



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

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First Meeting of Advisory Committee

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Agenda Item No .9

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Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)

**Conservation Status of ACAP Species in the Antarctic
Region**

**Report to the First Meeting of the ACAP Advisory Committee from the Scientific Committee
on Antarctic Research on the Regional Conservation Status of Southern Giant-petrels
Macronectes giganteus and other ACAP-listed seabirds within the Antarctic Treaty Area**

1. A workshop to apply the IUCN Red List criteria to Antarctic seabird population data was held at Cambridge, UK on 23 and 24 March 2005. The workshop was a cooperative effort between the SCAR Group of Experts on Birds (SCAR GEB), BirdLife International (BLI) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The workshop participants were Eric Woehler (Chair, SCAR GEB and Workshop Convenor), John Cooper and John Croxall (SCAR), Ali Stattersfield and Stuart Butchart (BLI) and Craig Hilton-Taylor (IUCN); Ben Sullivan (BLI) and David Walton (British Antarctic Survey) attended for part of the workshop as Observers.
2. The workshop examined the conservation status of all breeding and non-breeding seabird species recorded within the Antarctic region (defined as south of 60°S, ie the Antarctic Treaty Area). Assessments of breeding populations on the Antarctic Continent and Antarctic Peninsula, the South Shetland Islands and the South Orkney Islands were undertaken. Seabird populations on the sub-Antarctic or peri-Antarctic islands, South Georgia, the Falkland/Malvinas Islands and the South Sandwich Islands were excluded from the regional assessments.
3. The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (IUCN 2001) and regional application guidelines (IUCN 2003) were used in the workshop. Only the conservation assessment for those species listed within ACAP are reported here.
4. One breeding species was assessed: Southern Giant-petrel *Macronectes giganteus*, as were the following seven non-breeding species: Wandering Albatross *Diomedea exulans*, Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophrys*, Grey-headed Albatross *T. chrysostoma*, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross *Phoebastria palpebrata*, Northern Giant-petrel *M. halli*, Mottled Petrel *Pterodroma inexpectata* and White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis*. Other non-breeding ACAP species that occur more rarely (less than 10% of records) or irregularly within the region were also assessed, but they are not reported here.
5. The existence and status of any conspecific populations outside the Antarctic region that might affect the extinction risk within the Antarctic region were incorporated into the final regional assessment where required.
6. Population census data were taken from numerous published and unpublished sources, to be listed in the Workshop report. Assessments of population trends over varying time periods used published analyses. The regional results are presented with the most recent global

assessments and the proportion (%) of the global population occurring within the Antarctic region, in accordance with IUCN guidelines.

7. The results of this Workshop were incorporated into a SCAR Working Paper on Specially Protected Species in the Antarctic Treaty Area. The WP, tabled at the 28th ATCM in June 2005 in Stockholm, used Southern Giant-petrels as an example to establish new Antarctic Treaty System rules for proposing such species in the future.
8. Complete details of the workshop proceedings and of the application of the IUCN criteria and guidelines will be available later in 2005 in the form of the published Workshop Report.

Assessment of breeding species

Southern Giant-petrel *Macronectes giganteus*

9. The global population of this species is approximately 32 000 breeding pairs, of which approximately 24% of the known global population occur within the Antarctic. Breeding populations are also present on many of the sub-Antarctic islands.
10. Surveys in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands in the 2004/05 season suggest an increase in the known breeding population, with a concomitant increase in the global estimate. Incorporation of the 2004/05 Falkland/Malvinas Islands' census data would reduce the Antarctic population to approximately 19% of the global population. The Falkland/Malvinas Islands lie outside the Antarctic region.
11. The breeding population in East Antarctica (four known sites) has decreased since the 1950s while the population at Palmer on the Antarctic Peninsula has increased. The breeding population at the South Shetland Islands has decreased by more than 90% since the mid 1980s, while the population at Signy Island has decreased by 30% since the 1960s.
12. Overall, the Antarctic population of Southern Giant-petrels is inferred to have decreased by more than 90% over the last 50 years, and this decrease is expected to continue into the near future (i.e. during the next 10 years). The species meets the criteria for Critically Endangered for the Antarctic region (A4bcd), in marked contrast to its global classification of Vulnerable.
13. Known threats to the species include human disturbance at nesting sites, aircraft operations, station construction and station-related activities, and scientific banding. Southern Giant-petrels are also taken on longlines throughout the Southern Ocean.

Assessment of non-breeding species

14. Assessment of the Red List status of the seven non-breeding Antarctic seabird species of interest to ACAP indicated no change to their global conservation status. The seven species with their global status are listed in Table 1.

Workshop recommendation

15. Workshop participants recommended that a similar assessment should be undertaken in 2009. The interval of four years would allow for further census and trend data to become available for analyses and assessments. It was noted that the species to be included in the 2009 assessment may be different to those assessed in 2005.

References cited

- BirdLife International (2000) *Threatened birds of the world*. Barcelona and Cambridge, UK: Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International.
- BirdLife International (2004) *Threatened birds of the world 2004*. CD-ROM. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International.
- IUCN (2001) *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1*. IUCN Species Survival Commission, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. II + 30pp.
- IUCN (2003) *Guidelines for Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at Regional Levels: Version 3.0*. IUCN Species Survival Commission, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. II + 26pp.

Table 1. Conservation assessment of ACAP species occurring within the Antarctic region considered at the SCAR GEB-BLI workshop, March 2005, following IUCN Red List criteria for regional populations

Scientific name	Common name	IUCN Red List Categories	
		Global (2004)	Regional (2005)
<u>Breeding species:</u>			
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	Southern Giant-petrel	VU (A4bcd)	CR (A4bcd)
<u>Visiting species:</u>			
<i>Diomedea exulans</i>	Wandering Albatross	VU (A4bd)	VU (A4bd)
<i>Thalassarche melanophrys</i>	Black-browed Albatross	EN (A4bd)	EN (A4bd)
<i>Thalassarche chrysostoma</i>	Grey-headed Albatross	VU (A4bd)	VU (A4bd)
<i>Phoebetria palpebrata</i>	Light-mantled Sooty Albatross	NT (A4bd)	NT (A4bd)
<i>Macronectes halli</i>	Northern Giant-petrel	NT (A3cd)	NT (A3cd)
<i>Pterodroma inexpectata</i> (B1a+b(iv); D2)	Mottled Petrel	LC (B1a+b(iv); D2)	LC
<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>	White-chinned Petrel	VU (A4bcde)	VU (A4bcde)
key: CR Critically Endangered; EN Endangered, VU Vulnerable, NT Near Threatened, LC Least Concern			