

The Scottish Seabird Centre & Berwick Bank

Emily Burton, Conservation Manager at the Scottish Seabird Centre



Our Conservation Work

- SOS Puffin
- Island biosecurity
- Species monitoring
- Restoration Forth
- Marine pollution
- Marine policy & advocacy



Why are seabirds struggling?

70% of Scottish seabird species are in decline, facing a range of pressures

- Climate change
- Unsustainable fishing
- Marine pollution
- Invasive species
- Marine industry and developments
- Disease



Climate Crisis & Seabirds

Climate change is the greatest long-term threat to seabirds

- Sea surface temperatures around the UK show a significant warming trend of around 0.3°C per decade over the last 40 years. This has huge impacts ocean ecosystems, including causing changes in the distribution of fish.
- More frequent extreme weather events impacting seabird mortality and breeding success.



Offshore Wind

Offshore wind plays a vital role in decarbonising our electricity system and helping to address climate change

Challenges for seabirds:

- Collision with the turbines
- Displacement from foraging areas within the development site
- Barrier effects (avoidance behaviour in flight to/from foraging and breeding areas)



Offshore Wind – Our Position

Offshore renewables play a vital role in tackling the climate emergency and building a clean, green energy industry in Scotland.

But they must be developed in harmony with nature. We need the right type of technology, at the right scale, and in the right place.



What is Berwick Bank?

Berwick Bank is an offshore wind development proposed off Scotland's East coast. It has the potential to deliver up to 4.1 GW of installed capacity, making it one of the largest offshore developments in the world.

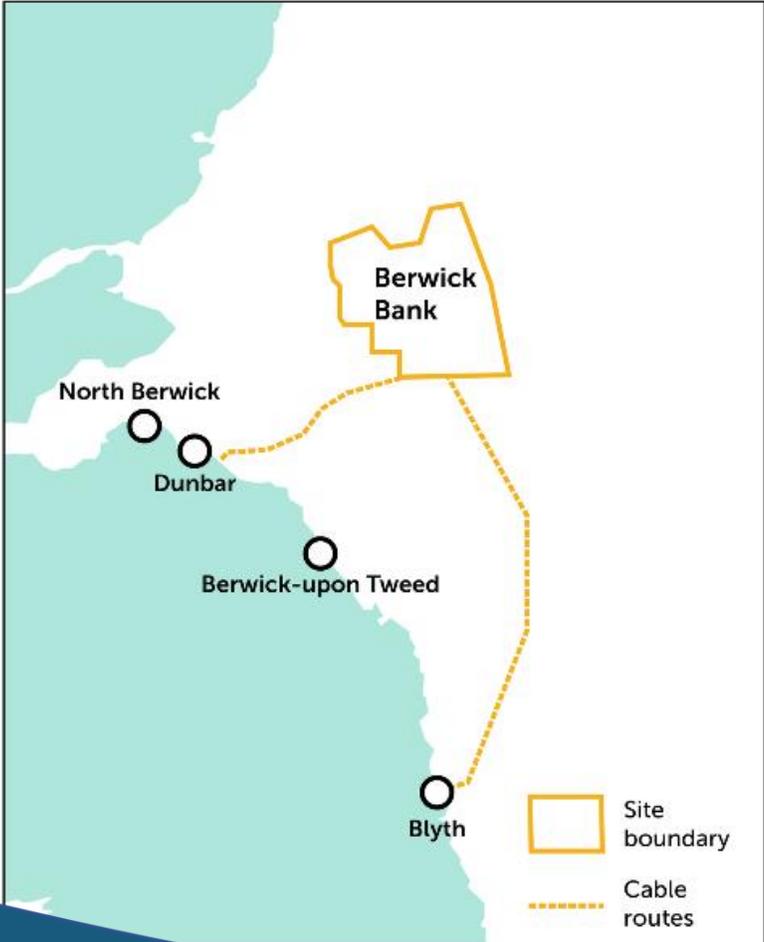
It will lie approximately 47.6 km offshore of the East Lothian coastline and 37.8 km from the coastline at St Abbs.



Maximum Height of each turbine (blade tip): **355m**

North Berwick Law: **187m**

Where is Berwick Bank Planned?



Berwick Bank

What's the problem?

The evidence presented by the developer in the Environmental Impact Assessment shows that the proposed development will have an Adverse Effect On the Integrity (AEIOI) of several seabird species and across several Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Predicted impacts may amount to **4104** seabirds killed each year, and **143,640** seabirds killed during the project's lifespan (35 years).

