

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Joint Thirteenth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Ninth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Swakopmund, Namibia, 26 May 2026</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intersessional Correspondence Group Progress Report: Development of ACAP Guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm Developments</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Intersessional Correspondence Group</i></b></p>
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## SUMMARY

Seabirds in the Southern Hemisphere, including ACAP-listed albatrosses and petrels, have been identified as potentially at risk from Offshore Wind Farm developments. In acknowledgement of this emerging threat to albatrosses and petrels, the Fourteenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee endorsed the establishment of an Intersessional Correspondence Group for development of ACAP guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm developments (OWF ICG).

This paper presents a report on the progress of the OWF ICG and proposed work program for the development of draft guidelines for consideration at AC16.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That SBWG / PaCSWG:

1. Acknowledge and thank the Chair of the OWF ICG - Dr. Helen Wade - for her expert guidance and leadership in supporting the work of the group, noting a new Chair will be appointed as Dr. Wade will be unable to continue in this role after AC15.
2. Thank Humane World for Animals for its voluntary contribution to procure a Consultancy to assist with the development of draft ACAP guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm developments.
3. Note the progress of the OWF ICG and that this work will not be finished until AC16 due to the scope of work being greater than the capacity of the group and timeframes associated with Consultancy deliverables.
  - a. The Consultancy scope is provided at Appendix A.
4. Endorse the proposed OWF ICG work program for consideration of draft guidelines at AC16, noting the need for the OWF ICG to continue to AC16 under the endorsed Terms of Reference (ToRs) at Appendix B.
5. Consider the appropriateness of the ToRs and whether a refocus is required to better support the proposed OWF ICG forward work program and identify any additional resource needs resulting from the proposal.

## **Informe de progreso del grupo de trabajo por correspondencia intersesional: elaboración de las directrices del ACAP para el desarrollo de parques eólicos en alta mar**

### **RESUMEN**

Se ha determinado que las aves marinas del hemisferio sur, entre ellas especies de albatros y petreles incluidas en la lista del ACAP, podrían verse amenazadas por el desarrollo de parques eólicos en alta mar (OWF). Reconociendo esta amenaza emergente para los albatros y los petreles, la Decimocuarta Reunión del Comité Asesor aprobó la creación de un grupo de correspondencia intersesional encargado de elaborar las directrices del ACAP para los proyectos de parques eólicos en alta mar (GCI OWF).

Este documento presenta un informe sobre los avances del GCI OWF en torno al desarrollo de parques eólicos en alta mar y propone un programa de trabajo para la elaboración de directrices preliminares que se someterá a consideración en la CA16.

### **RECOMENDACIONES**

Que el GdTCS y el GdTPEC:

1. Expresen su reconocimiento y agradecimiento a la Presidenta del GCI OWF, la Dra. Helen Wade, por su experta orientación y su liderazgo en apoyo a la labor del grupo, y señalen que se nombrará a un/a nuevo/a Presidente/a, ya que la Dra. Wade no podrá seguir ocupando este cargo después de la CA15.
2. Agradezcan a Humane World for Animals por su contribución voluntaria para contratar los servicios de una consultora que colabore en la elaboración de las directrices preliminares del ACAP para los proyectos de parques eólicos en alta mar.
3. Tomen nota de los avances del GCI OWF y de que esta labor no concluirá hasta la CA16, ya que su alcance supera la capacidad del grupo y los plazos asociados a los entregables de la consultoría.
  - a. El alcance de la consultoría se detalla en el Anexo A.
4. Aprueben el programa de trabajo propuesto por el GCI OWF para considerar las directrices preliminares en la CA16 y señalen la necesidad de que el GCI OWF continúe hasta la CA16 en virtud de los Términos de Referencia aprobados en el Apéndice B.
5. Evalúen si los Términos de Referencia son adecuados y si es necesario reorientarlos para respaldar mejor el programa de trabajo futuro propuesto por el GCI OWF, e identifiquen cualquier necesidad de recursos adicionales que se derive de la propuesta.

## **Rapport d'étape du groupe de correspondance intersessions : Élaboration des lignes directrices de l'ACAP relatives au développement de parcs éoliens en mer**

### **RÉSUMÉ**

Les oiseaux marins de l'hémisphère sud, notamment les albatros et les pétrels inscrits à l'ACAP, ont été identifiés comme étant potentiellement menacés par les projets de parcs éoliens en mer. Compte tenu de cette menace émergente pesant sur les albatros et les pétrels, la 14e réunion du Comité consultatif a approuvé la création d'un groupe de correspondance intersessions chargé d'élaborer des lignes directrices de l'ACAP relatives aux projets de parcs éoliens en mer (OWF ICG).

Le présent document rend compte des travaux réalisés par le groupe de correspondance intersessions OWF ICG et propose un programme de travail en vue de l'élaboration d'un projet de lignes directrices qui sera examiné lors du CC16.

