



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

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Developing Indicators to Measure the Success of ACAP

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Developing Indicators to Measure the Success of ACAP

To facilitate discussion by the Advisory Committee of this agenda item, the Secretariat, in consultation with Working Group Conveners, has extracted text from the reports of the three working groups that considered this topic. This has been lightly edited and forms this document.

Introduction

AC5 Doc 28 summarises the background to the requirement to develop a system of indicators to measure the effectiveness of the ACAP Agreement. It also suggests potential categories of indicators and some examples of specific indicators relating to these.

AC5 Inf 8 extends this approach and provides additional suggestions for potential indicators, especially those relating to the marine environment and to capacity and resource aspects.

In addition it was recognised that AC5 Doc16, proposing improvements to reporting on implementation of the Agreement, contains suggestions relevant to the development of basic performance indicators.

Accordingly the Working Groups:

- a) endorsed the general principles outlined in Doc 28 Annex B;
- b) supported the proposition that, whenever possible, indicators should be aligned with and/or developed from the existing initiatives of the ACAP and its WGs and incorporated into ACAP reporting and data collection mechanisms;
- c) recommended that indicator categories should, where possible, conform with the State Pressure Response (SPR) system, while recognising that in some cases important indicators should relate to monitoring the progressive acquisition of relevant data to enable the development of SPR indicators.

In respect of potential indicators of relevance to **breeding sites**, the Breeding Sites WG recommended that an appropriate suite of indicators should be developed from amongst the following categories:

State

1. Number and proportion of sites with alien species, including separate sub-indicators for habitat modifiers and known/potential predators

Pressure

2. Levels of threat to species/sites
Develop indicators to track changes in the number and proportion of threats, taking account of the different ACAP categories (Low, Medium, High, Very High) involved.
It is envisaged that an indicator for threats at ACAP sites could be developed and treated in a manner analogous to that of the IUCN Red List Index for species.

Response

3.1 Actions to mitigate/eliminate threats

Although this indicator might also be included within the elements of 3.2 relating to implementation of management plans, such eradication actions may be viewed as of sufficient importance to warrant a separate category.

3.2 Actions to protect and manage sites

Potential indicators might include:

- a) number and proportion of sites with formal Protected Area status;
- b) level (quality) of protection (e.g. IUCN WCPA category);
- c) number and proportion of sites with formal Management Plans (and specific inclusion of actions relating to ACAP species);
- d) progress with implementation of actions relating to ACAP species;
- e) status of elements of biosecurity protocols relevant to ACAP species.

Data relevant to the development of several of these indicators are already available, at least in part, from the ACAP database.

Currently standard database queries can derive some information on breeding site indicators, such as is summarised in Table 2 of the draft BSWG report.

However additional work is required to:

- a) refine the analysis of existing data;
- b) ensure that consistency is retained in the application of and changes to threat classification; and
- c) acquire the additional information essential for generating time specified baselines (e.g. for entry into force of management plans) and for ensuring that changes over time can be tracked accurately.

In respect of potential indicators relevant to **population status and trends**, the Status and Trends WG recommended that the following be considered:

State

1.1 Data availability

- a) Proportion of populations (island groups) where numbers have been counted within the last (i) 10 years and (ii) 20 years [reflecting large-scale censuses],
- b) Proportion of populations (island groups) where the trend is known from annual monitoring of whole islands or study plots within the last (i) 10 years and (ii) 20 years [reflecting annual monitoring of population size],
- c) Total number of ongoing annual monitoring studies (whole island or study colony) of (i) population size and (ii) demography (mark-recapture studies).

1.2 Population trends

Proportion of populations (islands groups) where the trend is increasing, decreasing, stable or unknown within the last (i) 10 years and (ii) 20 years.

In respect of potential indicators of specific relevance to operations and processes occurring in the marine environment, especially in relation to **bycatch**, the Seabird Bycatch WG recommended that an appropriate suite of indicators should be developed from amongst the following categories:

State

1. Feeding sites/areas/habitat

1.1 Knowledge of at-sea range/distribution of ACAP species

Indicators to monitor the progressive acquisition of information, reflecting the amount, scope (e.g. in terms of species, seasons, years, life history stages) and quality of data available. Such indicators are potentially available from the tracking data on ACAP species submitted to the global Procellariiform tracking database.

1.2 Condition of feeding habitat

Potential indicators for the key foraging areas of ACAP species might be derived from existing information on e.g. climatology, physical oceanography, biological oceanography (e.g. productivity) and possibly also from work developing marine pollution indicators. The collation and/or extraction of relevant data are not currently part of the ACAP work programme, but might be considered for investigation in the future.

1.3 Status of prey

For those ACAP species whose diet is sufficiently well known and comprises a substantial proportion of prey for which abundance data are available (e.g. via commercial fisheries or scientific research), indices of stock status may be relevant and applicable. The collation and/or extraction of relevant data is not currently part of the ACAP work programme, but might be considered for investigation in the future.

Pressure

2. Assessment of levels/rates of incidental mortality (bycatch) in fisheries

2.1 Availability of data

Indicators need developing to monitor changes in the amount (e.g. number of data sets, fisheries etc), scope (e.g. coverage in terms of geographical area, proportion of relevant fisheries) and quality (e.g. reliability, statistical properties etc) of available data. Potential indicators might also include those related to the amount, scope and quality of observer programmes.

2.2 Levels and rates of bycatch

Reviewing existing data, not least to establish realistic baselines, where feasible, is a high priority. The WG requested members with appropriate summarised data to make these available to assist in taking this forward intersessionally.

Response

3. Implementation of bycatch mitigation
 - 3.1 Within EEZs:
 - a) extent (e.g. number/proportion of fisheries/vessels etc)
 - b) quality (in relation to ACAP criteria of best practice)
 - c) regulatory effectiveness (e.g. voluntary vs mandatory, oversight through observer programme etc)
 - 3.2 Interaction with RFMOs
 - a) attendance at relevant RFMOs and their WGs
 - b) advocacy of ACAP recommendations at relevant RFMOs and their WGs
 - c) submission of papers to relevant RFMOs and their WGs on topics of relevance to bycatch of ACAP species

Other

Capacity and resources

Appropriate indicators might be developed from the responses to data requests posed in AC Doc 16 Section D, and to other analogous information requests.

In respect of most, if not all, of the potential indicators suggested above, considerable work is needed to investigate and assess the current and likely future availability of relevant data in order to develop precise formulations of appropriate indicators.

The work by ACAP in developing a Bycatch Reporting System (see e.g. AC5 Inf 10) will provide considerable relevant input and advice, especially once the responses to the Bycatch Data Request are available for analysis. While it would, therefore, be premature to recommend particular indicators at this stage, the working group advised that special priority should be given to progress with those on pressure and response.