Special EU Programmes Body
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Northern Ireland - Ireland - Scotland
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SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

Project Case Study: A Closer Look at the Marine Protected Area Management and Monitoring Project (MarPAMM) Project

THEME:

Environment—Manage Marine Protected Areas & Species

FUNDING (ERDF + Match):

€5,983,173.51

MATCH FUNDERS:

Dept of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs NI and Dept of Housing, Planning and Local Government Ireland

LEAD PARTNER:

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)

PROJECT PARTNERS:

BirdWatch Ireland; Marine Scotland Science (MSS); Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS); Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); Ulster University; and University College Cork

PROJECT CONTACT:

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Start Date: 01/01/2018

End Date: 31/03/2022

www.mpa-management.eu

@MarPAMM_project

MarPAMM brings together 46 experts and a host of stakeholders from across Northern Ireland, western Scotland and the Border Region of Ireland to develop tools for managing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within the INTERREG VA Programme region.

Studying Coastal Erosion at Murlough Beach

In 2019 a team of coastal scientists from Ulster University began conducting regular surveys of Co. Down's Newcastle to Dundrum (Murlough Bay) beach system to find out how, and why, our coastline changes. Their findings will be used to predict future changes to help better plan how we use and protect our fragile coastal environment. The Murlough Bay beach study explores how climate-related processes including sea-level rise and storms, may alter the physical environment that supports protected species and habitats on our coasts.

"Naturally, our coasts are constantly changing and are becoming more apparent when extreme weather events increase and sea levels rise. Using ground based survey technology, we can now study relatively rapid changes in the movements of beach sands on this site. Research to date has shown that the once golden beaches at the promenade at Newcastle have over the past few decades been pushed down the coast towards Ballykinler through wave and tidal action. As well as past and present movements, we are examining future scenarios of how heightened sea levels at the site will alter the coastline dynamics; using Murlough Bay site as a test bed for establishing coastal monitoring protocols for other sites in the region. These will help advise any future science-led coastal management approaches we may adopt for protecting these vulnerable environments."

Professor Derek Jackson, Lead Scientist at Ulster University's School of Geography and Environmental Sciences

Tracking Gulls in North-West Ireland

To identify where large gull species forage; how they use the MarPAMM project area; and where they may interact with fisheries, offshore energy and other human activities over the year; the MarPAMM team fitted 18 GPS tracking devices and engraved colour leg-rings to numerous birds in Sligo and Donegal. This included European herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*), lesser black-backed gulls (*Larus fuscus*) and great black-backed gulls (*Larus marinus*). The work will provide the team with invaluable insight into the movement ecology of these species and the information will feed directly into MarPAMM's management plans.