

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

**Fourth Report by the United Kingdom  
under Article 17**

on the implementation of the Directive  
from January 2013 to December 2018

Conservation status assessment for the species:

**S5020 - Blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

## **IMPORTANT NOTE - PLEASE READ**

- The information in this document represents the UK Report on the conservation status of this species, submitted to the European Commission as part of the 2019 UK Reporting under Article 17 of the EU Habitats Directive.
- It is based on supporting information provided by the geographically-relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies, which is documented separately.
- The 2019 Article 17 UK Approach document provides details on how this supporting information contributed to the UK Report and the fields that were completed for each parameter.
- The reporting fields and options used are aligned to those set out in the European Commission guidance.
- Maps showing the distribution and range of the species are included (where available).
- Explanatory notes (where provided) are included at the end. These provide additional audit trail information to that included within the UK assessments. Further underpinning explanatory notes are available in the related country-level reports.
- Some of the reporting fields have been left blank because either: (i) there was insufficient information to complete the field; (ii) completion of the field was not obligatory; and/or (iii) the field was not relevant to this species (section 12 Natura 2000 coverage for Annex II species).
- The UK-level reporting information for all habitats and species is also available in spreadsheet format.

Visit the JNCC website, <https://jncc.gov.uk/article17>, for further information on UK Article 17 reporting.

# Report on the main results of the surveillance under Article 11 for Annex II, IV and V species (Annex B)

## NATIONAL LEVEL

### 1. General information

1.1 Member State	UK
1.2 Species code	5020
1.3 Species scientific name	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>
1.4 Alternative species scientific name	
1.5 Common name (in national language)	Blue whale

### 2. Maps

2.1 Sensitive species	No
2.2 Year or period	2013-2018
2.3 Distribution map	Yes
2.4 Distribution map Method used	Insufficient or no data available
2.5 Additional maps	No

### 3. Information related to Annex V Species (Art. 14)

3.1 Is the species taken in the wild/exploited?	No	
3.2 Which of the measures in Art. 14 have been taken?	a) regulations regarding access to property	No
	b) temporary or local prohibition of the taking of specimens in the wild and exploitation	No
	c) regulation of the periods and/or methods of taking specimens	No
	d) application of hunting and fishing rules which take account of the conservation of such populations	No
	e) establishment of a system of licences for taking specimens or of quotas	No
	f) regulation of the purchase, sale, offering for sale, keeping for sale or transport for sale of specimens	No
	g) breeding in captivity of animal species as well as artificial propagation of plant species	No
	h) other measures	No

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3.3 Hunting bag or quantity taken in the wild for Mammals and Acipenseridae (Fish)

a) Unit

b) Statistics/ quantity taken	Provide statistics/quantity per hunting season or per year (where season is not used) over the reporting period					
	Season/ year 1	Season/ year 2	Season/ year 3	Season/ year 4	Season/ year 5	Season/ year 6
Min. (raw, ie. not rounded)						
Max. (raw, ie. not rounded)						
Unknown	No	No	No	No	No	No

3.4. Hunting bag or quantity taken in the wild Method used

3.5. Additional information

## BIOGEOGRAPHICAL LEVEL

### 4. Biogeographical and marine regions

4.1 Biogeographical or marine region where the species occurs

**Marine Atlantic (MATL)**

4.2 Sources of information

- Clapham, P. J., Young, S. B. and Brownell, R. L. 1999. Baleen whales: conservation issues and the status of the most endangered populations. *Mammal Review*. 29 (1): 35-60.
- Gunnlaugsson, T. and Sigurjonsson, J. 1989. NASS-87: Estimation of whale abundance based on observations made onboard Icelandic and Faroese survey vessels ship-board. *Rep. Int. Whal. Commn.* 40: 571-580.
- Perry, S. L., Demaster, D. P. and Silber, G. K. 1999. The great whales: history and status of six species listed as Endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973. *Marine Fisheries Review* 61(1): 1-74.
- Pollock, C.M., Mavor, R., Weir, C.R., Reid, A., White, R.W., Tasker, M.L., Webb, A. and Reid, J.B. 2000. The Distribution of Seabirds and Marine Mammals in the Atlantic Frontier, North and West of Scotland. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Aberdeen. 92pp.
- Pike, D. G., Vikingsson, G. A., Gunnlaugsson, T. and Oien, N. 2009. A note on the distribution and abundance of blue whales (*Balaenoptera musculus*) in the Central and Northeast North Atlantic. *NAMMCO Scientific Publications Volume* 7:19-29
- 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.
- Sears, R., J. M. Williamson, F. W. Wenzel, M. Berube, D. Gendron and P. Jones 1990. Photographic identification of the blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada. *International Whaling Commission Special Issue Report (SC/A88/ID23)*.
- Sigurjonsson, J. and Gunnlaugsson, T. 1990. Recent trends in abundance of blue

