



## **Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels**

### **Sixth Meeting of Advisory Committee**

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## **Suggested Indicators for Measuring the Success of ACAP**

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## **Suggested Indicators for Measuring the Success of ACAP**

1. This is a UK paper submitted to aid discussion on indicators which will take place at AC6. It takes account of the views of the Intersessional Working Group established at AC5 but it should not be seen as the conclusions of that group as this has not been possible to achieve in the time available. Instead it reflects the UK's summary of considerations and makes UK suggestions at paragraphs 11 and 12, with the views of members of the group reflected in italics throughout the paper.

### **INTRODUCTION**

2. The development of indicators suitable for measuring the success in achieving the ACAP objective of favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels has been under consideration since AC1 in July 2005.

3. Prior to AC5 the ACAP Working Groups considered possible indicators in conjunction with AC5 papers submitted by the UK (AC5 Doc 28) and Birdlife International (Inf 8). Following the Working Group deliberations the Secretariat produced AC5 Inf 16 for consideration by Parties at AC5, which summarised the position and listed potential indicators from the Working Groups that might be worked up.

4. The AC discussed the desirable characteristics of performance indicators and agreed:

- a. that indicator categories should, as far as possible, conform with the "State, Pressure, Response" (SPR) system, while recognising that some important indicators would relate to monitoring the progressive acquisition of relevant data to enable the development of SPR indicators;
- b. that some basic indicators (at Annex 15 of the final report) identified by the working groups, which were readily achievable with data that ACAP already holds, could be adopted immediately and, where necessary, incorporated into the revised national reporting template;
- c. that some other indicators identified by the working groups require further development intersessionally; and
- d. to form a small ad-hoc group to progress work on the development of indicators. The group comprised the WG Convenors and members from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the USA, BirdLife and any others who wished to join; the UK agreed to lead this group;

5. Birdlife International noted the importance of directly measuring the levels of commitment (e.g. in terms of capacity as set out in AC5 Doc 28 Annex C) by those with Range State responsibility of ACAP species so this should also be considered when developing the indicators. The AC agreed to add this topic to the work of the intersessional group.

6. In its e-mail to the intercessional group dated 6 August 2010 the UK proposed initially limiting indicators to those that can be populated with readily available data, whilst considering more challenging data for the next phase. The indicators to be considered would exclude those requiring subjective judgements and be restricted to those where the overarching measure should be the number of birds in question that exist, use, or are threatened, so that over time it is possible to assess changes in these figures and how ACAP measures have or have not made a difference. Views were sought on this approach and the degree to which the work should restrict itself to using readily available data or looking to obtain data that is required. Responses were received from Australia and Birdlife. These were broadly supportive of the UK's proposal but did not rule out the use of subjective indicators if they could be shown to be useful and no quantitative data were available.

7. Various factors already proven or agreed, were utilised by the UK when considering the merits of potential indicators. These were presented to the Intersessionally Working Group members together with UK conclusions on suggested indicators and a proposed way forward. Various constructive comments and suggestions were received but time constraints have prevented a consensus view from being reached. This paper therefore presents a UK perspective with alternative views presented in italics. It is hoped these views can contribute to the AC6 considerations.

## **UK CONSIDERATIONS**

8.

- The indicators proposed for ACAP are more detailed than those used for CBD purposes but where possible should be consistent with CBD.

*(IWG comment: It is debateable whether consistency with CBD indicators should be given any prominence or significant consideration. There is no general reason to necessarily align with CBD and a case by case approach should be adopted.)*

- Parties or the Secretariat must have the means (data) to fulfil the indicator. Focus should at least initially be concentrated on data that ACAP already holds or will soon hold and that will be available for an extended period – at least 10 years.
- Indicators should be measurable (objective or quantifiable) and scientifically sound. An indicator should be representative.
- Capacity based indicators should relate to actual resources made available not administrative activity. Such indicators should focus on conservation goals/actions and the capacity to implement them. Whatever units of measure are chosen need to be available and equally meaningful for all Parties e.g money and staff numbers are unlikely to be comparable as money has different purchasing power in different countries.

