**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – POSSIBLE TENDER OPPORTUNITY**

[Natural England](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england), in our role as statutory adviser on nature conservation in England to government and industry, is seeking ways to reduce impacts on seabirds from offshore wind farms, in line with our [Approach to Offshore Wind](http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/5400620875120640).

We are developing a project that, if funded, would aim to gather high quality evidence on seabird flight height distributions, at a range of locations (including within offshore wind farms) in UK waters.

We anticipate this activity focusing on the collection of airborne LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data at sea. It is likely to include some validation steps and some data collection steps.

We are interested to hear from providers who may be able to provide this service in the event of successful funding and subsequent competitive tender opportunity. If successful, providers will be expected:

* To be able to demonstrate their ability to simultaneous image capture (and subsequent identification) of relevant seabird species in flight, which can reliably be matched to LiDAR point estimates of altitude relative to a fixed datum and the sea surface to derive species-specific flight height estimates;
* To capture images of suitable quality and resolution to confidently identify birds in flight, generally accepted to be at least 2 cm Ground Surface Distance (GSD);
* To be able to source and provide all equipment (including aircraft, LiDAR sensors and digital aerial imagery still or video cameras) as well as suitably qualified staff;
* To be able to work at sea in distant locations (e.g. offshore wind farms) within the UK EEZ for long enough to complete surveys required (frequently lasting several hours);
* To be aware of any potential issues with the method and be prepared to discuss these and contribute to the development of potential solutions as required;
* To have suitable LiDAR system calibration and verification processes in place to ensure accuracy and precision is maintained and quantified during, and between, surveys;
* To have suitable systems and procedures in place to process resultant imagery and LiDAR data and produce Quality Assured datasets of species’ flight height estimates; and
* To be able to provide data collection services between approx. summer 2024 and spring 2026.