



Comhshaol, Oidhreachta agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Heritage and Local Government

# Harbour porpoise conservation in the Republic of Ireland

## *An official view*

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Service

## *Actions of NPWS*

- Enact and enforce Legislation
- Report on Current Status
- Support Research and Monitoring

# *1. Legislation*

1.1 National Legislation

1.2 International Legislation

1.3 International Agreements

## *1.1 National Legislation*

## *Wildlife Act 1976 (and amendment 2000)*

- an offence to hunt, injure or wilfully interfere with, or destroy, the breeding or resting place (Section 23)
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) for “special scientific interest for one or more species, communities, habitats, landforms or geological or geo-morphological features, or for its diversity of natural attributes” (Section 16).

# *European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations (SI 94/1997)*

- Sites of Community Importance (Special Areas of Conservation) for harbour porpoise
- Offence for operations detrimental to qualifying interest (s)
- Appropriate assessment of operations
- Strict protection

## 1.2 *International Legislation*

# *COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC*

- Special Areas of Conservation for harbour porpoise (A3)
- Appropriate Assessments of activities (A6)
- Surveillance of species within and outside designated areas (A11)
- Status reporting every six years (A17)
- Research into those species (A18)

# *COUNCIL REGULATION (812/2004)*

- Designed to reduce the amount of by-catch of small cetaceans
- vessels over 12m in length to carry pingers
- to ensure the strict protection of cetaceans

## *1.3 International Agreements*

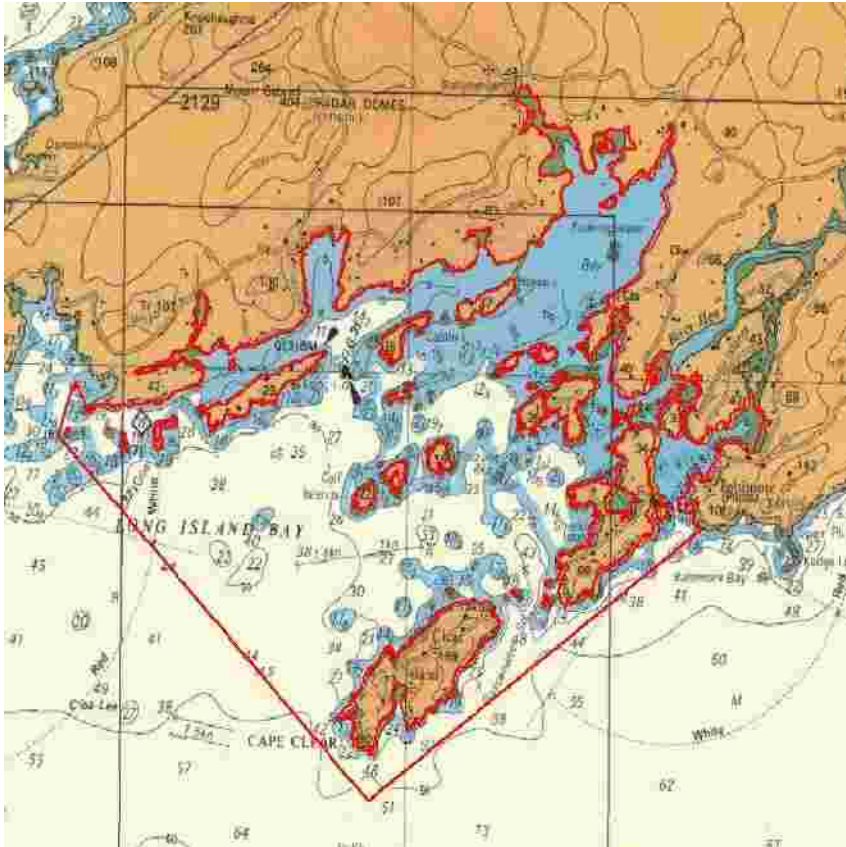
- CITES
- Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn)
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- OSPAR convention

