Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Fourteenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Lima, Peru, 12 – 16 August 2024

Report of the Joint Twelfth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Eighth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group

SBWG and PaCSWG Convenors and Vice-convenors

Joint Twelfth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Eighth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group

Lima, Peru, 8 - 9 August 2024

1. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

This Report documents discussions and recommendations of the Joint Twelfth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Eighth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group, held in Lima, Peru on 8-9 August 2024.

PaCSWG Co-convenors Marco Favero (Argentina) and Patricia Serafini (Brazil), and PaCSWG Vice-convenor Richard Phillips (United Kingdom), together with SBWG Co-convenors Igor Debski (New Zealand) and Sebastián Jiménez (Uruguay), and SBWG Vice-convenors Dimas Gianuca (BirdLife International, BLI) and Megan Tierney (United Kingdom), welcomed all meeting attendees (**ANNEX 1**) to the Joint Meeting of SBWG12 and PaCSWG8.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Joint Meeting adopted the agenda and meeting documents (**SBWG12/ PaCSWG8 Doc 01 Rev 1** and **SBWG12/ PaCSWG8 Doc 02 Rev 1)**.

3. OVERLAP OF BIRDS AND AT-SEA THREATS

3.1. Review of tracking studies for risk assessments

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 05 used tracking data to assess temporal variability in Antipodean Albatross *Diomedea antipodensis* distributions and spatial overlap with pelagic longline fishing effort. The study found differences in distribution according to breeding status, age, and sex. Although there was some variability over time, several distinct areas were consistently classified as fisheries overlap hotspots, including the Tasman Sea, waters east and north of New Zealand's North Island, as well as off the coast of Chile. A resampling approach was used to control for different sample sizes and tag types across the study period, which showed that the apparent range shift of female non-breeders reported previously was an artefact of differences in tagging durations. The meeting noted the importance of comprehensive and fine-scale (i.e. monthly) tracking data for assessing risk and overlap with fisheries.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 07 assessed spatio-temporal overlap of adult and juvenile Antipodean *D. a. antipodensis* and Gibson's *D. a. gibsoni* albatrosses with pelagic longline fishing vessels, using effort data from Global Fishing Watch (GFW). The study found differences between species and sexes in distributions and overlap with fisheries of RFMOs and flag states . The areas of highest bird-vessel overlap occurred in the high seas where the CCSBT (Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna) fisheries occur, and the

