

2018 ASPIRE WHITE PAPER SUBMISSIONS TEMPLATE

Contact Information

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Willing to Attend Workshop?

(Yes/No)

Yes, but no funding for travel is available

Target Name(s)

Main Feature(s)/Area(s) of Interest: Altair seamount

Geographic Area(s) of Interest within the North Atlantic Ocean (Indicate all that apply)

North Central

Relevant Subject Area(s) (Indicate all that apply)

Biology: X

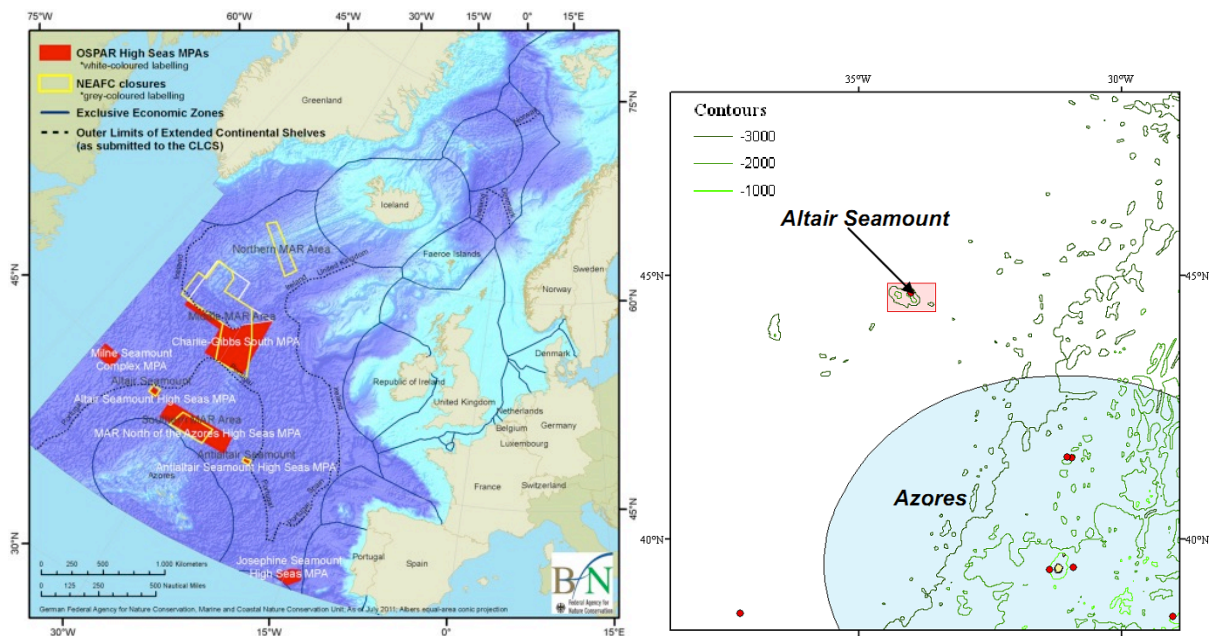
Geology: X

Chemistry

Physical Oceanography

Marine Archaeology

Other



Description of Topic or Region Recommended for Exploration

Brief Overview of Area or Feature:

Altair seamount located in the North Atlantic just north west of the Azores (44° 40' 00" N 34° 00' 00" W) and min depth 975 m. The seamount has very steep topography. Altair seabed is encompassed by a Portuguese submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

(CLCS). It was designated by both OSPAR (for the waters overlying the seabed) and Portugal (for the seabed) as MPAs. Altair seamount has been protected by a NEAFC fishery closure since 2005.

Brief Summary of Current State of Knowledge

Altair seamount is one of the less studied seamounts. Few scientific studies have been conducted on Altair before its closure, therefore very little is known about its biodiversity and ecology. Study conducted using a Spanish freezer trawler did perform three experimental trawls (1.8 h total) over Altair seamount at depth 975-1382 m (Durán Muñoz et al, 2000). The main fish species that were caught in just under 2 hours of trawling on Altair were Black scabbardfish (*Aphanopus carbo*) and Lantern shark (*Etmopterus princeps*) (Durán Muñoz et al, 2000).

Rationale for Future Exploration

Altair seamount has been protected by a NEAFC fishery closure and no bottom trawling is apparently being conducted on this seamount since 2005. It believed to be extremely rich on both vulnerable marine ecosystems and fish resources, but no studies on VME were performed. This seamount is appearing to be extremely useful for transatlantic studies and for understanding the biodiversity, biogeography and connectivity in the both sides of the Atlantic.

Relevant Partnerships (If Applicable)

SponGES, ATLAS

Literature

Durán Muñoz, P., Román, E. & González, F. (2000) Results of deep-water experimental fishing in the North Atlantic: An example of co-operative research with the fishing industry. ICES CM 2000/W:04.