

# National Parks and Wildlife Service

## *Conservation Objectives Series*

### Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC 003001



**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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003001	Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC
1170	Reefs
1349	Common Bottlenose Dolphin <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>

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Please note that this SAC is adjacent to South-west Porcupine Bank SAC (002329). See map 1a. The conservation objectives for this site should be used in conjunction with those for the adjacent site as appropriate. **IMPORTANT:** This 'Version 2' document includes 1 additional QI (1349). 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>	2010
<b>Title :</b>	Habitat Mapping of Geogenic Reef Offshore Ireland
<b>Author :</b>	Guinan, J.; Leahy, Y.
<b>Series :</b>	Report prepared by the Marine Institute, Galway, Ireland and Geological Survey of Ireland for NPWS
<b>Year :</b>	2022
<b>Title :</b>	Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC (site code: 003001) Conservation objectives supporting document - marine habitats V1
<b>Author :</b>	NPWS
<b>Series :</b>	Conservation objectives supporting document
<b>Year :</b>	2024
<b>Title :</b>	Reef Habitat in Irish offshore waters – A synthesis of current knowledge
<b>Author :</b>	Forde, J., Alcock, L. & Grehan, A.
<b>Series :</b>	Irish Wildlife Manuals No. 152
<b>Year :</b>	2024
<b>Title :</b>	Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC (site code 003001). Conservation objectives supporting document - Bottlenose Dolphin V1
<b>Author :</b>	NPWS
<b>Series :</b>	Conservation objectives supporting document

### Other References

<b>Year :</b>	2002
<b>Title :</b>	Report of the survey in zone 3 of the Irish National Seabed Survey, volume 1: Describing the results and the methods used
<b>Author :</b>	Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)
<b>Series :</b>	GOTECH, Dublin
<b>Year :</b>	2010
<b>Title :</b>	Atlas of the deep-water seabed: Ireland
<b>Author :</b>	Dorschel, B.; Wheeler, A.J.; Monteys, X.; Verbruggen, K.
<b>Series :</b>	Springer, Netherlands
<b>Year :</b>	2013
<b>Title :</b>	Raster grids detailing habitat suitability for <i>Lophelia pertusa</i> reefs in the Irish continental margin
<b>Author :</b>	Rengstorf, A.M.; Yesson, C.; Brown, C.; Grehan, A.J.
<b>Series :</b>	Pangaea, DOI: 10.1594/PANGAEA.810467
<b>Year :</b>	2019
<b>Title :</b>	SEAROVER 2018 Deep Water Reef Habitat & Species Video Analysis Full Report
<b>Author :</b>	La Bianca, G.; Ross, R.; Howell, K.
<b>Series :</b>	Report commissioned by Marine Institute, Rinville, Oranmore, Co. Galway

## Spatial data sources

**Year :** 2010

**Title :** INFOMAR dataset

**GIS Operations :** Bathymetric dataset used to derive spatial footprint of reef features; clipped to SAC boundary. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising

**Used For :** 1170, Marine community types (maps 2, 3)

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**Year :** 2002

**Title :** Irish National Seabed Survey

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**Used For :** 1170, Marine community types (maps 2, 3)

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## Conservation Objectives for : Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC [003001]

### 1170 Reefs

**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Reefs in Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Area of geological features	Hectares	The permanent area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 2	Habitat area estimated as 810ha, with an additional 181km of linear features, based on information from the national seabed mapping programme INFOMAR (Dorschel et al., 2010) and the Irish National Seabed Survey (GSI, 2002). See the Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC conservation objectives supporting document for marine habitats for further details
Distribution	Occurrence	The distribution of reefs is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 3	Based on information from the national seabed mapping programme INFOMAR (Dorschel et al., 2010) and the Irish National Seabed Survey (GSI, 2002). Map 3 shows the mapped geological features, which are used as indicators of the distribution of the reefs habitat. See the marine habitats supporting document for further details
Physical structure: habitat-forming species	Presence and structure	Maintain the structural integrity of the Porcupine Bank Canyon reef community complex, subject to natural processes	Based on information from Guinan and Leahy (2010), Rengstorf et al. (2013), La Bianca et al. (2019) and Forde et al. (2024). See the marine habitats supporting document for further details
Community structure	Biological composition	Conserve the Porcupine Bank Canyon reef community complex in a natural condition, subject to natural processes	Based on information from Guinan and Leahy (2010), Rengstorf et al. (2013), La Bianca et al. (2019) and Forde et al. (2024). See the marine habitats supporting document for further details