area of competence of the WCPFC (Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission). The Joint Meeting noted the importance of seabird observer programmes and feather sampling so species and breeding population of origin can be determined genetically. It was highlighted that captures in the New Zealand Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) may decrease as ACAP Best Practice mitigation is now mandated. Currently, effort data available from GFW does not include most artisanal and small-scale fisheries. GFW informed the Joint Meeting that they are analysing satellite imagery to at least partially overcome this limitation, and would welcome the provision of independent datasets from Parties, which can assist with validation of satellite-derived estimates of effort. The Joint Meeting agreed on the merits of a cooperation arrangement between ACAP and GFW, and that ACAP should encourage Parties to share their VMS (vessel monitoring system) data with GFW, and make the data public where possible. GFW offered to work with Parties to provide analytical support for the monitoring of vessel movements, to improve understanding of artisanal and small-scale fleets, vessel movement patterns and fine-scale interactions.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 10 used GPS and immersion data to analyse the rafting behaviour of Wandering *Diomedea exulans*, Black-browed *Thalassarche melanophris*, Grey-headed *Thalassarche chrysostoma* and Light-mantled *Phoebetria palpebrata* albatrosses, and White-chinned petrels *Procellaria aequinoctialis*. Tracked birds used nearshore waters (within 10 km of the colony) extensively during the breeding season. The study recommends effective marine spatial planning to mitigate coastal threats such as pollution and shipping in waters adjacent to breeding colonies. The Joint Meeting noted that the use of the 10 km metric was pragmatic but that more studies in other areas and on a wider range of species are welcomed.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 11 assessed bycatch risk in longline and trawl fisheries of Short-tailed *Phoebastria albatrus*, Laysan *Phoebastria immutabilis* and Black-footed *Phoebastria nigripes* albatrosses in the North Pacific. High-risk areas were identified in the central and northwest subtropical Pacific and along the Pacific Rim from Japan to California. Four flag states and entities (Japan, USA, Chinese Taipei and the Russian Federation) were responsible for >95% of overall risk. The study recommended improved monitoring in these fleets and increased adoption of and compliance with best practice mitigation measures to reduce conflicts between fisheries and albatrosses. The Joint Meeting highlighted the importance of this study for both WCPFC and IATTC (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission) and noted that recommendations should be targeted at high-risk regions rather than high-risk fleets. The Joint Meeting encouraged the authors work with data owners to submit the albatross tracking data to the BirdLife International Seabird Tracking Database. The Joint Meeting noted that ACAP does not currently engage with North Pacific fisheries bodies – to which Japan, USA and the Russian Federation are Parties. Two ways to convey these results to these Parties were discussed: 1) authors to submit this paper to meetings of the relevant fisheries bodies, and 2) encourage Japan and US to take this information to those meetings.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 01 analysed the seabird assemblages in the Brazil-Malvinas Confluence, during the austral winter. The highest seabird abundances and species richness were found along the continental shelf and shelf break. Environmental factors like wind direction, wind intensity, cloudiness, and atmospheric pressure significantly influenced seabird abundance and richness. This information can aid fisheries management and the development of management plans for marine resources use.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 02 analysed habitat suitability for adult and immature Black-browed albatrosses *T. melanophris* in the southwest Atlantic during the austral winter. There were differences in habitat use between age classes, underlining the importance of tracking different life stages to identify the full range of critical habitats and guide conservation efforts.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 04 used a literature review and Bayesian multilevel models to analyse the influence of seabird scavenging behaviour and life-history traits on bycatch risk. The study indicates that K-selected species, including albatrosses, are more likely to rely on fisheries subsidies and are more threatened by bycatch. The study suggested that fisheries represent an ecological trap – i.e. the birds are attracted to poor quality habitats.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 07 compared the foraging habitat preferences of the *Phoebetria* albatrosses at multiple colonies across their breeding ranges, including in sympatry and allopatry. Foraging habitat preferences were consistent for Light-mantled albatrosses *P. palpebrata* but differed in Sooty albatrosses *P. fusca* in sympatry (both species present) vs. allopatry. The work underlines the importance of collecting tracking data from different island groups to improve understanding of fisheries overlap and bycatch risk.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 09 reviewed the progress made by Peru concerning management of the fishing sector and presented important considerations for improving albatross and petrel conservation. The management programmes relate to monitoring of seabird strandings, fisheries observation, and the safe handling and release of bycaught marine megafauna.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 12 described work undertaken to develop the Seabird-Safe Fishing Toolkit. The paper defined ocean zones and showed high-risk areas in the Pacific Ocean, where there was a high diversity of threatened species and where *Procellaria* petrels were present. The Joint Meeting noted that the Toolkit will be expanded to also include non-ACAP species, and that seabird tracking data owners should be encouraged to share data with ACAP and upload their data to the BirdLife International Seabird Tracking Database to facilitate seabird-fisheries overlap analyses and spatial risk assessments. The Joint Meeting agreed to recommend funding for a project to: identify gaps in tracking data coverage; to contact holders of tracking data that are not in the Tracking Database; and encourage them to submit their data, and to assist data holders with data submission.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 14 presented the first year-round tracking of Northern Buller's Albatross *Thalassarche bulleri platei*. The paper reported on breeding schedules, generated population-level distributions, quantified spatio-temporal overlap with Southern Buller's albatrosses *Thalassarche bulleri bulleri* and identified geopolitical responsibilities for both taxa. There was considerable spatial segregation between the two taxa, which is important to consider in risk assessments. The Joint Meeting noted that the data in this paper could be useful to resolve the taxonomy of Buller's Albatross but currently the ACAP Taxonomy Working Group considers there is insufficient evidence to recognise these taxa as separate species.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SBWG and PaCSWG jointly recommend that the Advisory Committee:

