



STRATEGIC COMPENSATION STUDIES

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026



STRATEGIC COMPENSATION STUDIES OVERVIEW

Aims

To investigate the effectiveness of certain strategic compensation measures through desk-based **feasibility case studies** and **practical pilots** to increase confidence and outline compensation options for the offshore wind industry.

To create a toolbox of collaborative compensation lessons learnt, incorporating measures and a mechanism by which these can be **secured, delivered** and **relied upon** in plan and project consenting decisions.

Objectives

Develop and test a delivery mechanism(s) and governance arrangements to allocate benefits and share risks across multiple schemes

Test and monitor potential strategic compensation measures through a series of practical pilots and desk-based studies

Define and test the most appropriate approaches to monitoring and managing strategic measures (including adaptive management)

Provide options that satisfy Habitat Regulations / Marine and Coastal Access Act compensation requirements for offshore wind plans and projects

STRATEGIC COMPENSATION STUDIES WORK PACKAGES

WP1 Artificial Nesting Structures (ANS)

- Site selection of optimum locations for ANS for auks
- Roadmap for repurposing offshore infrastructure

WP2 Predator Reduction

- Avian predation reduction
- Predator reduction site feasibility
- Efficacy of control measures
- Isles of Scilly development
- UK-island eradication

WP3 Habitat creation and restoration

- Habitat creation and restoration and wider ecosystem benefits
- Habitat compensation monitoring for Annex I Reef

WP 4 Infrastructure Removal

- Mapping of redundant infrastructure in UK waters
- Infrastructure removal follow on work package

WP5 Delivery mechanism and overarching

- Develop and test delivery mechanism
- Adaptive management
- Lessons learnt
- Development of AI tools for seabird monitoring

WP6 Supporting Measures

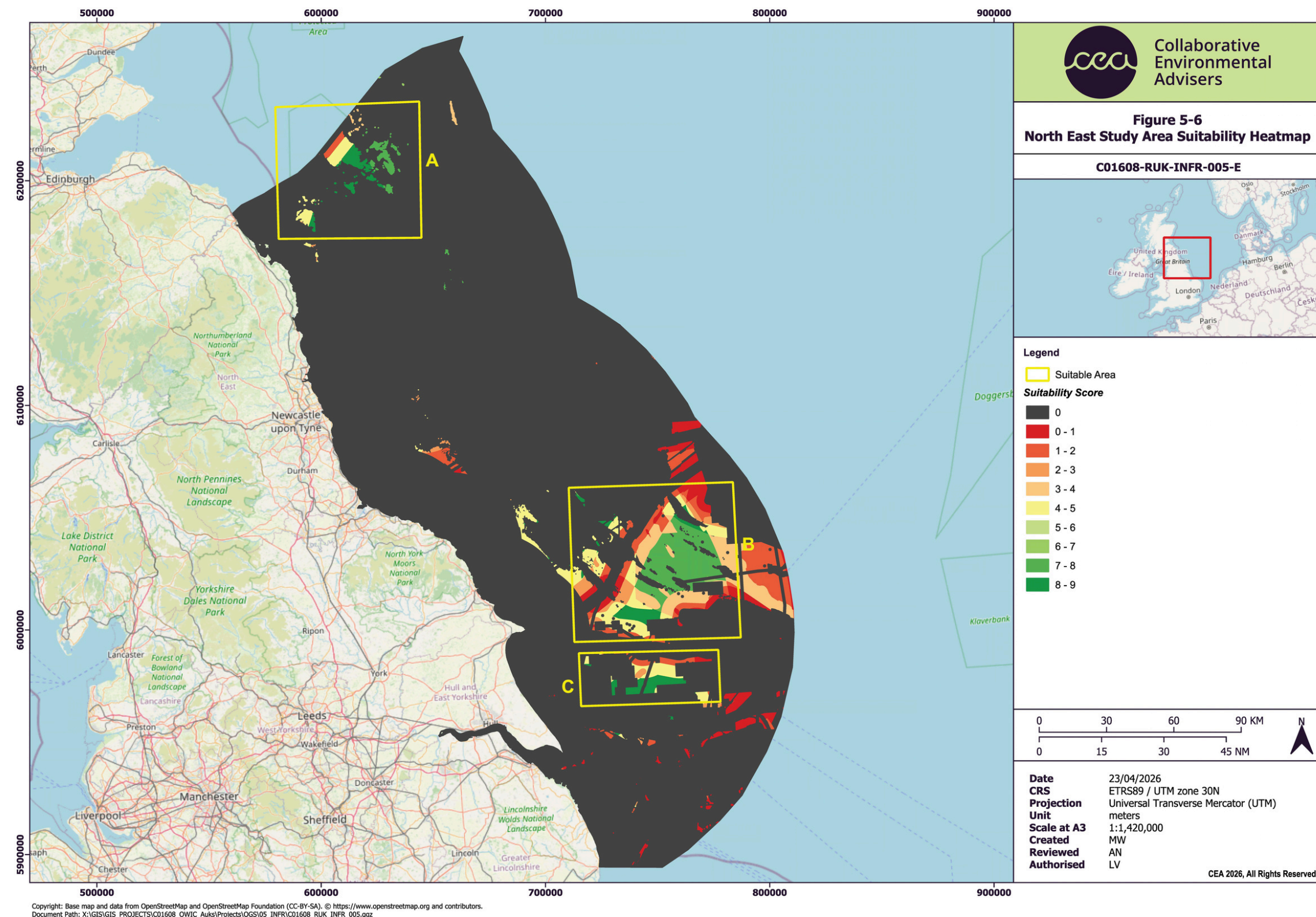
- Breeding seabird package
- Reducing recreational disturbance SW
- Bycatch monitoring and mitigation
- Red-throated diver opportunities
- Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs)

