



Agreement on the Conservation
of Albatrosses and Petrels

Twelfth Meeting of the Advisory Committee
Virtual meeting, 31 August – 2 September 2021 (UTC+10)

2021 Implementation Report - Australia

Australia



Agreement on the Conservation
of Albatrosses and Petrels

Report - MOP-7 (2022)

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Implementation Report for the Meeting of Parties - MOP-7 (2022)

Submitted by - Australia

Coverage of report - Australia

1. Overview of implementation of Agreement and Action Plan

1.1 Has action been taken to implement the decisions of previous MoPs?

Response: Yes

1.1.1 to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are established/maintained to identify and robustly assess seabird bycatch in relevant fisheries and to monitor the implementation of effective bycatch mitigation strategies (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.2 to actively support and participate in the ACAP process to better understand and address barriers and drivers in the effective use of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation strategies (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.3 to review, based on the information provided by the Seabird Bycatch Working Group, the efficacy of seabird bycatch mitigation measures used in the fisheries that they manage and explore the performance of new mitigation technologies and related safety and other operational issues (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.4 to use the revised bycatch reporting template as part of annual reporting (Advisory Committee Annual Report, Section C), to enable the assessment and reporting of performance indicators on seabird bycatch (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.5 to support the collection and provision of seabird bycatch data by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and Regional Conservation Bodies (RCBs) that they are members of (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.6 to support their priority population monitoring programmes, including the maintenance of long-term monitoring (see AC10 Doc 11 Rev 1, p. 22-26)

Response: Yes

1.1.7 to implement best practice monitoring practices that include censuses of breeding sites conducted at a minimum of 10 year intervals, and annual monitoring of population trend and demography at a minimum of one representative site for each island group (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

At sites where access is readily available, regular monitoring using best practice is undertaken.

1.1.8 to conduct priority tracking programmes to enable a better understanding of at-sea distribution of albatrosses and petrels (see AC10 Doc 11 Rev 1, p. 26-28)

Response: No

1.1.9 to update the ACAP database on an ongoing basis to maintain the currency of information underpinning analyses (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.10 to support the allocation of funds for the operation of the Advisory Committee to enable its effective operation, taking into account the growth in the complexity and number of matters it now addresses (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.11 to provide the necessary resources for the conduct of the research and conservation programmes identified by the Advisory Committee's Working Groups (7.1.13 MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes

1.1.12 to engage in domestic consultation processes to facilitate the effective implementation of the

Agreement (7.1.13, MoP6 Report)

Response: Yes
1.1.13 to report on Capacity Building indicators (MoP6 Report, 7.6.3). See Advisory Committee Annual Report Section D: Other Annual Reporting Requirements, Question 3.

Response: Yes

1.1.14 Resolution 6.4 AC Work Programme 2019-2021 - Tasks 4.2 (Accession of non-Party Range states) and 5.2 (Action Plans)

Response: Yes

1.1.15 Resolution 4.5 Financial Regulations: 5.1 to contribute to the budget in accordance with the scale of contributions agreed by the Meeting of Parties (Resolution 6.6 Agreement Budget 201-2021)

Response: Yes

1.2 Is action for national implementation planned to occur in the next three years?

Response: Yes

1.2.1 on species conservation?

Response: Yes

1.2.2 on habitat conservation?

Response: Yes

1.2.3 on management of human activities?

Response: Yes

1.2.4 on research programmes?

Response: Yes

1.2.5 on education and public awareness?

Response: Yes

1.2.6 on impacts or mitigation of climate change?

Response: Yes

2. Species conservation

2.1 Has the Party provided any exemptions to prohibitions on the taking or harmful interference with albatrosses and petrels? (do not include exemptions provided for scientific research purposes here)

Response: No

2.2 Has any authorised use or trade in albatrosses or petrels occurred? (e.g. to accommodate the traditional needs and practices of Indigenous people, for scientific, educational or similar purposes)

