

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p>Fifteenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee <i>Swakopmund, Namibia, 1–5 June 2026</i></p> <p>Outcomes from MoP8 of relevance to the Advisory Committee</p> <p><i>Advisory Committee Chair, Secretariat</i></p>
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SUMMARY

The Eighth Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP8) was convened between 19 and 23 May 2025, in Dunedin, New Zealand. The meeting was hosted and chaired by New Zealand. This document highlights the outcomes and decisions of MoP8 of relevance to the Advisory Committee and its Work Programme. Its structure follows that of the MoP8 meeting report. Of note to the Advisory Committee, the Parties agreed:

- to a zero real growth budget, supported by a one-off draw down of \$306,842 in estimated savings from the General Fund
- to endorse a review of the implementation reporting format to better assess the effectiveness of priority conservation actions
- to allocate sufficient funding for the Advisory Committee's Work Programme, including RFMCO engagement
- to review Annex 2 (Action Plan) of the Agreement before the next MoP
- to allocate funding in the Advisory Committee Work Programme to implement ACAP's Communications Strategy; and
- to adopt updated indicators to monitor the success of the Agreement, acknowledging the continued decline of ACAP-listed species.

RECOMMENDATION

The Advisory Committee is requested to act during the 2026-2028 triennium to address and implement the agreed Resolutions, endorsed recommendations and other outcomes of MoP8 relevant to the Advisory Committee's agenda and Work Programme.

1. BACKGROUND

The Eighth Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP8) was convened between 19 and 23 May 2025, in Dunedin, New Zealand and was hosted by New Zealand. The meeting was opened by Ms Stephanie Rowe, Deputy Director-General Biodiversity Heritage and Visitors of New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DOC). Ms Danica Stent from the New Zealand's Department of Conservation chaired the Meeting.

This document highlights outcomes of MoP8 relevant to the Advisory Committee and its Work Programme. For a full account of the meeting outcomes please refer to the [Report of the Eighth Session of the Meeting of the Parties](#).

The Advisory Committee Work Programme (**AC15 Doc 14**) and the Secretariat Work Programme (**AC15 Doc 15**) are addressed in detail under agenda items 14.1 and 5.2, respectively.

2. PROCEDURAL ISSUES

MoP8 adopted amendments to the Rules of Procedure for the MoP. Rule 4(5) was amended to align the timeline for requests from non-international bodies with that of Rule 4(3) applicable to international bodies (in line with recent changes to the Rules of Procedure for the Advisory Committee agreed at AC14), and Rule 5 was amended to allow Parties to submit their credentials either as original documents or in electronic format ([Resolution 8.1](#)).

3. OPERATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat Report ([MoP8 Doc 08](#)) highlighted the Secretariat's focus on organising two meetings of the Advisory Committee and Working Groups in Edinburgh in 2023 and in Lima in 2024, followed by organising MoP8 in May 2025. The Secretariat and Advisory Committee officials also continued representing the Agreement at many international meetings in accordance with the RFMCO Engagement Strategy ([MoP8 Doc 24](#)). The Executive Secretary also assisted (administratively) the Recruitment Subcommittee in the process for appointing a new Executive Secretary.

The MoP expressed Parties' appreciation for the work undertaken by the Secretariat and thanked the Tasmanian Department of State Growth for supporting the Agreement by providing ongoing invaluable financial and administrative assistance to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat Work Programme 2026-2028 was adopted ([Resolution 8.2](#)).

MoP8 endorsed Terms of Reference for an Intersessional Group to review the criteria for recruitment of the Executive Secretary contained in Annex A of the current Staff Regulations (**MoP8 Report, Annex 8**).

MoP8 adopted Terms of Reference for reviewing the effectiveness of the Secretariat ([Resolution 8.3](#)), and established the Review Body that included regional representation from: (i) Europe/Africa – South Africa and the United Kingdom (Chair); (ii) Asia/Australasia – Australia and New Zealand; and (iii) North/South America: Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay.

The MoP thanked the Recruitment Subcommittee for its work on recruiting the new Executive Secretary, Mr Jonathon Barrington.

4. OPERATION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

The MoP discussed [MoP8 Doc 23](#), but rejected a proposal by Australia and New Zealand to amend the Financial Regulations to establish a Budget Subcommittee. Instead, the Parties agreed to hold informal online meetings of interested Representatives, convened by the Secretariat, at least 30 days before future MoP sessions to discuss the draft Budget and assessed contributions.