WPI ANS Locations for Auks

This study aimed to identify suitable locations for offshore artificial nesting structures (ANS) for guillemot and razorbill, building on earlier work commissioned by The Crown Estate that identified ecologically suitable sites for black-legged kittiwake ANS.

Using agreed ecological, technical, consenting, and navigational criteria, spatial heatmaps were developed to highlight suitable locations and key constraints, ensuring proposed sites are both robust and deliverable. Opportunities for co-locating ANS for multiple species under the Round 4 Kittiwake Strategic Compensation Plan were also explored.

The findings demonstrate the potential strategic scalability of offshore ANS for guillemot and razorbill, contributing to the evidence base supporting their potential inclusion within the Library of Strategic Compensatory Measures.

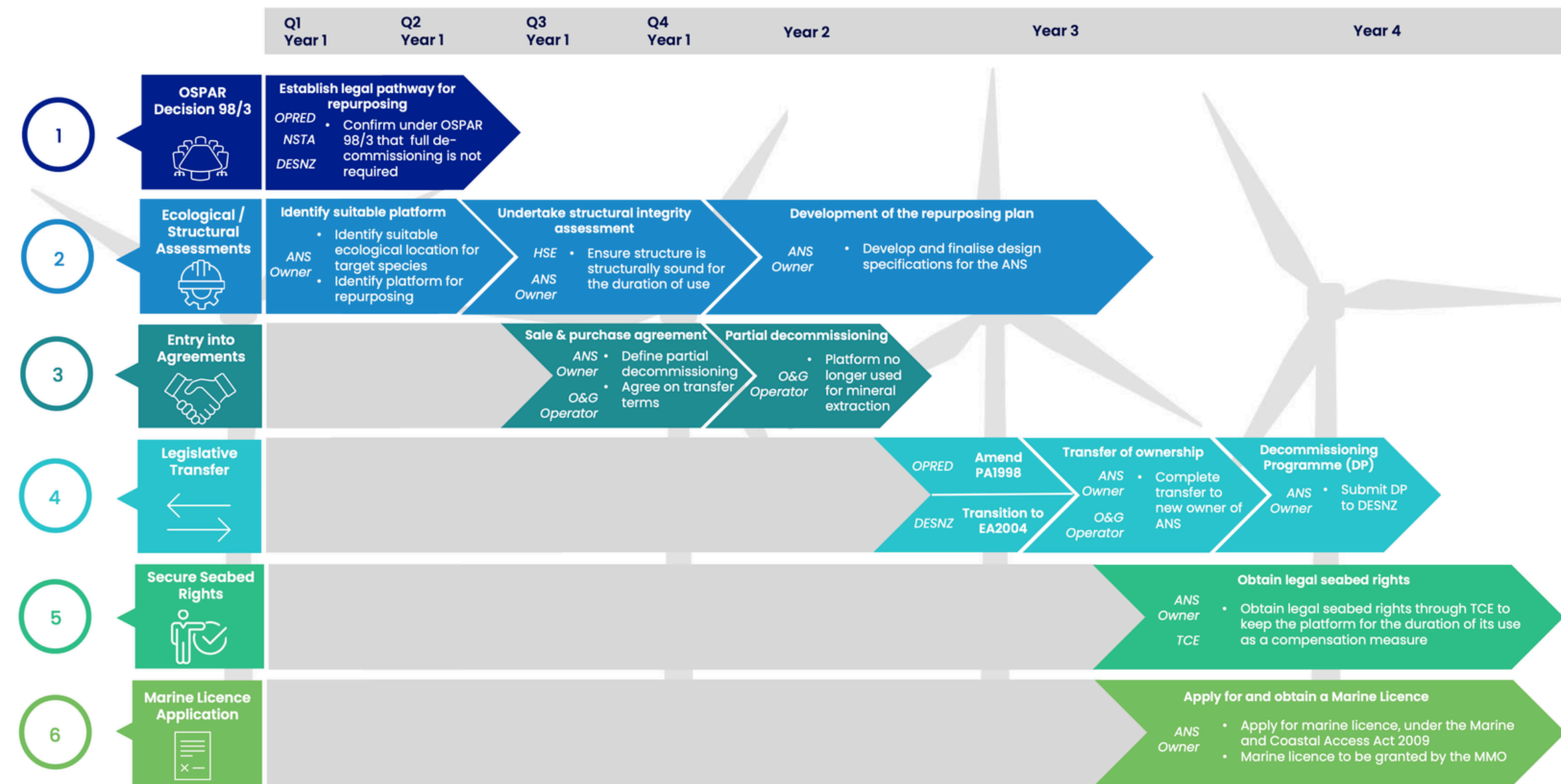


WP1 Offshore Structure Repurposing

This report forms explores the feasibility of repurposing offshore structures as artificial nesting structures (ANS) to deliver seabird compensation for offshore wind projects, and identifies the steps required to progress this approach.

