



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Fourth Meeting of Advisory Committee

Cape Town, South Africa, 22 – 25 August 2008

**Observer Report – CCAMLR (Commission for the
Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources)**

USA

Observer Report -- CCAMLR

CCAMLR Meetings: WG-IMAF, WG-Fish Stock Assessment, Scientific Committee, Commission—October 8 to November 2, 2007; Hobart, Tasmania, Australia; www.ccamlr.org ; ACAP Observer—USA, Kim Rivera, Co-Convener, CCAMLR's WG-IMAF, Working Group on Incidental Mortality Associated with Fishing; Kim.Rivera@noaa.gov

Summary: In 2007, with the exception of the French EEZ areas within the CCAMLR Convention Area, zero bird mortalities were reported in the regulated longline fisheries in the Convention Area and for a second consecutive year there were no albatross mortalities in the Convention Area in regulated fisheries. CCAMLR continues to refine its seabird conservation measures to represent best practice. CCAMLR's seabird risk assessment has been documented and will be shared with other RFMOs which could consider the experience of CCAMLR when developing approaches to minimizing bycatch in their own fisheries. This is particularly important given that the continued declines of some albatross populations breeding in the CCAMLR Convention Area is thought to result from bycatch in fisheries outside the Convention Area. CCAMLR members are also proactively working with other RFMOs to implement its Resolution 22/XXV (International actions to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds arising from fishing). Also in 2007, the United States presented information regarding seabird related activities at the WCPFC to CCAMLR's ad-hoc Working Group on Incidental Mortality and stressed to the full Commission the need to further develop the Memorandum of Understanding between CCAMLR and the WCPFC, particular to address issue of common concern such as seabird interactions within the WCPFC Convention Area.

List of Relevant Documents (available at CCAMLR's website):

Report of the CCAMLR Scientific Committee, SC-CAMLR-XXVI-2007 at

http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/sr/07/toc.htm

(see Annex 6 for Report of the ad-hoc WG-IMAF at

http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/sr/07/a06.pdf)

Report of the CCAMLR Commission, C-CAMLR-XXVI-2007 at

http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/cr/07/toc.htm

Highlights:

- The need for krill observer coverage on trawl vessels fishing for krill continues to be a concern (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraphs 3.7 to 3.13);
- France made commitments for implementation of an action plan to reduce the current level of incidental mortality by a factor of two over the next three years; France will submit a report annually to WG-IMAF on the progress and intermediate results of its action plan (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraph 5.7);
- Given that considerably greater levels of mortality of Convention Area seabirds occur in areas north of the Convention Area, compared to levels within the

- Convention Area, the Scientific Committee reminded Members of the importance of the standing request to report on seabird mortality for Convention Area species arising from fisheries conducted outside the Convention Area (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraph 5.18);
- A standing invitation to BirdLife International and ACAP to participate in IMAF as invited experts was agreed (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraph 5.56);
 - Recognizing the priority of working with RFMOs and a more pro-active implementation of CCAMLR's seabird resolution 22-XXV, the Scientific Committee tasked the IMAF Co-Conveners with the Secretariat to prepare briefing packets for CCAMLR-SC representatives at RFMO meetings, covering the resolution and IMAF's risk assessments (WG-FSA-07/P2) (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraphs 10.47 and 10.48); to date briefing packets have been compiled for the meetings of IOTC, ICCAT, and WCPFC; these packets also include ACAP information;
 - The Scientific Committee identified and requested intersessional tasks of its working groups: WG-SAM (Working Group on Statistics, Assessments, and Modeling) is to review a French analysis of petrel population responses to fisheries and environmental factors (SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraph 14.4(iii));
 - WG-IMAF will conduct a one-day workshop (October 10, 2008) to address critical medium-term items and the future focus of WG-IMAF (SC-CAMLR-XXVI, Annex 6, paragraph I.76; also see SC-CAMLR-XXVI paragraph 14.8).

Pertinent ACAP-related Extracts from the WG-IMAF Advice to the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-XXVI, Annex 6)

- Information was reported on current international initiatives under the auspices of: (i) ACAP – items of particular relevance to CCAMLR including ACAP's newly formed Seabird Bycatch Working Group (Part II, paragraphs 166 to 168); (ii) FAO (IPOA-Seabirds) – noting COFI's agreement (pending cost considerations) to develop best-practice technical guidelines for NPOA-Seabirds and RFMOs, that the guidelines should extend to other relevant fishing gears, and that FAO could undertake this work through an expert consultation and in cooperation with CCAMLR, ACAP and BirdLife International (Part II, paragraph 169); (iii) Joint meeting of tuna RFMOs – Secretariat-provided information on CCAMLR's processes in developing its seabird by-catch mitigation measures (Part I paragraph 65; Part II, paragraphs 171 to 174); (iv) RFMOs – no responses received to CCAMLR Resolution 22/XXV but updates on WCPFC, ICCAT, CCSBT, IOTC and IATTC (Part II, paragraphs 175 to 187).
- The Working Group noted several ACAP work products (Species Assessments by the Status and Trends Working Group, research plan for pelagic longline mitigation technologies by the Seabird Bycatch Working Group) (Part II, paragraphs 127, 128 and 168) of utility as RFMOs consider seabird assessments and seabird by-catch mitigation measures. The Working Group recommended that the Scientific Committee encourage Members to use and promote these ACAP resources, as appropriate. (Part I paragraph 66)

- The Working Group reiterated its support for the development of best-practicetechnical guidelines for the development of NPOA-Seabirds, to be used by countries and RFMOs and to include other relevant gear types (Part II, paragraph 169). This effort is important where RFMOs manage fisheries in waters adjacent to the Convention Area, particularly where seabird species which breed and forage in the Convention Area may be distributed (Part I paragraph 67; Part II, paragraph 191).
- The Working Group was encouraged by the progress made at some of the RFMOs toward addressing the issue of seabird by-catch in their fisheries, particularly at WCPFC and ICCAT, including the initiation of risk assessments in both RFMOs to better assess the level of interactions between seabirds and the fisheries within their Convention Areas and the adoption of binding seabird conservation measures at the WCPFC (Part I paragraph 68; Part II, paragraphs 189 and 190).
- The Working Group requested that the Scientific Committee extend an offer of technical assistance on conducting seabird risk assessments generally to other RFMOs should they desire such support (Part II, paragraphs 189 and 193), and further recommended that the Scientific Committee stress the need for assessing risk to seabird populations and for mitigating such risks via adaptive and precautionary decision-making, including the use of adequate levels of observer coverage and detailed reporting of implementation of conservation measures to truly achieve reductions in seabird by-catch (Part I paragraph 69; Part II, paragraph 192).
- With regard to the effectiveness of Resolution 22/XXV, the Working Group:(i) expressed concern at the general lack of progress in RFMOs (Part II, paragraph 194); (ii) reaffirmed that a key to progress is the employment of robust scientific observer programs (Part II, paragraph 194); (iii) encouraged the Secretariat to continue to contact Flag States whose vessels fish in areas where unregulated fishing takes place or where systematic data reporting has not yet been introduced (Part II, paragraph 195); (iv) noted the lack of reporting as required under paragraph 5 of Resolution 22/XXV (Part II, paragraph 195); (v) encouraged Contracting Parties to provide information on this matter in the future (Part I paragraph 70; Part II, paragraph 195).