BIRDS KILLED PER YEAR (UPPER VALUE):

2808
GUILLEMOTS

815
KITTIWAKES

261
GANNETS

154
RAZORBILLS

66 PUFFINS



St Abb's Head Seabirds and Berwick Bank

















NTS cares for 129 heritage properties which include:

- 76,000 ha of some of the wildest and most spectacular countryside in Scotland
 - 46 Munroes
 - 8 National Nature Reserves
 - 45 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- The UK's only natural and cultural World Heritage Site (St Kilda)
 - Over 400 islands
- The nest sites of over 1 million breeding seabirds (more than any other single organisation in the UK)

Threats

Overfishing

Starvation

Pollution

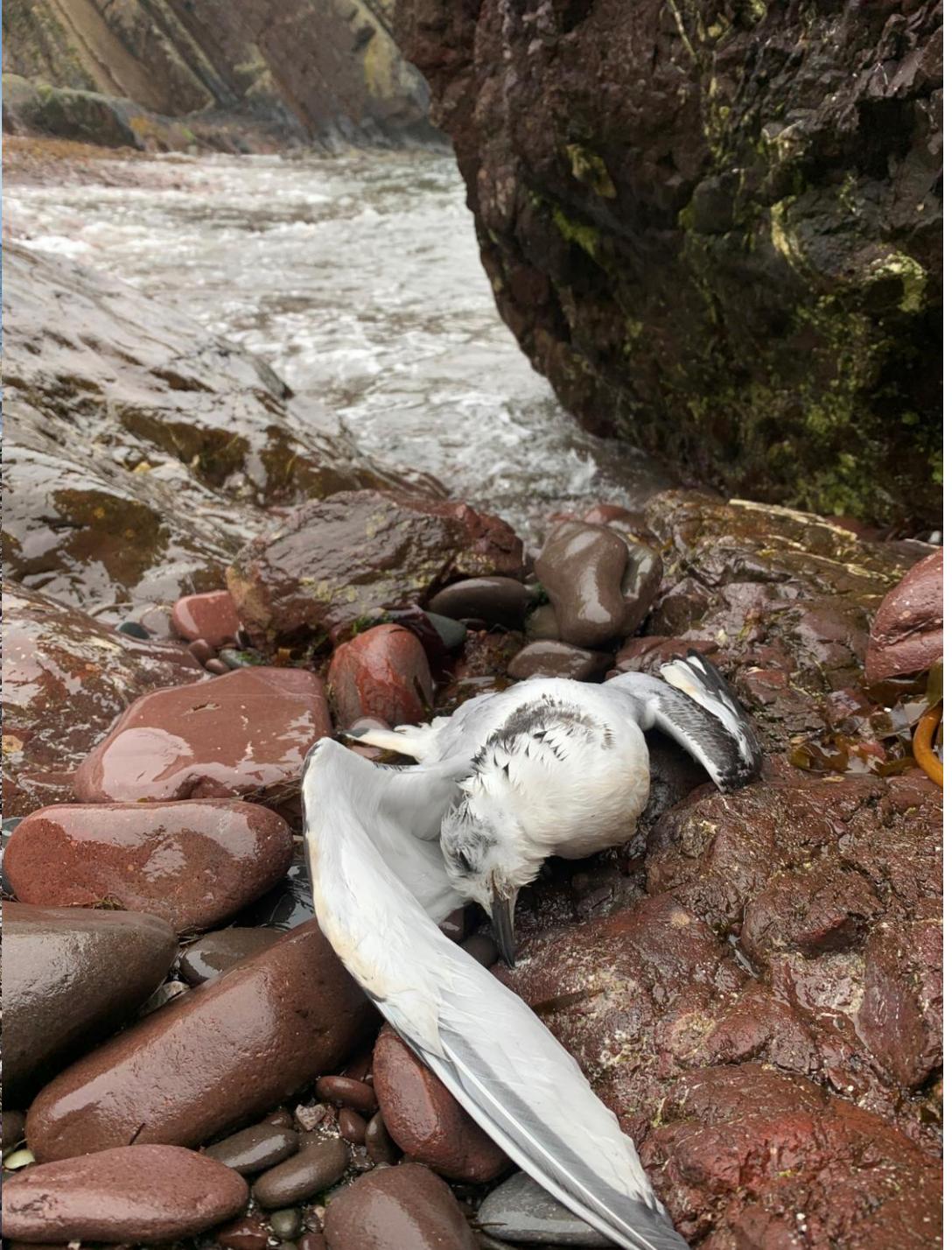
Plastics

Avian flu

By-catch

Predation by invasive predators

Disturbance

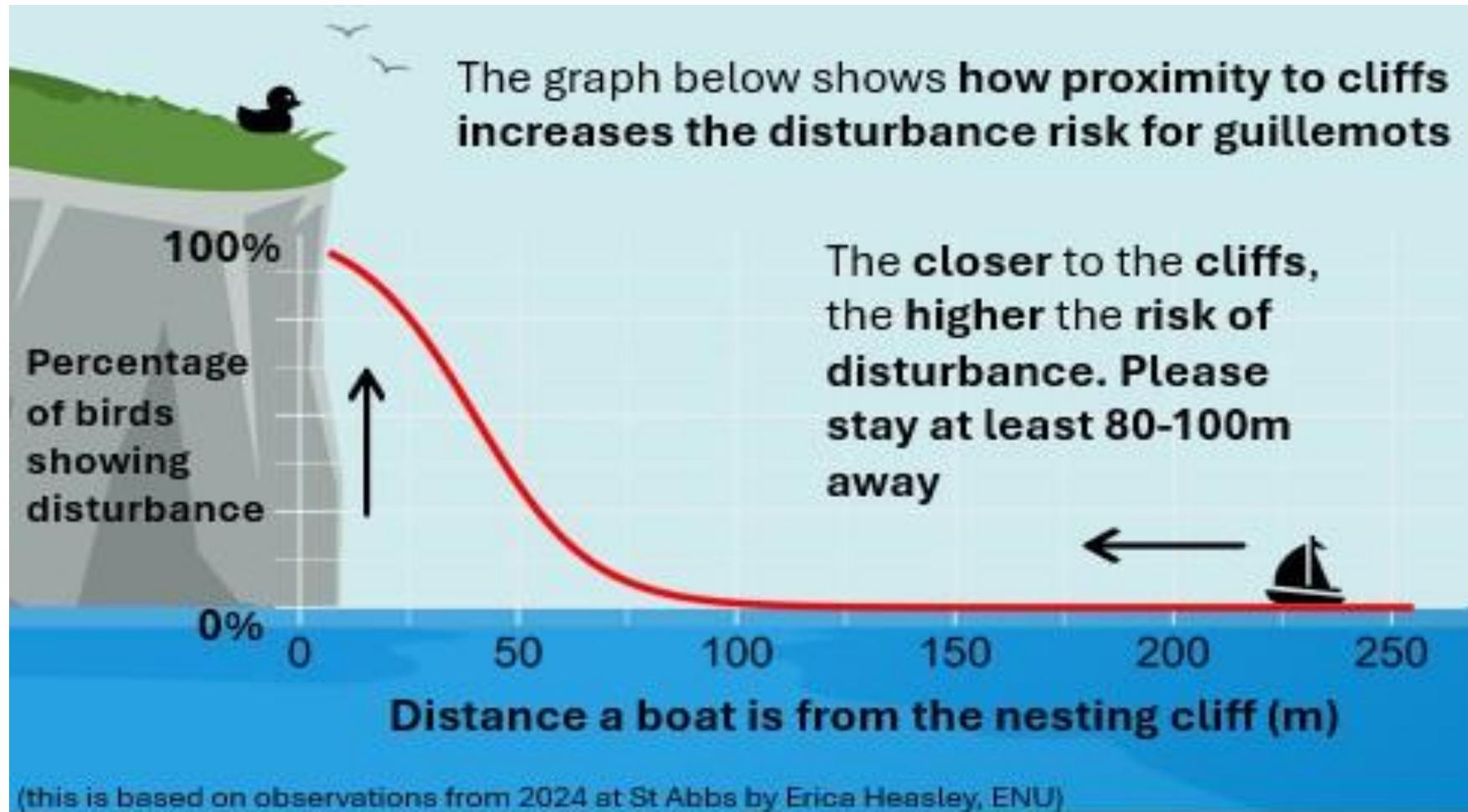


St Abbs disturbance – SEABIRDS SPACE PROGRAMME

- PUFFINS ON THE MOON?!.....
- Working with universities to look at Guillemot disturbance and responsible use of marine environment.
- Reducing disturbance to our breeding Puffins