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(*Balaenoptera musculus*) and humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) off west and southwest Iceland, with a note on occurrence of other cetacean species. Rep. Int. Whal. Comm. 40: 537-551.  
Yochem, P. K. and Leatherwood, S. 1985. Blue whale. Pages 193-240 in: S. H. Ridgway and R. Harrison, (eds.) Handbook of Marine Mammals, Vol. 3: The Sirenians and Baleen Whales. Academic Press, New York.

## 5. Range

5.1 Surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	
5.2 Short-term trend Period	
5.3 Short-term trend Direction	
5.4 Short-term trend Magnitude	a) Minimum                      b) Maximum
5.5 Short-term trend Method used	Insufficient or no data available
5.6 Long-term trend Period	
5.7 Long-term trend Direction	
5.8 Long-term trend Magnitude	a) Minimum                      b) Maximum
5.9 Long-term trend Method used	
5.10 Favourable reference range	a) Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) b) Operator c) Unknown d) Method
5.11 Change and reason for change in surface area of range	No change The change is mainly due to:
5.12 Additional information	

## 6. Population

6.1 Year or period	
6.2 Population size (in reporting unit)	a) Unit                      number of individuals (i) b) Minimum c) Maximum d) Best single value
6.3 Type of estimate	
6.4 Additional population size (using population unit other than reporting unit)	a) Unit b) Minimum c) Maximum d) Best single value
6.5 Type of estimate	
6.6 Population size Method used	
6.7 Short-term trend Period	
6.8 Short-term trend Direction	Unknown (x)

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6.9 Short-term trend Magnitude	a) Minimum b) Maximum c) Confidence interval
6.10 Short-term trend Method used	Insufficient or no data available
6.11 Long-term trend Period	
6.12 Long-term trend Direction	
6.13 Long-term trend Magnitude	a) Minimum b) Maximum c) Confidence interval
6.14 Long-term trend Method used	
6.15 Favourable reference population (using the unit in 6.2 or 6.4)	a) Population size b) Operator c) Unknown d) Method
6.16 Change and reason for change in population size	No change The change is mainly due to:
6.17 Additional information	

## 7. Habitat for the species

7.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat	a) Are area and quality of occupied habitat sufficient (for long-term survival)? b) Is there a sufficiently large area of unoccupied habitat of suitable quality (for long-term survival)?	Unknown
7.2 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat Method used	Insufficient or no data available	
7.3 Short-term trend Period		
7.4 Short-term trend Direction	Unknown (x)	
7.5 Short-term trend Method used	Insufficient or no data available	
7.6 Long-term trend Period		
7.7 Long-term trend Direction		
7.8 Long-term trend Method used		
7.9 Additional information		

## 8. Main pressures and threats

8.1 Characterisation of pressures/threats
8.2 Sources of information
8.3 Additional information

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## 9. Conservation measures

### 9.1 Status of measures

- a) Are measures needed? No
- b) Indicate the status of measures

### 9.2 Main purpose of the measures taken

### 9.3 Location of the measures taken

### 9.4 Response to the measures

### 9.5 List of main conservation measures

### 9.6 Additional information

## 10. Future prospects

### 10.1 Future prospects of parameters

- a) Range Unknown
- b) Population Unknown
- c) Habitat of the species Unknown

### 10.2 Additional information

## 11. Conclusions

### 11.1. Range

### 11.2. Population

### 11.3. Habitat for the species

### 11.4. Future prospects

### 11.5 Overall assessment of Conservation Status

### 11.6 Overall trend in Conservation Status

### 11.7 Change and reasons for change in conservation status and conservation status trend

- a) Overall assessment of conservation status

The change is mainly due to:

- b) Overall trend in conservation status

The change is mainly due to:

### 11.8 Additional information

## 12. Natura 2000 (pSCIs, SCIs and SACs) coverage for Annex II species

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12.1 Population size inside the pSCIs, SCIs and SACs network (on the biogeographical/marine level including all sites where the species is present)

