

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p>Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee <i>Wellington, New Zealand, 11 – 15 September 2017</i></p> <p>Secretariat Report</p> <p><i>Secretariat</i></p>
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SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Secretariat's operations since the Ninth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. A major focus of the Secretariat's work during this period has been on building the Agreement's relationships with other intergovernmental organisations and in raising its profile in relevant international fora. The Agreement's Secretariat also provided support to the Advisory Committee and Working Groups during the inter-sessional period, as well as organising the current meetings (AC10, PaCSWG4, SBWG8 and the *Pterodroma* Workshop).

RECOMMENDATION

That the Advisory Committee takes note of the outcomes achieved by the Secretariat since AC9 and, if appropriate, use this information to suggest amendments to the Secretariat's Work Programme (**AC10 Doc 18** and **AC10 Doc 19**).

1. SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS

The Secretariat moved premises on 21 February 2017 following the non-renewal of the lease at 27 Salamanca Square. This relocation was unanticipated and required unforeseen time and budget resources. The new office is located on Level 2, 119 Macquarie Street, Hobart, and offers the same standard of accommodation while being conveniently positioned in the Hobart CBD. The Secretariat signed a five year lease and the financial terms are significantly more advantageous than the previous lease.

2. STAFFING

Staffing of the Secretariat remains at two full-time positions, consisting of the Executive Secretary and Science Officer positions. Mr John Cooper continues in the position of Honorary Information Officer. Additional support is provided by volunteers, consultancies and internships, as well as by Advisory Committee officials.

3. CONTRACTS/CONSULTANTS

Dr Anton Wolfaardt continued to assist with the implementation of ACAP's RFMO engagement strategy on a contract basis. Dr Wolfaardt represented the Agreement at meetings of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), as well as other related meetings such as the two Common Oceans Project Regional Seabird Bycatch Pre-Assessment Workshops in South Africa and Vietnam.

Oncall Conference Interpreters and Translators continued to provide interpretation and translation services for the Agreement on a long-term contract basis.

Dr Dave Watts (Wombat Data Solutions) continued to provide database development services, and Mr Jan Dabrowski (Web Monkey) continued to provide web hosting and associated administration services.

4. SECONDMENTS/INTERNSHIPS

Three translation and interpretation students from Monash University, Melbourne (Delphine Marie) and the University of New South Wales, Sydney (Carolina Genson and Juliana Castaneda) undertook internships in the Secretariat over a one week period in mid-February 2017.

Ms Cui Shuo (University of Tasmania, Hobart) undertook an internship during October-November 2016 in relation to the Common Oceans China National Awareness Workshop (Suva, Fiji, 10 December 2016) aimed to build capacities in Chinese crew and skippers in the pelagic longline fleet. Ms Cui contributed with the translation and adaptation of the Agreement's introduction paper offered in Mandarin to workshop attendants. Although the internship took place in the Secretariat, Ms Cui's participation also included the attendance of the actual workshop (partially supported by FAO Common Oceans Project) to assist with

translation and interpretation. Chinese delegates who regularly attend RFMO meetings and specifically address bycatch and observer programme matters were also involved in the preparation of this event.

Mr Shao-Yi Wang (Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania) undertook a week-long internship in April 2017 as part of his Master's Degree. The objective of this practicum focused on the analysis of national annual reports to Scientific Committee meetings of the IATTC and the WCPFC. The analysis was restricted to recent years and aimed to describe the level and quality of reporting to better understand needs and actions to improve reporting (e.g. in terms of species identification, report of bycatch rates and birds bycaught, spatial and temporal data stratification). Preliminary results of this internship were used in a paper on bycatch estimation and reporting framework submitted by ACAP to the latest IATTC Scientific Advisory Committee meeting in May 2017.

5. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

5.1. Support for Advisory Committee meetings and AC Work Program

Support was provided to the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups during the inter-sessional period. Advice and assistance was also provided to the Chair of the Advisory Committee and other Advisory Committee Officials regarding actions relevant to the Advisory Committee Work Programme.

