 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p><b>Ninth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group</b> <i>Florianópolis, Brazil, 6 - 8 May 2019</i></p> <p><b>Guide on removing entangled seabirds from nets</b></p> <p><b><i>Jonathon HS Barrington, Sowdamini S Prasad</i></b></p>
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### SUMMARY

Entanglement of seabirds occurs across a range of net fishing gear in commercial, artisanal and recreational capture fisheries. A guide has been prepared outlining appropriate practices and procedures that would assist with the safe handling and disentanglement of seabirds from nets. This information is designed to help to maximise the chance of survival of seabirds entangled in nets, particularly threatened species of albatrosses and petrels. The guide complements information in the de-hooking guide.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That SBWG considers the content of the guide: *Removing entangled seabirds from nets*.
2. That SBWG considers recommending adoption of the guide.

## Guía sobre remoción de aves marinas atrapadas en redes

### RESUMEN

Las aves marinas pueden quedar atrapadas en muchos tipos de artes de pesca con redes utilizados en pesca de captura, ya sea en pesquerías comerciales, artesanales o deportivas. Se preparó una guía en la que se describen las prácticas y los procedimientos apropiados que ayudarán a manipular y liberar, de manera segura, a las aves marinas atrapadas en redes. La información que contiene la guía fue pensada para ayudar a aumentar al máximo las probabilidades de supervivencia de las aves marinas atrapadas en redes, sobre todo, de las especies amenazadas de albatros y petreles. Esta guía complementa la información incluida en la guía de extracción de anzuelos.

### RECOMENDACIONES

1. Que el GdTCS considere el contenido de la guía: *Remoción de aves marinas atrapadas en redes*.
2. Que el GdTCS considere recomendar la adopción de la guía.

## **Guide relatif à la libération des oiseaux de mer enchevêtrés dans les filets**

### **RÉSUMÉ**

Il arrive que des oiseaux marins soient capturés dans différentes sortes de filets au cours d'activités de pêche commerciale, artisanale et récréative. Un guide a été élaboré, qui décrit les pratiques et procédures à adopter pour contribuer à manipuler et désenchevêtrer en toute sécurité les oiseaux pris dans les filets. Ces informations ont pour but d'aider à renforcer le taux de survie des oiseaux de mer enchevêtrés dans les filets, en particulier les espèces d'albatros et de pétrels menacées. Le guide proposé complète les informations reprises dans le guide de retrait de l'hameçon.

### **RECOMMANDATIONS**

1. Que le GTCA examine le contenu du guide : *Libérer les oiseaux de mer enchevêtrés dans les filets*.
2. Que le GTCA envisage de recommander l'adoption du guide.

## **1. CONTEXT**

ACAP fact sheets outline technologies and procedures for mitigating seabird bycatch during fishing operations. Bycatch mitigation fact sheet 14 provides information on seabird bycatch mitigation measures in trawl fisheries concerning net entanglement (ACAP, 2019). Some information is included in the fact sheet about removing bycaught birds from nets, as follows:

Birds caught during hauling are often brought aboard the vessel alive. Care is needed to remove these birds without causing injury. Waterlogged birds should be kept in a dry place (cardboard box) to allow the bird's feathers to dry and be reconditioned prior to release (ACAP 2014b).

A preponderance of seabirds entangled by nets will either die from their injuries or drown before the net is retrieved by the fishing vessel. Some seabirds will however, be hauled aboard the fishing vessel alive, and entangled in the fishing net (Tamini et al., 2017; Watkins et al., 2008; Sullivan et al., 2006). Further information about appropriate practices and procedures would help maximise the chance of survival of entangled seabirds in trawl, gillnet and other net fisheries.

## **2. NET ENTANGLEMENT**

Seabirds are at risk of entanglement in nets in commercial, artisanal and recreational capture fisheries. Various nets pose an entanglement risk including, but not limited to, trawl nets, gillnets and purse seines. For example, entanglement may occur when trawl nets are at, or close to, the surface during shooting and hauling, when seabirds attempt to seize fish from the net (ACAP, 2019). Seabirds entangled during hauling may be brought onboard the fishing vessel alive (Tamini et al., 2017; Watkins et al., 2008; Sullivan et al., 2006). In these circumstances every effort should be made to safely disentangle the bycaught seabird, and ensure proper handling prior to release. Tamini et al. (2017) reported that 26% of seabirds entangled in a Uruguayan side-haul trawl fishery were retrieved onboard alive and could be saved, however crew education and training was needed to help crew in deciding whether to

release an entangled seabird, and about the manner in which that release should be performed. Consideration should also be given in nearshore fisheries about whether injured seabirds may be returned ashore to care and rehabilitation facilities, such as animal rescue centres.

### 3. GUIDE ON REMOVING ENTANGLED SEABIRDS FROM NETS

The Advisory Committee has encouraged development of guidelines and best-practice advice for removing entangled seabirds from nets ([AC9 Report](#), paragraph 9.1.6).

A guide on removing entangled seabirds from nets has been developed (**ANNEX 1**). The proposed guide provides clear, step-wise advice about, and illustrations concerning the safe handling of bycaught seabirds that have been entangled during net fishing operations. It is designed to be placed onboard fishing vessels for use when required. The guide is proposed to be made available in a range of languages.

