

## Humphries S (Sophie)

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**From:** Catriona.Gall@snh.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 29 September 2017 14:31  
**To:** Gayle.Holland@gov.scot  
**Cc:** Sophie.Humphries@gov.scot; Erica.Knott@snh.gov.uk; Glen.Tyler@snh.gov.uk; Alex.Robbins@snh.gov.uk; Helen.Wade@snh.gov.uk  
**Subject:** FW: PVA Clarifications

Dear Gayle,

We're happy for Inch Cape to use more recent counts where these are available. This is relevant to the PVA modelling, as raised by Inch Cape below, but also to apportioning where they've confirmed they'll be using the SNH 'two step' approach. This uses seabird 2000 data for all colonies to give an SPA / no-SPA apportion, then most recent counts to apportion between the SPAs (if all relevant sites have fairly concurrent counts).

The one aspect that CEH will need to confirm is whether their counts for Forth Islands relate only to the Isle of May or to the full SPA. Assessment will need to be on the basis of the full SPA.

The same point is relevant in relation to St Abb's where the disparity in 2016 counts for herring gull relates to the difference between the NNR and the full SPA (see further explanation below). SNH also counted guillemot and razorbill in 2016 for the full SPA and therefore confirm that the figures in the scoping opinion should be used for these two species.

If this needs any further discussion, we may be able to manage something on Monday or Tuesday.

Kind regards,

Catriona

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**From:** Sarah Arthur [<mailto:sarah.arthur@redrockpower.co.uk>]  
**Sent:** 28 September 2017 09:37  
**To:** Holland G (Gayle)  
**Cc:** Andrew Blyth; Tom Young; McKie J (Jim) (MARLAB); Pacitti F (Frances); Bain N (Nicola) (MARLAB); McCollin T (Tracy) (MARLAB); Humphries S (Sophie)  
**Subject:** PVA Clarifications

Hi Gayle,

Following conversations with CEH about the PVA modelling for the EIA, we have identified the following discrepancies between the colony counts that SNH have provided to ICOL in Appendix A(ii) of Appendix 1 of the Scoping Opinion and the data that CEH hold:

- In relation to the colony population count that SNH have provided to ICOL for Forth Islands puffin, can confirmation be provided that this estimate derives from a range of years, with different colonies within the Forth Islands having been counted in different years? Has 2013 been taken as the mid-point year for these counts? The count data available to CEH for Forth Islands puffin span the period 2009 – 2017. **Not all puffin colonies were counted in a single year, and some counts are of 'individuals seen' rather than occupied burrows (equivalent of pairs).** The value we reported is from 2013 when AOB on Isle of May, CraigLeith and Fidra were counted, plus estimated numbers of pairs based either on the next nearest count year or on the number of pairs estimated from a count of individuals ashore. The vast bulk of the Forth Islands birds are on the islands that were counted AOB in 2013.
- Can SNH confirm whether the estimates provided for guillemot and razorbill populations at St Abb's Head to Fast Castle refer to actual colony counts at this SPA, or have they been derived by applying a trend from

earlier counts? CEH believe that the last colony count for these species at St Abb's Head was in 2013 and the next count is not due until 2018. SNH counted guillemot and razorbill for the Fast Castle to St Abb's Head SPA in 2016. These figures are on the SMP database.

- The data available to CEH give a count of 197 pairs for St Abb's Head herring gulls but the information provided by SNH states 325 pairs for 2016. Can SNH confirm whether the estimate of 325 pairs is correct? 197 is the number of pairs in St Abb's Head NNR. 325 is the SPA count.

Further to this, in relation to undertaking the PVAs for the assessment, ICOL consider that the most up-to-date colony count data should be used. Therefore, in some instances the PVAs will be informed by colony count data that supersede the estimates that SNH have provided in Appendix A(ii) of Appendix 1 of the Scoping Opinion. Can Marine Scotland confirm that this approach is acceptable? This would affect the following colony count data:

SPA	Species	CEH count (year)	Count given in Scoping Opinion (year)
Forth Islands	Kittiwake	4663 (2017)	4333 (2015)
	Herring gull	6580 (2014-17)	6500 (2014-16)
	Guillemot	28786 (2017)	30910 (2015-16)
	Razorbill	5815 (2017)	4993 (2015)
	Puffin	45005 (2009-17)	51956 (2013)
St Abb's Head to Fast Castle	Kittiwake	4803 (2017)	2779 (2016)
	Herring gull*	187 (2016)	325 (2016)
	Guillemot*	32990 (2013)	33627 (2016)
	Razorbill*	1820 (2013)	2067 (2016)

\*refer to colony counts for which CEH have raised queries over the count provided in the Scoping Opinion (see above bullet points), as opposed to the CEH counts representing updates to those provided in the Scoping Opinion.

We would be happy that the most recent colony counts are used, but it should be clearly stated (as in the table above).

Finally, in relation to the PVAs, can Marine Scotland confirm that it would be preferable to run the population models for a number of years beyond the final year for which colony count data are available before introducing wind farm impacts into the projection? This would be analogous to what was done in the Freeman *et al.* (2014) models, which were run to 2015 before introducing the wind farm impacts, although 2012 (or an earlier year for some colonies) was the final year with colony population data. This was done to take account of the fact that wind farm construction and operation was to begin some years after the final year for which population data were available for the different SPA populations. For the current PVAs being undertaken for ICOL's new application, it is proposed that models would be run until 2021 before introducing wind farm impacts. ICOL consider 2021 to be a suitable point at which to introduce wind farm impacts into the PVAs because construction of the Inch Cape Wind Farm is proposed to start at the earliest in 2021 and, perhaps more importantly, because it is assumed that Neart na Gaoithe is likely to be operational by then (which would be relevant for considering the population-level impacts from the CIA). Yes wind farm impacts should not be introduced until a date at which construction is expected.

Many thanks  
Sarah

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