1. Support the development and use of tools for analysis of spatial overlap of seabirds and fisheries.
2. Encourage the development of ACAP guidelines for seabird-fisheries overlap and risk assessment analyses.
3. Encourage the provision of samples of known provenance for genetic assignment of seabirds caught in fisheries and submission of genetic data to appropriate data repositories.
4. Encourage Parties to improve knowledge of artisanal and small-scale fisheries to better understand impacts on seabirds, and provide ground-truthing data to assist Global Fishing Watch with remote detection of these fleets.
5. Encourage researchers to conduct fine-scale tracking studies, particularly on species, populations, and age classes, where there are data gaps, to submit their data to the BirdLife International Seabird Tracking Database, and to make the data available for seabird-fisheries overlap analyses and risk assessments.
6. Request the Secretariat to develop a cooperation arrangement with Global Fishing Watch, for presentation to the Meeting of the Parties for approval.
7. Encourage Parties to share Vessel Monitoring System data, including with Global Fishing Watch, and make it publicly available.
8. Encourage Parties to implement measures to reduce risks to rafting albatrosses and petrels, including reductions or prohibitions on shipping, carriage of heavy fuel oil, commercial or recreational fishing, and other activities that may cause harm to ACAP species in waters adjacent to breeding colonies.
9. Encourage increased engagement with North Pacific Ocean Regional Fisheries Organizations and non-Party Range States in the region.

3.2 Review of priority fisheries identified at pre-meeting workshop

The outcome of discussions on the review of priority fisheries identified at the pre-meeting workshop are detailed in **SBWG12 Doc 04,** with subsequent recommendations made by the SBWG presented in **AC14 Doc 12**.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 06 presented an update of New Zealand's Spatially Explicit Fisheries Risk Assessment (SEFRA) framework. The approach has been expanded from pelagic longline effort to include demersal longline and trawl effort. The study noted that global effort for pelagic longline fisheries is well-curated by RFMOs but is incomplete for demersal and trawl fisheries, and that seabird bycatch observer data for this SEFRA was based on New

Zealand data only. The Joint Meeting noted the importance of incorporating observer data from other fleets to develop more robust bycatch estimates. The Joint Meeting was made aware of plans to further develop the SEFRA methodology, including updated values for biological parameters, a greater number of species (both ACAP-listed species and others from New Zealand), and observer data from more fishing nations (New Zealand, Chinese Taipei and Japan). The Joint Meeting noted that updated species distributions and biological parameters, and improved estimates of catchability are needed, and that the project would benefit from assistance by ACAP and BirdLife International to access additional tracking data from data owners (see previous agenda item). The short deadlines make updates more challenging as the plan is for the model to be completed in 2025.

3.3 Offshore energy infrastructure developments and associated risks

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 09 sets out six principles to guide offshore wind farm (OWF) development that could be used to inform best practice advice for assessing and implementing individual projects. The Joint Meeting highlighted that OWF development guidelines and risk assessment methods may already exist elsewhere (e.g. Northern Hemisphere jurisdictions) and could be adapted. An ACAP intersessional working group was proposed that would develop guidelines for ACAP species, including Jonathan Barrington (Australia) as lead, the United Kingdom, Patricia Serafini (Brazil), New Zealand, Chile, Nigel Brothers (HSI), BirdLife International, Azwianewi Makhado (South Africa), Helena Moreno (Spain), Gustavo Jiménez Uzcátegui (Charles Darwin Foundation), and Mike Double (AC Chair). The Joint Meeting noted the benefit of coordination with the CMS Energy Task Force. It was recommended that OWF should not be located in areas with high concentrations of seabirds, such as near breeding colonies. Studies on the flight height behaviours and fine-scale distributions of ACAP species were also encouraged to inform OWF development.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SBWG and PaCSWG jointly recommend that the Advisory Committee:

10. Endorse the establishment of an intersessional working group to develop guidelines for offshore wind farm developments and risk assessments.
11. 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.

3.4 Other at-sea threats

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 05 reviewed the impacts of fishing on seabird communities and identified avenues for future research. The main recommendations relevant to this group were to: 1) improve collection of data on bycatch rates, fishing effort and vessel movements;