The proposed guide on removing entangled seabirds from nets would contribute to the conservation of seabirds, particularly threatened albatrosses and petrels, in trawl, gillnet and other net fisheries. It would help commercial, artisanal and recreational net fishers in deciding whether to release an entangled seabird, and provide information about the manner in which that release should be performed. The proposed guide complements a similar guide on hook removal from seabirds and closely matches the style and layout of that guide (ACAP, 2019).

### REFERENCES

- ACAP (Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels), 2014. *Trawl Fisheries Net Entanglement* (ACAP Bycatch Mitigation Fact Sheet No 14) Available on the internet: <http://www.acap.aq/en/bycatch-mitigation/bycatch-mitigation-fact-sheets/1713-fs-14-trawl-fisheries-net-entanglement/file>.
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- ACAP, 2019. *Hook Removal from Seabirds* (ACAP Conservation Guidelines). Available on the internet: <http://www.acap.aq/en/resources/acap-conservation-guidelines/2177-hook-removal-from-seabirds-guide-a4/file>.
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- Tamini, L.L., Chavez, L.N., Dellacasa, R.F., Yates, O. and Frere, E., 2017. Seabird entanglement in side-haul trawlers: education as a mitigation strategy. Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, Eighth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group, 4 - 6 September 2017, Wellington, New Zealand, [SBWG8 Doc 10](#).
- Watkins, B.P., Petersen, S.I. and Ryan, P.G., 2008. Interactions between seabirds and deep-water hake trawl gear: an assessment of impacts in South African waters. *Animal Conservation*, 11, 247-254.

# REMOVING ENTANGLED SEABIRDS FROM NETS

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

For more information visit:  
[www.acap.aq](http://www.acap.aq)



## Release Kit



Towel /  
Blanket



Gloves



Pliers /  
Bolt cutters

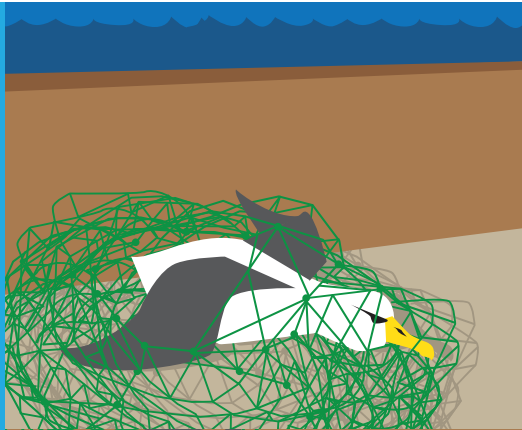


Knives



Box / Bin

1



## Bringing the bird aboard

If possible, slow or stop hauling and slow the vessel to reduce tension on net. If practical, support the bird as the net is hauled onboard to prevent further risk of injury to the bird.

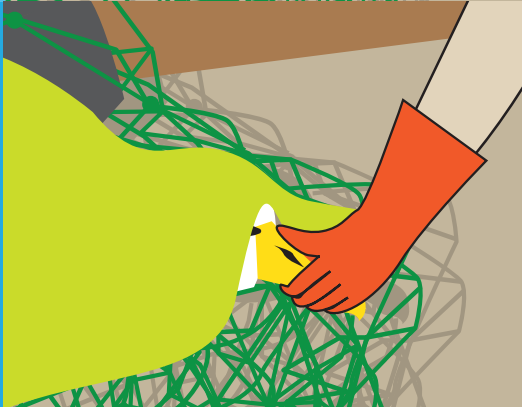
2



## Retrieve the bird

If practical, restrain the bird carefully, without squeezing. Use a towel or a blanket to cover its eyes if possible.

3



## Hold the bird securely

Continue to restrain the bird securely. Hold the beak gently shut but do not cover the nostrils. If the bird vomits, loosen hold on the bill so the bird does not suffocate.

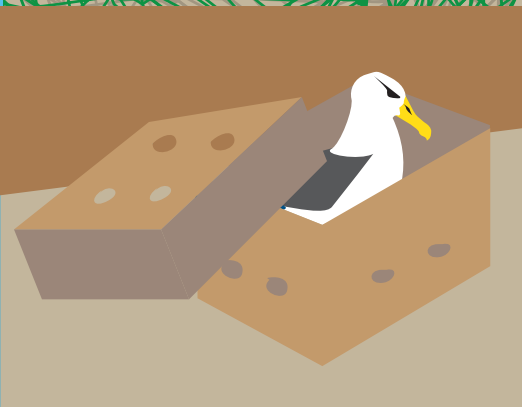
4



## Disentangling the bird

Cut the net around the bird. Remove the bird backward in the direction it entered the net. Avoid pulling the entangled bird through the net. After removing the bird, check for remaining net entanglement around its wings, neck or feet.

5



## If the bird is exhausted or waterlogged

If possible, place the bird in a ventilated box or bin in a quiet, dry, shaded place to recover for an hour or two. Otherwise contain the bird in a quiet, dry area away from oil. The bird is ready for release when the feathers are dry, bird is alert and able to stand.

6



## Release

### *Small vessels*

Slowly lower the bird onto the water. Bird may remain on the water for some time after release.

### *Large vessels – where birds cannot be lowered onto water*

Allow the bird to fly away naturally or lift and release the bird from the side of the vessel into the wind.