5. OPERATION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Report of the Advisory Committee ([MoP8 Doc 11](#)) detailed its work over the 2023-2025 triennium. Key achievements included the continued development of seabird bycatch mitigation Best Practice Advice, guidelines and factsheets, a review of priority conservation actions, funding of Small Grants and Secondments Programmes, development and implementation of ACAP's RFMCO Engagement Strategy, provision of advice on High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI), and continued review of taxonomy-related publications relevant to ACAP species. Ten intersessional groups were established to advance these initiatives.

The Advisory Committee Chair highlighted that despite these efforts, ACAP's objective to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels was not yet being met and the conservation crisis for albatrosses and petrels, highlighted since 2019, was ongoing. Nevertheless, he highlighted achievements of ACAP set out in a booklet published in 2024 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Agreement's entry into force.

The MoP welcomed the new Advisory Committee reporting structure and recognised the contributions made to ACAP by the Advisory Committee's Working Groups, Convenors, Vice-convenors and technical experts.

The MoP requested that a task be added to the Advisory Committee Work Programme to carry out a Review of Annex 2 (Action Plan) to the Agreement, and endorsed the recommendations as set out in **MoP8 Doc 11**:

1. Note the progress and achievements made by the Advisory Committee during the past triennium.
2. Recognise the contributions made to the Agreement by the Advisory Committee's Working Groups and continue to support engagement by Convenors, Vice-convenors and technical experts in order to progress the Advisory Committee's Work Programme.
3. Allocate adequate resources to support the continued work of the Advisory Committee, its Working Groups and its Work Programme to ensure timely and reliable advice on the status of ACAP species and their breeding sites; the assessment and mitigation of threats and on priority conservation actions.
4. Provide feedback to the Advisory Committee on its reporting to the MoP and identify further opportunities to improve the delivery of information and advice.

MoP8 adopted the Advisory Committee Work Programme 2026-2028, as amended ([Resolution 8.4](#)).

6. OPERATION OF THE AGREEMENT

6.1 Listing of new species to Annex 1

No proposals were submitted by Parties to MoP8 to amend Annex 1 of the Agreement.

The Convenor of the Taxonomy Working Group presented an updated list of procellariiform species ([MoP8 Inf 01 Rev 1](#)) for potential inclusion in Annex 1, while Chinese Taipei provided new data on land-based threats to the Streaked Shearwater *Calonectris leucomelas* in the North Pacific, and suggested adjusting the score for "Land-based threats" for this species from 1 to 3 or 4 in Table 1 of **MoP8 Inf 01 Rev 1**.

6.2 Implementation

The MoP considered the Summary Report on Progress with the Implementation of the Agreement 2022 – 2024 ([MoP8 Doc 12](#)), based on information received from eight Parties. Four Parties submitted their implementation reports after the due date ([MoP8 Inf 02 Rev 3](#)).

The detail provided in Parties' implementation reports varied greatly. Some broad themes identified in the 2023-2025 triennium included the adoption, review or update of National Plans of Action, development of new management plans for breeding sites or foraging areas of ACAP species, expansion or declaration of Marine Protected Areas, review of potential impacts on birds from offshore wind farms, and the impact of HPAI.

Considering the limitations identified in the current implementation reporting process, the MoP requested the Advisory Committee to review the format of reporting on the implementation of the Agreement, with a focus on priority conservation actions, on land, at-sea and for High Priority Populations. This should capture activities undertaken under the Agreement, including those reported by Parties, and an assessment of the effectiveness of these activities in addressing the conservation priorities.

MoP8 endorsed the recommendations as set out in **MoP8 Doc 12**:

1. Recognise the progress made by Parties in addressing the Conservation Priorities identified in the 2022-2024 triennium.
2. Provide their Implementation Reports to the Secretariat in a timely manner as per Article VII(1)(c) of the Agreement so that the information can be used to determine progress with implementation of the Agreement.
3. Continue to take actions to implement the Agreement.

6.3 Identification of Priority Conservation Actions

The MoP considered an update to ACAP's priority conservation actions for the 2026-2028 triennium, as identified by the Advisory Committee ([MoP8 Doc 15](#)). The priority conservation actions are identified by prioritisation frameworks developed by the Advisory Committee to address both land-based and at-sea threats. The conservation actions are based on information compiled from ACAP Parties, cooperating non-Party Range States, the Seabird Bycatch Working Group, and the Population and Conservation Status Working Group.

