

The natural heritage resource values of the South Wexford Coast

Biological assets

1. Great diversity of coastal and seabed habitats.
2. Seventeen EU Annex 1 habitats.
3. Two EU priority habitats.
4. 29% of Ireland's coastal lagoon habitat.
5. Biggest, best, and the best-documented lagoon in Ireland.
6. Highest number of lagoonal specialists in the country.
7. Twelve *Flora (Protection) Order* species of wild plants.
8. Three species of plant found nowhere else in Ireland.
9. One of the highest densities of fish species in Ireland.
10. Biggest spawning and nursery area for Herring on the south coast of Ireland.
11. Important spawning grounds Haddock, Whiting, and Cod.
12. Major seabird migration route.
13. Important seabird nesting and foraging area.
14. Best-documented bird site in Ireland.
15. Internationally important for a nesting colony of the rarest breeding seabird in Europe.
16. Top site in Ireland for breeding Mediterranean Gulls.
17. Forty-two species of wild birds that are EU Species of Conservation Interest (SCIs).
18. Hot spot for Bottlenose Dolphins, Harbour Porpoises, Fin Whales, and Risso's Dolphins.
19. Largest Grey Seal colony in south-east Ireland.

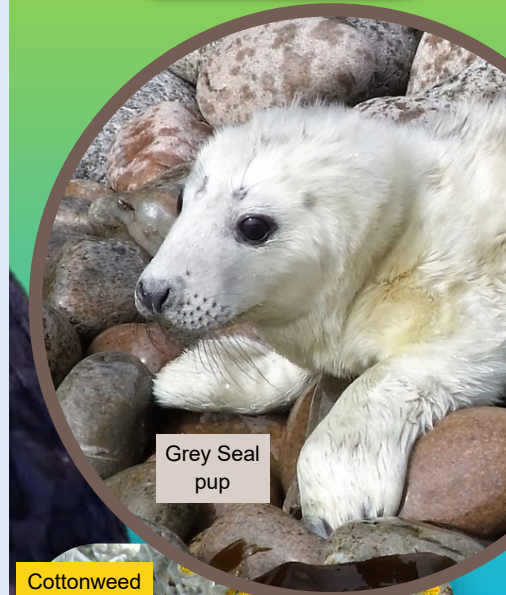


Atlantic Puffin



Other natural assets

- A. Remarkable assemblage of coastal sites with some of the most varied bedrock geology exposures in Ireland.
- B. Best exposure in Ireland of the Avalonian basement.
- C. Fossil site of European significance.
- D. Striking glacial legacy with sequences of ice sheet deposits, wave-cut platforms, and raised beaches.
- E. Textbook examples of coastal features.
- F. Finest barrier/lagoon system in north-west Europe.
- G. Significant oceanographic features including the Celtic Sea frontal system.



