



## **Job Description**

### **Marine Advocacy and Campaigns Officer**

16/12/2025

**Job Title:** Marine Advocacy and Campaigns Officer

**Vacancy Type:** 4 days a week, fixed term contract with with the possibility of extension subject to funding. A three-month probationary period will apply.

**Place of Work:** This post will be based at BirdWatch Ireland HQ, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow, but hybrid working is possible.

**Salary:** €37,000 – 41,000 pro rata depending on experience.

**Other benefits:** Pension auto-enrolment according to government legal obligations

**Contract Term :** From start date as soon as possible to December 31 2027.

**Hours:** 7 hours a day 4 days per week

**Annual leave:** Statutory annual leave of 20 days pro-rata

**Closing date for applications:** January 7<sup>th</sup> 2025 5 pm.

**Start date:** As soon as possible

**Interviews:** Applicants who are deemed to be suitable for interview will be interviewed in person at BirdWatch Ireland HQ or online in the **week starting January 19<sup>th</sup> 2025**.

#### **About BirdWatch Ireland:**

BirdWatch Ireland is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation focused on the conservation of wild birds and other biodiversity. Through survey and monitoring, on the ground conservation, advocacy, education and awareness raising, we are working to secure the futures of our Ireland's birds and the habitats they need to thrive. We work in partnership with a range of organisations to achieve our goals. Our policy and advocacy team ensures that its messaging to politicians, government officials and the public is evidence-based and grounded in science, and we work closely with our species and land management and surveys and monitoring teams to underpin this approach. BirdWatch Ireland is the BirdLife International partner in Ireland.

#### **Background**

BirdWatch Ireland is a founding member of Fair Seas, a coalition of Irish non-governmental organisations working on a national campaign to secure a well-protected, ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Ireland. The Irish government has committed to protecting 30% of Ireland's seas by 2030 with 10% strictly protected. This is a huge opportunity to ensure that this network of MPAs is based on sound science and ensures the best possible outcomes and futures for marine biodiversity including seabirds. The campaign is coordinated by the Irish Environmental Network who have a centralised function to support member organisations and coordinate the Campaign which is funded by a range of international foundations.

### **The Marine Advocacy and Campaigns Officer Role**

We are seeking a Marine Advocacy and Campaigns Officer to undertake advocacy and campaigning as part of our involvement and sub-grant agreement with the Irish Environmental Network and the Fair Seas campaign. This person will be an active member of the Policy and Advocacy team of BirdWatch Ireland and will also be centrally involved with the Fair Seas core team at the Irish Environmental Network. The Marine Advocacy and Campaigns Officer's line manager will be the Head of Policy and Advocacy at BirdWatch Ireland.

#### *Advocacy*

The role will involve advocacy with decision makers (government officials, elected representatives) on core topics and tasks as part of the marine protected areas campaign with a specific focus on seabirds and protected areas for seabirds. This includes advocacy on the critical new legislative amendments relating to marine protected areas and other relevant marine policy topics. It will also include engagement with stakeholders on the designation of Important Bird Areas for seabirds (as identified by BirdWatch Ireland) as marine Special Protection Areas.

#### *Campaigning and mobilising BirdWatch Ireland branches, members and supporters*

BirdWatch Ireland has 15,000 members and a strong branch network around the country that undertakes events open to the general public including talks and outings to areas for birdwatching and conservation. Our branches are composed of motivated individuals who are central to local awareness raising of national issues and opportunities and taking action to advance protection, conservation and restoration of Ireland's wild bird populations. The successful applicant for the role will engage with members and our branch network giving talks to branches locally and will mobilise them and our members at critical moments in the Fair Seas campaign to take action.

#### *Communications*

Raising awareness about the Fair Seas campaign goals and activities, the legislation, the ecology of seabirds and the importance of an effective network of marine protected areas including marine Special Protection Areas will be critical. In this regard, the successful applicant will have proven **excellent and proven communication skills**, will engage with the communications team, write blog posts for our website, articles for our members magazine and be active on social media and give media interviews where appropriate. BirdWatch Ireland is active on social media including Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky, LinkedIn and X (@BirdsMatter\_IE as well as main BWI account).