Response: No

2.3 Has the Party implemented any new single or multi-species conservation strategies / Action Plans?

Response: Yes

Australia's national Threat Abatement Plan for the Incidental Catch (or Bycatch) of Seabirds during Oceanic Longline Fishing Operations was finalised in 2018. This plan coordinates national action to moderate the impact of longline fishing activities on seabirds in Australian waters. It applies to all fisheries under Australian Commonwealth jurisdiction. <https://www.antarctica.gov.au/site/assets/files/49352/threat-abatement-plan-for-the-incident-catch-or-bycatch-of-seabirds-during-longline-oceanic-fishing-operations-2018.pdf> Australia has developed a National Plan of Action for minimising the incidental catch of seabirds in Australian capture fisheries (NPOA-Seabirds). NPOA-Seabirds is a voluntary measure that provides a comprehensive and nationally-consistent approach to reducing the impact of fishing on seabirds. It draws together existing regulatory and voluntary management arrangements into one document and provides additional guidance for future management decisions around seabird mitigation measures.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/sitecollectiondocuments/fisheries/environment/bycatch/npoa-seabirds.pdf> An updated draft National Recovery Plan for albatrosses and petrels (2021) has been prepared and will be available for public consultation during 2021. The plan outlines the research and management actions necessary to stop the decline of, and support the recovery of listed albatross and petrel species' populations breeding and/or foraging in Australian jurisdiction. This plan will replace the previous plan adopted in 2011.

1) [threat-abatement-plan-for-the-incident-catch-or-bycatch-of-seabirds-during-longline-oceanic-fishing-operations-2018\[1\].pdf](#) (size 475941 bytes)  

2) [npoa-seabirds\[1\].pdf](#) (size 662165 bytes)  

2.4 Has the Party taken any emergency measures, as defined in [Resolution 1.4](#), involving albatrosses or petrels?

Response: No

2.5 Has the Party conducted any re-establishment schemes?

Response: No

2.6 Has the Party introduced any **new** legal or policy instruments for species protection of albatrosses and petrels?

Response: Yes

See item 2.3 above.

2.7 Has the Party implemented any legal or policy instruments for environmental impact assessments?

(Completion of any new environmental impact assessments is addressed in Question 4.1)

2.8.1 Has the Party taken action to submit any albatross and/or petrel species for addition to Annex 1 (please indicate which species)?

Response: No

2.8.2 Does the Party intend to submit any albatross and/or petrel species for addition to Annex 1 during the next triennium 2023 - 2025 (please indicate which species)?

Response: No

2.9 Are there any other conservation projects for ACAP species not already mentioned in Questions 2.3 to 2.6?

Response: No

3. Habitat conservation

3.1 Has the Party introduced any legal or policy instruments or actions to implement protection and management of breeding sites, including habitat restoration?

Response: No

3.2 Has the Party implemented any sustainable management measures for marine living resources which provide food for albatrosses and petrels? (e.g. temporal or spatial area closures, adjustment to a fishing quota for a species known to be eaten by an albatross or petrel, size limits, issue of licences, observer programmes/reporting, research/surveys).

Response: No

3.3 Has the Party implemented any management or protection of important marine areas for albatrosses and petrels?

Response: Yes

The Commonwealth, state and territory governments have established marine parks around the country, covering 3.3 million square kilometres or 37 per cent of Australia's oceans. Important foraging, feeding and breeding areas for albatross and petrel species that occur in Australia's jurisdiction have been identified in some of these marine parks. Among a range of conservation values identified for each marine region, albatross and petrels are managed as major conservation values where they occur.

<https://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/parks/>

4. Management of human activities

4.1 Has the Party completed any **new** environmental impact assessments related to albatrosses and petrels? (legal and policy instruments are addressed in Question 2.7)

Response: No

4.2 Has the Party implemented any **new** measures to minimise discharge of pollutants and marine debris ([MARPOL](#))?

Response: Yes

'Injury and fatality to vertebrate marine life caused by ingestion of, or entanglement in, harmful marine debris' has been listed as a key threatening process under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). To address this the threat abatement plan for the impacts of marine debris on the vertebrate wildlife of Australia's coasts and oceans was finalised in 2018. The plan incorporates actions needed to abate the listed key threatening process, particularly actions to develop understanding about microplastic impacts and the potential role of new technologies in waste management. The plan identifies several petrel and albatross species in Australia's jurisdiction that are adversely impacted by marine debris.

1) tap-marine-debris-2018[1].pdf (size 4078039 bytes)  [→](#)

4.3 Has the Party introduced any other **new** measures to minimise the disturbance to albatrosses and petrels in marine and terrestrial habitats not already reported in Questions 3.1 to 4.2?

Response: No

5. Research programmes

5.1 Does the Party have any ongoing research programmes relating to the conservation of albatrosses and petrels not already reported on in Sections 2, 3 and 4?

Response: No

5.2 Does the Party have any **new** national institutions (authorities or research centres), or NGOs involved in albatross and petrel conservation?