*(IWG comment: A better approach might be to develop a list of which conservation actions are needed and then measure which are achieved.)*

- General consensus that we should start the process with simple indicators and look to build from there.

## UK CONCLUSIONS

9. With these basic considerations in mind, and having sought the input of the UK's expert on CBD indicators, the possibility of using the potential indicators previously identified at **Annex A of AC5 Doc 28** was explored. There is considerable potential for new or improved simple analysis of existing data in the ACAP database and the UK believes that the utilisation of this data should be developed by the Secretariat. All BSWG indicators in Annex 15 of the final AC5 report and the majority of those from the STWG fall into this category. We recognise that work has already been undertaken on several of these suggestions and we support its continuation and refinement. Having considered all these elements we **rejected** recommending the following headline indicator at this stage.

(i). By-catch – there are probably insufficient and consistent data available to produce a universal fisheries by-catch indicator at this stage.

*(IWG comment: This may be a premature conclusion and the SBWG should consider whether there is sufficient and consistent by-catch data available on which to produce a useful indicator.)*

10. We also rejected these sub-indicators:

(i). Coverage of albatross range by observers programmes – unlikely that this would achieve a sufficiently consistent approach, particularly in the short term, to be meaningful.

(ii). RFMO engagement on ACAP issues – this is worth exploring further to consider such things as the existence of an MoU, relevant ACAP resolutions and active implementation, but more work would be required in terms of measurement to make it meaningful.

(iii). Tracking the level of risk to an ACAP species (increasing, decreasing or stable) – unlikely to be sufficiently robust when subjected to scrutiny.

*(IWG Comment: May be sufficiently robust for some species or populations.*

*The BSWG is likely to advise on this aspect at AC6.)*

(iv). Identification and successful implementation of key priority conservation actions – would be very difficult to quantify.

*(IWG Comment: Believe that something could be achieved. It should be possible to agree priority conservation actions with specific targets and then measure completion of those targets over a given time frame e.g. the eradication of invasive alien pests at a specific site or reduction of by-catch in a specific fishery.)*

(v). The provision and quality of ACAP information – would be very difficult to measure as variables such as total resource and expenditure would come into play which in turn would need to be measured against the comparative wealth of individual Parties.

## UK PROPOSAL

11. Taking account of the factors detailed above the UK would recommend 3 headline indicators.

1. Conservation status:
  - IUCN Red List status of ACAP species

A simple indicator to utilise and which has existing data. This indicator compliments the messages produced by other species-based indicators such as trends in the abundance of species, and those relating to invasive species and sustainable use.

2. Populations:
  - Population trends for selected ACAP species/populations (giving priority to indicator that can pick up trends in a shorter period)
  - Breeding success of selected ACAP species at selected key breeding sites.
  - Coverage of protected areas, an agreed indicator from Annex 15, also directly complements several other indicators, including trends in abundance and distribution of selected species; and, change in the status of threatened species. There is an existing system for measuring effectively managed protected areas.

*(IWG Comment: Need to decide whether this should cover breeding land, sea areas or both.*

*Whilst agreeing general points, they may have been overtaken by developments. ACAP Secretariat is supplying database extracts for examination at AC6.*

*Content that the indicators identified at the STWG and BSWG at the last AC are those that are the most effective/useful, and that can be produced and updated readily.)*

12. Both conservation status and population trend indicators are consistent with CBD requirements.

{NB. Some breeding site and population indicators already exist. At the Secretariat's request these are included in this paper and are shown in the table at Annex I. These will be reviewed in the joint BS and ST Working Groups with further advice to be presented to AC}

3. A universal third indicator.

We suggest something on threats is required and propose that we use the breeding sites indicator suggesting the number and proportion of sites with potentially harmful invasive alien species.