The MoP endorsed the recommendations as set out in **MoP8 Doc 15**:

1. Endorse the priority conservation actions identified by the Advisory Committee for the 2026 - 2028 triennium.
2. Implement ACAP's Best Practice Advice on seabird bycatch mitigation in all domestic and high-seas fisheries that impact ACAP species and especially those identified as priorities for conservation action.
3. Fully support and implement ACAP's RFMCO Engagement Strategy.
4. Address priority land-based threats through alien species eradications and other management actions.
5. Support all conservation actions that reduce the threats to ACAP's High Priority Populations.

The MoP considered the revised ACAP Engagement Strategy with Regional Fisheries Management and Conservation Organisations (RFMCO) ([MoP8 Doc 24](#)). The Engagement Strategy sets out individualised approaches for engagement with each RFMCO (grouped by

three categories) and a list of Priority Actions. These would be updated regularly and reviewed by the Advisory Committee at least every three years to account for developments in the respective organisations.

The MoP endorsed the ACAP Engagement Strategy with Regional Fisheries Management and Conservation Organisations (RFMCO) (**MoP8 Doc 24**), and agreed to allocate sufficient funding in the Advisory Committee Work Programme 2026-2028 to fully implement the Priority Actions outlined in the Strategy, acknowledging the pivotal role engagement with these organisations plays in advocating for the implementation of ACAP's Best Practice Advice in conservation and management measures.

The MoP adopted a Resolution developed by New Zealand concerning *Actions to address the conservation crisis faced by albatrosses and petrels due to the threat of fisheries bycatch* ([Resolution 8.5](#)). The Resolution reiterates key actions ACAP and its Parties have agreed to undertake to address the conservation crisis, in line with Parties' commitments under Article VI of the Agreement to implement the Action Plan for achieving a favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels.

6.4 Indicators to Measure the Success of the Agreement

The MoP considered a report on the status of ACAP species, populations, and breeding sites ([MoP8 Doc 13](#)). The report is based on input from ACAP Parties, cooperating Range States, and BirdLife International (BLI). Most ACAP species continue to decline, with their IUCN Red List status worsening since 2004. Over the past 20 years, 52% of species have declined, 16% remained stable, 27% increased, and 6% have unknown trends. Population monitoring has decreased since 2014, reaching its lowest levels since 2004. Tracking studies have been conducted for all ACAP species, but comprehensive tracking across all life stages remains limited. The report highlighted that with more than 50% of ACAP-listed species in decline, current conservation efforts are insufficient to maintain a favourable status for these populations.

The MoP endorsed the recommendations as set out in **MoP8 Doc 13**:

1. Acknowledge the continuing decline in the conservation status of ACAP-listed species and the urgent need to implement ACAP's Priority Conservation Actions in the next triennium (see MoP8 Doc 15).
2. Implement best practice monitoring that includes censuses of breeding sites conducted at a minimum of 10-year intervals, and annual monitoring of population trend and demography at a minimum of one representative site for each island group.
3. Continue to submit all breeding site monitoring data to the ACAP Database to maintain the currency of information underpinning analyses.
4. Conduct priority tracking and other research programmes to describe the at-sea distribution of albatrosses and petrels, and submit any new tracking data to BirdLife International's Seabird Tracking Database.

The MoP considered a report on threats to ACAP species and mitigation actions ([MoP8 Doc 14](#)). The report summarises known and suspected threats to ACAP species, both at-sea and at their breeding sites, and outlines mitigation strategies and best practices to reduce these risks. The report is based on consolidated information from ACAP Parties, cooperating Range States, the Seabird Bycatch Working Group, and the Population and Conservation Status Working Group.

The MoP endorsed the recommendations as set out in **MoP8 Doc 14**:

1. Eradicate feral species from the breeding sites that impact on ACAP species.
2. Mitigate other threats at breeding sites through the development of policy and practices that follow ACAP advice and guidelines.
3. Invest in, and implement, comprehensive management plans for breeding sites of ACAP species.
4. Use ACAP guidelines and Best Practice Advice for seabird bycatch mitigation to guide the development of policy and practice within the fisheries under their jurisdiction or management, and the RFMOs of which they are members.
5. Establish and maintain programmes to determine the magnitude and species composition of seabird bycatch in relevant national and high seas fisheries and to monitor the implementation of effective bycatch mitigation strategies.
6. Assess the efficacy of seabird bycatch mitigation measures used in the fisheries they manage, and in RFMOs they are members of, and explore the performance of new mitigation techniques and technologies, as well as related safety and other operational issues.
7. Monitor and provide information on the fisheries they manage, and the associated seabird bycatch, as part of annual reporting to the Advisory Committee, to enable the assessment and reporting of performance indicators on seabird bycatch.
8. Support the collection and provision of seabird bycatch data by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and Regional Conservation Bodies (RCBs).