Response: No

6. Education and public awareness

6.1 Has the Party conducted training or provided information for user audiences (eg scientists, fishers)?

Response: Yes

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority routinely conducts in port visits to inform fishing operators about applicable seabird bycatch mitigation measures. However during 2020, COVID-19 pandemic restrictions limited outreach to fishers as a consequence of limited travel and viable communication opportunities.

6.2 Has the Party conducted training or provided information to the general public?

Response: Yes

An 'On Albatross Island' Education Kit has been developed in collaboration with the Tasmanian Art Teachers Association (TATA). This education kit has been designed to support teacher and student engagement the 'On Albatross Island exhibition' which was exhibited at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Tasmania throughout 2016. While the physical exhibition has concluded, the opportunity for teachers and students to engage with its core creative outputs is made possible through this education kit. wa Australia's Minister for the Environment released a media statement on World Albatross Day in June 2020. The statement highlights the upgraded threatened species listing for Australia's Shy Albatross from vulnerable to endangered and raises awareness of ACAP's objectives. <https://minister.awe.gov.au/ley/media-releases/world-albatross-day-sees-australian-native-transferred-endangered-threatened-species-list> Social media posts and platforms were used to raise awareness for World Albatross Day during 2020. Outreach statistics demonstrate good communication across Facebook and Twitter with several posts on the day: Facebook impressions per post 1. 16700 2. 19604 3. 15321 Twitter impressions per post 1. 9237 2. 7662
1) On-Albatross-Island-Education-Kit.pdf (size 3174927 bytes) 

7. Reporting against priorities for land-based conservation actions ([see MoP6 Doc 13](#))

7.2 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to house mice on Gough Island?

Response: Not Applicable

7.3 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to reindeer on Kerguelen (Grande Terre)?

Response: Not Applicable

7.4 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Formentera?

Response: Not Applicable

7.5 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Menorca?

Response: Not Applicable

7.6 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Kerguelen (Grande Terre)?

Response: Not Applicable

7.7 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Cabrera?

Response: Not Applicable

7.8 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Cabrera?

Response: Not Applicable

7.9 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Formentera?

Response: Not Applicable

7.10 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Ibiza?

Response: Not Applicable

7.11 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Mallorca?

Response: Not Applicable

7.12 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Menorca?

Response: Not Applicable

7.13 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Ile Saint Lanne Gramont?

Response: Not Applicable

7.14 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Ile Saint Lanne Gramont?

Response: Not Applicable

7.15 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to brown rats on South Georgia (Islas Georgias del Sur)?

Response: Not Applicable

7.16 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Auckland Island?

Response: Not Applicable

7.17 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to pigs on Auckland Island?

Response: Not Applicable

7.19 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Avian cholera on Ile Amsterdam?

Response: Not Applicable

7.20 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to mosquitos on Isla Espanola?

Response: Not Applicable

7.21 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Avian pox virus on Albatross Island (AU)?

Response: Yes

Monitoring of external symptoms of Avian pox virus in pre-fledging *Thalassarche cauta* (Shy Albatross) chicks

has been ongoing since 2008. Analyses in 2016 confirmed pox virus to be highly prevalent among chicks, with 42% of chicks showing clinical signs of disease. As part of a targeted study to evaluate and develop climate change mitigation options, trials have been undertaken of ways to reduce the disease loads of affected albatrosses. Chicks are sprayed with commercially available insecticide to reduce the transmission of avian pox, reduce the severity of general disease impacts, and increase the overall health of chicks. Survival of treated chicks was significantly higher than those in control areas within the colony (Alderman RA, and Hobday AJ (2016). Developing a climate adaptation strategy for vulnerable seabirds based on prioritisation of intervention options. Deep-Sea Research 171 140: 290-297). Analysis of blood and cloacal swab samples from Shy Albatross chicks obtained throughout their development is ongoing, with results hopefully leading to increased understanding of pox virus dynamics and a refined approach to the control of vectors.

7.22 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Australasian gannets *Morus serrator* on Pedra Branca?
Response: Yes

Aerial surveys are undertaken biannually of Pedra Branca to determine relative numbers and distribution of *Thalassarche cauta* (Shy Albatross) and *Morus serrator* (Australasian Gannet). Results from camera monitoring suggest damage may be occurring to albatross nesting sites by gannets stealing nesting material. A successful trial of artificial nests on Albatross Island has now been extended to Pedra Branca to assess the efficacy of artificial nest provision in mitigating the impacts of competition between the species. Remote cameras are currently deployed to monitor uptake and success of these nests.

8. Reporting against priorities for at-sea conservation actions (see MoP6 Doc 13)

8.1 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Angola Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.2 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Argentina Demersal trawl fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.4 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia demersal trawl fishery?
Response: Yes
see response to 8.6 below.

