



Spatial Ecology Workshop

Title: FROM HOTSPOTS TO PROTECTED AREAS - MOVING FORWARD ON MARINE HABITAT CONSERVATION FOR SEABIRDS

Convenors:

Rob Ronconi	Dalhousie University	rronconi@dal.ca
Gary Langham	Audubon California	glangham@audubon.org
Ben Lascelles	BirdLife International	ben.lascelles@birdlife.org
Jim Reid	Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Jim.Reid@jncc.gov.uk

Abstract:

This workshop session will build on the two previous paper sessions looking at “Methods for identifying hotspots for seabirds at sea” and the “Conversion of seabird hotspots into improved protection/management”. The workshop will look to build on experiences to date in converting hotspots for seabirds into formal designations for special environmental protection and management

The workshop will aim to discuss a small number (<5) of key questions under each topic. The questions will be determined based on a survey of key experts prior to the workshop. Questions will be open to the floor for discussion, and input also provided by a panel of selected experts drawn from the presenters confirmed for the paper sessions, and other relevant conference attendees.

All attendees to the workshop will be encourage to input by filling out a brief form that will allow them to provide answers/thoughts/references to the key questions being discussed. The results from the discussions and the survey form will be compiled to provide an output paper for submission to a relevant journal.

Timetable and Program: 2 hours

Methods for identifying hotspots for seabirds at sea (1 hour)

(Plenary) Introduction to the session – what are some of the major issues/challenges relating to identifying seabird hotspots at sea? (10-15 minutes)

Examples of questions that may be covered include: (c.10 minutes on each question)

- How do we make the most out of existing datasets?
- What are some of the key limitations to using tracking and at-sea survey data for MPAs and how might these be overcome?
- How much data on at-sea distribution of seabirds is needed before protection is warranted?
- Where are the biggest gaps in global data coverage? How might these be filled?

Conversion of seabird hotspots into improved protection/management (1 hour)

(Plenary) Introduction to the session – what are some of the major issues/challenges relating to promoting seabird hotspots for improved protection/management? (10-15 minutes)

Examples of questions that may be covered include: (c.10 minute son each questions)

- How seabird data gaps create legal hurdles for protection? What are some methods to overcome data gaps while maintaining scientific standards?
- Do current policy agreements allow for successful seabird conservation?
- How can issues such as climate change and mobile sites be better accommodated?

Workshop Outcomes: The workshop session will look to build some consensus as to how these questions might be answered. Ultimately the hope is that the workshop will provide an outline of how much information is required before we are “comfortable” with promoting an area for protection, and identify a list of possible methods for this under a variety of legal mechanisms, A publication of do’s and don’ts when attempting to promote at sea sites for protection/management, might be one product to be published as a result of the workshop.

Number of Participants: To be determined – several hundred?

Equipment: Data projector; live Internet connection; printed materials; pens; survey form submission boxes, wireless microphone