

# *Cetorhinus maximus* (Basking Shark)

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## 1. Status of the habitat / species

Please give your most accurate assessment of the status of your species or habitat for the UK and for each country. Leave the row blank where the species or habitat does not occur in that country.

	Amount:	Units:	Year:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
UK	5000	Individuals	2002	Informed guess	
E	2000	Individuals	2002	Informed guess	
NI	1000	Individuals	2002	Informed guess	
S	1000	Individuals	2002	Informed guess	
W	1000	Individuals	2002	Informed guess	

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## 2. Trend in Biological Status

Please give your best estimate of the current trend for your species or habitat for the UK, and each appropriate country, using the following categories. Please give an estimate unless there is absolutely no information on which to assess status.

	Trend:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
<b>UK</b>	Fluctuating / No clear trend ▼	Informed guess ▼	
<b>E</b>	Fluctuating / No clear trend ▼	Informed guess ▼	
<b>NI</b>	Fluctuating / No clear trend ▼	Informed guess ▼	
<b>S</b>	Fluctuating / No clear trend ▼	Informed guess ▼	
<b>W</b>	Fluctuating / No clear trend ▼	Informed guess ▼	

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### 3. Status of knowledge

To what extent is our scientific knowledge of the habitat / species (e.g research information, autecological knowledge, knowledge for effective re-introduction or habitat restoration/re-creation) sufficient to deliver the plan targets?

Please give an assessment for the UK overall but if there is significant difference in knowledge between different countries this should be noted.

**Status of knowledge:** Know ledge insufficient but research currently underw ay. ▼

**Notes:**

New research proposals include pooling of existing data, and standardization of effort

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## 4. Progress on targets

Each of the revised targets from the 2001 Targets Review is listed below.

For each one please give a qualitative assessment of progress for the UK and each country. You can also enter quantitative information on progress by entering data in each of the target boxes and entering the current amount in the amount box. For more information see Help.

**T1: Maintain the current basking shark population.**

**Target start date:**

**Target end date:**

**Target units:**

Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
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<b>UK</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	5000	5000	Informed guess ▼	Under consideration ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	2000	2000	Informed guess ▼	Under consideration ▼
<b>NI</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	1000	1000	Informed guess ▼	Under consideration ▼
<b>S</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	1000	1000	Informed guess ▼	Under consideration ▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	1000	1000	Informed guess ▼	Under consideration ▼

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## 5. Current factors affecting the habitat

When your plan was published the factors (threats) that were thought to be causing loss or decline were listed (in section 2). Re-assessing the current situation may help prioritise actions for your species or habitat. In addition, this enables identification of the main threats to biodiversity across all plans. It is useful to assess whether the importance of different factors is changing and whether there are new issues emerging.

The threat section from the original plan is duplicated below, and a first attempt at categorising the threats has been made. Please confirm that you agree with the categorisation of the original threats identified in the plan (by deleting any wrongly categorised threats and adding the correct category). Please also add to the list any significant threats that have emerged recently, being mindful of environmental issues that have increased in profile or been recognised since plan publication (e.g. climate change). Once you are happy that the list contains all the threats identified in the published plan together with any new ones, please rank them in order of severity (1= highest threat). If the situation has changed and one of the published threats is no longer significant, please leave this in the list but give this rank = 0.

**Current factors affecting the habitat from the original publication:**

- 2.1 Habitat constraints and food availability are likely to be important factors regulating distribution and population size. Recent studies in the English Channel show that they exhibit selective foraging behaviour on productive zooplankton patches along thermal fronts, track tidally-controlled movements of patches, and follow frontal boundaries as they move. These findings and the apparent unpredictability in surface sightings suggest basking sharks to be dependent on enhanced productivity found near transient oceanographic features. Consequently, population trends in the north-east Atlantic will be linked with broad-scale changes in secondary production and controlling factors (eg summer stratification, North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)).
- 2.2 Capture in directed and by-catch fisheries are a potential threat to populations, although few are now caught commercially. The Achill Island fishery (western Ireland) declined after only 10 years of peak catches. However, the decline in surfacing sharks was paralleled by a decline in zooplankton in the north-east Atlantic over the same 38 year period, emphasising the broad-scale importance of food availability controlling the numbers of sharks sighted at the surface and hence potentially available to harpoon fisheries. This species may spend at least 50% of its time in deep water beyond the scope of directed or intensive by-catch fisheries. Part of this time may be spent mating and giving birth. Future risk could possibly arise from a combination of coastal and deep-water fisheries.
- 2.3 Liver oil was traditionally the main product derived from basking sharks, but prices are now very low. Today fins are valuable in the Far East, both at first sale and dried. Meat and cartilage are also utilised, but are less valuable.
- 2.4 A directed fishery by a small Norwegian fleet, has an annual quota in EU waters of 100 tonnes of basking shark liver. In recent years, very little or none of the quota has been taken.

