

 <p data-bbox="231 542 470 582">Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p data-bbox="587 250 1385 344"><b>Thirteenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee</b> <i>Edinburgh, United Kingdom, 22 – 26 May 2023</i></p> <p data-bbox="769 421 1120 465"><b>Secretariat Report</b></p> <p data-bbox="855 542 1034 577"><b><i>Secretariat</i></b></p>
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### **SUMMARY**

As decided by the Sixth Session of the Meeting of the Parties, this report draws on the most recent Secretariat six-monthly report to provide an overview of the Secretariat's operations during the first half of the 2023 financial year. A highlight of the six month period was the return to in-person meetings by many of the international organisations with which ACAP engages; allowing enhanced engagement with a number of contacts. Preparations for AC13 got underway. A Secondments round was launched.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Advisory Committee take note of the outcomes achieved by the Secretariat since MoP7 and, if appropriate, use this information to suggest amendments to the Secretariat's Work Programme (**AC13 Doc 14**).

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the decisions taken by the Sixth Meeting of the Parties (MoP6), the Secretariat prepares two reports (together with accompanying financial reports) per year, one in February covering the first six months of the financial year, and a full-year audited report in September. MoP6 decided that the most recent such report would be presented to the relevant session of the Advisory Committee or Meeting of the Parties. This report covers the Secretariat's activities over the period 1 July to 31 December 2022. **AC13 Doc 08** provides an interim financial report for the 2023 financial year.

A highlight of the six month period was the return to in-person meetings by many of the international organisations that ACAP engages with. ACAP was represented at several meetings of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and other international bodies. Over the six months (1 July - 31 December 2022) the Secretariat continued to implement actions in the Advisory Committee and Secretariat Work Programmes. This included launching a Secondments round. Preparations for AC13 got underway.

## **2. COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have an impact on the Secretariat and the Agreement's operations. Internationally, many organisations held in-person meetings for the first time in three years, but some were online.

## **3. AC13 PLANNING**

Preparations for the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC13) and its working groups, to be held in Edinburgh, United Kingdom (UK), got underway, in consultation with Advisory Committee officials and UK colleagues. Two AC13 Circulars (about AC13 deadlines and arrangements) were issued and one ACAP ANCP Circular (ACAP-ANCP Circular 2022-01 on sponsorship of delegates). Planning included a visit to Edinburgh by the Executive Secretary to look at the proposed meeting venue and discuss logistics. AC13 will be the first ACAP meeting held in person since AC11 in May 2019.

## **4. SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS**

The Secretariat's office remains at Level 2, 119 Macquarie Street, Hobart, Tasmania.

## **5. STAFFING**

Staffing of the Secretariat remains at two full-time positions, the Executive Secretary and the Science Officer. John Cooper retired from his position as Honorary Information Officer in August 2022 but continued to be involved in some activities, as Emeritus Information Officer and News Correspondent.

Additional support to the Secretariat is provided by volunteers, consultancies and internships, as well as by Advisory Committee officials. Volunteers included Geoffrey Tyler, who updated the World Albatross Day logos he designed in 2020, and Laurence Laureau, who helped with some translations into French.

## **6. CONTRACTS/CONSULTANTS**

In October 2022, the Secretariat's contract with *OnCall Conference Interpreters and Translators* came to an end. In October 2022 a new three year contract was signed with *2M Language Services*.

Marco Favero, Sebastián Jiménez and Juan Pablo Seco Pon attended RFMO and other meetings as ACAP representatives on a contract basis.

*Wombat Data Solutions* continued to provide database development services, and *Web Monkey* continued to provide web hosting and associated administration services.

Bree Forrer continued work under contract as a part time Communications Advisor for ACAP.

## 7. SUPPORT TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Secretariat liaised closely with Advisory Committee officials and members throughout the six-month period. A Secondments round was launched in September 2022. As at 31 December, the assessment process for the applications had not been finalised. One secondment carried over from 2019 was completed during this period. Two other secondments awarded in 2019 will be undertaken in the coming months.

## 8. ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTIES AND NON PARTIES

The resumption of international travel enabled the Executive Secretary to undertake two liaison visits, taking advantage of travel to RFMO meetings (see below) to add on a brief visit to Madrid and Lisbon. In Madrid she met with ACAP's National Contact Point (Elvira García-Bellido Capdevila) and colleagues at the *Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica y el Reto Demográfico* and had a separate meeting with the *Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación*. These meetings provided an opportunity to discuss issues likely to be covered at AC13 and its working groups, and to learn about Spain's national (and EU-related) developments in relation to seabird bycatch mitigation and other issues. During her visit to Madrid the Executive Secretary also had a meeting with the ICCAT Executive Secretary, Camille Mantel.

