

LIGHT POLLUTION IMPACT ON SEABIRDS OF MALTA

Paulo Lago. BirdLife Malta

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

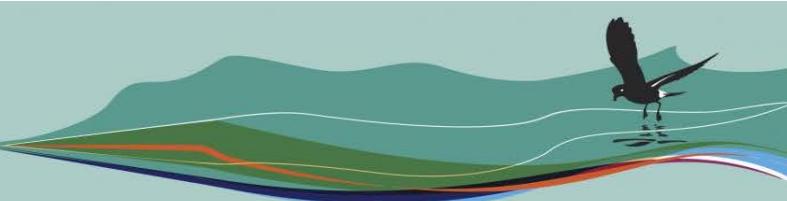
23RD – 25TH NOVEMBER 2015



MINISTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Partnership for
nature and people

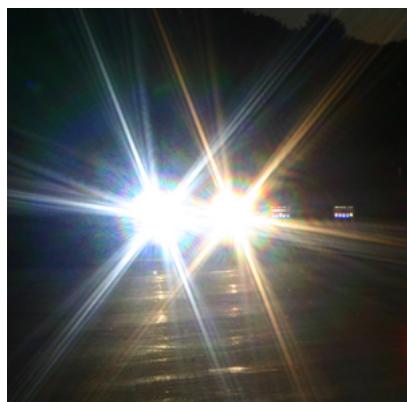


LIGHT POLLUTION

Excessive, misdirected, or obtrusive artificial light

Consequences: it washes out starlight in the night sky, interferes with astronomical research, disrupts ecosystems, has adverse health effects and wastes energy

Glare



Light trespass



Skyglow



Increasing development since 70's in Malta



Picture taken by Paolo Nespoli from the International Space Station (ISS). Available at <http://www.nightearth.com/>

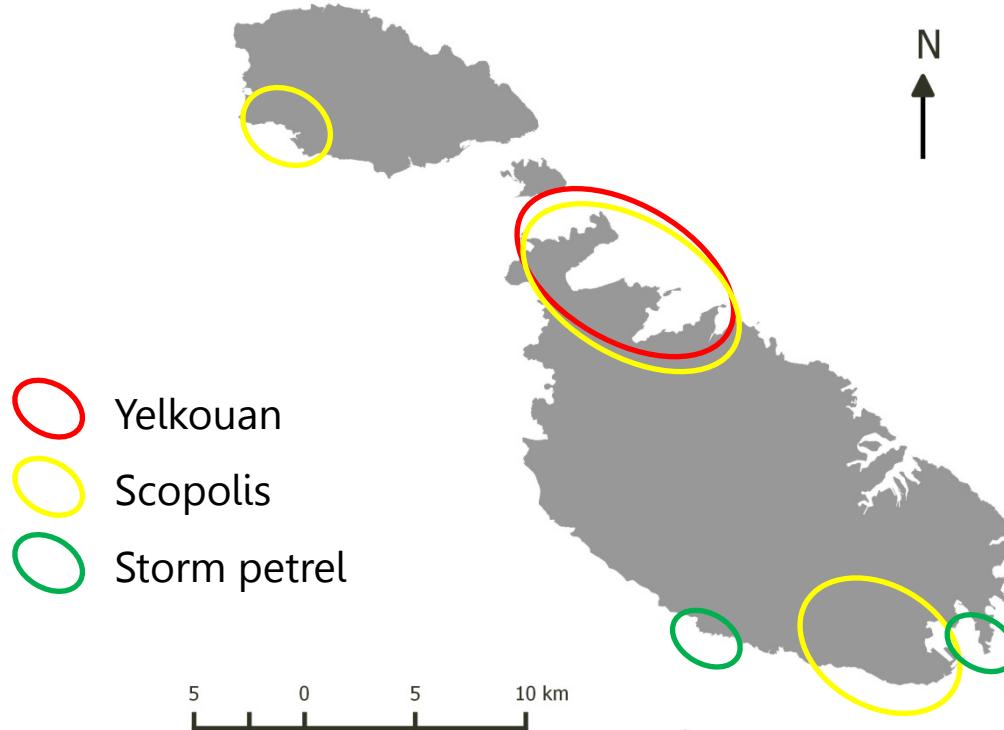


IMPACT OF LIGHT POLLUTION ON SEABIRDS

- Colony disturbance: reduces available nesting habitat abandonment of colonies (Xlendi 1975, Sultana)
- Disturbs nesting birds
- Disorients fledglings



