

# Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for seabirds

On 3 July 2025, World Seabird Day, BirdWatch Ireland in conjunction with BirdLife International, published 'Important Areas for Ireland's Seabirds and their Contribution to Protected Area Targets', identifying 73 coastal and the marine areas in Ireland important for seabirds (Figure 1, left). Two IBAs were identified on the South Wexford Coast: one west of the Keeragh Islands and one east of the Keeragh Islands (Figure 1, right).

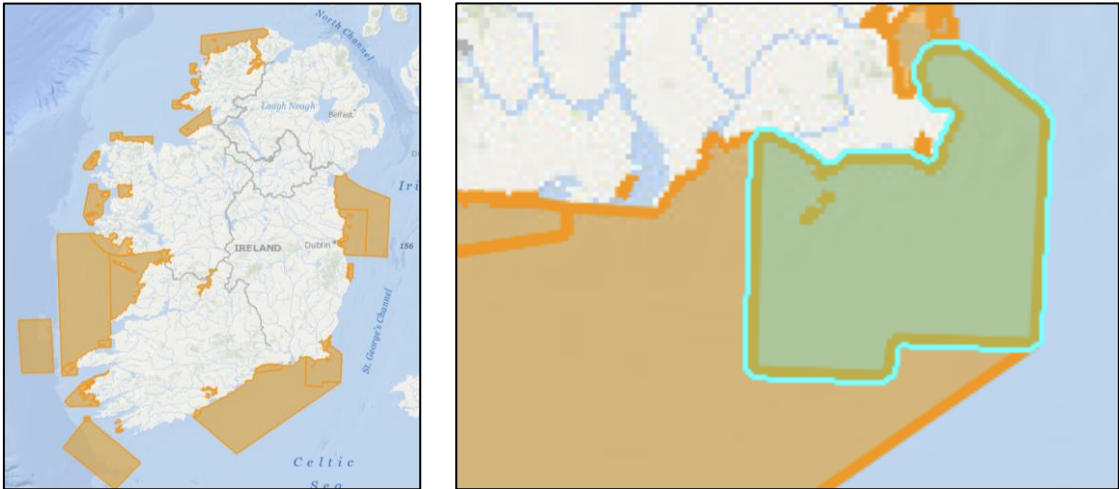


Figure 1. 73 IBAs in Ireland (Left), two on the South Wexford Coast (right).

The IBA west of the Keeragh Islands was named the '**Northeast Celtic Sea IBA**' and it extended westwards from the Keeragh Islands along the south coast of Ireland to Co Cork (Figure 2, left). The IBA east of the Keeragh Islands was named the '**Saltees - Lady's Island Marine Extension**' and while a large part of it is in the Celtic Sea, it wrapped around Carnsore Point to include part of the southern Irish Sea (Figure 2, right).

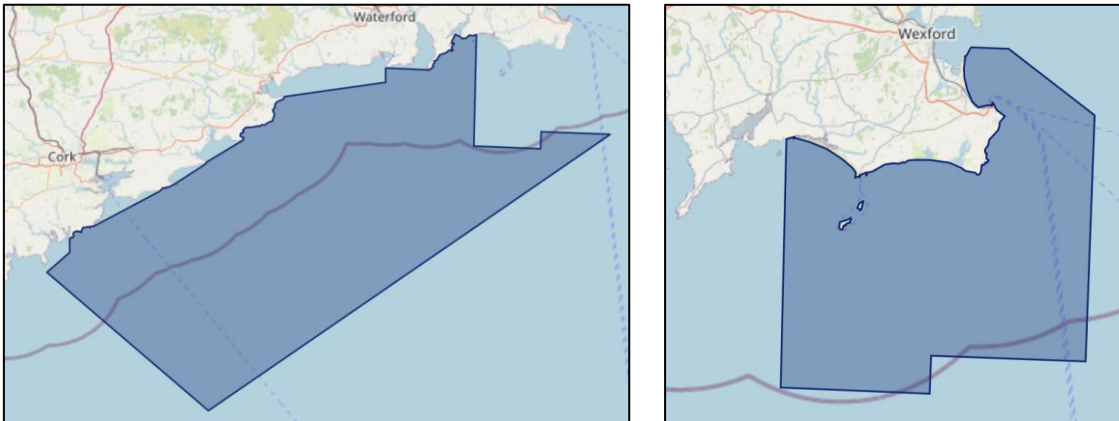


Figure 2. Northeast Celtic Sea IBA (left) and the Saltees - Lady's Island Marine Extension IBA (right).

In summary, all of the South Wexford Coast is an IBA for seabirds extending from Hook Head to Carnsore Point on the mainland and at sea out to and beyond the 12-mile limit. Details regarding important seabird areas for seabirds are available at <https://birdwatchireland.ie/ibas-for-seabirds-in-ireland/> with factsheets on the two IBAs on the South Wexford Coast at <https://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/northeast-celtic-sea> and <https://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/saltees-lady's-island-marine-extension> respectively.

The 'Northeast Celtic Sea IBA' (6 qualifying species) adjoins the Bannow Bay IBA (15 qualifying species) and the 'Saltees - Lady's Island Marine Extension' (15 qualifying species) adjoin The Cull and Killag IBA (11 qualifying species), Tacumshin Lake IBA (21 qualifying species) and Lady's Island Lake IBA (19 qualifying species) (Figure 3).

