

**Addition of Bottlenose Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise as new Qualifying Interests
and the addition of Activities Requiring Consent to
Belgica Mound Province Special Area of Conservation 002327**

Ireland designates Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in its inshore and offshore waters to protect marine habitats and species listed on Annex I and Annex II of the 1992 EU Habitats Directive.

The Minister has added Bottlenose Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise as Qualifying Interests to Belgica Mound Province SAC 002327.

The full list of Qualifying Interests, including the newly added Bottlenose Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise, for Belgica Mound Province SAC is as follows:

Natural Habitat Type

In this list the sign [] indicates a priority habitat type as defined in the Directive.*

Natura 2000 Code	Description
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1170	Reefs
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Animal and Plant Species

Natura 2000 Code	Common Name	Scientific Name
1349	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
1351	Harbour Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>

The inclusion of these species as Qualifying Interests has resulted in additional Activities Requiring Consent being applied to the site. The Minister has reason to believe that these activities may cause disturbance of and may impact on the conservation status of these species. Therefore, the Minister has issued a new Direction adding ARCs 06, 31 & 35 to the list of ARCs that currently apply to the site and has directed that these activities cannot be carried out, caused or permitted to be carried out or continued to be carried out in the SAC, unless it is with the consent of the Minister.

It is an offence to contravene any Direction by carrying out any of the activities within the site unless the activity is carried out with the consent of the Minister or another statutory authority (in practice, such consent should be sought initially from the Department's National Parks and Wildlife Service <https://www.npws.ie/contact-us>).

The full list of Activities Requiring Consent that apply to this site, including the newly added ARCs are:

ARC 03	Blasting, drilling, dredging or otherwise removing or disturbing fossils, rock, minerals, mud, sand, gravel or other sediment
ARC 06	Introduction, or re-introduction, of plants or animals not found in the area. [Consent is not required for the planting of crops on established reseeded grassland or cultivated land.]

- ARC 08 Undertaking scientific research involving the collection and removal of biological material
- ARC 31 Developing or consenting to the development or operation of commercial recreational/visitor facilities or organised recreational activities
- ARC 35 Undertaking active acoustic surveys in the marine environment

20th March 2024

