



# NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),  
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),  
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and  
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE IE0002172  
SITENAME Blasket Islands SAC

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [1. SITE IDENTIFICATION](#)
- [2. SITE LOCATION](#)
- [3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION](#)
- [4. SITE DESCRIPTION](#)
- [5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS](#)
- [6. SITE MANAGEMENT](#)
- [7. MAP OF THE SITE](#)

## 1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

<b>1.1 Type</b> B	<b>1.2 Site code</b> IE0002172	<a href="#">Back to top</a>
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### 1.3 Site name

Blasket Islands SAC

<b>1.4 First Compilation date</b> 2001-09	<b>1.5 Update date</b> 2020-10
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### 1.6 Respondent:

**Name/Organisation:** National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
**Address:** 90 King Street North, Dublin 7, D07 N7CV, Ireland  
**Email:** datadelivery@chg.gov.ie

<b>Date site proposed as SCI:</b>	2001-09
<b>Date site confirmed as SCI:</b>	No data
<b>Date site designated as SAC:</b>	2019-06
<b>National legal reference of SAC designation:</b>	296/2019

## 2. SITE LOCATION

[Back to top](#)

## 2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

**Longitude**

-10.576032

**Latitude**

52.085565

## 2.2 Area [ha]:

22715.95665

## 2.3 Marine area [%]

96.751

## 2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

## 2.5 Administrative region code and name

**NUTS level 2 code**

**Region Name**

IE02

Southern and Eastern

## 2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Atlantic ( %)

## 3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

### 3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

[Back to top](#)

Annex I Habitat types						Site assessment			
Code	PF	NP	Cover [ha]	Cave [number]	Data quality	A B C D	A B C		
						Representativity	Relative Surface	Conservation	Global
1170			4859.7683		M	A	C	A	B
1230			227.12		M	A	B	A	A
4030			305.6033		M	B	C	B	C
8330			227.12		M	B	C	B	C

- **PF:** for the habitat types that can have a non-priority as well as a priority form (6210, 7130, 9430) enter "X" in the column PF to indicate the priority form.
- **NP:** in case that a habitat type no longer exists in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Cover:** decimal values can be entered
- **Caves:** for habitat types 8310, 8330 (caves) enter the number of caves if estimated surface is not available.
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation)

### 3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive

92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

Species					Population in the site						Site assessment			
G	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	T	Size		Unit	Cat.	D.qual.	A B C D		A B C	
						Min	Max				Pop.	Con.	Iso.	Gl
B	A200	<a href="#">Alca torda</a>			r	450	450	i		G	C	B	C	B
B	A103	<a href="#">Falco peregrinus</a>			p	2	2	p		G	C	B	C	B
B	A204	<a href="#">Fraterecula arctica</a>			r	5000	5000	i		G	A	A	C	A
B	A009	<a href="#">Fulmarus glacialis</a>			r	2200	2200	p		G	B	A	C	A
M	1364	<a href="#">Halichoerus grypus</a>			p	648	833	i		G	A	A	C	A
M	1364	<a href="#">Halichoerus grypus</a>			c	989	989	i		G	A	A	C	A
B	A014	<a href="#">Hydrobates pelagicus</a>			r	40000	40000	p		G	A	A	C	A
B	A182	<a href="#">Larus canus</a>			r	10	10	p		G	C	C	C	C
B	A183	<a href="#">Larus fuscus</a>			r	420	420	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A015	<a href="#">Oceanodroma leucorhoa</a>			r	1	5	p		G	C	B	B	B
B	A017	<a href="#">Phalacrocorax carbo</a>			r	1	1	p		G	D			
M	1351	<a href="#">Phocoena phocoena</a>			p	267	477	i		G	C	B	C	C
B	A013	<a href="#">Puffinus puffinus</a>			r	1	5000	p		M	B	A	C	A
B	A346	<a href="#">Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</a>			p	12	12	p		G	C	A	C	B
B	A188	<a href="#">Rissa tridactyla</a>			r	750	750	p		G	C	B	C	B
B	A194	<a href="#">Sterna paradisaea</a>			r	200	200	p		G	B	B	C	B
B	A199	<a href="#">Uria aalge</a>			r	370	370	i		G	C	B	C	C

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Type:** p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the Standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting (see [reference portal](#))
- **Abundance categories (Cat.):** C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

### 3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

Species					Population in the site			Motivation							
Group	CODE	Scientific Name	S	NP	Size		Unit	Cat.	Species Annex		Other categories				
					Min	Max			C R V P	IV	V	A	B	C	D
I		<a href="#">Alcyonium glomeratum</a>						C							X
I		<a href="#">Axinella dissimilis</a>						C							X
P		<a href="#">Carpomitra costata</a>						P							X
B		<a href="#">Cepphus grylle</a>			40	40	i						X		
I		<a href="#">Crimora papillata</a>						P							X
I		<a href="#">Diazona violacea</a>						C							X
I		<a href="#">Gymnangium montagui</a>						C							X
B		<a href="#">Larus argentatus</a>			130	130	p								X
B		<a href="#">Larus marinus</a>			400	400	p								X
B		<a href="#">Phalacrocorax aristotelis</a>			350	350	p						X		
P		<a href="#">Schizymenia dubyi</a>						R							X