#### *Project management and engagement with wider BirdWatch Ireland team*

Finally and importantly, the successful candidate will manage and undertake various financial and reporting elements of the Fair Seas campaign including keeping track of activities, managing the budget, invoicing and reporting with oversight from the Head of Policy and Advocacy. It will be very important that the successful candidate engages with the wider marine and seabird scientific teams in BirdWatch Ireland to ensure that positions and messaging are in line with the scientific evidence. You will also engage with our colleagues in BirdLife Europe and Central Asia and especially the

Marine Task Force and ensure that the BirdWatch Ireland and the Fair Seas team are aware of developments at European level on marine issues (this will require some international travel).

### **Responsibilities and Accountabilities**

A detailed programme of work will be agreed with the successful candidate.

- Work with the Fair Seas campaign team in the delivery of the campaign advocacy strategy advocating with decision makers including politicians, government officials, and a broad range of stakeholders.
- Track, engage on and advocate for the designation of Important Bird Areas for seabirds as marine SPAs as part of the Fair Seas campaign to designate 30% of marine protected areas by 2030.
- Engage with BirdWatch Ireland branches include arranging and giving talks at local branch events on the Fair Seas project, campaign updates, marine protected areas including the designation of marine SPAs. Additionally, the role may require participation in meetings which can occur in the evenings and at weekends.
- Effectively communicate the aims and messages of the campaign with stakeholders at a range of levels – including ministerial meetings, the Oireachtas, MEPs, departmental officials, scientists, media and the public including BirdWatch Ireland members and branches.
- Assist in the development of campaign policy positions and submissions where appropriate.
- Arrange and host a seabird day with coastal branches.
- Work with the communications team to develop engaging social media posts and other media to raise awareness of seabirds and to engage on relevant key actions and topics.
- Engage regularly on social media and in line with BirdWatch Ireland guidance.
- Write blog posts, articles and social media posts raising awareness about the campaign.
- Keep track of campaign activities and deliverables for reporting back to the core campaign, funders, the wider BirdWatch Ireland advocacy team and other reporting requirements.
- Manage budget, invoicing and reporting to Fair Seas and reporting internally to the Head of Policy and Advocacy and the BirdWatch Ireland board.
- Engage with the wider BirdWatch Ireland marine and seabird team.
- Assist in the organisation of and participate in Fair Seas and BirdWatch Ireland events including staff meetings. This may require work at weekends.

### **Person specification:**

BirdWatch Ireland is looking for a highly **motivated individual** with the following essential skills to join our Policy and Advocacy team and lead on our work with the Fair Seas campaign:

- **At least 3 years work experience in policy, advocacy and/or campaigning.**
- A relevant university degree or equivalent qualifications and experience.
- Experience of engaging with community groups and mobilising people to take action for the environment.
- A strong proven ability to communicate effectively, both written and in person. This will include report-writing skills, letter-writing skills and the ability to influence a diverse range of people at all levels and including on social media.
- Project management experience including budget and reporting requirements.
- A good understanding of issues relating to marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity (including seabirds) climate change.
- Experience in researching and developing policy positions or proposals and using scientific evidence.
- Proficiency in working across the usual software packages and active on social media

- Has a driver's license and can travel within Ireland and beyond where necessary.
- A passion for nature.

**Desirable Skills:**

- Experience in environmental policy, advocacy, education, working with, or volunteering with, local groups on environmental topics.
- A sound understanding of the Birds and Habitats Directives and other European environmental legislation.

**How to apply**

**Please complete the application form available on the BirdWatch Ireland website. Please do not send CVs.** Also please write a one-page max cover letter telling us why you're the best person for this role.

Completed application forms and cover letters should be sent by email to [oduggan@birdwatchireland.ie](mailto:oduggan@birdwatchireland.ie)

**Closing date for applications:** Wednesday January 7<sup>th</sup> at 5 o'clock. Late applications will not be accepted.

**It is hoped to conduct interviews during the week of January 19<sup>th</sup> 2026.**