SEABIRD CONSERVATION THROUGH SITE-BASED PROTECTION AT SEA: THE FIRST MARINE IBA INVENTORY IN SPAIN

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Seabirds face several serious threats at sea, which have been noticeably overlooked or unattended for long. With the increasing awareness of this gap, several initiatives are on the way to address seabird conservation at sea. Among them, and thanks to the increasing knowledge on seabird distribution patterns at sea, the protection of key areas is receiving increasing attention (Hyrenbach *et al.*, 2000). BirdLife International is now addressing this issue through extending its Important Bird Area (IBA) Programme to the marine environment (BirdLife International 2004). Two EC funded LIFE projects (2004-2009), in Spain (SEO/BirdLife) and Portugal (SPEA), have led this initiative, collecting data (surveys and tracking information) and developing the methodology to end up with their respective national inventories of marine IBAs. Both projects have succeeded on this initiative, and set a reference for future inventories of marine IBAs, with the support of BirdLife International. Here we present the results of the Spanish project, with a comprehensive and detailed marine IBA inventory which is expected to be the reference for the implementation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) at sea within the framework of the Natura 2000 network.

References

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