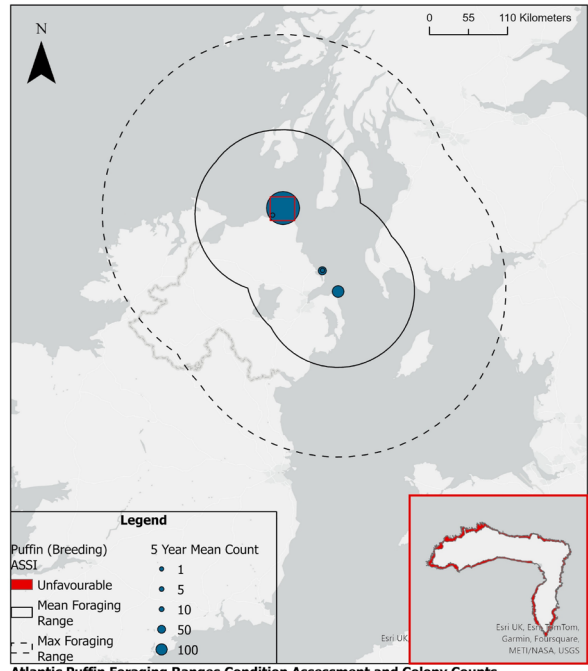
Herring Gull Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts
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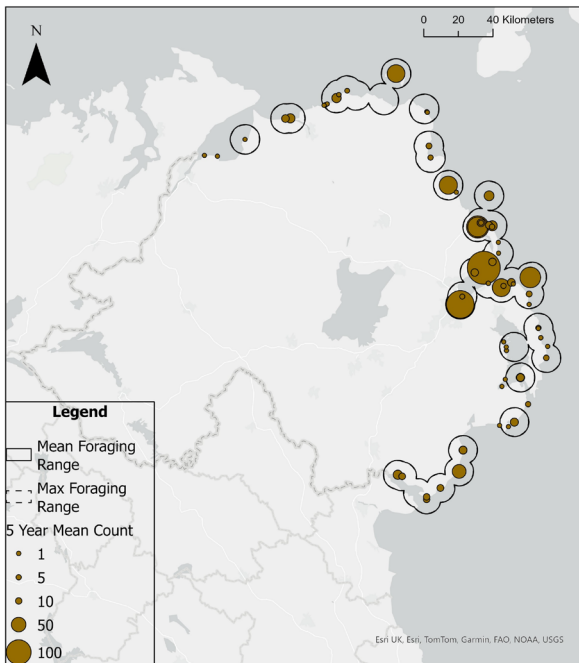
Lesser Black-backed Gull Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts
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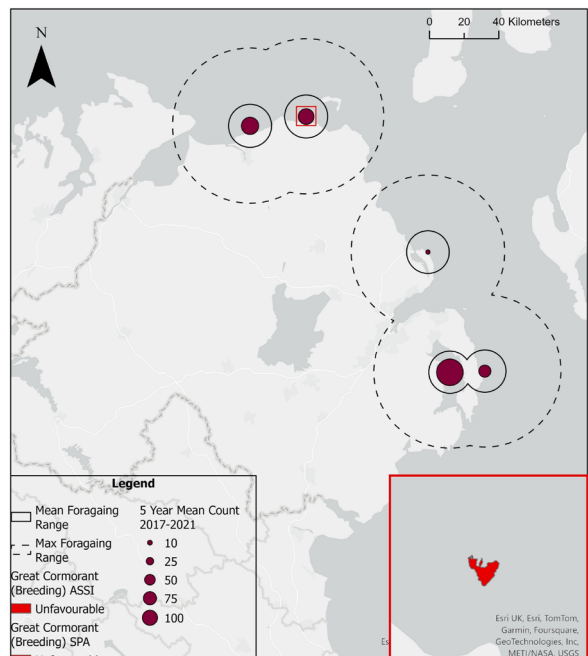
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs | An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthai Tuaithe | Department of Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matters