Seabirds space programme - Disturbance monitoring with Edinburgh Napier

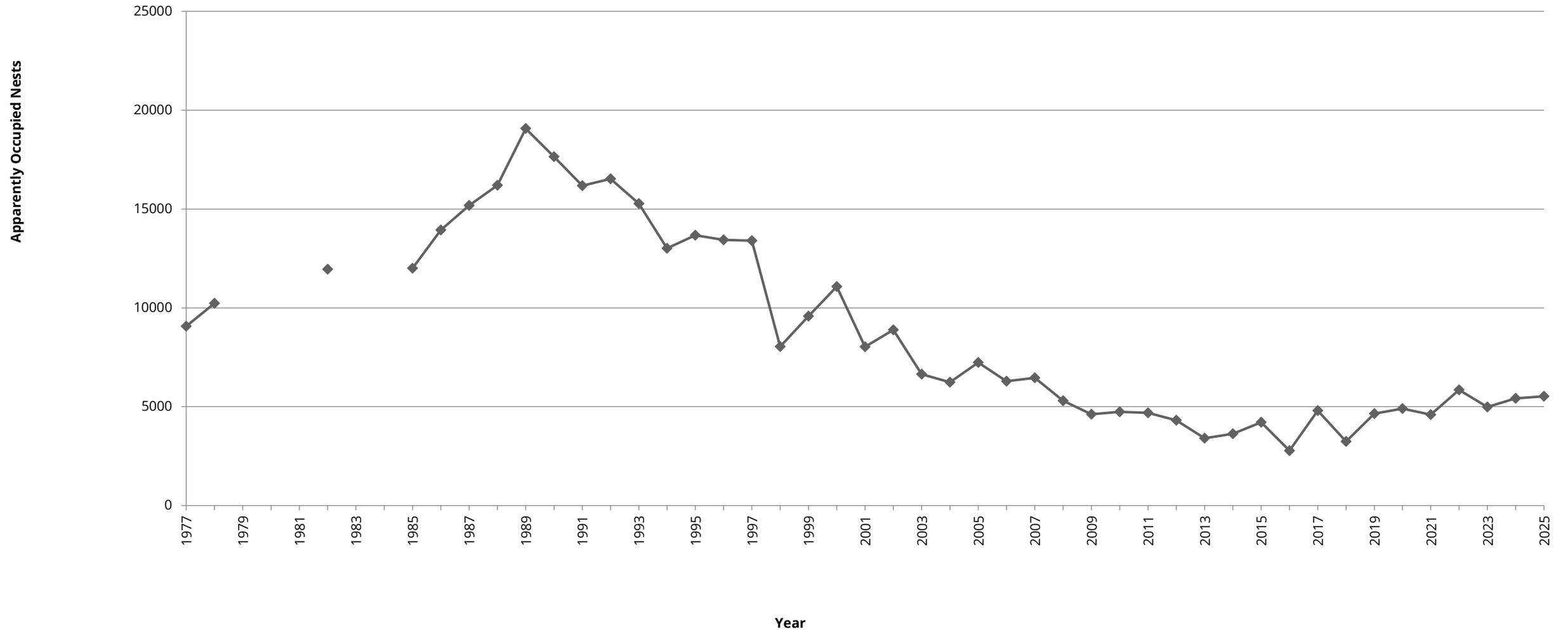


Wind farm collision and displacement

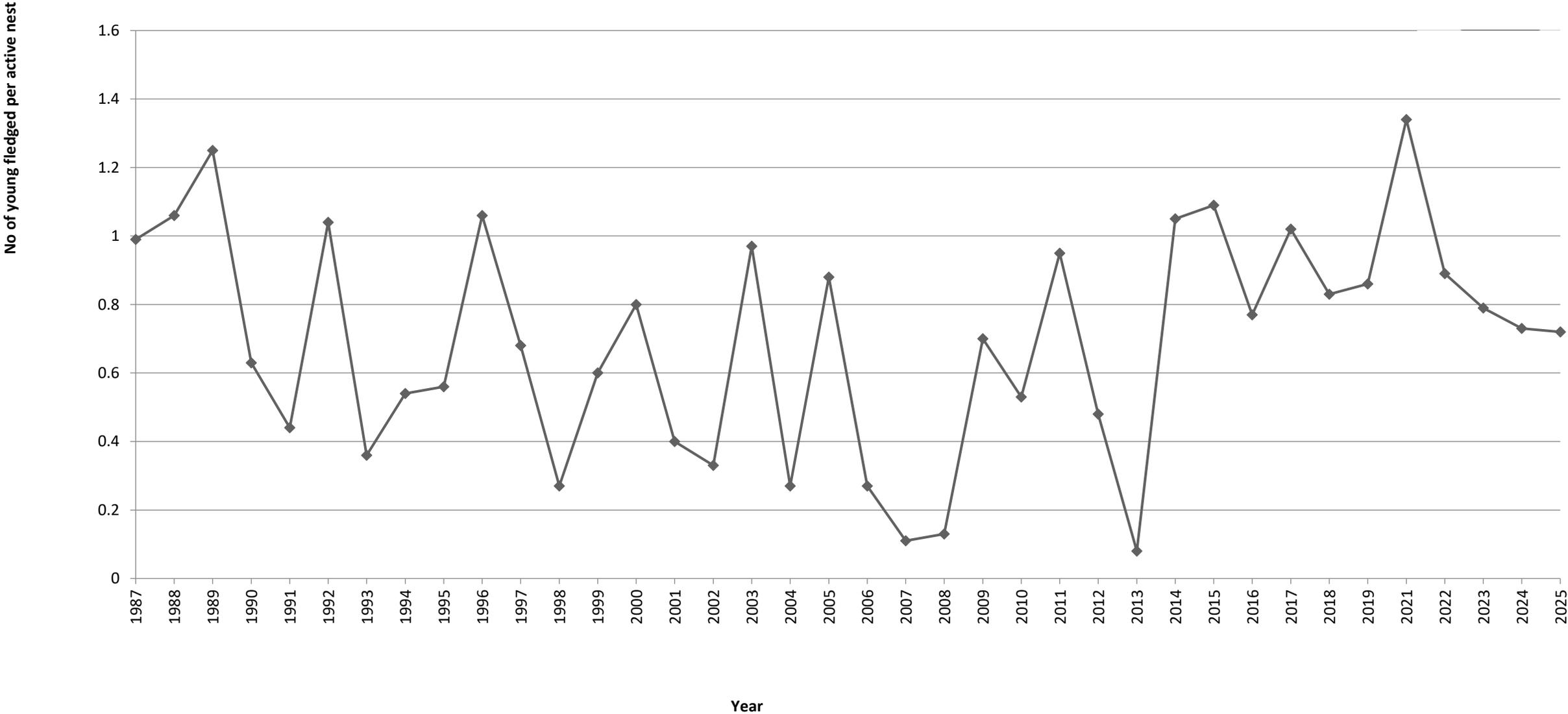
- Berwick bank has the phenomenally high projected impact
- We need energy from offshore wind, just the right ones in the right places!
- We are the voice of our seabirds and you can add your voice to ours!