2) counter the current bias towards temperate and high-latitudes and particular life stages (e.g. breeding adults); and 3) advance understanding of combined effects of fisheries and other threats. The paper also discussed new technologies such as electronic monitoring, remote sensing, artificial intelligence, and big data.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 08 introduced a project that aims to examine how eco-evolutionary mechanisms may modify foraging behaviour to counter impacts of climate change on Wandering *D. exulans* and Black-browed *T. melanophris* albatrosses. The study will link foraging effort and fitness with population dynamics, while accounting for phenotypic plasticity due to environmental change. The goal is to improve forecasting and predict the long-term responses of marine ecosystems to climate change.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 10 presented the results of the 2023 Peruvian stranding network for Procellariiformes. Anthropogenic threats including entanglement in fishing nets and hook injuries were identified as the cause of death of some stranded birds; however, the cause was undetermined in most individuals due to decomposition. There was evidence of starvation in some species (e.g. Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*). Tests for High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 were negative. Brazil offered to provide advice based on their extensive stranding network programme.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 13 combined an integrated population model, tracking data, and advanced expert elicitations to predict future population trends of the Critically Endangered Whenua Hou Diving Petrel (*Pelecanoides georgicus whenuahouensis*). The paper showed how decision science could be used to determine the most cost-effective conservation strategies. The Joint Meeting noted that these methods are novel and could be applied broadly to ACAP species.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 16 reported on a project to assess bird strikes on vessels (research, patrol, fishing, tourism). The paper developed bird-strike reporting systems and bird-handling guidelines. The Joint Meeting noted that resources from this project could be made available on the ACAP website, noting also the usefulness of developing a database that would hold data on bird strikes, including from the cruise-ship industry, for future analyses of causes and effects. The Joint Meeting also noted the importance of minimising collisions caused by other light sources, including near breeding colonies, for which there are existing guidelines on the ACAP website.

4. ACAP HIGH PRIORITY POPULATIONS

4.1. Review key research and management actions for current ACAP High Priority Populations.

SBWG12/PaCSWG7 Doc 07 was discussed under Agenda Item 3.1.

SBWG12/PaCSWG7 Doc 08 investigated the causes of the decline, since 2005, in the Antipodean Albatross *D. a. antipodensis* population breeding at Antipodes Islands, using data collected since 1994. The model showed that the number of albatrosses, survival rates (especially for females), and breeding rates have all decreased. The study looked at whether fishing, climate change, plastic pollution, and diseases could be causing the population decline. Females spent more time in the Tasman Sea and north-east of New Zealand than

males. A simulation tool based on the population model and tracking data is publicly available (https://antipodean-albatross-simulations.dragonfly.nz/). Model simulations indicated that the most likely cause of the population declines was bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries in the high seas. The Joint Meeting welcomed this paper and noted the applicability of the modelling approach for other populations. The Joint Meeting recognised the importance of the effective implementation of seabird bycatch mitigation in Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction to address the Antipodean Albatross *D. a. antipodensis* decline. The Joint Meeting also welcomed New Zealand's commitment to addressing some of the latent threats to the Antipodean Albatross *D. a. antipodensis* from New Zealand domestic fisheries through the continued implementation of the New Zealand NPOA-Seabirds and its recenty updated regulation due to come into effect in October 2024 (**AC14 Doc 12**).

The Waved Albatross Plan of Action (WAPOA) developed by Ecuador and Peru in collaboration with ACAP, has the objective of providing information to managers, scientists, and stakeholders on actions needed to improve the conservation status of the species. The WAPOA was adopted in 2008 and **SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 03** outlines a timeline of actions by the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups relevant to the implementation of the WAPOA. This provides background and context for **SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 06** that proposes five principal action areas for priority engagement, support, and implementation arising from the WAPOA: 1) conservation knowledge and engaging stakeholders, 2) habitat suitability and insurance populations, 3) measuring overlap of albatross and fisheries, 4) tracking population trajectory as a metric of progress, and 5) recognising the potential role of marine protected areas (MPAs) in albatross protection.

Peru highlighted that this 'horizon-scanning' exercise has proved very helpful to prioritise their actions, and, in particular, in identifying that progress requires improvements in the internal communications network, and in assigning management roles and responsibilities to the appropriate sectors. The Joint Meeting was pleased to see this progress and the plans for action in the next five years. However, it noted that many of the recommendations made during the initial workshop held to develop the WAPOA are yet to be implemented or even incorporated in the plan, and recommended a review of these recommendations and consideration of how they could be included to further strengthen the WAPOA. Marco Favero offered to assist Peru and Ecuador in this activity.