## 2. *Current status*

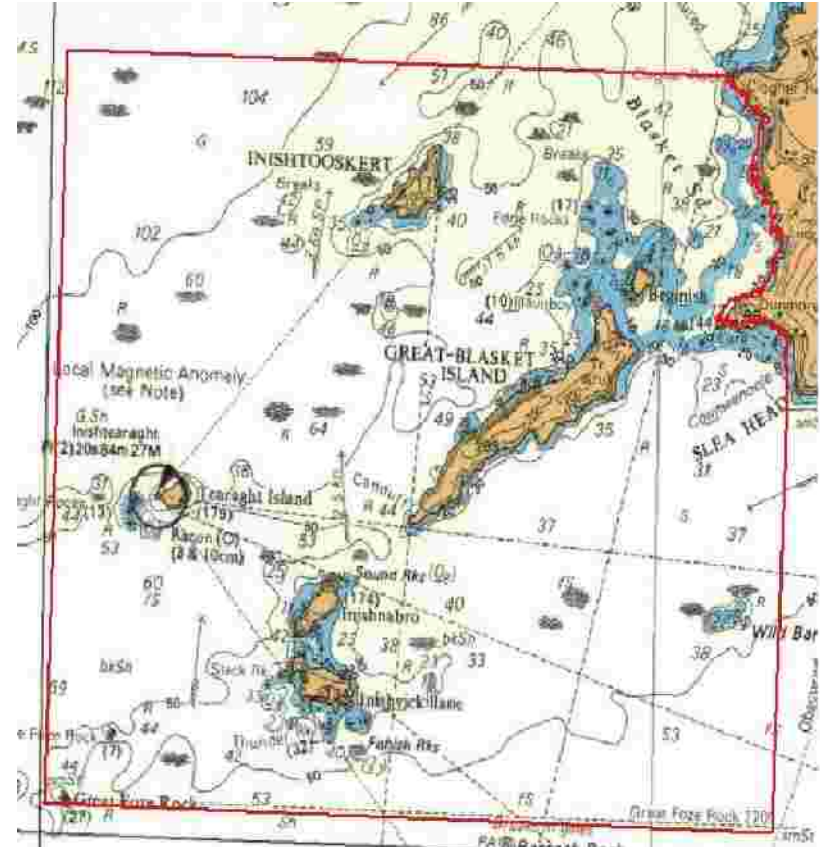
## *EU Guidance for SAC designation*

- Sites should be used for residence, breeding, reproducing or seasonally
- Proportion of the national resource
  - A 100% to 15%
  - B 15% to 2%
  - C 2% to 0%
- Large enough to support population
- Range of habitats used by the species