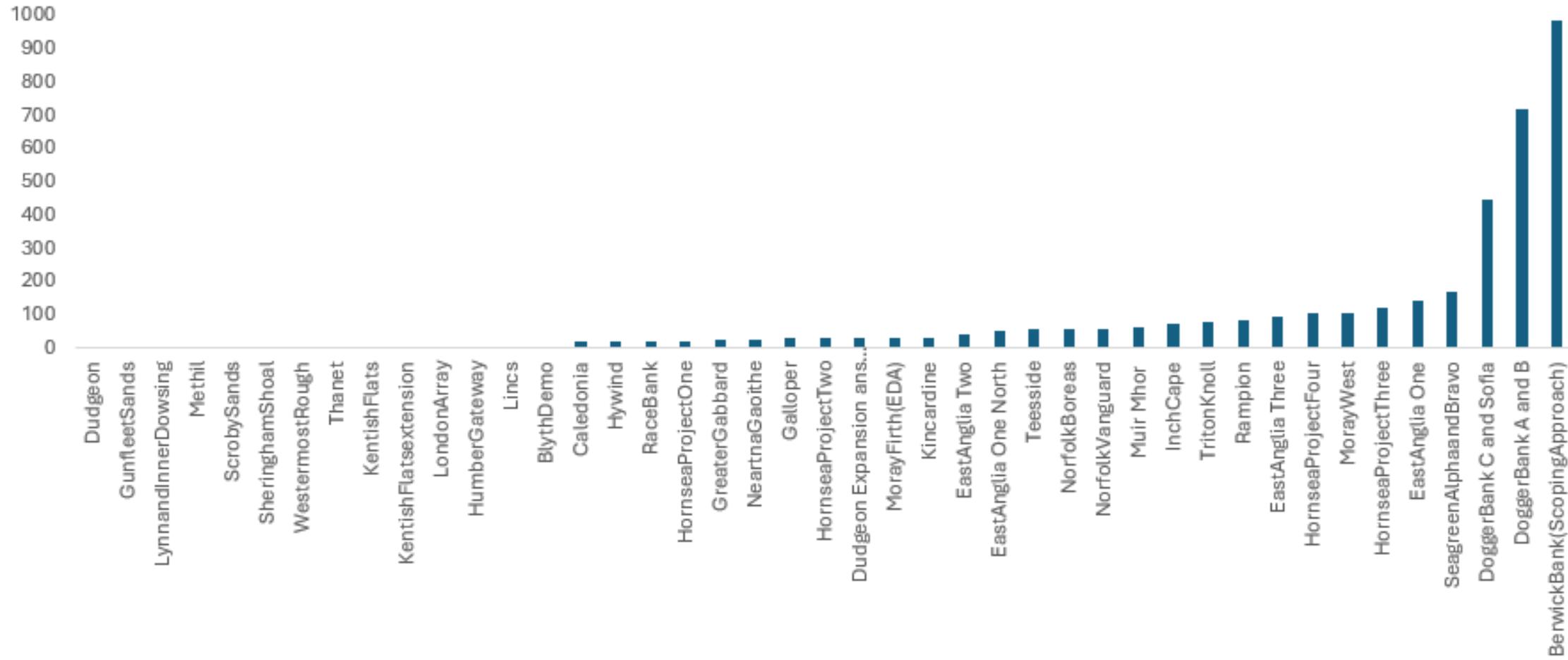
Kittiwake Whole Colony Count



Kittiwake Productivity



Predicted Annual Kittiwake Collisions



SING WITH ME!!!!





