

Protecting marine biodiversity on International Day of Biological Diversity

Title

Marine Biodiversity is the theme for this year's International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB), celebrated today. The BirdLife International Partnership is working with Governments and conservation organisations to identify where best to locate protected areas to conserve the world's marine biodiversity.

It is widely recognised that protected area coverage for marine areas lags behind those for the world's land. In recent years a set of criteria for describing Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas (EBSAs) in need of protection have been agreed by Governments signed up to the CBD. "EBSAs provide a useful tool for marine conservation planning and with their approval by governments under international agreements they should hopefully lead to new Marine Protected Areas being established," said Ben Lascelles, BirdLife's Global Marine IBA Officer.

BirdLife has been compiling all available seabird data in order to propose lists of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for consideration and have presented these to other experts at a series of regional workshops held over recent months. "Our work is proving to be a vital contribution to describing EBSAs with over 150 IBAs used to describe them in the regional workshops held to date," said Lascelles. "We hope that in the coming years BirdLife Partnership data can be used to help identify more EBSAs" "EBSAs should also be used by governments, and major ocean user groups such as fisheries, shipping and the extraction industry to inform marine spatial planning initiatives and ultimately inform their sustainable management of marine resources."

Further information For more information on the status of the world's seabirds and the efforts being taken by the BirdLife partnership to save them please visit the new *State of the World's Birds* '[Spotlight on Seabirds](#)'. BirdLife, is working on EBSAs through the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (www.gobi.org) BirdLife has been compiling all available seabird data (such as that held at www.seabirdtracking.org) IDB is organised annually by the [Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat \(CBD\)](#)