6.5 Capacity Building

The MoP considered a report on capacity building and outreach ([MoP8 Doc 16](#)). This report highlighted capacity building through international collaboration facilitated by the Agreement's Small Grants Scheme and Secondment Programme. The report identified difficulties encountered with the collection and analysis of the capacity building indicator related to Parties' domestic activities, which is collated from annual reports to the Advisory Committee.

The MoP reiterated its commitment to capacity building activities supported by the Agreement's Small Grants Scheme and Secondment Programme, noting the role of these programmes in the sharing of knowledge and strengthening international cooperation.

The MoP agreed to remove Indicator 2 on domestic capacity building activities from the annual reporting obligations to the Advisory Committee, acknowledging that capacity building indicators addressing domestic activities may not be well suited as a monitoring tool.

The MoP also agreed to advise the Secretariat of any updates to the list of authorities, research centres, scientists and non-government organisations concerned with albatrosses and petrels provided on the ACAP website.

The MoP considered an analysis of the resources allocated and the conservation value of the ACAP Small Grants Scheme and Secondment Programme ([MoP8 Doc 25](#)). The analysis outlined the evolution of resources allocated, the impact of both programmes in conservation and capacity building, and the way both programmes improved international collaboration.

The MoP highlighted that the Small Grants and Secondments have clearly enhanced the research capacity of the Agreement, promoting knowledge exchange, and integrated scientific findings into ACAP's decision-making processes, providing an efficient and effective way for

the Agreement to progress the Advisory Committee's Work Programme and build capacity within Parties.

The MoP acknowledged the substantial amount of human resources allocated in-kind to the implementation of Small Grants and Secondments.

All Parties agreed on the very high value of both programmes in progressing actions in the Advisory Committee Work Programme and stressed the crucial importance of securing the funds to keep these programmes operating into the future.

6.6 Communications Strategy

The MoP considered a report on the implementation of the ACAP Communications Strategy ([MoP8 Doc 26](#)). The document contained the latest update of the Communications Strategy as presented to AC14.

The MoP appreciated the importance of improving communication with relevant entities not currently reached, and agreed to allocate funding in the Advisory Committee Work Programme to implement the Communications Strategy.

6.7 Arrangements with other organisations

The MoP considered a report on arrangements with other organisations ([MoP8 Doc 21](#)). The report indicated which existing arrangements had been renewed during the 2023-2025 triennium pursuant to Resolution 6.11, and that a new Grant Agreement had been entered into with the Tasmanian Department of State Growth with the approval of the Parties.

The MoP agreed to the Secretariat concluding an arrangement with the Comisión Técnica Mixta del Frente Marítimo (CTMFM), and developing an arrangement with Global Fishing Watch (GFW), and adopted [Resolution 8.6](#).

6.8 Agreement budget 2026-2028 and Scale of Contributions

The MoP agreed to adopt a zero real growth budget, supported by a one-off draw down of \$306,842 in estimated savings from the General Fund to support the work of the Agreement in the 2026-2028 triennium, and adopted [Resolution 8.7](#).

The MoP agreed to adopt a zero real growth Scale of Contributions for the 2026-2028 triennium (see **Resolution 8.7 Appendix C**).

6.9 National Plans of Actions

The MoP noted progress by Parties: Australia Brazil, New Zealand, South Africa, and the APEC Member Economy of Chinese Taipei in updating their respective National Plans of Action, and New Zealand's full implementation of ACAP Best Practice Advice, including the "three out of three" approach or hook shielding devices.

11. CLOSING REMARKS

Noting this would be Dr Christine Bogle's last meeting of the Agreement in this role before relinquishing the Executive Secretary position at the end of June 2025, the MoP joined in warmly thanking her for her dedicated involvement with the Agreement over the last six and a half years, including her leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic, and wished her all the best for her future.