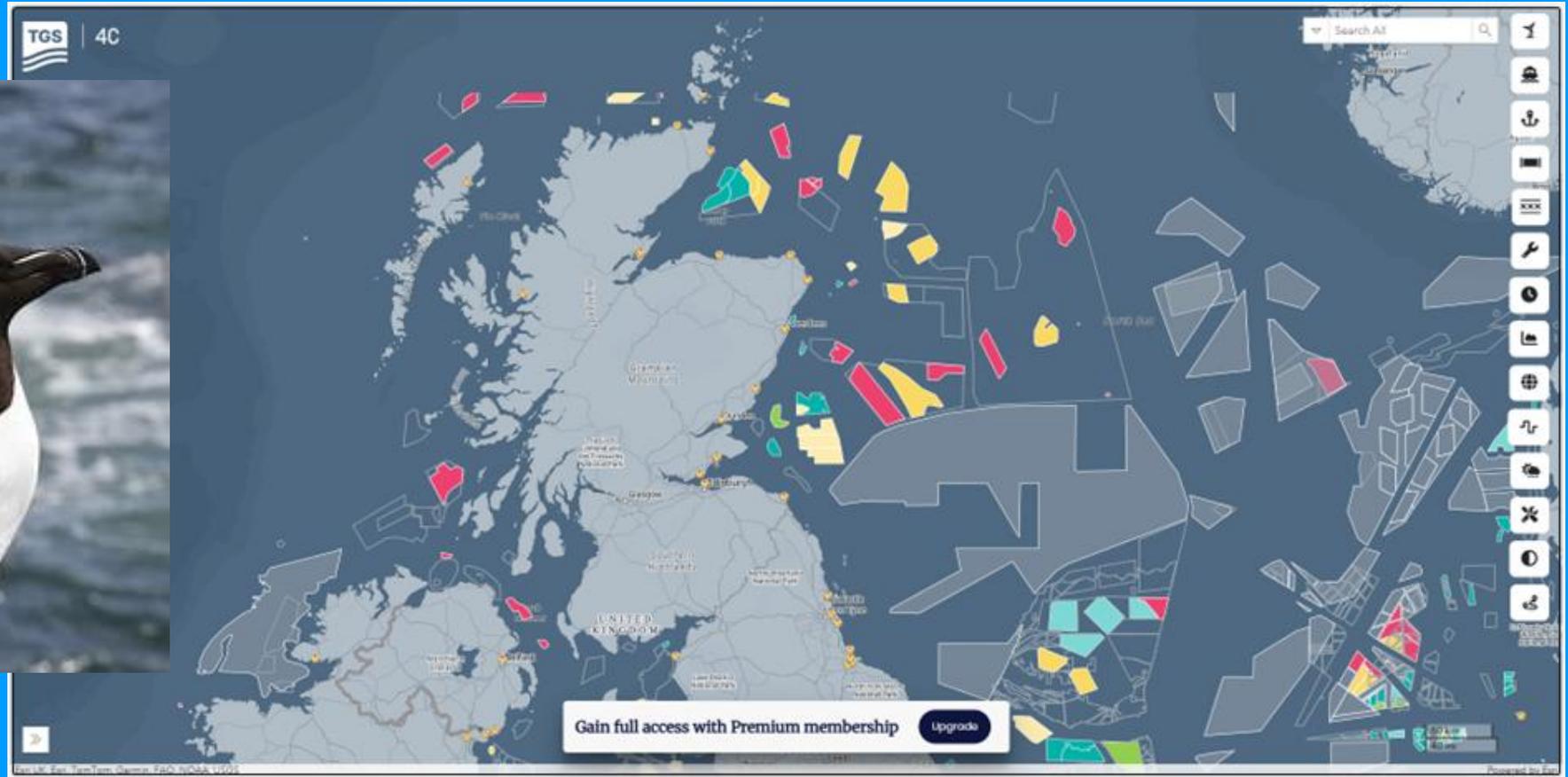
BE LESS PUFFIN, BE MORE GANNET – BLUE SKY THINKING, TAKE ACTION AND NEVER LOSE HOPE!!

Berwick Bank



Helen McLachlan, Head of Marine Policy

It's busy out there.....



Source: www.map.3coffshore.com/offshorewind

That means a lot of casework.....



