

**European Community Directive
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats
and of Wild Fauna and Flora
(92/43/EEC)**

Third Report by the United Kingdom under
Article 17

on the implementation of the Directive
from January 2007 to December 2012
Conservation status assessment for

Species:

S2619 - Sei whale *Balaenoptera borealis*

Reporting format on the 'main results of the surveillance under Article 11' for Annex II, IV & V species

<i>Field name</i>	<i>Brief explanations</i>	
0.2 Species	0.2.1 Species code	S2619
	0.2.2 Species scientific name	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>
	0.2.3 Alternative species scientific name Optional	
	0.2.4 Common name Optional	

1.1 Maps			
1.1.1 Distribution map	False	Sensitive	False

1.1.2 Method used - map	Absent data		
1.1.3 Year or period			
1.1.4 Additional distribution map Optional	<p>False</p> <p>A map of sei whale distribution is given in Reid et al. (2003). The species is most commonly recorded to the north west of Britain, particularly in the Faroe Shetland Channel. They are also occasionally seen further south in deep waters west of Scotland, but only rarely in shelf waters of western Britain; although sightings have also been made in the south western approaches, between Ireland and south west England (Pollock et al., 2000). Its occurrence tends to be seasonal, with most records between May and October. Whaling records from the early 20th century show a similar seasonal pattern, with most catches made along the shelf edge from June to August. From 1903-1928, 1839 sei whales were taken in Shetland and 375 in the Outer Hebrides.</p> <p>There have only been 16 strandings of sei whale in the UK since 1913. However, during the 2007-2012 reporting period, there have been 3 strandings; 1 in 2011 (Deaville, 2011) and 2 up to mid- 2012 . All were of juvenile animals found stranded along coastlines of the North Sea , outwith their normal UK habitat.</p>		
1.1.5 Range map	False		

2.1 Biogeographical region & marine regions	MATL
2.2 Published sources	Brown, S. G. 1976. Modern whaling in Britain and the north-east Atlantic Ocean. Mammal Review, 6: 25–36

	<p>Cattanach, K.L., Sigurjonsson, J., Buckland, S.T. and Gunnlaugsson, TH. 1993. Sei whale abundance, estimated from Icelandic and Faroese NASS-87 and NASS-89 data. Report of the International Whaling commission, 43, 315-321.</p> <p>Deaville, R. (compiled by). 2011. Quarterly report for the period 1st July – 30th September 2011. Cetacean Stranding Investigation Programme CSIP.</p> <p>Macleod, K., Simmonds, M. P. and Murray, E. 2006. Abundance of fin (<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>) and sei whales (<i>B. borealis</i>) amid oil exploration and development off northwest Scotland. <i>J Cet. Res. Man.</i> 8(3):247–254.</p> <p>Macleod, K., Burt, L., Cañadas, A., Lens, S., Rogan, E., Santos, B., Uriarte, A., Van Canneyt, O., Vázquez, J. A. and Hammond, P.S. 2009. Distribution and abundance of fin whales and other baleen whales in the European Atlantic. Paper SC/61/RMP10 presented to the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Committee.</p> <p>Reid, J.B., Evans, P.G.H. and Northridge, S.P., 2003. Atlas of cetacean distribution in north-west European waters. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.</p>

2.3 Range	
2.3.1 Surface area Range	
2.3.2 Method used Surface area of Range	Absent data
2.3.3 Short-term trend Period	2001-2012
2.3.4 Short term trend Trend direction	unknown
2.3.5 Short-term trend Magnitude Optional	a) Minimum
	b) Maximum
2.3.6 Long-term trend Period Optional	1988-2012
2.3.7 Long-term trend	unknown

Trend direction Optional		
2.3.8 Long-term trend Magnitude Optional	a) Minimum	
	b) Maximum	
2.3.9 Favourable reference range	a) Value in km²	
	b) Operator for FRR	
	c) FRR is unknown (indicated by "true")	True
2.3.10 Reason for change Is the difference between the reported value in 2.3.1 and the previous reporting round mainly due to...	a) Genuine change?	False
	b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?	False
	c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?	False

2.4 Population		
2.4.1 Population size estimation (using individuals or agreed exceptions where possible)	a) Unit	number of individuals
	b) Minimum	497
	c) Maximum	2058

2.4.2 Population size estimation (using population unit other than individuals) Optional (<i>if 2.4.1 filled in</i>)	a) Unit	
	b) Minimum	
	c) Maximum	
2.4.3 Additional information on population estimates / conversion Optional	a) Definition of "locality"	
	b) Method to convert data	
	c) Problems encountered to provide population size estimation	This is not a population estimate. Survey covered only a portion of the species likely range in UK waters.
2.4.4 Year or period	1998-	
2.4.5 Method used Population size	Estimate based on partial data with some extrapolation and/or modelling	
2.4.6 Short-term trend Period	2001-2012	
2.4.7 Short-term trend Trend direction	unknown	
2.4.8 Short-term trend Magnitude Optional	a) Minimum	
	b) Maximum	
	c) Confidence interval	
2.4.9 Short-term trend Method used	Absent data	
2.4.10 Long-term trend –	1988-2012	