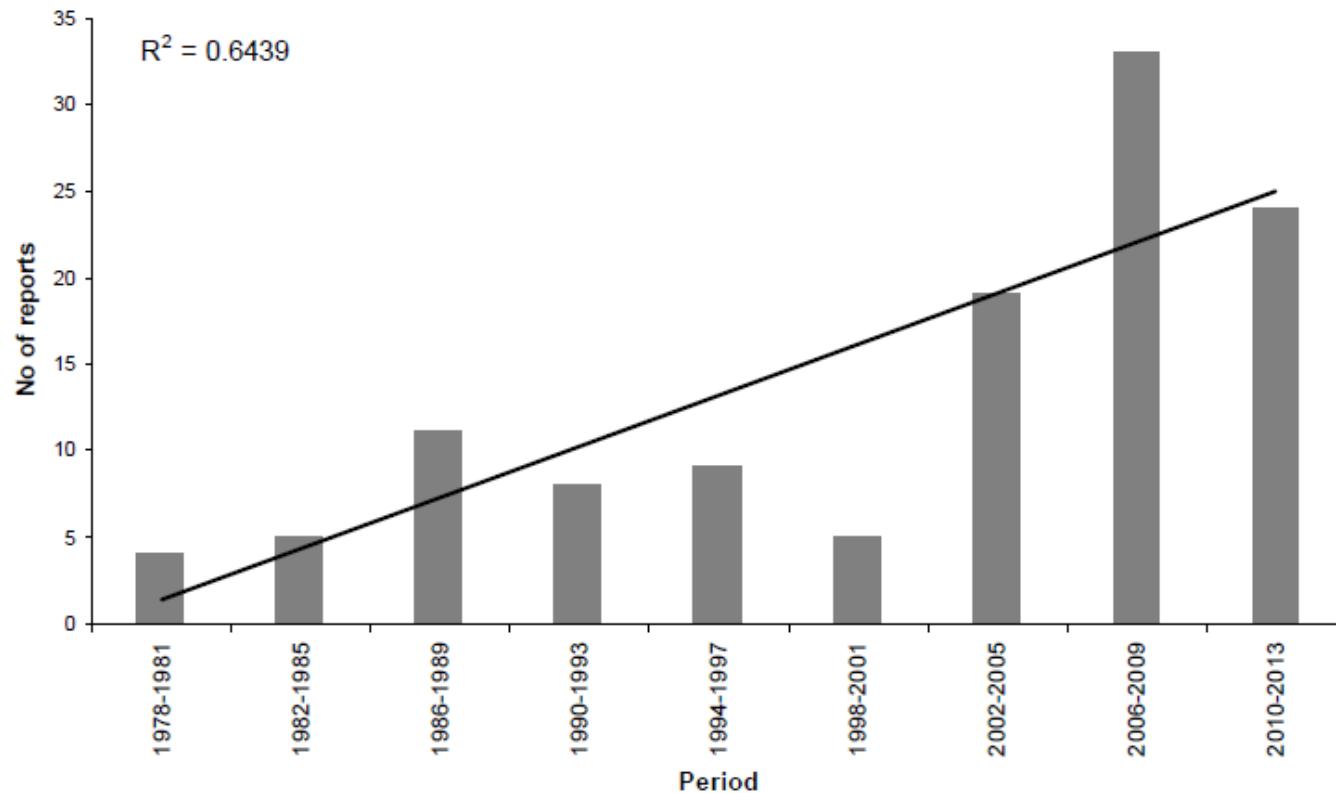
SEABIRD STRANDING HOTSPOTS



120 cases of stranded seabirds along 36 years (1978-2013) reported to BirdLife Malta. 32 Yelkouan shearwaters., 79 Scopolis shearwaters, 9 Storm petrels 44 locations all around Malta. (Juan Mula et al. In prep.)



Is light pollution becoming an increasingly concerning problem?