### **RECOMMANDATIONS**

Que les groupes de travail SBWG / PaCSWG :

1. Remercient et saluent la présidente du groupe de correspondance intersessions OWF ICG, Dr Helen Wade, pour ses conseils avisés et son leadership dans l'appui aux travaux du groupe, en notant qu'une nouvelle présidente sera nommée, car Dr Helen Wade ne pourra plus exercer cette fonction après le CC15.
2. Remercient Humane World for Animals pour sa contribution volontaire visant à financer une mission de conseil afin d'appuyer l'élaboration d'un projet de lignes directrices de l'ACAP relatives aux projets de parcs éoliens en mer.
3. Prennent note de l'avancement des travaux du groupe de correspondance intersessions OWF ICG et du fait que ces travaux ne seront pas achevés avant le CC16, leur portée dépassant les capacités du groupe ainsi que les délais associés aux livrables de la mission de conseil.
  - a. Le périmètre de la mission de conseil figure à l'annexe A.
4. Approuvent le programme de travail proposé par le groupe de correspondance intersessions OWF ICG pour l'examen du projet de lignes directrices au CC16, en notant la nécessité pour le groupe de poursuivre ses travaux jusqu'au CC16 conformément au mandat approuvé figurant à l'annexe B.
5. Examiner la pertinence du mandat et déterminer s'il convient de le réorienter afin de mieux soutenir le programme de travail futur proposé par le OWF ICG, et identifier les besoins en ressources supplémentaires découlant de cette proposition.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

In recognition of the importance in gaining an improved understanding of issues associated with Offshore Wind Farm developments on seabirds, the Advisory Committee (AC Work Programme 2026-2028 (2.13) agreed to:

- Endorse the establishment of an Intersessional Correspondence Group to develop guidelines for offshore wind farm developments and risk assessments, noting the ToRs for this group is provided at Appendix B.
- Encourage Parties to further develop technologies that mitigate and monitor potential impacts of offshore windfarms on ACAP species and in particular, technologies that can determine flight height behaviours of albatrosses and petrels.

## 2. INTERSESSIONAL PROGRESS

Chaired by Dr. Helen Wade of BirdLife International, the Intersessional Correspondence Group for development of ACAP guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm developments (OWF ICG) commenced work in May 2025.

The intersessional work of the OWF ICG has primarily focused on developing a draft structure for the development of ACAP guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm developments with a strong focus on ACAP species. The following Terms of Reference (ToRs) have guided the progress of the OWF ICG to date, acknowledging that the remaining ToRs will be considered as development of the guidelines progresses:

- reviewing the principles and suggested best practice advice provided in SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 09;
- the applicability of existing OWF development guidelines for ACAP species and risk assessment methods (e.g. from the Northern Hemisphere); and
- the development of draft ACAP guidelines for OWF development for consideration at AC15.

The OWF ICG determined aspects of OWF development considered appropriate for inclusion in the final proposed product (Attachment A).

In recognition of the amount of work required to populate the proposed draft structure, including to ensure adequate referencing of the considerable material already available and where appropriate, summarise into a clear, concise and consistent final product, the OWF ICG explored the option of contracting an expert consultancy to develop draft guidelines.

ACAP Parties welcomed a voluntary contribution of \$30,000 (AUD) from Humane Word for Animals to engage a consultant. The scope of the Consultancy is at Attachment A.

While the finalised draft document is not yet available for AC15, a proposed forward work plan is provided for consideration by the Joint SBWG/PACS Working Group, noting the work of the OWF ICG will not be completed prior to AC16.

Further, as Dr. Helen Wade will be unable to continue as Chair of the OWF ICG beyond AC15 a new Chair will be appointed.

### **3. PROPOSED OWF ICG WORK PROGRAM AND TIMELINE**

- Appoint new OWF ICG Chair
- Review draft guidelines developed under the Consultancy
- Identify further work including whether the guidelines should be minimum standard versus best practice advice and consider the benefits of more detailed topic-specific companion documents and identify any additional resource needs
- Determine the content and value of seeking additional funding through ACAP-RERI grant program
- Consult with National Contact Points to determine further amendments
- Submit draft guidelines to AC16

The OWF ICG is yet to consider whether the development of more detailed, topic-specific companion documents on issues such collision risk modelling and monitoring would complement and support the generally high-level guidelines.

## **Appendix A: Consultancy scope**

### **Development of ACAP Best Practice Guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm developments.**

Consider all aspects of each stage of OWF development.

An outline of the suggested elements for the ACAP Best Practice Guidelines for OWF development has been developed by the intersessional group of the Advisory Committee. These are provided to assist in the development of consultancy proposals and should not be taken as prescriptive or interpreted as covering all necessary elements.

Key issues that the Best Practice Guidelines should focus on are:

- specific potential impact pathways affecting Southern Hemisphere seabird species, particularly ACAP-listed species
- spatial planning
- baseline data collection
- monitoring data collection
- mitigation and adaptive management.

The consultancy should consider species-specific vulnerabilities and factors relevant to Southern Hemisphere seabirds. This should identify vulnerabilities and factors that have not already been addressed in previously accepted methods for other seabird species worldwide.

The ACAP Best Practice Guidelines should also flag significant evidence gaps and need for new methods of data collection, impact assessment, mitigation, etc. that are specific to ACAP-listed albatross and petrel species, as well as what would be needed to address these evidence gaps.

The ACAP Best Practice Guidelines should identify the data and analyses required to produce the appropriate assessments for the planning and development of OWF projects.

Not all aspects of OWF developments need to be covered under this Consultancy, with some aspects such as offsetting requiring further consideration. The decommissioning phase of OWF development is considered out of scope.

**Appendix B: Offshore Wind Farm Intersessional Correspondence Group Terms of Reference (ToRs) (AC14 Report Annex 7).**

To develop guidelines for Offshore Wind Farm (OWF) developments the Intersessional Group will:

1. Review the principles and suggested best practice advice provided in SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 09;
2. Consider the applicability for ACAP species of existing OWF development guidelines and risk assessment methods (e.g. from the Northern Hemisphere);
3. Review methods that enable studies of flight height behaviours of ACAP species;
4. Review methods that enable studies of fine-scale distributions of ACAP species;
5. Review approaches to identify areas with high concentrations of seabirds (e.g. near breeding colonies, flight corridors, and migration routes);
6. Explore ways to coordinate the work of the ICG with the CMS Energy Task Force;
7. Develop draft ACAP guidelines for OWF development for consideration at AC15 or intersessionally.