*(IWG Comment: Believe this has been overtaken by other work. Understand the possibility of developing a composite index style of indicator which draws on several fields in the ACAP database and which can be compared across sites is to be discussed in the Breeding Sites Working Group.*

*May be an advantage in a joint BSWG and STWG meeting.*

*Preference for a larger number of indicators to be considered and trialled- most indicators in AC5 Inf 16 could be trialled. Concern that a small number will not be fully representative of overall performance.)*

## **NEXT STEPS**

13. It is clear there is a need to consider the development of an indicator reflecting at sea threats. Ideally this would reflect by-catch and mitigation measures. This is potentially a crucial area of assessment but will require considerable further thinking on development before it can be utilised effectively as details are currently patchy and likely to be inconsistent across RFMO areas. This seems likely to be a task for the SBWG.

14. In the interim we should explore further the possibility of measuring RFMO engagement on ACAP issues such as whether an MoU is in place, active implementation etc.

*(IWG Comment: A meaningful indicator for ACAP engagement in RFMOs may be to measure the extent to which formal policies/recommendations/resolutions in RFMOs reflect ACAP best practice advice.)*

15. In the longer term we should also consider the use of a provider such as Global Biodiversity Indicator Partnership co-ordinated by WCMC in Cambridge.

*(IWG comment: Some reluctance to use ACAP funds for an external provider in an area we could service ourselves, also doubts about reliable delivery.)*

## Annex I – Existing Indicators

Breeding Sites	2011	
	Count	%
Islands with alien species	FIX	
Islands with habitat modifiers ( <i>Black (ship) rat, Brown (Norwegian) rat, Cattle, deer, European hare, House mouse, Pig, Polynesian rat, Rabbit, Reindeer, Sheep</i> )	FIX	
Islands with known/potential predators ( <i>Black (ship) rat, Brown (Norwegian) rat, Brushtail possum, Cat, Dog, Ferret, House mouse, Polynesian rat, Stoat</i> )	FIX	
Sites with threats - Low	FIX	
Sites with threats - Medium	FIX	
Sites with threats - High	FIX	
Sites with threats - Very High	FIX	
Sites with Protected Status *	FIX	
Sites with Management Plans	FIX	
Sites with Biosecurity Protocol ( <i>Biosecurity Plan or Quarantine</i> )	14	2.23
<b>Status and Trends</b>		
Populations of Island Groups censused within last 10 years	100	60.98
Populations of Island Groups censused within last 20 years	112	68.29
Populations of Island Groups monitored annually (incl. part-sites) within last 10 years	18	10.98
Populations of Island Groups monitored annually (incl. part-sites) within last 20 years	FIX	
Sites (or part sites) with ongoing annual monitoring - population	4	0.64
Sites (or part sites) with ongoing annual monitoring - demography	0	0
Populations of Island Groups - Trend increasing last 10 years	12	7.32
Populations of Island Groups - Trend stable last 10 years	5	3.05
Populations of Island Groups - Trend down last 10 years	4	2.44
Populations of Island Groups - Trend unknown last 10 years	2	1.22
Populations of Island Groups - Trend increasing last 20 years	13	7.93
Populations of Island Groups - Trend stable last 20 years	5	3.05
Populations of Island Groups - Trend down last 20 years	4	2.44
Populations of Island Groups - Trend unknown last 20 years	2	1.22

\* Protected status = one or more following categories: (Antarctic Specially Managed Area, Antarctic Specially Protected Area, Antarctic Treaty Area, Area restricted to scientific and technical research, IUCN Protected Area - Category 1a, IUCN Protected Area - Category 1b, IUCN Protected Area - Category II, IUCN Protected Area - Category III, IUCN Protected Area - Category IV, IUCN Protected Area - Category V, Marine National Monument, Marine Park, Marine Reserve, National Heritage List, National Nature Reserve, National Park, National Wildlife Protection Area, National Wildlife Refuge, Natural Area Reserve, Natural Monument, Nature Reserve, Private Sanctuary, Ramsar Wetland, Register of Critical Habitat, Register of National Estate, Scenic Reserve, Special Management Areas, Special Nature Reserve, Specially Protected Area, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, UNESCO World Heritage Area)