



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Second Meeting of Seabird Bycatch Working Group

Hermanus, South Africa, 17 – 18 August 2008

Title: ACAP Observer Report – WCPFC SC3

Author: Secretariat

ACAP Observer Report – WCPFC SC3

Meeting Title: Scientific Committee 3 incorporating Ecosystem and Bycatch Specialist Working Group

Meeting Organisation: Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

Date and Location: 13-24 August 2007

Website Address: <http://www.wcpfc.int/>

Your Name/Affiliation: Warren Papworth, ACAP Secretariat

Capacity of Attendance: ACAP Observer

Relevant Paper(s) Tabled:

EB-WP-14 ACAP. **Seabird bycatch mitigation: minimum standards for pelagic longline fishing and priorities for further research.** Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels.

EB-IP-17 BirdLife International. **Distribution of albatrosses and petrels in the WCPFC Convention Area and overlap with WCPFC longline fishing effort.** BirdLife International for the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels.

EB-WP-1 Kirby et al. **Ecological Risk Assessment for species caught in the WCPO tuna fishery: updated Productivity-Susceptibility Analysis.** Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia.

EB-WP-3 Kirby et al. **Ecological Risk Assessment Research Planning Workshop Report.** SPC, Noumea, New Caledonia.

EB-WP-6 Andy Black, Cleo Small and Ben Sullivan. **Recording seabird bycatch in longline observer programs.** BirdLife International, BirdLife Global Seabird Programme, UK.

EB-WP-8 Wez Norris [1] and Stephen Brouwer [2]. **TCC Draft Report and Information Paper of the Voluntary Small Working Group on Seabird Bycatch Mitigation.** [1] Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Canberra, Australia. [2] Ministry of Fisheries, Wellington, New Zealand.

EB-WP-12 Secretariat. **Status of the regional observer programme inter-sessional working group.** WCPFC, Pohnpei, FSM

EB-WP-13 Kosuke Yolota, Hiroshi Minami, Masashi Kiyota. **Effective factors of tori-poles in reducing incidental catch of seabirds in the Japanese longline fishery.** National Research Institute for Far Seas Fisheries, Shimizu, Japan.

EB-IP-2 Peter Williams. **Specification of a Database System to manage and facilitate access of information covering (i) By-catch and (ii) By-catch mitigation on behalf of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).** Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia.

- EB-IP-4 Véran, S., O. Gimenez, E. Flint, W. L. Kendall, P. F. Doherty Jr., and J-D. Lebreton. **Quantifying the impact of longline fisheries on adult survival in the black-footed albatross.** *Journal of Applied Ecology* 2007. C.E.F.E., Centre d'Ecologie Fonctionnelle et Evolutive, Montpellier, France.
- EB-IP-6 Phillips, R.A., Geoff Tuck and Cleo Small. **Assessment of the impact of ICCAT fisheries on seabirds: proposed methodology and framework for discussion.** British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge UK.
- EB-IP-7 Phillips, R.A., C. Small and E. Howgate. **Studies of distribution, population dynamics and bycatch rates of seabirds in the Atlantic.** British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK; CSIRO, Hobart, Australia; Seafood Choices Alliance, London, UK.
- EB-IP-8 Allain, V, T. Essington, R. Olson, T. Okey, J. Dambacher, D. Kirby and S. Nicol. **An Ecopath with Ecosim model of the WCPO warm pool pelagic ecosystem.** SPC, Noumea, New Caledonia.
- EB-IP-10 NMFS. **Guide for Complying with Regulations to Reduce Interactions between Seabirds and Hawaii-Based Longline Vessels.** NOAA Fisheries, USA.
- EB-IP-11 FFA. **FFA Update on the Application of the Ecosystem-Based Approach to managing Tuna Fisheries amongst FFA Member Countries and Territory in the WCPO: specific to lessons from stakeholder consultations in countries.** FFA, Honiara, Solomon Islands.
- EB-IP-13 Doo Hae An, Soon-Song Kim , Dae-Yeon Moon and Seon-Jae Hwang. **A Summary of the Korean Tuna Fishery Observer Program for the Pacific Ocean in 2006.** NFRDI, Busan, Korea.
- EB-IP-14 Hiroshi Minami, Kosuke Yokota and Masashi Kiyota. **Examination of tori-pole configuration in middle-sized longline vessels.** National Research Institute for Far Seas Fisheries, Shimizu, Japan.
- EB-IP-16 Eric Gilman[1] and Thomas Moth-Poulsen[2]. **Review of measures taken by intergovernmental organizations to address sea turtle and seabird interactions in marine capture fisheries (Draft, not yet formally cleared by FAO).** [1] Blue Ocean Institute and IUCN Global Marine Program. [2] FAO Fishing Technology Service, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Rome.
- EB-IP-18 Okamura, H.[1], M. Kiyota[1], H. Kurota[1], and T. Kitakado[2]. **Estimation of fisheries bycatch and risk assessment for short-tailed albatross using a Bayesian State-Space Model.** [1] National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries, Fisheries Research Agency, Japan. [2] Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Japan.