Period Optional		
2.4.11 Long-term trend Trend direction Optional	unknown	
2.4.12 Long-term trend Magnitude Optional	a) Minimum	
	b) Maximum	
	c) Confidence interval	
2.4.13 Long term trend Method used Optional	Absent data	
2.4.14 Favourable reference population	a) Number of individuals/agreed exceptions/other units	
	b) Operator	
	c) FRP is unknown (indicated by "true")	True
	d) Method used to set FRP	In UK waters, this species is most frequently recorded in the Faroe-Shetland Channel where the abundance of sei whales was estimated at 1,011 (CV=0.35) during July-August 1998 (Macleod et al. 2006). During the July 2007 CODA survey which covered offshore waters to the west of the UK, France and Spain, 12 sightings of sei whale were recorded off northwest Spain resulting in an abundance estimate of about 400 individuals (Macleod et al. 2009). However, the sei whale is often difficult to distinguish from the more numerous fin whale at sea, so could be under-recorded. The animals occurring in UK waters are only a small part of a much larger northeast Atlantic population. No current population estimates exist for B.

		borealis in the North Atlantic although sightings surveys undertaken in the late 1980s indicate a possible abundance of 13,500 individuals (Cattanach et al., 1993). This species was hunted extensively in the eastern North Atlantic in the 19th and 20th centuries, and abundance significantly depleted. For example, 13.2 whales taken per catcher boat per year from 1903 to 1920 whilst between 1922 and 1929 this had dropped to 3.2 <i>B. borealis</i> per boat (Brown, 1976).
2.4.15 Reason for change Is the difference between the value reported at 2.4.1 or 2.4.2 and the previous reporting round mainly due to:	a) Genuine change?	False
	b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?	False
	c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?	False

2.5 Habitat for the species	
2.5.1 Area estimation	
2.5.2 Year or period	
2.5.3 Method used Habitat for the species	Absent data
2.5.4 Quality of the habitat	a) Habitat quality
	b) Assessment method
2.5.5 Short-term trend Period	2001-2012
2.5.6 Short-term trend Trend direction	unknown
2.5.7 Long-term trend	1988-2012

Period Optional		
2.5.8 Long-term trend Trend direction Optional	unknown	
2.5.9 Area of suitable habitat for the species	a) Value in km²	
	b) Absence of data indicated as '0'	
2.5.10 Reason for change Is the difference between the value reported at 2.5.1 and the previous reporting round mainly due to	a) Genuine change?	False
	b) Improved knowledge/more accurate data?	False
	c) Use of different method (e.g. "Range tool")?	False

2.6 Main pressures		
a) Pressure	b) Ranking	c) Pollution qualifier
	H = high importance (max 5 entries) M = medium importance L = low importance	

2.6.1 Method used – Pressures	

2.7 Threats		
a) Threat	b) Ranking	c) Pollution qualifier
	H = high importance (max 5 entries) M = medium importance L = low importance	

2.7.1 Method used – Threats	

2.8 Complementary information	
2.8.1 Justification of % thresholds for trends	
2.8.2 Other relevant information	
2.8.3 Trans-boundary assessment	

2.9 Conclusions (<i>assessment of conservation status at end of reporting period</i>)		
2.9.1 Range	a) Conclusion	Unknown
	b) Qualifier	
2.9.2 Population	a) Conclusion	Unknown
	b) Qualifier	
2.9.3 Habitat for the species	a) Conclusion	Unknown
	b) Qualifier	
2.9.4 Future prospects	a) Conclusion	Unknown
	b) Qualifier	
2.9.5 Overall assessment of Conservation Status	Unknown	
2.9.6 Overall trend in Conservation Status		

3 Natura 2000 coverage & conservation measures - Annex II species
(only applies to species listed under Annex II of the Directive)

3.1 Population

3.1.1 Population size Estimation of population size included in the SAC network	a) Unit	
	b) Minimum	
	c) Maximum	
3.1.2 Method used		
3.1.3 Trend of population size within the network (short-term trend) Optional		

3.2 Conservation measures

Conservation measures taken (i.e. already being implemented) within the reporting period and provided information about their importance, location and evaluation.

3.2.1 Measure	3.2.2 Type					3.2.3 Ranking H = high importance M = medium importance L = low importance	3.2.4 Location where the measure is PRIMARILY applied			3.2.5 Broad evaluation of the measure					
	a) Legal/statutory	b) Administrative	c) Contractual	d) Recurrent	e) One-off		a) Inside	b) Outside	c) Both inside & outside	a) Maintain	b) Enhance	c) Long term	d) No effect	e) Unknown	f) Not evaluated