



**Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels**

**Fifth Meeting of Advisory Committee**

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**ACAP Development of Indicators**

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## ACAP Development of Indicators

### Requirements under ACAP

Article IX 6(f) of the ACAP Agreement requires the Advisory Committee to develop a system of indicators to measure the collective success of the Parties to the Agreement in achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels listed in Annex 1 of the Agreement.

Under the Agreement, a species is said to be in favourable conservation status when the following conditions are met:

- **population** dynamics indicate that the migratory species is maintaining itself on a long-term basis
- the **range** of the migratory species is neither currently being reduced, nor is likely to be reduced, on a long term basis
- there is, and will be in the foreseeable future, sufficient **habitat** to maintain the population of the migratory species on a long-term basis; and
- the **distribution and abundance** of the migratory species approach historic coverage and levels to the extent that potentially **suitable ecosystems** exist and to the extent consistent with wise wildlife management

Currently ACAP uses just the one headline indicator; the IUCN Red list Indicator (RLI) for ACAP species. It was agreed at MoP2 in 2006 that ACAP should use this as an interim measure for monitoring the conservation status of ACAP-listed albatrosses and petrels whilst a more comprehensive suite of indicators could be developed to measure the success of ACAP.

These indicators will need to reflect both :

- changes in the conservation status of ACAP species; and
- the implementation of measures adopted by Parties that can reasonably be assumed to have beneficial outcomes for populations.

### Developing ACAP indicators

It is important to have an explicit link between any ACAP objectives or targets and the indicators. CBD recommends the development of a small set of broad headline indicators, clearly linked to key objectives/targets and underscored by more specific sub-indicators.

A list of possible ACAP indicators is included at Annex A falling into the four key areas which could be aligned with the work of the existing ACAP working groups:

- conservation status (Taxonomy WG and S&T WG)
- population trends (S&T WG)

- by-catch (By-catch WG)
- breeding sites (BS WG)

Sub-indicators could also be developed related to ACAP implementation to reflect and monitor the work of other people/ groups looking at issues like priorities, reporting etc.

When assessing the validity of proposed indicators the information provided at Annex B (CBD Principles for selecting indicators) and C (Key questions and indicator categories) may be of use.

### **Recommendations**

The Advisory Committee and its working groups are requested to:

- note the guidance for developing indicators;
- discuss and revise the proposed list of possible indicators (at Annex A); and
- to
  - consider what existing data could feed into the assessment of the proposed indicators considered at AC5;
  - identify data gaps (and how best to fill them); and
  - recommend, and in the case of the AC, adopt, a proposed suite of indicators to be used by AC6

## Possible ACAP indicators

### Headline Indicators :

#### Conservation status:

- IUCN Red List status of ACAP species (existing IUCN indicator)

#### Population trends:

- Population trends for individual ACAP species/populations (giving priority to indicator than can pick up trends in a shorter period)
- Breeding success of ACAP species at key breeding sites

#### By-catch:

- Levels of fisheries by-catch involving ACAP species (linked to Kim Rivera's WG).

#### Breeding Sites:

- Numbers of land-based threats of low, medium and high magnitude at key ACAP breeding sites (linked to the threat assessment analysis conducted by the Breeding Sites Working Group).
- Number of ACAP breeding sites with protected status
- Condition of breeding site

#### Sub-indicators:

- Coverage of albatross range by observers programmes
- RFMO engagement on ACAP issues (MoU in place, ACAP-related Resolutions, active implementation?)
- Through the priorities work led by Spencer Clubb (NZ) track whether the risk (vulnerability and threat) for an ACAP species is increasing , decreasing or remaining stable.
- How many key priority conservation actions (once identified) have been successfully achieved)
- Quality of ACAP information and population (linked to Ian Hay's work on national reporting) to get better/more accurate information, increase scope or filling data gaps).

## **CBD Principles for selecting indicators**

### **Indicators should be:**

**Policy relevant and meaningful** Indicators should send a clear message and provide information at a level appropriate for policy and management decision making by assessing changes in the status of biodiversity (or pressures, responses, use or capacity), related to baselines and agreed policy targets if possible.

**Biodiversity relevant** Indicators should address key properties of biodiversity or related issues as state, pressures, responses, use or capacity.

**Scientifically sound** Indicators must be based on clearly defined, verifiable and scientifically acceptable data, which are collected using standard methods with known accuracy and precision, or based on traditional knowledge that has been validated in an appropriate way.

**Broadly accepted** The power of an indicator depends on its broad acceptance. Involvement of the policy makers, and major stakeholders and experts in the development of an indicator is crucial.

**Based on affordable monitoring** Indicators should be measurable in an accurate and affordable way and part of a sustainable monitoring system, using determinable baselines and targets for the assessment of improvements and declines.

**Based on affordable modelling** Information on cause-effect relationships should be achievable and quantifiable, in order to link pressures, state and response indicators. These relation models enable scenario analyses and are the basis of the ecosystem approach.

**Sensitive** Indicators should be sensitive to show trends and, where possible, permit distinction between human-induced and natural changes. Indicators should thus be able to detect changes in systems in time frames and on the scales that are relevant to the decisions, but also be robust so that measuring errors do not affect the interpretation. It is important to detect changes before it is too late to correct the problems being detected.

### **Key questions and indicator categories**

What is changing and to what extent? (**state**);  
Why is it changing? (**pressure**);  
Why is it important? (**use**);  
What are we doing about it? (**response**);  
Do we have the means to formulate and implement response measures?  
(**capacity**).

#### **State**

What is the current state of the conservation status of ACAP species (stable, increasing, decreasing)?  
What is the condition of the breeding site?

#### **Pressure**

What is the possible impact of threats and what is their relative contribution?  
What is the size of these threats, and are they stable, decreasing or growing?  
Are the threats being addressed?

#### **Response**

Are management efforts targeted to the highest priority threats?  
Is progress being made in achieving ACAP targets and objectives set out in planning process?  
Is the protected area network adequate? Are the protected areas being effectively managed?

#### **Effectiveness of measures (combination of state and response)**

How effective are/have been the measures taken?  
Are management efforts, including resource allocation, in relation to present and past threats sufficient to slow the rate of decline and prevent irreversible loss?

#### **Use**

What is the current state of the goods and services provided by biological diversity?  
What sustainable use practices are in place and how sustainable are they?  
Are the economic benefits derived known (income from eco-tourism)?

#### **Capacity**

How much human and institutional capacity is available to implement ACAP?  
How much support (financial resources, institutional support and incentives) from national and international sources is currently being provided to implement ACAP?  
What additional means (including new and additional financial resources) are needed to address the threats?  
What is the management capacity to quickly react to known (e.g. by-catch, predation) or unforeseen (e.g. oil spills, new diseases) threats? What is needed to build the required capacity (according to national priorities)?  
What is the capacity to effectively manage priority breeding sites/range?  
What is the capacity to maintain information flow?