Summary of Content:

The Third Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), held 11-15 December 2006, adopted CMM 2006-02 (Conservation and Management Measure to Mitigate the Impact of Fishing for Highly Migratory Fish Stocks on Seabirds. This measure requires longline vessels of Commission Members, Cooperating Non Members, and participating Territories (CCMs) to use at least two mitigation measures from those included in Table 1 of the document. The two measures must include at least one from Column A in areas South of 30 degrees South and North of 23 degrees North. There are eight seabird bycatch mitigation measures listed within Table 1 of WCPFC CMM 2006-02. See below for Table 1

Table 1 (CMM 2006-02)

Column A	Column B
Side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines ¹	Tori line ²
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	Weighted branch lines
Tori line	Blue-dyed bait
Weighted branch lines	Deep setting line shooter
	Underwater setting chute
	Management of offal discharge

CMM 2006-02 requires the Commission at its 2007 Annual Meeting adopt minimum technical specifications for the mitigation measures, based on the advice and recommendations of the SC3 and TCC3. CCM 2006-02 also offers guidelines for use of measures in Column A, until future research suggests otherwise, as well as guidelines for use of measures in Column B and requires CCMs to submit to the Commission by 30 November 2007, the specifications of mitigation measures listed in Columns A and B, that they will require their vessels to employ.

To assist SC3 and TCC3 in the refinement of these guidelines and the Commission in the development of minimum technical specifications for these eight seabird mitigation measures, ACAP submitted EB-WP-14 which provides information on recent work undertaken by the Seabird Bycatch Working Group (SBWG), as well as that of other RFMOs and some fishing nations in the identification of minimum standards for the same measures. The paper also included recommended revisions of the guidelines found within CMM 2006-02, to be discussed and refined, by SC3.

A number of papers on ecological risk assessment (EB-WP-1, EB-WP-3, EB-IP-18) were submitted, as well as papers on seabird distribution (EB-IP-7, EB-IP-17), mitigation measures (EB-WP-13, EB-IP-14), and observer programs/data collection (EB-WP-6, EB-WP-12, EB-IP-2, EB-IP-13).

Outcome (e.g. summary of relevant discussion, resolution, etc):

The SC reviewed the scientific information available to it and decided that at this time there was no need to amend the suite of mitigation measures, or to make changes to the area of application listed in CMM-2006-02.

With regard to the technical specifications for mitigation measures, differing views were expressed by SC members on some specifications and complete agreement could not be reached. There was vigorous debate as to whether the technical specifications should include operational considerations such as weather and oceanic conditions. No agreement was reached by the SC on this matter, and it was referred to the TCC.

¹ This measure can only be applied in the area north of 23 degrees north until research establishes the utility of this measure in waters south of 30 degrees south. If using side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines from column A, this will be counted as two mitigation measures.

² If tori line is selected from both Column A and Column B this equates to simultaneously using two (i.e. paired) tori lines.

The following list of specifications reflects the product of these discussions, including the differing views expressed by SC members.

This and other text in brackets within the report indicates issues that have not been agreed on or resolved.

Proposed technical specifications for seabird bycatch mitigation measures. The SC adopted the following proposals (areas of non-agreement in square brackets were proposed by Japan and supported by China and Chinese Taipei but could not be endorsed by the SC because of insufficient scientific data).