8.5 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia Pelagic trawl fishery?
Response: Yes
Vessels operating in the small pelagic fishery carry independent observers and/or use electronic monitoring (including cameras) to monitor fishing operations. Vessels employ seabird bycatch mitigation measures including tori lines or bafflers and offal management to minimise risks to seabirds. This includes using tori lines to minimise interactions with net sonde cable.

8.6 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia trawl fishery?
Response: Yes
In addition to stringent offal management and mandatory deployment of physical mitigation (either bird bafflers or large brightly coloured buoys on the warp wires) operators are prohibited from discharging biological material in high risk areas during daylight hours unless they can demonstrate mitigation approaches that remove the risk to seabirds interacting with trawl warps. A number of boats have been approved for exemptions to the discharge rules, having implemented measures such as discard chutes or mechanical devices to pull warp wires under water.

8.7 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil demersal longline fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.8 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.9 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil Pelagic longline fishery (Itaipava fleet)?
Response: Not Applicable

8.10 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the CCSBT Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Yes
Australia implements seabird mitigation requirements for its flagged fishing vessels that exceed the existing binding conservation measures applying in the fishery. These include requirements concerning branch line weighting, use of at least one tori line, a prohibition on offal discharge during line setting, and about using electronic monitoring systems and logbook reporting to monitor and report bycatch.

8.11 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the IATTC Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.12 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the ICCAT Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Not Applicable

8.13 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the IOTC Pelagic longline fishery?
Response: Yes
Australia implements seabird mitigation requirements for its flagged fishing vessels that exceed the existing binding Pelagic longline fishery conservation measures applying in the fishery. These include requirements

concerning branch line weighting, use of at least one tori line, a prohibition on offal discharge during line setting, and about using electronic monitoring systems and logbook reporting to monitor and report bycatch.

8.15 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia demersal trawl fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.16 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia Pelagic longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.17 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia pelagic trawl fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.18 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Peru demersal longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.19 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Peru Pelagic longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.20 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the SEAFO demersal trawl fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.21 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Spain demersal longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.22 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Spain Pelagic longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.23 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Spain purse seine fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.24 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Spain trawl fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.25 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the SPRFMO demersal trawl fishery?

Response: Yes

Australia implements measures that exceed the requirements for demersal trawl and longline. We prohibit discharge of biological material. For longline, operators are required to use at least one bird scaring line when deploying lines, as well as a bird excluder device. Trawl operators are required to deploy a bird baffler.

8.26 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the UK (OT) Pelagic longline fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

8.27 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the WCPFC Pelagic longline fishery?

Response: Yes

Australia implements seabird mitigation requirements for its flagged fishing vessels that exceed the existing binding conservation measures applying in the fishery. These include requirements concerning branch line weighting, use of at least one tori line, a prohibition on offal discharge during line setting, and about using electronic monitoring systems and logbook reporting to monitor and report bycatch. Australia has actively supported other Member's proposals to improve seabird conservation outcomes.

8.28 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia Gillnet fishery?

Response: Yes

Fishing operations by vessels in the Gillnet fishery are monitored via electronic monitoring (including cameras). In 2021, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority implemented a spatially targeted approach to investigate mass seabird bycatch interactions to inform increased Electronic Monitoring review on potentially higher risk vessels near breeding colonies. Offal management in the Gillnet fishery requires the permit holder remove all biological material from a gillnet before it is set and to not discharge offal while setting. The attached Shark Gillnet Bycatch and Discarding Workplan is relevant to operators fishing with gillnets in the Gillnet, Hook and Trap sector of the larger Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. It includes an action item regarding the intended development and distribution of a best practice 'fact sheet' for minimising seabird interactions.

8.29 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch the Uruguay demersal trawl fishery?

Response: Not Applicable

9. Other

Does the Party have any new information to report on research into observed impacts, or mitigation of, climate change on albatrosses and petrels?

Response: Yes

See attachments. Further, Claire Mason is a PhD student at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies. Claire's research papers on Climate Variability Influences on Shy Albatross Populations and Conservation under Climate Change will become available over the next year when published. Contact:

Claire.Mason@utas.edu.au

1) Alderman&Hobday_climate adaptation strategy_seabirds_DSR II_2017.pdf (size 520667 bytes) 

2) Michael_longlines_climate chagne_albatross_thesis_2016.pdf (size 5802437 bytes) 

10. Additional Comments (including feedback about this form or the reporting process)

Final submission details

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Report by Mandi Livesey

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