The objective of the visit to Lisbon was to make initial contact with Portuguese colleagues (given that Portugal is not an ACAP Party) and encourage them to take an interest in ACAP and to consider attending AC13 as an Observer. The visit was well received, and some useful contacts were made with officials from the *Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas* (Institute for Conservation of Nature and Forests) and the *Direção-Geral de Recursos Naturais, Segurança e Serviços Marítimos* (Directorate-General for Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Services).

There were also opportunities to engage in the margins at RFMO and other meetings with a range of contacts from various countries and organisations.

## 9. REPRESENTATION AT RELEVANT MEETINGS

The Secretariat and AC officials represented the Agreement at a number of meetings during the period from July to December 2022:

- Juan Pablo Seco Pon represented ACAP at the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC 18) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), online, in August 2022.
- The Executive Secretary participated in the 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 35) and the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Regional Secretariats Network (RSN 9) in Rome in September 2022. She also attended the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), held in Portugal in November 2022 and the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC 19) held in Vietnam in November-December 2022.

- In September 2022 Sebastián Jiménez represented ACAP at the 18<sup>th</sup> Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB18) of the IOTC, online, and in December 2022 took part in the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IOTC's Scientific Committee (IOTC SC25), in the Seychelles.
- In October 2022, Igor Debski attended a one-day online Technical Compliance Working Group meeting of the Compliance Committee of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), about Electronic Monitoring Systems. The Executive Secretary attended the online 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Extended Commission and Commission (EC29) of the CCSBT.
- In October 2022, Igor Debski attended, as an invited observer, the Working Group on Incidental Mortality Associated with Fishing (WG-IMAF) of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), in Hobart, Tasmania. Together with the Executive Secretary and the Science Officer, Igor attended the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CCAMLR Scientific Committee (CAML-41). The Executive Secretary and the Science Officer also attended the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Commission (CCAMLR-41).
- Marco Favero represented ACAP, online, at the 19<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee Meeting of the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC) in November 2022.

The attendance at RFMO and CCAMLR meetings reflected the priorities for ACAP's RFMO engagement strategy, as endorsed by AC12 and by MoP 7.

## **10. ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

During the intersessional decision-making process of the Meeting of the Parties in 2020-2021, the ACAP Parties (in [Resolution 6.11](#)) authorised the Secretariat to renew or amend existing arrangements concerning matters of common interest between this Agreement and a number of other organisations with which we had an existing arrangement. In accordance with this policy, the Secretariat renewed our Cooperation Guidelines with ICCAT in September 2022 (see ACAP-ANCP Circular 2022—08).

Attached as ANNEX 1 is an updated list of the status of ACAP's cooperation arrangements with other organisations.

**ANNEX 1. Arrangements between the Secretariat and relevant international and national organisations and institutions**

Title	Adopted / Renewed	Duration	Expiry
<b>International organisations</b>			
Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources ( <b>CCAMLR</b> )	9 November 2021	3 years	9 November 2024
Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna ( <b>CCSBT</b> )	6 December 2021	6 years	6 December 2027
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission ( <b>IOTC</b> )	23 February 2021	5 years	23 February 2026
Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles ( <b>IAC</b> )	30 January 2023	Ongoing	—
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission ( <b>IATTC</b> )	27 July 2017	6 years	26 July 2023 (Discussions on renewal have begun)
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas ( <b>ICCAT</b> )	2 September 2022	6 years	2 September 2028
South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation ( <b>SEAFO</b> )	11 December 2018	6 years	10 December 2024
Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement ( <b>SIOFA</b> )	26 November 2018	6 years	25 November 2024
South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation ( <b>SPRFMO</b> )	28 October 2014	Ongoing	—
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission ( <b>WCPFC</b> )	7 December 2007	Ongoing	—
<b>National organisations</b>			
Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Arts ( <b>DEDTA</b> ), now Department of State Growth ( <b>DSG</b> ), Tasmania, Australia	1 February 2013	10 years	31 January 2023 (Renewal under discussion with Dept of State Growth)
<b>Institutions</b>			
Karen C. Drayer Wildlife Health Center, School of Veterinary Medicine ( <b>UC Davis</b> )	25 May 2022	Ongoing	—