

# National Parks and Wildlife Service

## *Conservation Objectives Series*

### West Connacht Coast SAC 002998



**NPWS**

An tSeirbhís Páirceanna  
Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúlra  
National Parks and Wildlife  
Service

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## Introduction

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

A site-specific conservation objective aims to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at that site.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

### Notes/Guidelines:

1. The targets given in these conservation objectives are based on best available information at the time of writing. As more information becomes available, targets for attributes may change. These will be updated periodically, as necessary.
2. An appropriate assessment based on these conservation objectives will remain valid even if the targets are subsequently updated, providing they were the most recent objectives available when the assessment was carried out. It is essential that the date and version are included when objectives are cited.
3. Assessments cannot consider an attribute in isolation from the others listed for that habitat or species, or for other habitats and species listed for that site. A plan or project with an apparently small impact on one attribute may have a significant impact on another.
4. Please note that the maps included in this document do not necessarily show the entire extent of the habitats and species for which the site is listed. This should be borne in mind when appropriate assessments are being carried out.
5. When using these objectives, it is essential that the relevant backing/supporting documents are consulted, particularly where instructed in the targets or notes for a particular attribute.

## Qualifying Interests

*\* indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive*

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002998	West Connacht Coast SAC
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1349	Common Bottlenose Dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
1351	Harbour Porpoise <i>Phocoena phocoena</i>

Please note that this SAC overlaps with SPA 004004, 004084, 004170 and is adjacent to SAC 000278, 000328, 000330, 000470, 000472, 000484, 000495, 000507, 000532, 001228, 001309, 001311, 001501, 001529, 001932, 002031, 002074, 002243, 002265 and SPA 004037, 004111, 004136, 004144, 004212. See map 2. The conservation objectives for this site should be used in conjunction with those for the overlapping and adjacent sites as appropriate. **IMPORTANT:** This 'Version 2' document includes 1 additional QI (1351). The conservation objectives for pre-existing QIs have generally not been updated.



## Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications

*Supporting documents, NPWS reports and publications are available for download from: [www.npws.ie/Publications](http://www.npws.ie/Publications)*

### NPWS Documents

<b>Year :</b>	2015
<b>Title :</b>	West Connacht Coast SAC (site code: 2998) Conservation objectives supporting document-marine species V1
<b>Author :</b>	NPWS
<b>Series :</b>	Conservation objectives supporting document
<b>Year :</b>	2024
<b>Title :</b>	West Connacht Coast SAC (site code 002998) Conservation objectives supporting document - Harbour Porpoise V1
<b>Author :</b>	NPWS
<b>Series :</b>	Conservation objectives supporting document

## Spatial data sources

<b>Year :</b>	2005
<b>Title :</b>	OSi Discovery series vector data
<b>GIS Operations :</b>	Low Water Mark (LWM) polyline feature class converted into polygon feature class; clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used For :</b>	1349 (map 3)

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## Conservation Objectives for : West Connacht Coast SAC [002998]

### 1349 Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

To maintain the Favourable conservation condition of Common Bottlenose Dolphin in West Connacht Coast SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Access to suitable habitat	Number of artificial barriers	Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers to site use. See map 3	See marine supporting document for further details
Disturbance	Level of impact	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the Bottlenose Dolphin population at the site	See marine supporting document for further details

## Conservation Objectives for : West Connacht Coast SAC [002998]

### 1351 Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*

**To maintain the Favourable conservation condition of Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) in West Connacht Coast SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Access to suitable habitat	Number of artificial barriers	Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers to site use. See map 1	See the West Connacht Coast SAC conservation objectives supporting document - Harbour Porpoise for further details (NPWS, 2024)
Disturbance	Level of impact	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the Harbour Porpoise community at the site	See the West Connacht Coast SAC conservation objectives supporting document - Harbour Porpoise for further details (NPWS, 2024)