Casework team dealing with around 25 applications in next 18 months

Increasingly complicated cumulative combination assessments

HRA Derogation-compensation likely required in many cases

Compensation complication- project and strategic level

All leading to significant port infrastructure proposals

Sectoral Offshore Wind Plan and National Marine Plan 2

Berwick Bank Windfarm worst we've ever seen

Manx Shearwater, Storm and Leach's Petrel- under reporting in surveys

Responding to pre-application enquiries and scoping/screening consultations

The Lifecycle Approach



Advocacy and Campaigning



We support offshore wind but in the *right* place, using least impactful design and practices

Taking it to the public



Stop Berwick Bank
save nature and the climate

Berwick Bank, deadly by location

In July 2025, the Scottish Government granted consent for the development of Berwick Bank Offshore Wind Farm. The decision came despite warnings, from RSPB Scotland and many others, of the catastrophic impact the project would have on our seabirds.

The RSPB strongly supports the development of renewable energy to tackle climate change, one of the greatest threats to wildlife. However, it must not be at any cost. The Berwick Bank site is incredibly important for some of our most threatened seabird species. There are many other places around our seas where offshore wind could be developed without such devastating impacts on seabirds.

The developer, SSE Renewables, own predictions are that thousands of Guillemots, Kittiwakes, Gannets, Razorbills and Puffins will be killed over the project's lifetime, putting the conservation of these species at huge risk.



The area includes
the world's second largest
Northern Gannet colony



Scotland's seabirds are
already in crisis
with 70% of species in decline



the development is predicted to
kill 2,808 Guillemots
in its first year alone



70%

of Scotland's seabird species are already in decline

Berwick Bank could catapult some of them towards **national extinction**. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Berwick Bank Wind Farm must be stopped.

Find out how you can speak up for Scotland's seabirds through the link in our bio.

Raising awareness with Parliamentarians



Working collaboratively



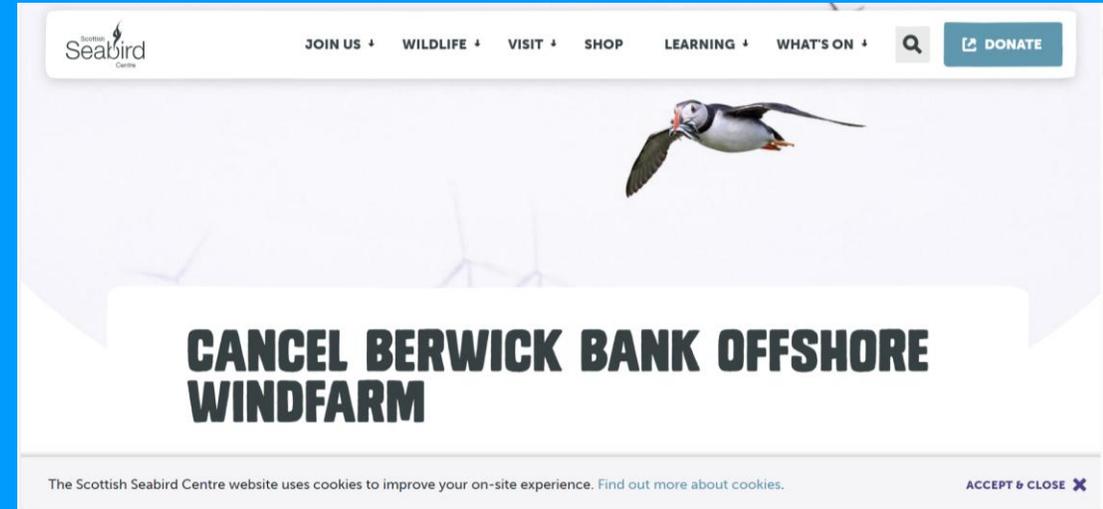
John Swinney MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government, St Andrew's House
Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
(by e-mail)