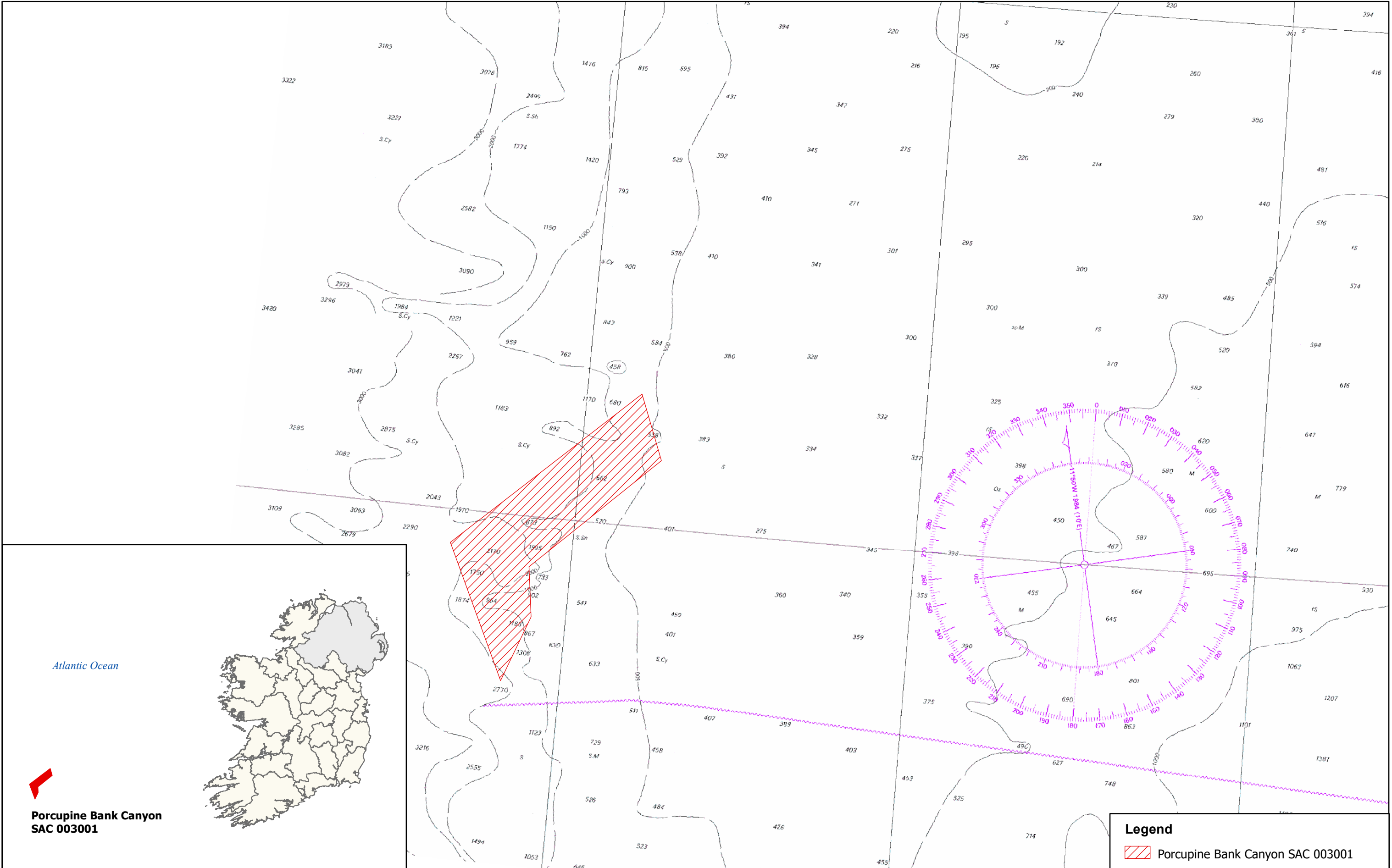
## Conservation Objectives for : Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC [003001]