Given the threats to Waved Albatross *Phoebastria irrorata* and the other ACAP High Priority Populations, the Joint Meeting noted the need for all relevant Parties to implement or develop their Action Plans, and to work collaboratively where needed to progress action. It was also agreed that the action plans for the High Priority Populations should be made more prominent on the ACAP website.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 08 reports the results of the recent (2024) island-wide survey of the ACAP High Priority Populations of Grey-headed *T. chrysostoma*, Black-browed *T. melanophris* and Wandering *D. exulans* albatrosses at South Georgia (Islas Georgias del Sur)[1]. Comparison of breeding numbers with previous surveys indicated considerable variation in trends among sites, and continued declines overall. Although annual trends from 2014/15 to 2023/24, compared with 2003/04 to 2014/15, indicated a slower decrease in all

[1] A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur e Islas Sandwich del Sur) and the surrounding maritime areas.

three species, the overall declines in <40 years were very steep: Grey-headed albatrosses *T. chrysostoma* by 76%, Black-browed albatrosses *T. melanophris* by 46% and Wandering albatrosses *D. exulans* by 39%. These were attributed primarily to incidental mortality in fisheries operating on continental shelves and on the high seas. Climatic change was also a contributing factor for the two *Thalassarche* species. The Joint Meeting stressed that addressing seabird bycatch remains a clear and urgent conservation priority. The Joint Meeting took note of these alarming trends and emphasised that these, and similar messages reported in other studies, e.g., from New Zealand (**PaCSWG8 DOC3**), need to be communicated to the Parties to emphasise the urgency of actions to halt these catastrophic declines.

4.2 Development of an ACAP strategy for High Priority Populations – reporting template and priority fisheries

At the Joint SBWG11/PaCSWG7 meeting, it was agreed that the reporting template that had been prepared for Parties to report on ACAP High Priority Populations would undergo a one-year trial, with results to be presented to the Joint SBWG12/PaCSWG8 and AC14. The Science Officer noted that incorporating the template into the ACAP database to facilitate this reporting had not progressed during the intersessional period. The Joint Meeting agreed that the trial be run in the next intersessional period, and results reported to AC15.

4.3 Proposals for new High Priority Populations

There were no proposals for additional ACAP High Priority Populations. However, it was noted that, based on recent surveys, Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi* on the Chatham Islands and Southern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi*, may qualify as ACAP High Priority Populations. The Joint Meeting noted that designating populations as High Priority Populations would require a document outlining the proposal to be submitted to the Working Groups. It also recommended that information on ACAP High Priority Populations should be more prominent on the ACAP website.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SBWG and PaCSWG jointly recommend that the Advisory Committee:

12. Encourage Parties to take actions for the conservation of the ACAP High Priority Populations and ensure the effective implementation of any existing Action Plans for the populations or species.

5. COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES RELATING TO RFMOs

5.1 Update on RFMO engagement strategy implementation

and

5.2 Review progress in implementing actions related to RFMOs

AC13 established an intersessional group to review the ACAP RFMO Engagement Strategy. The outcome of the review was a decision to present two Working Documents to the Joint SBWG12/PaCSWG8 meeting , one outlining progress since AC13 and the other proposing priority actions for the next triennium (see **SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf Doc 03 Rev 1**). **SBWG 12/PaCSWG8 Doc 04 Rev 1** outlined the engagement that had taken place with seven RFMOs, as well as CCAMLR, since AC13 up to June 2024. ACAP was represented at key meetings of these bodies, at the Working Group, Compliance Committee, Scientific Committee and Commission levels. Summaries are provided of developments at each meeting attended, highlighting ACAP's role and recommendations for future action. The document highlighted progress, with many RFMOs reviewing their seabird-related measures, providing opportunities for ACAP input and promotion of best practice advice.

SBWG 12/PaCSWG8 Doc 03 Rev 1 detailed priority actions for engaging with RFMOs in the coming triennium; many of them are relevant to ACAP as an observer delegation and also to ACAP Parties who are members of the respective organisations (as listed in ANNEX 1 of the document). Some of the priority actions had been carried over from the previous triennium, while new actions have been added, drawn from the recommendations in the summary of progress. The Joint Meeting stressed that the priority actions for the coming triennium were flexible, as changes or new actions could be added as appropriate. ANNEX 2 to **SBWG12/PaCSWG7 Doc 03 Rev 1** contains a list of proposed actions and ACAP products needed for all organisations relevant to the Strategy. The Joint Meeting agreed to update this list to reflect recent developments and newly available materials (see **SBWG12/PaCSWG7 Doc 03 Rev 2)**.