## Keyworded factors:

To add factors click the add button, to delete factors check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Rank:	Keyword:
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Accidental mortality   Fisheries bycatch - netting
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Changes in native species dynamics   Decline in food source / prey
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Harvesting   Overfishing

## 6. Constraints (optional)

Select the three most significant constraints to achieving the targets of the plan, and indicate the order of priority (1-3 with 1 being the most significant constraint). Only include constraints that are acting as a real blockage to delivering the plan targets or leading to a substantial delay in their delivery. For each constraint, please indicate whether you feel that it is within the ability of the lead partner or steering group to resolve the constraint.

<b>Constraint 1:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
Action plan process   Local-national links - insufficient	<input type="checkbox"/> UK <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> W
<b>Solution:</b>	<b>Solution type:</b>
Greater support for integrated research/monitoring	Links to other plans
<b>Able to resolve:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Constraint 2:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
Policy, legislation and designation   Insufficient protection through UK designated sites (SSSI, NNR, MNR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NI <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S

W

**Solution:**

**Solution type:**

Lack of MNRs. Site specific importance for the species.

Site protection / designation

**Able to resolve:**

**Constraint 3:**

**Constraint keyword:**

**Country:**

Research, survey and information | Monitoring surveys required

UK  E  NI  S  
 W

**Solution:**

**Solution type:**

Integrated research and monitoring programmes

Survey / monitoring

**Able to resolve:**

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## 7. Steering Group

Please list all organisations that are represented on the steering group for your species/habitat (include all organisations that have contributed either directly or by correspondence within the last 3 years). Where a steering group does not exist please leave this form blank.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Organisation:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine Conservation Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural Environment Research Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shark Trust
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife Trusts
<input type="checkbox"/>	World Wide Fund for Nature

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## 8. Other Groups/Organisations

Please list any additional groups/organisations that are actively involved in implementing your action plan. (This is to try to assess which groups are involved where there is no steering group and any additional contributors). If you do not have any other organisations involved, click [here](#).

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

**Delete: Organisation:**

- CEFAS
- Marine Biological association

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## 9. Linkages to LBAPs

a) Which of the following most accurately describes your interaction with LBAPs, up to now?

Generic advice to LBAPs on species/habitat needs or appropriate local actions produced/distributed.

b) If you have been in contact with LBAPs how was it initiated?

By Both

c) Irrespective of current contact, how important do you consider LBAP co-ordinated action will be in achieving the targets of the plan? Select from category:

Important

d) If you consider LBAP action to be anything other than unimportant, which of the following forms of engagement do you think would be appropriate? (Note, you may tick more than one category.)

- Indirect contact (e.g. posting information on UKBAP website, sharing work programmes, meeting schedules, articles in Biodiversity News, newsletter)

- Provision of generic information on habitat and/or species (e.g. advice and guidance on habitat/species ecology and management)
- Direct provision of advice (e.g. proactive approach to LBAP, response to consultations from LBAPs, advice on LBAP target setting)
- Reciprocal attendance at meetings
- Development of collaborative projects

Other (please specify):

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## 10. Successes (optional)

Have there been key successes in the implementation of your plan that should be drawn to the attention of government, the wider BAP partnership, or the public? Please give a brief description (i.e. 2-3 sentences) of up to three successes and allocate a topic area to each of them:

### Success 1:

Description:

Country:

Marine Biological Association/CEFAS project to attach archival satellite tags to individual sharks 2001-2002

UK  E  NI  S  W

**Keyword:**

Research, survey and information | Autecology - improved know ledge

**Success 2:**

**Description:**

Wildlife Trusts/WWF-UK effort corrected at sea survey, 2002, English Channel to the Hebrides

**Country:**

UK  E  NI  S  W

**Keyword:**

Research, survey and information | Monitoring surveys underw ay

**Success 3:**

**Description:**

**Country:**

European Basking Shark Photo-identification Project.  
Development of database, for ease of use and improved  
recognition of individuals

UK    E    NI    S    W

**Keyword:**

Research, survey and information | Identification techniques- improved

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Thankyou for answering the questions. You have not yet completed all of the questions. You can go back and answer the additional ones or edit the ones you have already answered whenever you want.

**Sign-off:**

When you have completed all of the questions that you are able to, you must sign off your reporting.

I agree that the steering group (if present) have agreed the information in this report and that the following contact point has also signed it off:

**Contact point:**    **email:**

**Your name:**

**Date:**