1a) Tori lines:

- Minimum length: 100 m (if weather and ocean conditions permit).
- Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point that is a minimum of 5 m above the water at the stern on the windward side of the point where the hookline enters the water.
- Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- Streamers must be less than 5 m apart, and should use swivels and be long enough so that they are as close to the water as possible.
- [If the tori line is less than 150 m in length, it must have a towed object attached to the end that will create enough drag to meet the 90 m coverage requirement]²
- If two (i.e. paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

1b) Tori line (light streamer): [Recognizing that the technical approaches used in this measure are currently used in some regions but that little data were presented on vessel size, sink rates and setting speeds for evaluation, this measure is to be applied on a trial basis for one year, to be reviewed and given full consideration at the next meeting of the SC.]

- [Minimum length of tori line: 100 m or three times the total length of the vessel, if weather and ocean conditions permit].
- [Light-weight streamers (e.g. polypropylene band)].
- [Streamers must be less than 1 m apart and be a minimum of 30 cm in length].
- [Must be deployed so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.]

2) Side setting with bird curtain and weighted branch lines:

- Mainline deployed from port or starboard side as far from stern as practicable (at least 1 m), and if mainline shooter is used, must be mounted at least 1 m forward of the stern.
- When seabirds are present the gear must ensure that the mainline is deployed slack so that baited hooks remain submerged.
- Bird curtain must be employed, and should have the following components:
 - o pole is aft of the line shooter and is at least 3 m long;
 - o A minimum of three main streamers attached to the upper 2 m of the pole;
 - o the main streamer diameter should be a minimum of 20 mm;
 - o branch streamers attached to the end of each main streamer should be long enough to drag on the water (i.e. no wind present) and have a minimum diameter of 10 mm.

3) Night setting:

- No setting between local sunrise and one hour after local sunset; and
- Deck lighting to be kept to a minimum, noting requirements for safety and navigation.

4) Weighted branchlines:

[The following weight specifications are encouraged:]

- Minimum weights attached to all branch lines is 45 g, with the following options:
 - o less than 60 g weight attached to within 1 m of the hook or;
 - o more than 60 g and less than 98 g weight attached to within 3.5 m of the hook or;
 - o more than 98 g weight attached to within 4 m of the hook; or
 - o minimum weights attached to all branch lines is 45 g, with the following options
- [more than total 300 g of lead core line.]

Guidelines for Column B mitigation measures

1) Weighted branchlines:

The following weight specifications are encouraged:

- Minimum weights attached to all branch lines is 45 g;
 - o less than 60 g weight attached within 1 m of the hook;
 - o more than 60 g and less than 98 g weight attached to within 3.5 m of the hook;
 - o more than 98 g weight attached to within 4 m of the hook; or

- [more than total 300 g of lead core line.]

2) Blue-dyed bait:

- The Commission Secretariat shall distribute a standardized color placard.
- All bait must be dyed to the shade shown on the placard.

3) Management of offal discharge:

- Either:
 - o No offal discharge during setting or hauling; or
 - o Strategic offal discharge from the opposite side of the boat to setting/hauling in order to actively encourage birds away from baited hooks.

The SC noted it would review this issue at its next meeting and reminded CCMs, as they implement CMM-2006-02 next year, to provide information to the Commission on the specifications of the mitigation measures that they will require their vessels to employ, as well as any data resulting from research undertaken to further develop and refine measures to mitigate seabird bycatch as required by the CMM.

The SC considered the requirement of CMM-2006-02 for estimates of seabird interactions and bycatch in the Convention Area. The SC noted that this was a complex task, requiring representative observer coverage, fine-scale distribution of the seabird populations and frequency and interactions between seabirds and fisheries. The SC reaffirmed that seabird mortality estimates would need to be addressed through the 2008–2010 work programme. The Secretariat should be requested to obtain the available estimates of seabird population sizes and trends for the next meeting of the SC. The Secretariat is also requested to include a summary of seabird catch reporting in its coverage of data gaps. Several CCMs reminded the SC that current observer coverage is less than 1% in the longline fisheries and that this seriously compromises the ability to assess wider ecosystem impacts.

Outlook for Future ACAP Involvement:

ACAP involvement at future meetings is highly desirable to ensure that a rigorous, scientific approach is taken when technical specifications are proposed and/or revised.

Recommended Actions for ACAP:

Attendance at the next TCC and WCPFC Commission meeting is highly desirable to promote the adoption of technical specifications for mitigation measures that have been proven to be effective. The need for further research on measure that have not been adequately proven also needs to be promoted

Have relevant papers been forwarded to Secretariat: Yes