22nd October 2025

Dear First Minister,

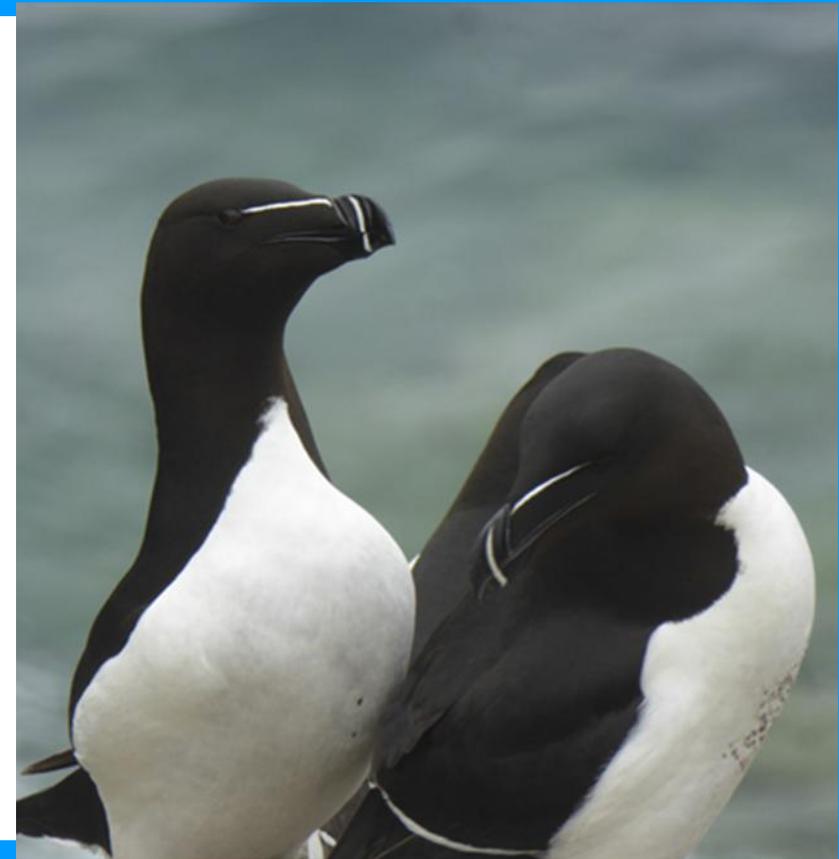
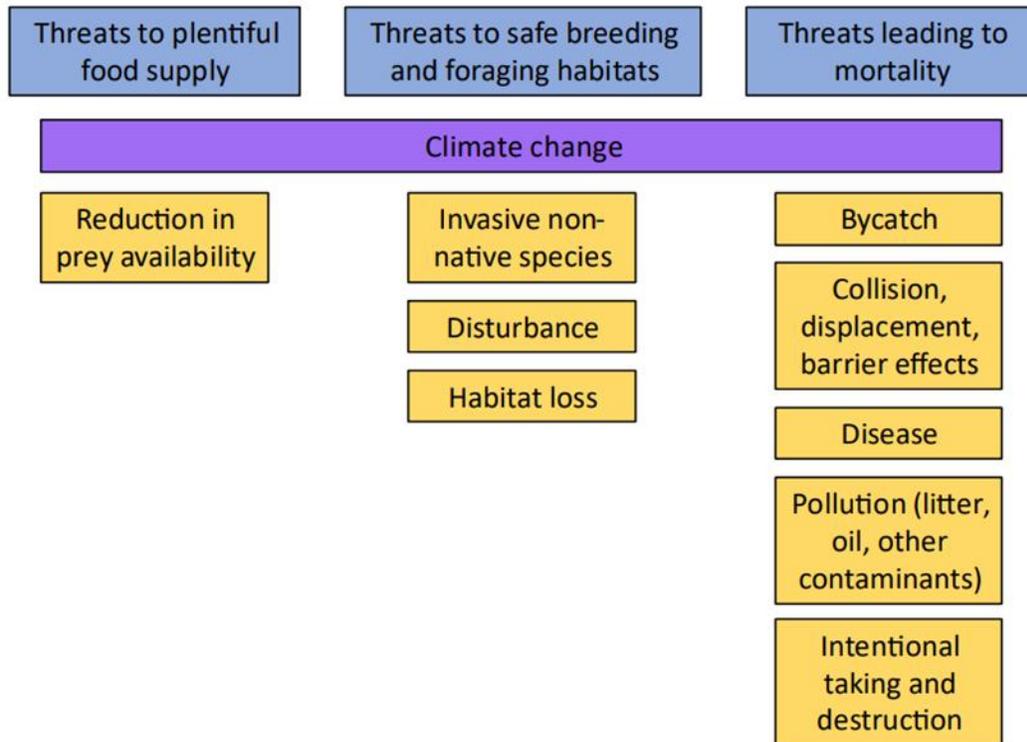
Don't fast track Scotland's seabirds to extinction - Reconsider Berwick Bank

Our organisations, who together represent hundreds of thousands of people across Scotland, write to strongly oppose the approval of Berwick Bank Offshore Windfarm and to urge your government to reverse this damaging decision and protect the future of Scotland's internationally important seabirds.



Holding government to account

Scottish Seabird Conservation Action Plan



“Scotland’s seabird colonies are one of our national treasures, from the Puffins of the Isle of May to the Gannets of Bass Rock. Scotland is internationally important for seabirds and they need our protection now more than ever.”

Anne McCall, Director, RSPB Scotland



Thank you for listening

Helen McLachlan, Head of Marine Policy, RSPB Scotland

Contact: helen.mclachlan@rspb.org.uk

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