# Roaringwater Bay & Islands



# Basket Islands



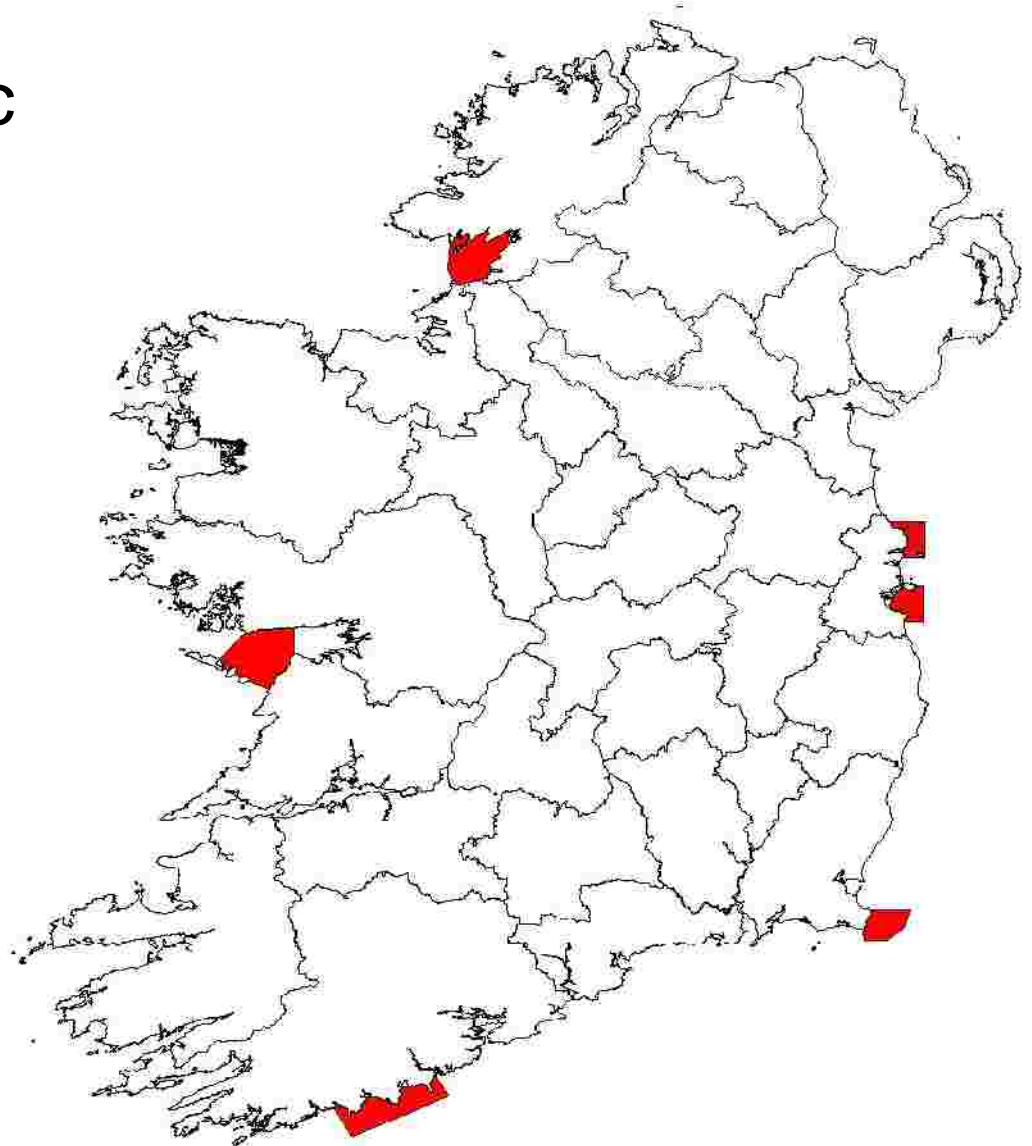
## *Harbour Porpoise reporting 2007*

- Population of 111,560 calculated from SCANS II
- Threats of By-catch, Pollution, Over-fishing, Habitat degradation
- Good Knowledge on Range
- Favourable population (i.e. not decreasing 1% per annum)
- Favourable Habitat
- Good Future Prospects
- Good Conservation Status

### 3. *Monitoring and Research*

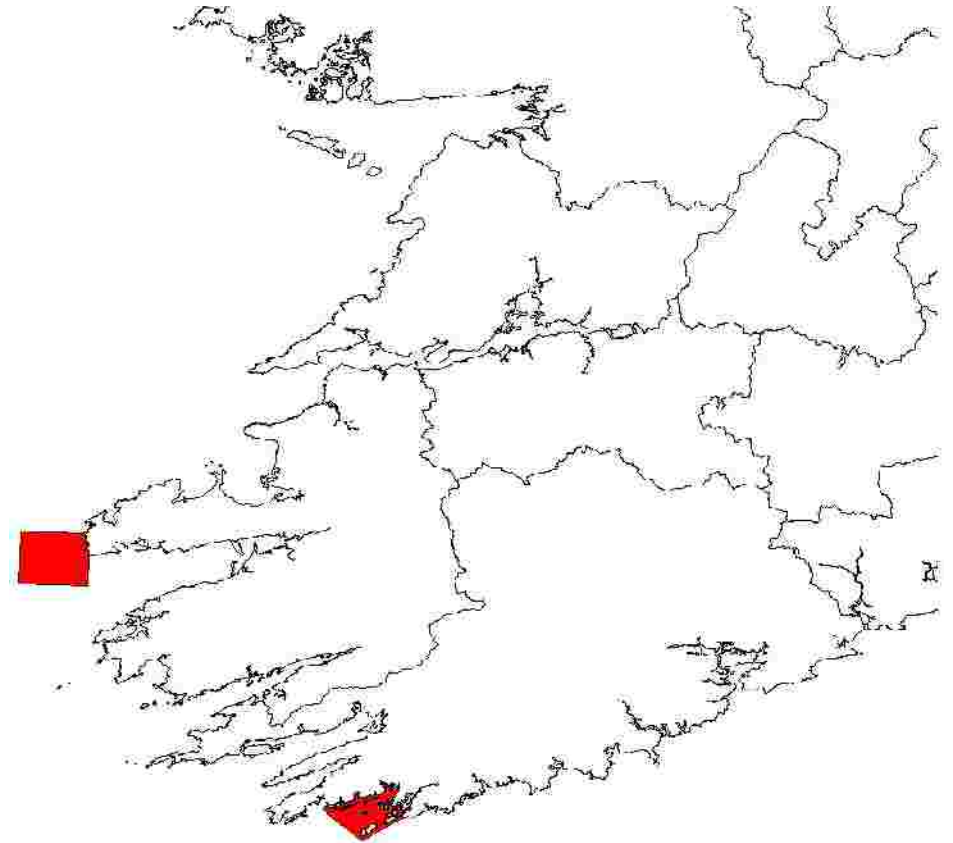
# *2008 Surveillance & Monitoring*

- Transect + Acoustic
  1. Dublin Coast
  2. Dublin Bay
  3. Cork Coast
  4. Outer Galway Bay
- Transect only
  1. Carnsore
  2. Donegal Bay



# *Designated Sites*

- Blasket monitoring undertaken using transects
- Complements 2007 survey with abundance estimate of  $303 \pm 76$  (0.27%)
- Roaringwater Bay using both transects and T-Pods



# *NPWS aided Research*

- PReCast project
- PhD focussed on small cetaceans along the western seaboard
- ISCOPE II
- CODA

## *Near Future Actions*

- 2008 surveys will be used to review designations
- Potential NHAs for harbour porpoise
- Cetacean Action Plan
- Strict protection

# *2013 Reporting- Good Conservation Status?*

- Habitat and ecological data
- Range data
- Population data