Template for Submission of Scientific Information to Describe Areas Meeting Scientific Criteria for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

Title/Name of the area: Coastal area of Eastern Gotland

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Abstract

Very important area for seabirds both during the wintering and the breeding periods. Some key species occurring are the Vulnerable Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* (with estimates of more than 150 000 individuals during the winter) and the Near Threatened Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* (ca. 10 000 breeding pairs occur here).

Introduction

The Coastal area of Eastern Gotland is a very important area for seabirds in the Baltic Sea, with seven species using the area during the breeding or the wintering periods (BirdLife International 2018a). It is particularly important for wintering sea ducks such as Long-tailed ducks Clangula hyemalis, smews Mergellus albellus, Tufted ducks Aythya fuligula and Greater scaups Aythya marila. Common Eiders Somateria mollissima use the area during the breeding season; Little Tern Sternula albifrons and Caspian Tern Hydroprogne caspia also occur in the area during the breeding season.

The population of Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* is particularly relevant. This species has been listed as Vulnerable by IUCN (BirdLife International 2018b) because of an apparent severe decline detected in the wintering population in the Baltic Sea between the early 1990s and late 2000s (Bellebaum et al. 2014, BirdLife International 2018b). It is classified as Endangered in the HELCOM Red List (HELCOM Red List Bird Expert Group 2013a). This is a migratory species with a circumpolar distribution during the breeding season (BirdLife International 2018b); the species can be found in the Baltic Sea during the winter period (October to May). The *Coastal area of Eastern Gotland* has been identified as one of the most used areas within the Baltic by the species (Skov et al. 2011; Figures 1 and 2).

Location

The Coastal area of Eastern Gotland is a 1500 $\rm km^2$ area located in the Central Baltic Sea (57.6°N/18.9°E) (Figure 1)

Feature description of the proposed area

(This should include information about the characteristics of the feature to be proposed, e.g. in terms of physical description (water column feature, benthic feature, or both), biological communities, role in ecosystem function, and then refer to the data/information that is available to support the proposal and whether models are available in the absence of data. This needs to be supported where possible with maps, models, reference to analysis, or the level of research in the area)

Feature condition and future outlook of the proposed area

(Description of the current condition of the area - is this static, declining, improving, what are the particular vulnerabilities? Any planned research/programmes/investigations?)

Assessment of the area against CBD EBSA Criteria

CBD EBSA Criteria	Description (Annex I to decision IX/20)	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
(Annex I to		No	Low	Medi	High
decision		informa		um	
IX/20)		tion			
Uniqueness	Area contains either (i) unique ("the only one	X			
or rarity	of its kind"), rare (occurs only in few				

	locations) or endemic species, populations or				
	communities, and/or (ii) unique, rare or				
	distinct, habitats or ecosystems; and/or (iii)				
	unique or unusual geomorphological or				
	oceanographic features.				
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Special	Areas that are required for a population to				X
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for life-					
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	n. Other species occurring here during the breed				
•	ne Caspian Tern <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> .	ing period are	o the Little	i cin sic	Tituta
Importance	Area containing habitat for the survival and				Х
for	recovery of endangered, threatened,				
threatened,	declining species or area with significant				
endangered	assemblages of such species.				
or declining					
species					
and/or					
habitats					
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diversity	of ecosystems, habitats, communities, or species, or has higher genetic diversity.					
Explanation for ranking						
Naturalness	Area with a comparatively higher degree of naturalness as a result of the lack of or low level of human-induced disturbance or degradation.	X				
Explanation fo	r ranking	•				

Sharing experiences and information applying other criteria (Optional)

Other Criteria	Description	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
		Don't Know	Low	Mediu m	High
Add relevant criteria		х			
Explanation for ranking					

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Maps and Figures

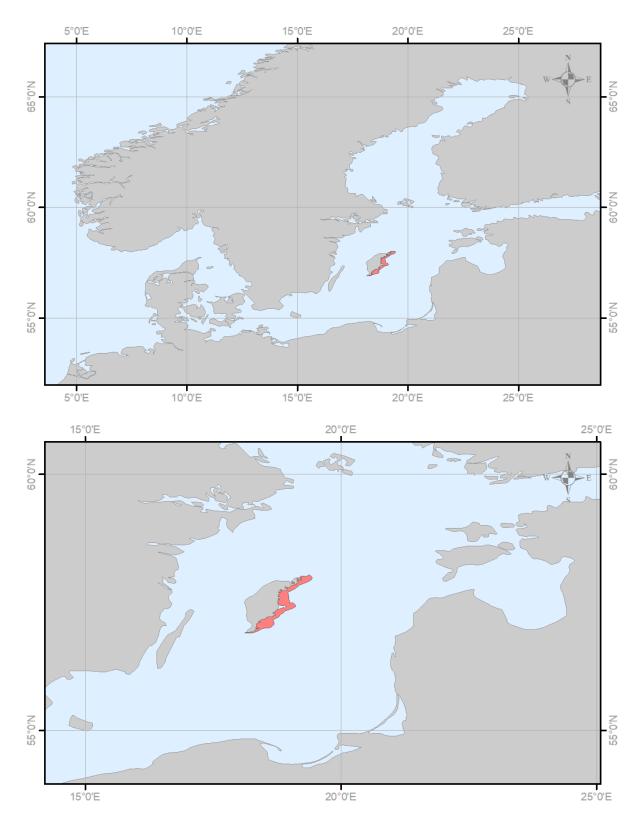


Figure 1: Location of *Coastal area of Eastern Gotland*. More details at http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/coastal-area-of-eastern-gotland-iba-sweden/details

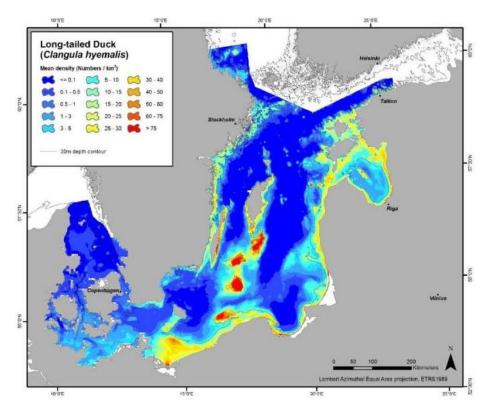


Figure 2. Distribution and density of wintering long-tailed duck Clangula hyemalis in the Baltic Sea, 2007 – 2009. From Skov et al. (2011) and HELCOM Red List Bird Expert Group (2013a).

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