### 1349 Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

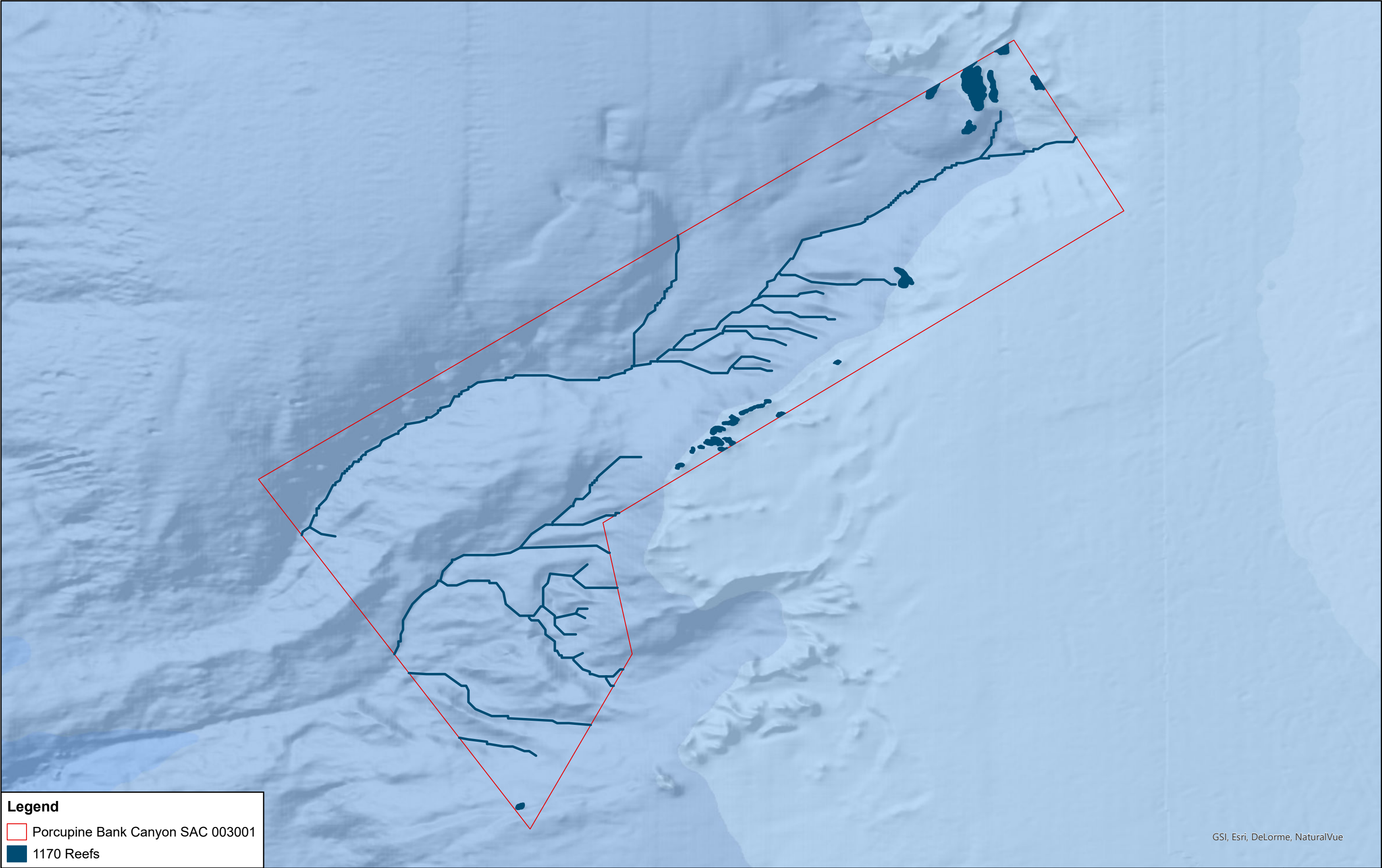
**To maintain the Favourable conservation condition of Bottlenose Dolphin ( *Tursiops truncatus*) in Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

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 Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC conservation objectives supporting document - Bottlenose Dolphin for further details (NPWS, 2024)
Disturbance	Level of impact	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the Bottlenose Dolphin population at the site	See the Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC conservation objectives supporting document - Bottlenose Dolphin for further details (NPWS, 2024)










GSI, Esri, DeLorme, NaturalVue

**Legend**

Porcupine Bank Canyon SAC 003001

1170 Reefs




**An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta**  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage

**MAP 2:  
PORCUPINE BANK CANYON SAC  
CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES  
REEFS**

Map to be read in conjunction with the NPWS Conservation Objectives Document.

**SITE CODE:  
SAC 003001; version 1.0**

0      5      10      15 Kilometers



The mapped boundaries are of an indicative and general nature only. Boundaries of designated areas are subject to revision.  
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Níl sna teorainneacha ar na léarscáileanna ach nod garshuíomhach ginearálta. Féadfar athbhreithnithe a déanamh ar theorainneacha na gceantar comharthaithe. Suirbhéarachta Ordonáis na hÉireann Ceadúnas Uimh OSI-NMA-014. © Suirbhéarachta Ordonáis na hÉireann Rialtas na hÉireann



**Map Version 1  
Date: January 2022**