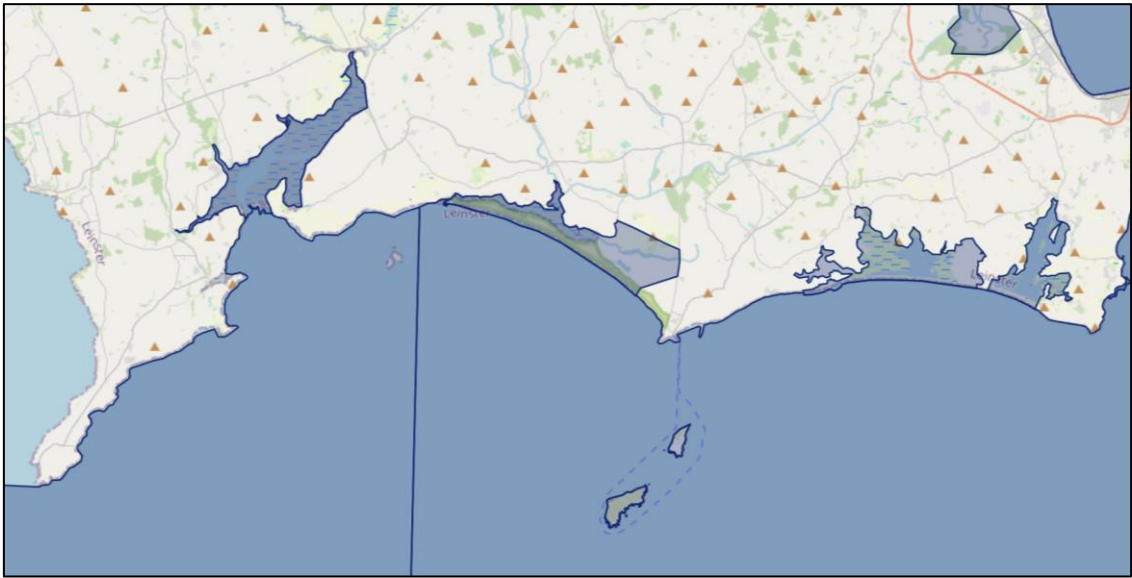


Figure 3. Four existing IBAs on the South Wexford Coast.

With regard to the South Wexford Coast (SWC) marine protected area (MPA) area of interest (AOI), the proposed Seas off Wexford SPA (Figure 4, green fill with 50% transparency) and the proposed two new IBAs (Figure 4, blue fill) overlap but the proposed Seas off Wexford SPA extends further east while the proposed two new IBAs extend further south and west.

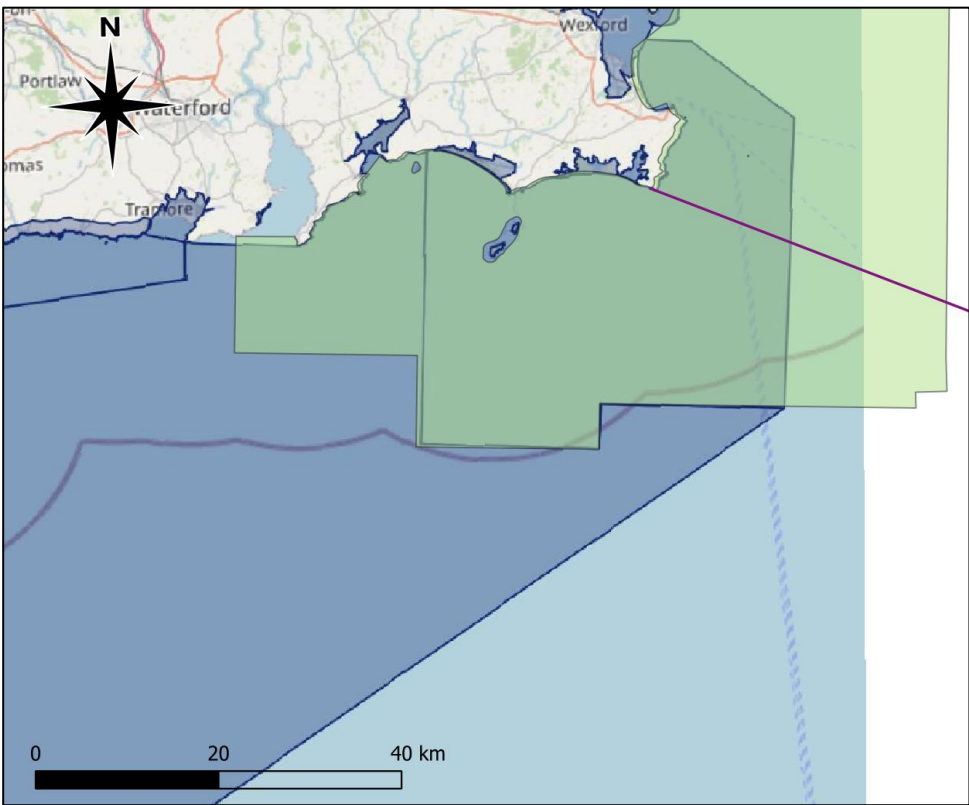


Figure 4. Overlap of two proposed areas.