Since June 2024 (when the above documents were finalised), there had been some further developments. The IATTC (at Working Group and Scientific Committee level) had begun a process (after a proposal presented by the USA) to review its seabird measure and to update the Action Plan, and had requested input from ACAP. Following the review, the IATTC Working Group on Ecosystems and Bycatch will (in 2025) coordinate and draft a proposal for updating the IATTC seabird measure. The Joint Meeting noted that elements of the current review and update underway in the WCPFC (coordinated by New Zealand) may be useful as a model for the IATTC review. ICCAT has begun (at Working Group level) a process to review its seabird measure, as well as setting up an Action Plan for the first time; this would be pursued further in its Scientific Committee and Commission.

The Joint Meeting noted that the RFMO Engagement Strategy would be discussed further in AC14, drawing on the report from this meeting and **AC14 Doc 20**. This document proposes a revised Engagement Strategy and includes a suggested template for targeted outcomes for each target organisation. The Joint Meeting observed that the Engagement Strategy was a high priority for ACAP and stressed the need for adequate funding to be allocated in the AC Work Programme to allow the current level of engagement to be maintained.

SBWG12 Doc 11 was discussed under Agenda Item 12.1 of SBWG12, but contained a proposal relevant to the Joint Working Group Agenda Item 5. The document suggested that it would be useful to develop a cooperation arrangement with the Argentina and Uruguay Joint Technical Commission for the Maritime Front (see **AC14 Doc 12**). After clarification that the Regional Action Plan was not seen as a combination of the Action Plans of Argentina and Uruguay, but rather as a distinct and separate endeavour, and that it might potentially in the future extend its coverage to the sea adjacent to the Commission area, it was agreed to

recommend to the Advisory Committee that it endorse discussions by the Secretariat with the Joint Commission on a potential cooperation arrangement with the ACAP Secretariat to be proposed to MoP8.

SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Inf 15 reported on progress related to the CCSBT Seabird Project, under the FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project Phase 2. The Seabird Project is supported by ACAP and BirdLife International, and the CCSBT thanked ACAP for its ongoing assistance. The Joint Meeting welcomed progress and agreed to recommend to the Advisory Committee that it encourage South Africa to take advantage of the free Compliance Officer training offered under the Seabird Project. The Joint Meeting noted that the seabird risk assessment element of the project was not yet underway, with most activities planned for 2025, including facilitating the inclusion of global tuna longline fishing effort, and conclusion of the risk assessment. The Joint Meeting noted that the Seabird Project offered to provide technical assistance to facilitate data contributions or enhance understanding and operations of the model. The CCSBT also requested that all ACAP Parties with observer datasets from national tuna longline fishing, from 2016 to the most recent dataset available, contribute their data and actively participate in the risk assessment process. (Interested parties can contact the CCSBT Seabird Project Manager: rwanless@ccsbt.org).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SBWG and PaCSWG jointly recommend that the Advisory Committee:

13. Endorse the Proposed Priority Actions as set out in **SBWG12/PaCSWG8 Doc 03 Rev 1** and support the completion of the RFMO Engagement Strategy for 2026 – 2028.
14. Endorse, and propose to MoP8, the allocation of funding in the Advisory Committee Work Programme 2026-2028 to fully implement the priority actions.
15. Request the Secretariat to develop a cooperation arrangement between the ACAP Secretariat and the Joint Technical Commission of the Maritime Front, as part of the RFMO engagement strategy, for presentation to the Meeting of the Parties for approval.

6. LISTING OF SPECIES ON ANNEX 1

6.1. List of candidate species

The list of candidate species is managed by the Taxonomy Working Group (see **AC14 Doc 11**).

6.2. Proposals to list species on Annex 1

There were no new proposals to list additional species on Annex 1.