- a) Unit
- b) Minimum
- c) Maximum
- d) Best single value

12.2 Type of estimate

12.3 Population size inside the network Method used

12.4 Short-term trend of population size within the network Direction

12.5 Short-term trend of population size within the network Method used

12.6 Additional information

## 13. Complementary information

13.1 Justification of % thresholds for trends

13.2 Trans-boundary assessment

13.3 Other relevant Information

There is limited or insufficient new evidence on which to update this species since the previous reporting round



# Distribution Map

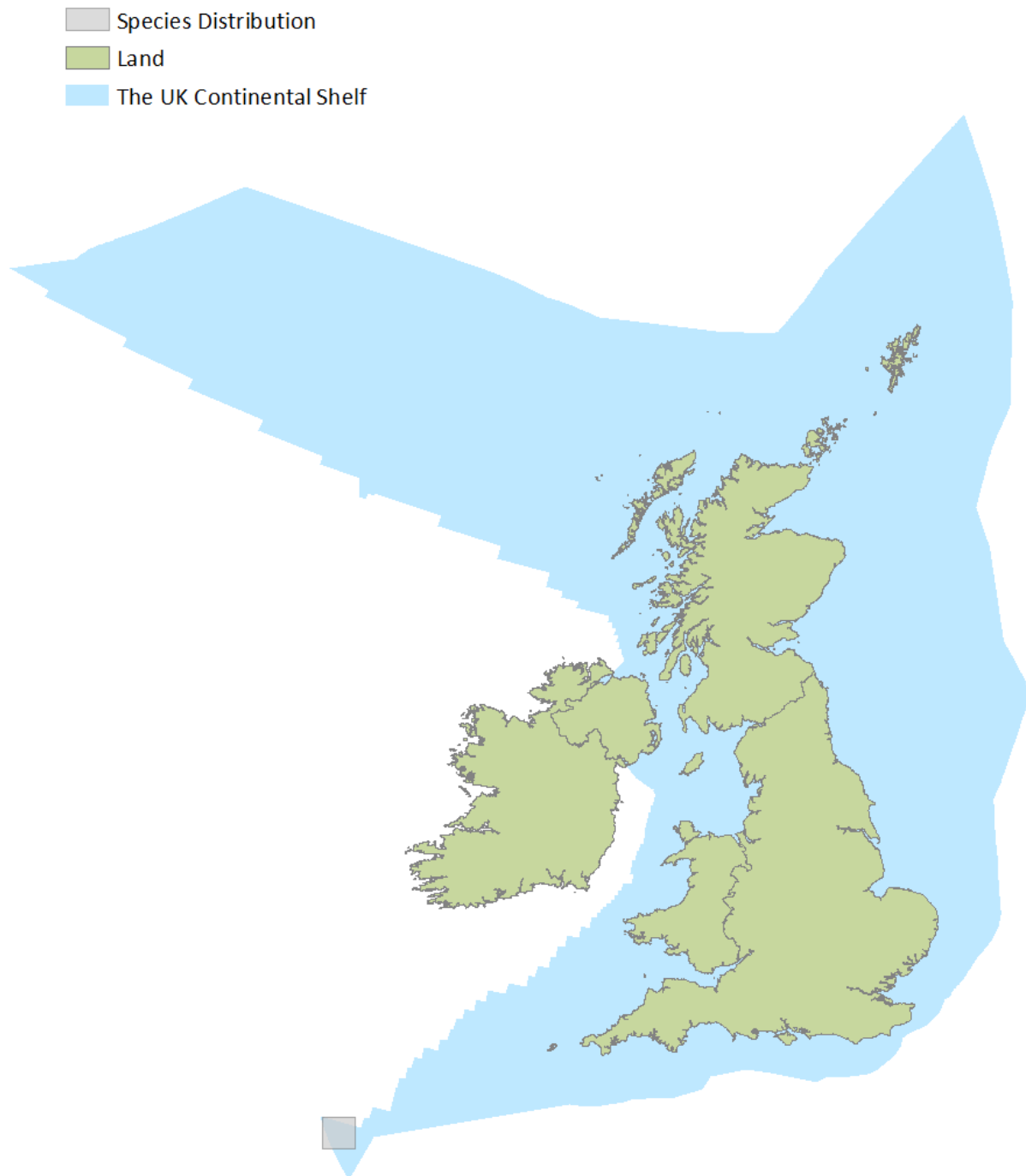


Figure 1: UK distribution map for S5020 - Blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*).

The 50km grid square distribution map is based on available species records within the current reporting period. For further details see the 2019 Article 17 UK Approach document.