Grey Seal pup

Lady's Island Lake



Cottonweed



Fossil sea urchins at Slade



Roseate Tern

Protected Areas on the South Wexford Coast



Hook Head

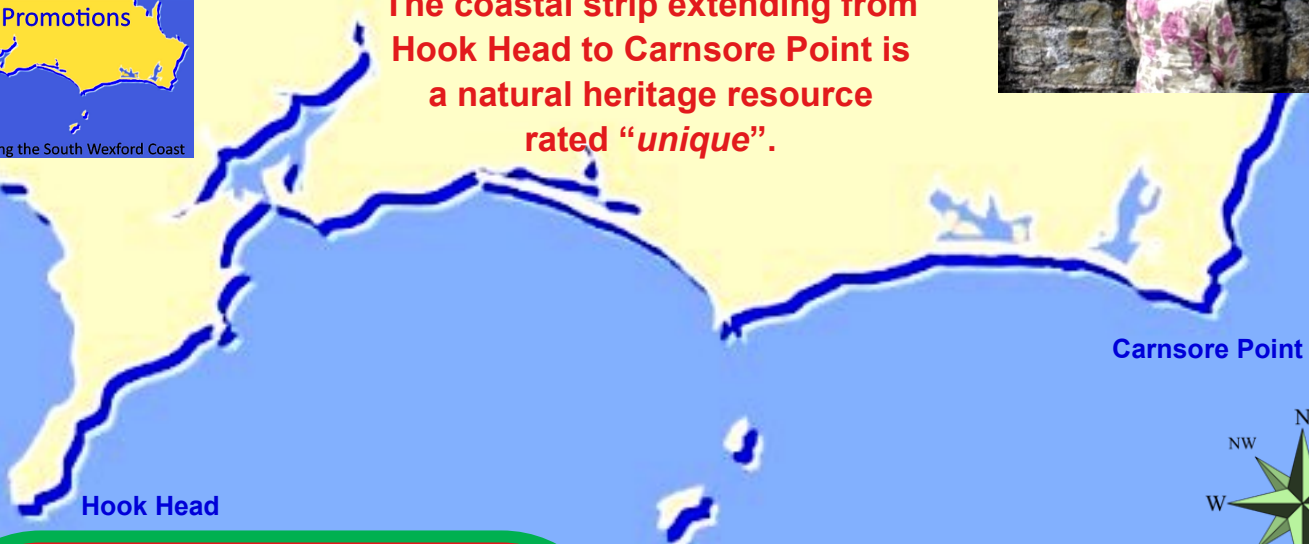
Nature conservation

South Wexford Coast

The coastal strip extending from Hook Head to Carnsore Point is a natural heritage resource rated "unique".



Promoting the South Wexford Coast



Carnsore Point

Hook Head



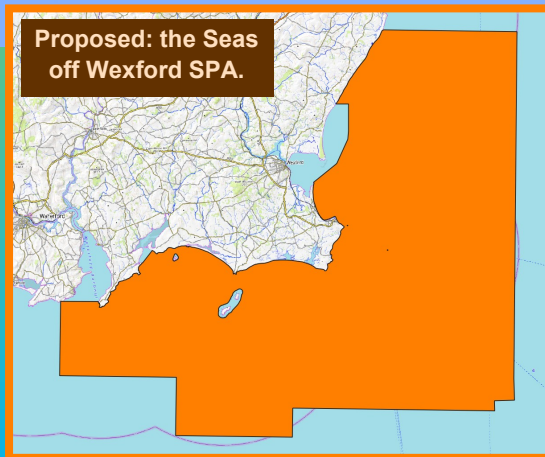
The entire South Wexford Coast is a protected area.

Existing:

- 6 Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- 7 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- 8 Natura 2000 sites (N2ks)
- 1 Ramsar site
- 1 Nature Reserve
- 1 Biogenetic Reserve
- 2 Refuges for Fauna
- 2 Wildfowl Sanctuaries
- 8 Marine Protected Sites
- A *de facto* Marine Protected Area (MPA)
- 17 County Geological Sites
- 9 beach bye law areas with 3 Green Coast Award beaches
- Part of the Celtic Sea IUCN Important Marine Mammal Area

Nature conservation is not for nature; it's for people!

Proposed: the Seas off Wexford SPA.



Suggested: a geopark.

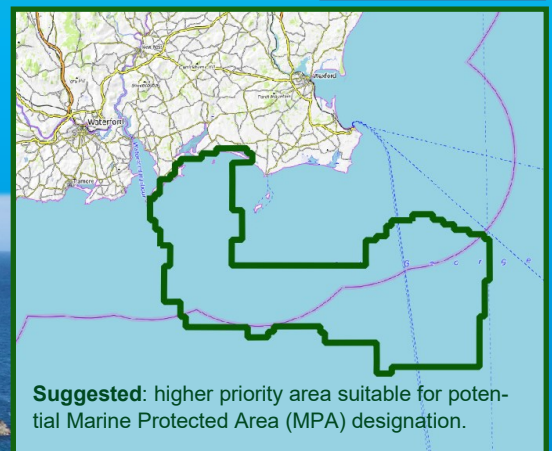


Proposed: the Seas off Wexford SPA.

Suggested: a Marine Protected Area (MPA) and a geopark.



Saltee Islands



Suggested: higher priority area suitable for potential Marine Protected Area (MPA) designation.

Further information

Biological sites: The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at <https://www.npws.ie/>.

Geological sites: <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/The-Geological-Heritage-of-Wexford.aspx>.

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SWC Promotions: promoting the natural heritage resource values of the South Wexford Coast