Arrangements were made for the Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC10), the preceding Working Group meetings (PaCSWG4 and SBWG8) and the Agreement's 'Pterodroma Workshop'.

5.2. Relationship and arrangements with other International Organisations

A key focus of the Secretariat's work has been on building and formalising the Agreement's relationship with other intergovernmental organisations (IGO). A significant level of success was achieved in this regard.

During the last year, arrangements have been negotiated with the Inter-American Turtle Convention (ANCP Circular 2016-05). After the consultation process and approval from Parties, the signature of a Cooperation Agreement between both organisations was completed in December 2016.

Following the recommendation from MoP5, a renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission was negotiated. As no change to the original text was required, both Secretariats signed the renewal for another five years in July 2017.

Discussions with authorities from the Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organisation (*Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuícola del Istmo Centroamericano*, OSPESCA) were also held to explore the value of signing an agreement with that organisation. A full analysis will be finalised shortly by the Secretariat and provided to Parties in MoP6.

5.3. Representation at Meetings of other International Organisations

Dr Anton Wolfaardt (Convenor of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group) represented the Agreement in meetings relevant to the strategy for the engagement with RFMOs (see point 3 for details).

Dr Igor Debski (Vice-Convenor of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group) represented the Agreement at the CCSBT ERSWG meeting.

Dr Richard Phillips (Co-convenor of Population and Conservation Status Working Group) offered presentations on behalf of the Agreement at the 5th International Albatross and Petrel Conference, and the SCAR Biology Symposium.

The Agreement's Science Officer, Dr Wiesława Misiak, represented the Agreement at the 5th International Albatross and Petrel Conference and the CCAMLR (Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources) Scientific Committee meeting.

The Agreement's Executive Secretary, Dr Marco Favero, represented the Agreement at meetings of CCAMLR, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS Scientific Council).

5.4. Accession of New Parties

The Secretariat has liaised with a number of Range States concerning their possible accession to the Agreement, including in the margins of international meetings it has attended.

Regarding the USA accession to ACAP, the legislation that was a part of the process that would enable the United States to accede to ACAP was introduced into the prior Congress. For accession to be further considered, such legislation would need to be reintroduced in the Congress that began in January 2017.

In the case of Namibia, Dr Hannes Holtzhausen reported progress in implementing seabird bycatch mitigation measures in their fisheries and a continuous support to the accession to the Agreement.

In combination with the attendance to the IATTC Commission Meeting in Mexico City (July 2017), the Executive Secretary met Mexican authorities from the *Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales* (SEMARNAT, Environment), *Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación* (SAGARPA, Fisheries) and *Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores* (SRE, Foreign Affairs). Mr Federico Méndez-Sánchez (CSO Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas) contributed to organising the agenda.

5.5. External funds

Following intersessional consultation (ACAP Circular 2016-07), Parties approved the ACAP Secretariat entering into an agreement with Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy to raise funds for purposes consistent with the policies, aims and activities of the Agreement. Any funds

raised were to be used to extend the research on fly-backs in association with the Australian Maritime College (Launceston, Tasmania). Between early December 2016 and late January 2017, the fundraising programme was successfully implemented in four Antarctic cruises. The total amount of funds raised will be communicated by Abercrombie and Kent in the near future. Abercrombie and Kent Philanthropy officers already confirmed their willingness to continue the support and fundraising during the upcoming 2017-18 Antarctic season.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

An interim financial report for the 2017 financial year has been prepared and is submitted for the information/action of the Advisory Committee (**AC10 Doc 08**). Expenditure is currently within budget allocations, and the cash on-hand in our accounts is sufficient to meet all expected commitments for the current financial year. The audited financial statements for the 2017 financial year will be distributed among ACAP Parties in accordance with Financial Regulations 10.2 and 11.3.