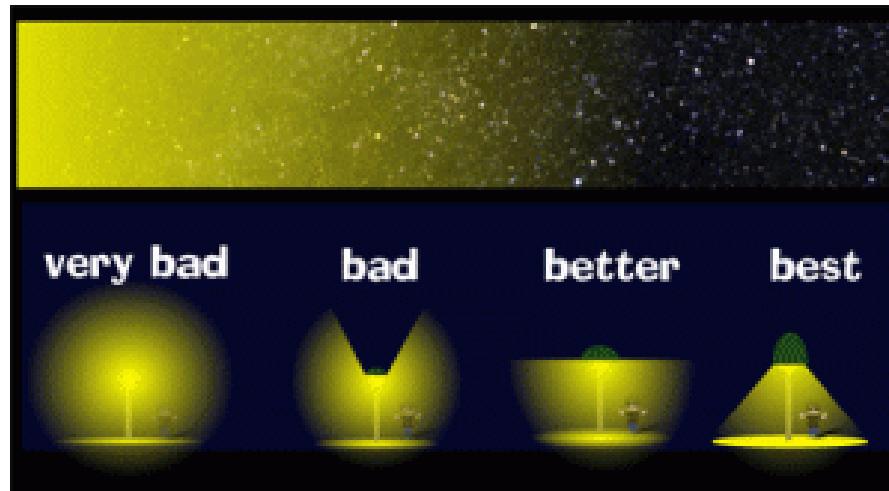


Seabird strandings in Malta 1978-2013 (Juan Mula et al. In prep.)



How to reduce light pollution?

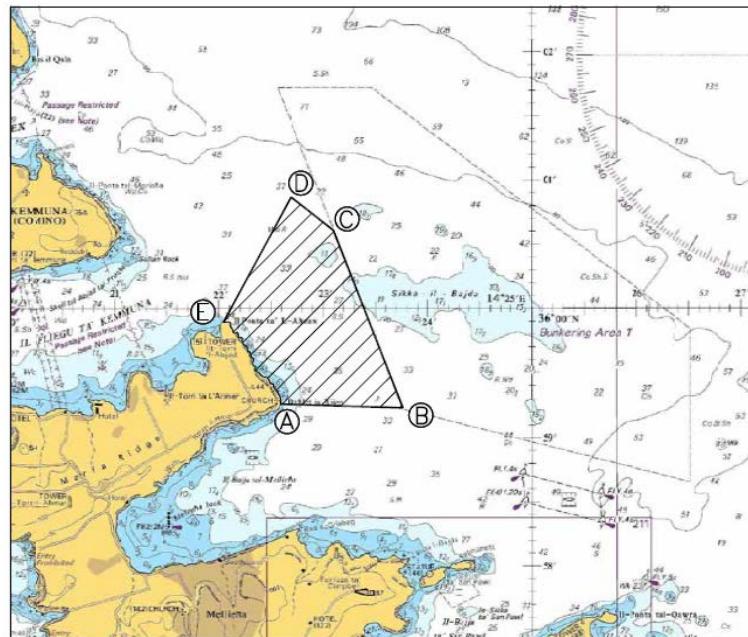
- Corrective measures
- Legislation
- Careful planning
- Public and stakeholders awareness



BIRDLIFE MALTA ACTIONS

LIFE Yelkouan Shearwater project (2006-2010)

- Legislative: Notice to Mariners No 02 of 2010



- Enforcement: meeting stakeholders, public awareness



BIRDLIFE MALTA ACTIONS

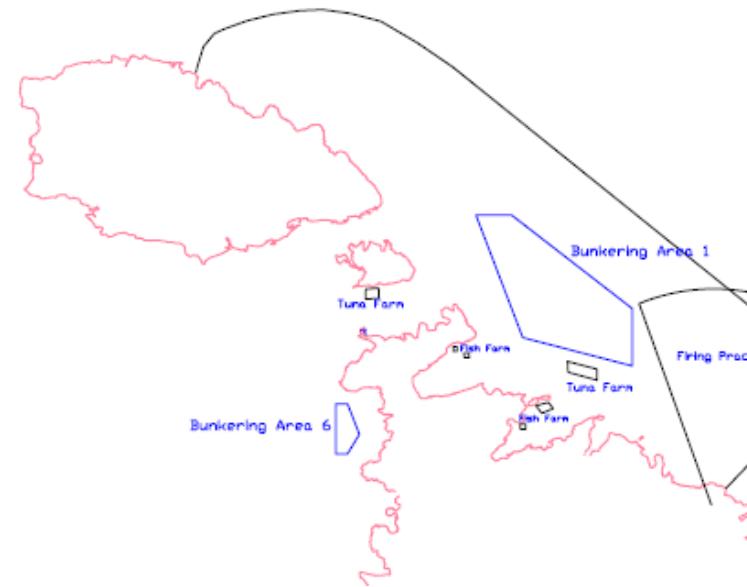
LIFE+ Malta Seabird project (2011-2016)

- Measurement of light pollution from bunkering

Pilot testing in Majjistral Nature & History Park



Prototype by Stephen John Cachia
Bachelor thesis 2015



BIRDLIFE MALTA ACTIONS

LIFE Arcipelagu Garnija (2015-2020)

- Address and reduce light pollution on *P. yelkouan* colonies utilising policy and legislation.
- Practical example: Cirkewwa terminal

