



Interim Secretariat provided by the Australian Government

First Meeting of the Parties

Hobart, Australia, 10-12 November 2004

Agenda Item No. 3.1
ACAP/MOP1/Doc.6
Interim Secretariat

Report of the Interim Secretariat and the Depository

Background

Interim Secretariat:

A meeting to finalise the text of an Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) was held in Cape Town, South Africa from 29 January to 2 February 2001. At that meeting, Australia offered to act as the interim Secretariat until such time as the Agreement entered into force and the Agreement Secretariat was established. The meeting warmly welcomed Australia's offer.

The interim Secretariat has followed the advice provided at the Cape Town Meeting and worked with Parties, signatories and Range States in the establishment of the ACAP Agreement.

Depository:

Australia is also the depository to the Agreement.

The Agreement was opened for signature in Canberra, Australia on 19 June 2001 and was signed by Australia, Brazil, Chile, France, New Zealand, Peru and the United Kingdom. Argentina, Ecuador, South Africa and Spain have subsequently signed the Agreement.

The Agreement came into force on 1 February 2004 following the ratification of five Parties. There are currently six Parties and five signatories to ACAP.

Action Required

The Meeting of the Parties is invited to note the report of the interim Secretariat and the Depository;

Overview of the activities of the ACAP interim Secretariat

Since the Cape Town meeting, the work of the interim Secretariat has consisted of responding to correspondence; maintaining the network of Parties, Signatories and Range States; and keeping the public up-to-date on ACAP matters through an internet site (www.acap.aq). Since the entry into force of the Agreement on 1 February 2004, the interim Secretariat has focussed on preparations for the first Meeting of the Parties (MOP1).

Administration / Financial Matters

The Australian Government currently hosts the interim Secretariat. Initially, it was housed in Canberra in the head-office of the Department of the Environment and Heritage (DEH). In July 2003 the interim Secretariat was transferred to the Australian Antarctic Division (a Division of DEH), in Hobart.

Funding for MOP1 has been provided through the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust.

Staffing of the interim Secretariat

Staffing levels over the life of the interim Secretariat have varied, but there has usually been the equivalent of one person full time undertaking the necessary work. Additional staff were sought for the 6-9 months before MOP1 to assist with preparations for the Meeting. The United Kingdom has provided funding for one full-time employee (Dr Helen Riley) for a period of five months. Additional staff are assisting with the Meeting itself.

Preparations for MOP1

The majority of the preparations for MOP1 were carried out in the six months preceding the Meeting. Such preparations included:

- arranging venues, translation facilities and other logistical matters;
- drafting agenda papers;
- arranging a Scientific Meeting prior to the MoP1 (8-9 November 2004)
- contacting Parties to confirm dates for the Meeting and other matters;
- contacting signatories and Range States to encourage their ratification of ACAP and their attendance at MOP1 as observers;
- liaising with diplomatic posts and relevant embassies; and
- responding to enquiries about MOP1 and ACAP generally.

Development of meeting papers

The interim Secretariat has developed various information and background papers for discussion at MOP1. These papers will assist in fulfilling the objectives of Article VIII paragraph 11 of ACAP.

Development of the Agreement's Website

Prior to March 2004, information regarding ACAP was located on the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage website. In April 2004, the interim Secretariat created the ACAP website (www.acap.aq). The website provides valuable information on albatross and petrel conservation issues, official documents for the Meetings of Parties, contact details of Parties and the interim Secretariat, links to associated sites and an image gallery. The website can be accessed by Parties and the general public, and is updated regularly by the interim Secretariat.

The ACAP website is currently hosted by the Australian Antarctic Division.

Newsletters

The interim Secretariat has produced four newsletters: in December 2001, August 2002, July 2003 and February 2004. With the development of a dedicated ACAP website in April 2004, the interim Secretariat has focussed on updating Parties on the progress of ACAP and conservation issues through the 'What's New?', 'Events Calendar', and 'Meeting of the Parties' sections of the website. These developments have been well received.

Promotion of the Agreement

The interim Secretariat has promoted ACAP extensively in international fora to engender support for the Agreement. In the course of other obligations overseas, the interim Secretariat has met with Parties, Signatories, Range States and other relevant bodies to discuss various ACAP matters. These included the Waterbirds of the World Conference (Edinburgh, April 2004) and the International Albatross and Petrels Conference (Montevideo, August 2004).

Other representations included:

- providing ACAP information panels for the IUCN World Conservation Congress (November 2004);
- ongoing discussions with diplomatic posts; and
- correspondence with Range States.

Cooperation with other organisations

In the lead-up to MOP1, the interim Secretariat has cooperated with, and obtained advice from, organisations such as African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans In the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS), Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), BirdLife, Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and Southern Seabird Solutions. It is envisaged such cooperation will continue through the Agreement Secretariat, as stated in Article X paragraphs (c) and (h) of the Agreement.



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Report of the Depository

Participant	Signature (subject to ratification)	Ratification(r)	Entry into force
Argentina	19 January 2004		
Australia	19 June 2001	4 October 2001 (r)	1 February 2004
Brazil	19 June 2001		
Chile	19 June 2001		
Ecuador	18 February 2003	18 February 2003 (r)	1 February 2004
France	19 June 2001		
New Zealand	19 June 2001	1 November 2001 (r)	1 February 2004
Peru	19 June 2001		
Republic of South Africa	6 November 2003	6 November 2003 (r)	1 February 2004
Spain	30 April 2002	12 August 2003 (r)	1 February 2004
United Kingdom	19 June 2001	2 April 2004 (r)	1 July 2004

Following the guidelines set in Article XIX of ACAP, the Depository reports that no Party has registered any reservation, notification of withdrawal of a reservation with respect to the Agreement, or any notification of denunciation of the Agreement.