It reviews the key barriers to repurposing offshore structures for seabird compensation and sets out a pathway for developing repurposing as a strategic compensation measure for the offshore wind sector.

The accompanying roadmap outlines a six-phase process, detailing the key actions, responsible parties, and indicative timeframes for each phase.



WP2 Isles of Scilly Breeding Seabird Habitat Assessment

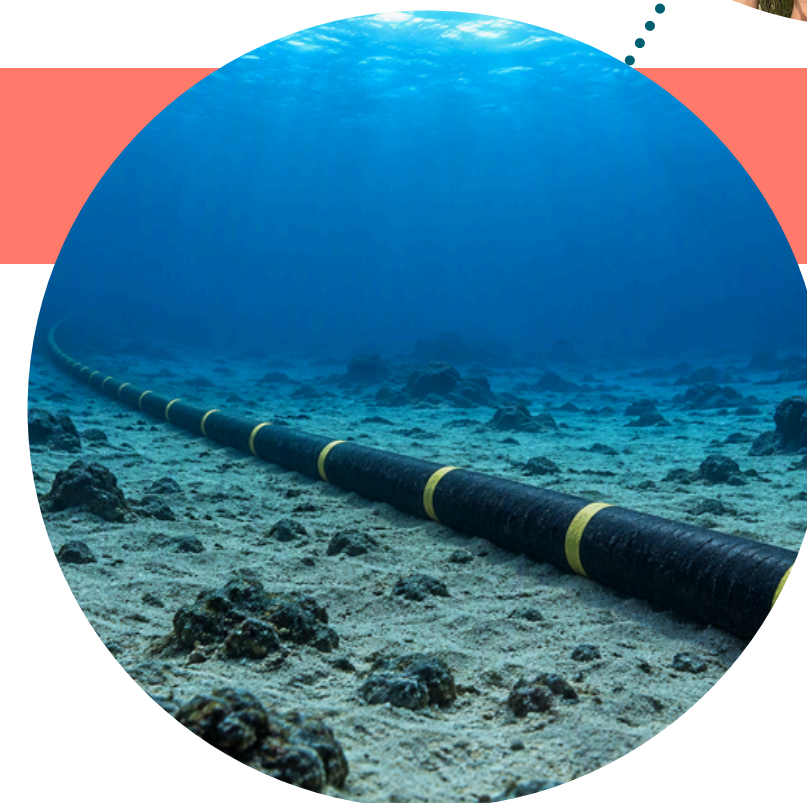
Study to assess the potential for the Isles of Scilly to support increased breeding seabird populations following rat eradication, as part of the wider Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project. Field-based habitat assessments were undertaken across 71 sites on 50 islands in June 2025, covering all 13 regularly breeding seabird species. The work evaluated the availability and suitability of breeding habitat in a rat-free scenario to inform future seabird recovery potential.

The report concluded that rat eradication could enable major seabird recovery, with the Isles of Scilly potentially supporting more than 50,000 breeding pairs, the highest population recorded since systematic monitoring began. Manx Shearwater and Storm Petrel are expected to benefit most, as they are heavily impacted by rats, have extensive suitable habitat available, and are not currently thought to be food-limited.