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **CODE:** for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting, (see [reference portal](#))
- **Cat.:** Abundance categories: C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present
- **Motivation categories:** IV, V: Annex Species (Habitats Directive), A: National Red List data; B: Endemics; C: International Conventions; D: other reasons

## 4. SITE DESCRIPTION

[Back to top](#)

### 4.1 General site character

Habitat class	% Cover
N09	1.0
N05	1.0
N01	97.0
N08	1.0

### Other Site Characteristics

The Blasket Islands are situated at the end of the Dingle peninsula in Co. Kerry. The site includes all of the islands in the group as well as a substantial area of the surrounding seas. There are six main islands, plus some smaller islands, islets and sea stacks. The largest island, Great Blasket, is separated from the mainland by the Blasket Sound, a distance of some 2 km. The smallest island, Beginish, occurs close to Great Blasket, while the other islands (Inishtooskert, Inishnabro, Inishvickillane, Tearaght Island) are between about 7 km and 12 km from the mainland. The bedrock is principally Old Red Sandstone, with some outcrops of volcanic and Silurian rocks on Inishvickillane and Beginish. The islands have a very maritime climate, being exposed to the prevailing Atlantic wind and swells. Sea cliffs, mostly precipitous, are the dominant terrestrial habitat and, indeed, much of the vegetation of the islands consists of species typical of cliffs or cliff-tops. Other habitats are dry heath, bracken dominated areas, and grassland used for grazing. There are no permanent habitations, though Great Blasket was inhabited until 1953.

### 4.2 Quality and importance

The site has good examples of exposed infralittoral and circalittoral reef communities. Species richness can be high. The rare red alga, *Schizymenia dubyi*, occurs in the infralittoral zone, and notable sponge, nudibranch, anthozoan and hydroid species also occur in the area. Sea caves occur on several of the islands though the flora and fauna of the caves has not been studied. Vegetated sea cliffs are very well represented on most of the islands and the site is an extreme oceanic outpost for the habitat in a European context. The cliffs are all of good quality with little or no interference from man. Dry heath, the most western example in the country, occurs on several of the islands. The site is one of the two most important breeding sites in the country for *Halichoerus grypus*, with c. 600 animals in a recent survey. The site is of significance for the occurrence of *Phocoena phocoena* with relative high abundances recorded, and presents high quality habitat for this marine mammal. The Blasket Islands have at least 15 species of breeding seabird, with internationally important populations of *Hydrobates pelagicus* and *Puffinus puffinus*. Six other seabird species occur in nationally important numbers, including *Sterna paradisaea*, and in addition it is one of the few known sites in the country where *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* breeds or has bred. *Falco peregrinus* and *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax* also breed. The Blaskets formerly had wintering populations of *Anser flavirostris albifrons* and *Branta leucopsis*.

### 4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
L	A04		i

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
L	A04		i
M	G03		i

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions

i = inside, o = outside, b = both

### 4.5 Documentation

Alexander, S.M.D. (1954). The Birds of the Blasket Islands with special reference to Great Blasket Island. Inishvickillane and Illaunboy, and some notes on the adjacent mainland. *Bird Study* 1: 148-168. Barrington, R.M. (1881). Report on the flora of the Blasket Islands, Co. Kerry. *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Series 2: 3: 368-369*. Berrow, S.D., Mackie, K.L., O'Sullivan, O., Shepperd, K.B., Mellon, C. and Coveney, J.A. (1993). The second International Chough Survey in Ireland, 1992. *Irish Birds* 5: 1-10. Berrow, S.D. and Rogan, E. (1998). Incidental capture of cetaceans in Irish waters. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 26: 22-31. Berrow, S.D., Whooley, P. and Ferriss, S. (2002). Irish Whale and Dolphin Group Cetacean Sighting Review (1991-2001). 34pp. Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. Brazier, H. and Merne, O.J. (1989). Breeding seabirds on the Blasket Islands, Co. Kerry. *Irish Birds* 4: 43-64. Cramp, S., Bourne, W.R.P. and Saunders, D. (1974). *The Seabirds of Britain and Ireland*. Collins, London. Evans, P.G.H. (1973). Report on the 1973 Expedition to the Islands of Co. Kerry. Unpublished report. Evans, P.G.H. and Lovegrove, R.R. (1974). The birds of the south-west Irish islands. *Irish Bird Report* 1973: 33-64. Evans, P.G.H. and Bourne, W.R.P. (1979). Auks on Inishtearaght, 1968-1973, and the occurrence of disease in terns. *Irish Birds* 1: 239-242. Fox, A.D., Norriss,

