



Oceans Protection Plan

Baseline environmental data on British Columbia's northern coast

Background

Environment and Climate Change Canada is collecting data on the marine environment to better understand the current environmental conditions of northern British Columbia. Working with Indigenous communities and other partners, we are using this information to protect British Columbia's north coast by supporting emergency preparedness and response efforts.

What is Baseline Environmental Data?

We are collecting baseline biological, ecological, and other environmental data about British Columbia's marine ecosystems, including the following:

- taking geotagged videos and photographs from helicopters to complete a physical characterization of the shorelines
- updating socioeconomic and ecological information
- conducting studies on marine birds to identify their distribution, movements, and abundance
- conducting ecotoxicological work to understand the effects of oil on marine birds

What have we done so far?

To date, we have:

- ✓ surveyed 16,000 km of shoreline
- ✓ conducted studies on three bird species to understand the health effects of oil exposure
- ✓ completed over 1,500 km of vessel-based marine bird surveys
- ✓ tracked seven priority seabird species across multiple colonies

What's next?

Finding innovative new ways to gather and share data will continue, including:

- ✓ Exploring new ways to map our coastlines, such as using unmanned aerial vehicles as well as airborne and satellite imaging systems
- ✓ Modelling habitat use by marine birds to predict their exposure to risk factors (such as oil) and identify highly sensitive coastal areas
- ✓ Tracking the seasonal movement of marine birds by using the latest tracking technologies to better understand and predict year-round habitat use along British Columbia's northern coast

Gathering baseline environmental data on British Columbia's northern coast is another action the Government of Canada is taking to protect our coasts and waterways. The Government is investing \$1.5 billion in the Oceans Protection Plan, a national strategy that is improving marine safety and responsible shipping, protecting Canada's marine environment and helping advance Indigenous reconciliation.