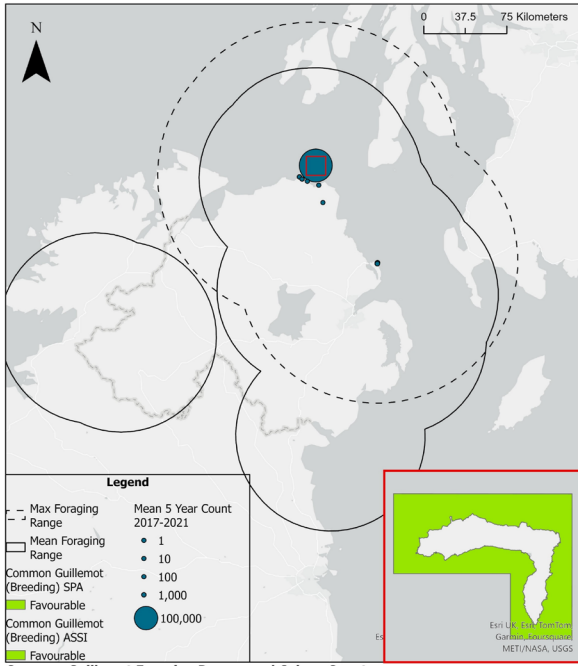
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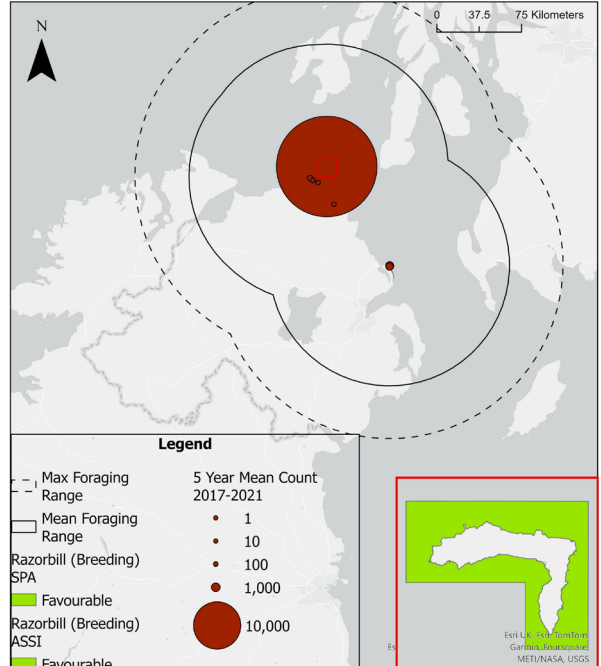


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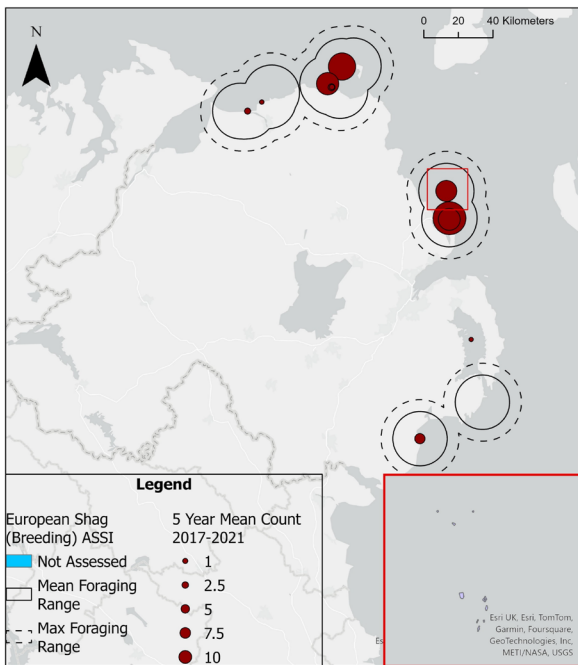
Common Guillemot Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts

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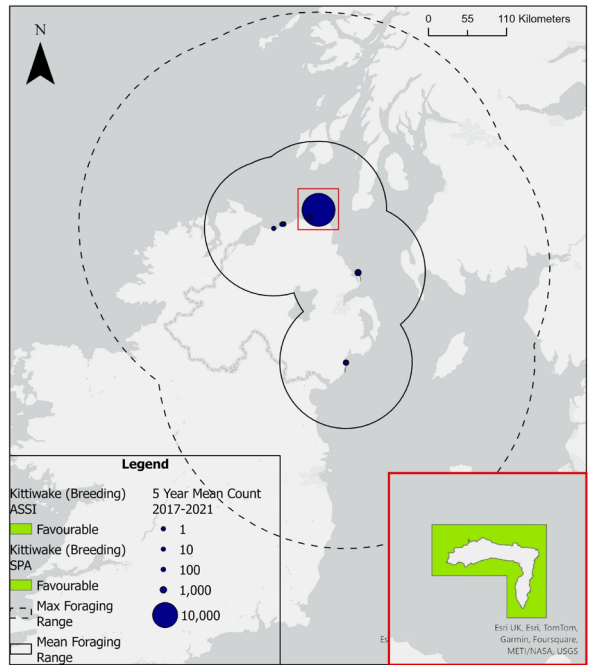
Razorbill Foraging Ranges and Colony Counts

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European Shag Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessment and Colony Counts

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Kittiwake Foraging Ranges, Condition Assessment and Colony Counts

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Annex F: Publication of Responses

Confidentiality

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation may be disclosed on request. The Department can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations as these provide guidance on the legal position of any information given by you in response to this consultation. Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request.

Data Protection

Section 8 (e) of the Data Protection Act 2018 permits processing of personal data when necessary for an activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement. Information provided by respondents to this consultation exercise will be held and used for the purposes of the administration of this current exercise and subsequently disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority (the Department in this case). This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided.
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature.
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses, please contact the Information Commissioner's Office:

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Email: ni@ico.org.uk

Website: www.ico.org.uk

For further information:

Marine Conservation
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

Tel: 028 905 69421

Email: MarineConservation@daera-ni.gov.uk

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/>



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