The Joint Meeting noted that a proposal is being developed by Australia and New Zealand to list a number of Gadfly petrel species (*Pterodroma* and *Pseudobulweria* species) on

Appendices I and II of. As this may then result in a proposal(s) for additional species to be listed on ACAP's Annex 1, the Joint Meeting highlighted that the Working Groups may need to actively consider any implications for ACAP that might result from this. The Joint Meeting noted that given the Range States of many of the Gadfly petrels, and the collective expertise within ACAP (as demonstrated from the Pterodroma workshop held in 2017), listing these species might result in attracting new Parties to join ACAP.

New Zealand also noted that they are considering proposing Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes* for CMS listing. This proposal may run in parallel with the Gadfly petrel species proposal. New Zealand will aim to provide an update at the next Joint Meeting.

7. ACAP FUNDED PROGRAMMES

7.1. Update on Small Grants and Secondments

AC14 Inf 01 summarises successful ACAP 2023 Small Grants and Secondments proposals and provides updates on progress with previous Secondments (2022, 2019) and Small Grants (2020, 2019) supported by the Advisory Committee, based on reports received. The high number of ongoing or recently completed projects reflects the ongoing delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years. Information on successful 2023 proposals is also available on the ACAP website, to which earlier projects will be progressively added.

The Secretariat thanked all Working Group members who reviewed the Small Grant proposals, and noted that the next application round for both Small Grants and Secondments is scheduled to start in mid-September 2024.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Feedback that had been received from Working Group members on the poster prepared by the ACAP HPAI H5N1 Intersessional Group of Experts for fishing vessels to be alert for avian flu was summarised by Patricia Serafini who leads the Intersessional Group. The Joint Meeting congratulated the Intersessional Group for developing this important resource and made several additional suggestions to further enhance the resource, such as: including a note to encourage sharing of any video footage taken of birds displaying potential signs of H5N1 infection, and including a QR code so users can also easily access/store an electronic copy of the poster. It was noted that in-kind support was being provided to translate the poster (once finalised) into Spanish, French and Portuguese. The Joint Meeting recommended that core ACAP funds be made available to support translation of the poster into additional languages and any costs associated with graphic design. The Joint Meeting also noted that the panzootic affects regions at different intensities and might be absent in some areas. Thus, efforts should be made to communicate epidemiological status changes, recognizing regional differences in the status of the panzootic. This would ensure that the mandated or recommended guidance on handling any live or dead seabirds found or brought on board during fishing operations is appropriately applied.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SBWG and PaCSWG jointly recommend that the Advisory Committee:

16. Endorse the allocation of core funds in the Advisory Committee Work Programme to cover design and translation costs of the poster for fishing vessels to be alert for avian flu and safe when handling birds.

9. REPORTING TO AC14

This report was prepared for consideration by the Advisory Committee.

10. CLOSING REMARKS

The PaCSWG and SBWG Convenors and PaCSWG Vice-convenor thanked those present, and the authors of papers and rapporteurs, for their valuable contributions to the meeting. The Science Officer was thanked for her diligence and commitment to assisting the work of the Meeting. Meeting attendees, the ACAP Secretariat and ACAP officials were thanked for their work during and in preparation of the meeting. Convenors gratefully acknowledged the host country for logistical support, Cecilia Alal and Sandra Hale for their interpretation services, and the sound technicians for their assistance during the meeting.

ANNEX 1. LIST OF JOINT SBWG12/PaCSWG8 MEETING PARTICIPANTS

SBWG/PaCSWG Members	
Igor Debski	SBWG Co-convenor, Department of Conservation, New Zealand
Sebastián Jiménez	SBWG Co-convenor, Dirección Nacional de Recursos Acuáticos, Uruguay
Megan Tierney	SBWG Co-vice-convenor, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, United Kingdom
Dimas Gianuca	SBWG Co-vice-convenor, BirdLife International
Marco Favero	PaCSWG Co-convenor, Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas y Costeras, CONICET-UNMDP, Argentina
Patricia Pereira Serafini	PaCSWG Co-convenor, UFSC and ICMBio/Ministry of Environment, Brazil
Richard Phillips	PaCSWG Vice-convenor, BAS, United Kingdom
Luis Adasme	Instituto de Fomento Pesquero, Chile
Cristobal Anguita	Universidad de Chile
José Carlos Baez	Spanish Oceanographic Institute
Jonathon Barrington	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australian Antarctic Division, Australia
Nigel Brothers	Humane Society International Australia
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