D.W., Stroud, D.A. and Wilson, H.J. (1994). Greenland white-fronted Geese in Ireland and Britain 1982/83, 1993/94. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study research report no. 8. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study, Wales and National Parks & Wildlife Service, Dublin. Goodbody, I. (1955). The breeding of Leach's Petrels on Inishtearaght in 1901. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 11:346-347. Hamilton, A.C. and Holligan, P.M. (1966). The Flora of the Blasket Islands. Unpublished report. Hunt, J., Derwin, J., Coveney, J. and Newton, S. (2000). Republic of Ireland. Pp. 365-416 in Heath, M.F. and Evans, M.I. (eds.). *Important Bird Areas in Europe: Priority Sites for Conservation 1: Northern Europe*, Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8). Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (2002). IWDG Cetacean Sighting Scheme : Harbour Porpoise. Contract report to Dúchas. Unpublished. Kiely, O. and Myers, A.A. (1998). 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An appreciation of Michael Long's contribution to our knowledge of the marine zoology of Co. Kerry. *Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 19: 177-178. Parkin, J. (1974). Silurian rocks of Inishvickillane, Blasket Islands, Co. Kerry. *Scientific Proceedings of the Royal Dublin Society* A5: 277-291. Praeger, R.L. (1912). Notes on the flora of the Blaskets. *Irish Naturalist*, 21: 157-163. Praeger, R.L. (1934). *The Botanist in Ireland*. Hodges, Figgis and Co. Dublin. Preston, C.D., Pearman, D.A. and Dines, T.D. (2002). *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*. University Press, Oxford. Quigley, D.T.G. and Flannery, K. (2002). Leucoptic harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* (L.). *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 27: 170. Sheppard, R. (1993). Ireland's Wetland Wealth. IWC, Dublin. Smyth, M., Berrow, S., Nixon, E. and Rogan, E. (2000). 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Mayo and the Donegal coast during the 2003 breeding season. Report to the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2, Ireland. Coastal & Marine Resources Centre, University College, Cork. 10pp. Cronin, M.A., Duck, C.D. and Ó Cadhla, O. (2007). Aerial surveying of grey seal breeding colonies on the Blasket Islands, Co. Kerry, the Inishkea Group, Co. Mayo and the Donegal coast, Ireland. *J. Nat. Conserv.* 15 (2): 73-83. Kiely, O.R.M. (1998). Population biology of grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus* Fabricius 1791) in western Ireland. PhD. thesis for the National University of Ireland, University College Cork. Ireland. Lyons, D.O. (2004). Summary of National Parks & Wildlife Service surveys for common (harbour) seals (*Phoca vitulina*) and grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*), 1978 to 2003. *Irish Wildlife Manuals* No. 13. National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2, Ireland. 67pp. Ó Cadhla, O., Strong, D., O'Keefe, C., Coleman, M., Cronin, M., Duck, C., Murray, T., Dower, P., Nairn, R., Murphy, P., Smiddy, P., Saich, C., Lyons, D. and Hiby, A.R. (2007). An assessment of the breeding population of grey seals in the Republic of Ireland, 2005. *Irish Wildlife Manuals* No. 34. National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland. 60pp. Ó Cadhla, O. and Strong, D. (2007). Grey seal moult population survey in the Republic of Ireland, 2007. Report to the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland. 22pp. Berrow, S.D., O'Brien, J., O'Connor, I. and McGrath, D. (2007). Abundance Estimate and Acoustic Monitoring of Harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* in the Blasket Islands candidate Special Area of Conservation. Report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. 23pp. Berrow, S.D., Hickey, R., O'Connor, I. and McGrath, D. (2008). Small Cetacean Site Survey Investigations 2008. Report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. 24pp. Berrow, S.D., O'Brien, J., O'Connor, I. and McGrath, D. (2009). Abundance Estimate and Acoustic Monitoring of Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena* (L.)) in the Blasket Islands' candidate Special Area of Conservation. *Biology and Environment: Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 109B, No.1: 35-46. Pollock, C., Reid, J.B., Webb, A. and Tasker, M.L. (1997). The distribution of seabirds and cetaceans in the waters around Ireland. *JNCC Report*, No. 267. Reid, J.B., Evans, P.G.H. and Northridge, S.P. (2003) *Atlas of Cetacean distribution in north-west European waters*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee. 75pp. Rogan, E. and Berrow, S.D. (1996). Review of Harbour porpoises *Phocoena phocoena* L. in Irish waters. Report of the International Whaling Commission 46: 595-605.

## 5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

[Back to top](#)

### 5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
IE02	1.0	IE01	1.0		

### 5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

designated at national or regional level:

Type code	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
IE02	Tearaght Island Nature Reserve	+	1.0
IE01	Tearaght Island Nature Reserve (Foreshore)	+	1.0

## 6. SITE MANAGEMENT

[Back to top](#)

### 6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

- |                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Yes                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | No, but in preparation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No                     |

## 7. MAP OF THE SITES

[Back to top](#)

INSPIRE ID:

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes  No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).

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