WP4 Understanding the scale of opportunity for the removal of infrastructure as a potential strategic compensation measure

To support the strategic assessment of infrastructure removal as a compensation measure, the report includes high-level maps illustrating the distribution, type, and status of offshore infrastructure across the UK. These maps provide an overview of the scale and geographic spread of potential infrastructure removal opportunities. To complement the mapping, an interactive online tool has been developed that enables users to explore infrastructure locations and characteristics in greater detail. This initial review has identified a substantial amount of infrastructure within the UK EEZ that may be suitable for removal as strategic compensation for offshore wind farms. The greatest concentration of potential opportunities appears to be along the east coast of England, followed by the east coast of Scotland.



WORK UNDERWAY

JULY 2025 TO JUNE 2026

WP2 Predator Reduction

- Avian predation monitoring SW England
- Predator reduction site feasibility desk studies and seabird surveys
- UK island rat eradication preparation



Carrion crow disturbance in SW England © GoBe

WP3 Habitat Creation and Restoration

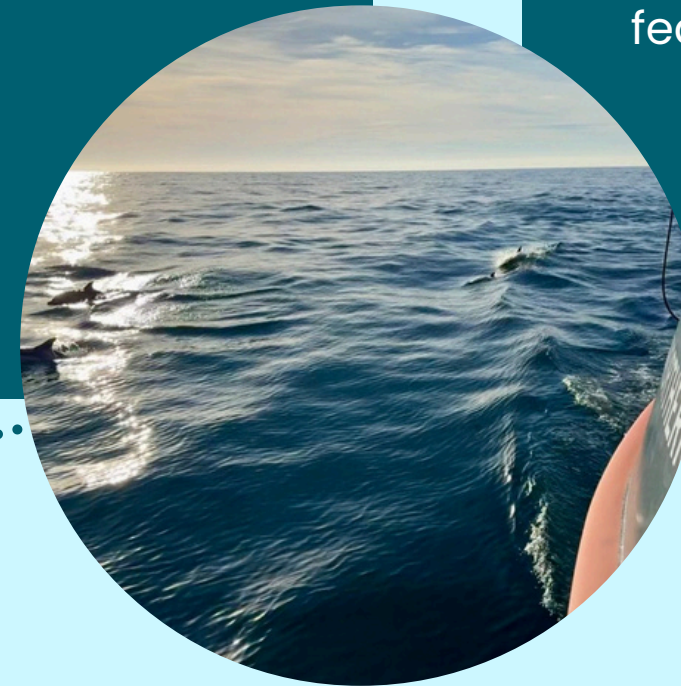
- Greenlink habitat compensation monitoring for Annex I reef
- Monitoring ecosystem outcomes from habitat restoration as strategic compensation for offshore wind: A Wilder Humber case study



Greenlink survey photos © Njord Survey

WP6 Supporting Measures

- Breeding seabird colony package (England)
- Southwest disturbance reduction
- Offshore bycatch mitigation – sea kite trial
- Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) feasibility



Greenlink survey photos ©Njord Survey



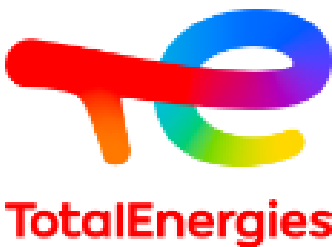
Sea kite flying during development © Fishtek

FORWARD LOOK

JULY 2026 TO JUNE 2027

	SCS further work	SCS Outputs
WP1 Artificial Nesting Structures	No further work expected	No further work expected
WP2 Predator Reduction	- Avian predation scoping of potential practical trials of control measures - Isles of Scilly rat genetics monitoring surveys - Predator control feasibility surveys - UK island rat eradication complete	- Avian predation monitoring report - Isles of Scilly rat genetics and distribution report - Predator control feasibility report (Site 1) - UK island eradication project report
WP3 Habitat Creation and Restoration	- Analysis and write up Annex 1 reef monitoring - Monitoring underway in collaboration with the Wilder Humber project	Habitat compensation evidence report for annex 1 reef
WP4 Infrastructure Removal	Infrastructure removal follow up progress	Infrastructure removal follow up report
WP5 Overarching Actions and Delivery Mechanism	- Delivery mechanism agreement development - Adaptive management progression	- Delivery mechanism collaborative agreements and framework - Adaptive management report
WP6 Supporting Measures	- Bycatch mitigation analysis and write up - FADs phase 2 work underway - Breeding seabird colony compensation assessment completed	- Bycatch mitigation summary report and barriers and incentives report - FADs technical report and roadmap - Breeding seabird colony report England

SCS PROJECT SUPPORT



SCS PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP



**For more information
on the SCS project visit**

<https://www.owic.org.uk/work/environment-and-consents/strategic-compensation-studies/>

**OffshoreWind
IndustryCouncil**

