

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p><b>Fourth Meeting of the Parties</b> <i>Lima, Peru, 23 – 27 April 2012</i></p> <p><b>Initiatives of Southern Seabird Solutions Trust</b></p> <p><b><i>Southern Seabird Solutions Trust</i></b></p>
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# Initiatives of Southern Seabird Solutions Trust



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Prepared for the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Parties  
For the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), 2012<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NB: Trust Member Rebecca Bird of WWF-New Zealand will be in attendance and welcomes discussion on any of the listed projects and/or work of the Trust with interested Parties at the meeting.

## **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of current initiatives of relevance to participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Parties of ACAP.

## **2.0 Background**

The Southern Seabird Solutions Trust was formed in New Zealand in 2002 in response to the threat fishing poses to seabirds. The purpose of the Trust is to work with fishermen throughout the southern hemisphere to promote fishing practices that are safer for seabirds. Southern Seabird Solutions Trust is an alliance that includes representatives from the New Zealand seafood industry, New Zealand government, WWF and Te Ohu Kaimoana. Funding for the Trust's projects comes from a variety of sources both within and outside New Zealand, and includes financial contributions from supporters, grants, sponsorship and services in kind.

## **3.0 Commercial Fishing**

### **3.1 Seabird Smart Fishermen's Programme**

The objective of this project is to reinforce the importance of "seabird smart" fishing amongst New Zealand commercial inshore fishermen, and to educate and motivate them to use the best available "seabird smart" practices for their particular fishing methods at all times. The project will be delivered through locally held workshops. Two pilot workshops have been held and the project is now ready to be rolled out.

The content of the workshops is tailored to fit each fishing fleet. This includes consideration of the seabird interactions each fleet encounters (due to their fishing method and location) and what specific "seabird smart" practices are likely to work best for their vessels, taking account of existing regulated fishing measures. Assessments of the effectiveness of the workshops in motivating fishermen and changing their attitudes and behaviour will be carried out in tandem with this project.

Each skipper is presented with a laminated card that describes the new or existing mitigation measures they have agreed to use, and we hope these will be proudly displayed on the wheel-house wall. Each participant also gets a pack of information to take home to share with the family, including our new booklet about seabirds and fishing, and stickers for their vessels and vehicles.

We will maintain contact with the skippers and crew who attended the workshops and provide ongoing encouragement and support. Promising new mitigation ideas that flow from the workshops will feed into the Trust's International Mitigation Mentor Programme and potentially for development. More information on the project can be found at <http://www.southernseabirds.org/ss-workshops>.

### **3.2 Seabird Smart Vessels**

In 2012, the Trust plans to undertake a scoping exercise to determine methods to independently verify compliance with proven seabird smart fishing practices so that the New Zealand fishing industry can reassure government, the retail chain and other interested parties that they meet specified standards. The Trust will also be looking at how it can provide benefit to those fisheries or fleets that can prove they are seabird smart, through promotion and other means.

### 3.3 International Mitigation Mentor Programme

The Southern Seabirds Solutions' International Mitigation Mentoring Programme has been established to mentor the development of new techniques that have the potential to reduce seabird bycatch in fisheries. The scope of mentoring will include feedback on design, guidance on development and testing, and advice on potential collaborators or funders. The Trust has appointed Barry Baker as the mentor for this programme. A referral group of 10 members has been established to lend their expertise on such topics such as fishing methods and practices, seabird behaviour, marine engineering, at-sea research, product development, fundraising expertise and ways to introduce new practices into fisheries.

The Referral group consists of:

- Phil Ashworth - Amerro Engineering, Australia
- John Cleal - Deepwater Group, New Zealand
- Marco Favero - Chair, ACAP Advisory Committee; Head of Vertebrate Research Group at the National University of Mar del Plata (Argentina)
- Eric Gilman - Fisheries Research Scientist, Hawaii Pacific University
- Dave Kellian - Fisherman and Inventor, New Zealand
- Dave Kreutz - Oceanwatch, Australia
- Svein Lokkeborg - Institute of Marine Research, Norway
- Ed Melvin - Washington Sea Grant, University of Washington, USA
- Graham Robertson - Australian Antarctic Division, Australia
- Barrie Rose - Bycatch Mitigation Consultant, South Africa

More information on the members of the Referral Group can be found at <http://www.southernseabirds.org/ss-referralgroup>.

The Mentor has secured funding to develop and test a prototype underwater line setter for demersal long lining and is seeking funds to develop the Pelagic Smart Hook.

An important part of the role will be to provide a co-ordinating hub and networking point for inventors and others including through the Trust's Mitigation Development Pathway Programme [http://www.southernseabirds.org/ss-mitigation\\_pathway](http://www.southernseabirds.org/ss-mitigation_pathway)

## 4.0 Recreational Fishing

### 4.1 Introduction

Until recently, little effort has been put into understanding the impact of recreational fishing on New Zealand seabirds. A recent report by Abraham *et al.* (2010) estimates that recreational fishers in the Hauraki Gulf of New Zealand alone may capture 11 500 (95% c.i.: 6600 to 17 200) seabirds per year. A significant percentage of these seabirds are likely to be released alive. However, this is a foraging area for black petrels (*Procellaria parkinsoni*), New Zealand's highest risk seabird. Two black petrels have been found dead at the colony on Great Barrier Island with recreational fishing hooks and lines in their stomachs, and one live bird tangled in fishing line (E. Bell pers. comm. 2011). This information as well as anecdotal reports from recreational fishers has prompted the Trust to initiate an education and awareness-raising programme with recreational fishers.

#### **4.1 “Fishing for Ideas”**

The Trust has held a competition for ideas on ways recreational fishers can carry out their sport without harming seabirds. The competition has raised interest in the issue and hopefully provided some potential measures that could later be tested for effectiveness.

#### **4.2 Education and Awareness**

The Trust has begun raising awareness of the seabird issue in recreational fishing through television (Gone Fishin’ Show), regular articles in the two main recreational fishing magazines, and on radio shows about fishing and at a national recreational fishing competition.

The Trust has produced a poster on how to handle and dehook seabirds and advice on ways to fish without harming seabirds. This work will continue. More information is available at <http://www.southernseabirds.org/>

A program to involve the local community on Great Barrier Island in black petrel monitoring and rat control will commence this year. Many Great Barrier residents fish recreationally, so we hope by involving them in monitoring work they will become more informed and interested in the birds and take greater care while fishing.

#### **5.0 Contact information for the Southern Seabird Solutions Trust**

To learn more about our other projects and the Trust generally, visit [www.southernseabirds.org](http://www.southernseabirds.org) or join our facebook page.

#### **Reference**

Abraham, E.R.; Berkenbusch, K.N.; Y. Richard (2010). The capture of seabirds and marine mammals in New Zealand non-commercial fisheries. New Zealand Aquatic Environment and Biodiversity Report No. 64.