



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Third Meeting of Advisory Committee

Valdivia, Chile, 12 - 15 June 2007

**OBSERVER REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE CONSERVATION OF ANTARCTIC
LIVING MARINE RESOURCES (CCAMLR)
NOVEMBER 2006
HOBART, AUSTRALIA**

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CONSERVATION OF ANTARCTIC LIVING MARINE RESOURCES
(CCAMLR), OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2006, HOBART, AUSTRALIA**

Background

The CCAMLR meetings were held in October and November 2006 in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. The Commission meeting was attended by its 24 Members, 4 Contracting Parties, and numerous invited observers. The reports of the Commission and the Scientific Committee are available (or will be) at CCAMLR's website CCAMLR website at <http://www.ccamlr.org/default.htm>

The ACAP Secretariat had asked the USA to act as an observer for the meeting and report back on issues of relevance to the Agreement. CCAMLR and its associated bodies consider a wide array of seabird topics, including: the incidental mortality of seabirds in--the Convention Area, the French and South Africa EEZs of specified subareas and divisions, IUU fishing, and new and exploratory fisheries; continued improvements to seabird conservation measures through mitigation research; international and national initiatives relating to seabird bycatch in longline fishing; seabird interactions in trawl fishery operations for krill and icefish; and discussions on the Scheme of International Scientific Observation. See the associated reports for details.

A brief summary of items of relevance to ACAP follows:

ad-hoc Working Group on Incidental Mortality Associated with Fishing (WG-IMAF) 9-13 October 2006

Once available, the WG-IMAF report can be found as Appendix D to the WG-FSA report, which can be found as Annex 5 to the Scientific Committee's report SC-CAMLR-XXV 2006, posted at http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/sr/drt.htm

Mr W. Papworth provided an update on recent developments of ACAP and the AC2 meeting: the review of data relevant to assessment of status and trends of albatross populations by the ACAP Status and Trends Working Group, development of a database by the Working Group on Breeding Sites for the collection and collation of data on breeding sites of ACAP species, the establishment of a Seabird Bycatch Working Group (SBWG) to address issues related to fisheries interactions and, advice from ACAP's Taxonomic Working Group regarding various albatross species pairs. There was a substantial discussion on the incidental mortality of albatrosses and petrels in fisheries and how to further action that would improve the conservation status of seabirds that breed and forage in the Convention Area. WG-IMAF agreed that ACAP Parties and CCAMLR Members should be proactive in engaging with RFMOs and in promoting information exchange and strengthening their input into RFMO meetings by including seabird experts on member state delegations. It was also agreed that a critical role of Parties and Members was to become involved in the development and implementation of seabird resolutions and other measures to reduce by-catch of albatrosses and petrels within RFMO jurisdictions. Further, Parties and Members should take steps beyond the current scope of the IPOA-Seabirds and that NPOA-Seabirds or similar plans should be

developed for fisheries with a known seabird by-catch problem and assessments conducted for all other fisheries operating within their EEZs.

WG-IMAF further agreed that it would be beneficial if WG-IMAF and SBWG maintained a close cooperative relationship, particularly with respect to technology transfer of best practice mitigation measures. The work of both groups was seen as complementary. It was noted that many of the WG-IMAF members were also members of SBWG, and it would be useful to consider conducting frequent technical workshops around the WG-IMAF/WG-FSA meeting to ensure the best-practice measures developed by CCAMLR over the last 10 years can be readily transferred to other fisheries where Convention Area birds are currently being impacted by fisheries interactions.

WG-IMAF recalled previous advice to the Scientific Committee that many of the seabirds breeding in the Convention Area were being impacted by pelagic tuna fisheries that operate in the migratory ranges of these seabirds. Development of mitigation measures for pelagic longline fishers, although not of direct relevance to Convention Area demersal longline fisheries, was therefore still considered a high priority.

With respect to CCAMLR's Resolution 22/XXIII seeking international actions to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds arising from fishing, WG-IMAF reviewed progress at RFMOs (CCSBT, IATTC, IOTC, ICCAT, SEAFO, WCPFC). WG-IMAF highlighted that development of proven pelagic mitigation measures and their uptake outside the Convention Area should remain a high priority for CCAMLR.

WG-IMAF noted that the successful uptake and transfer of operational and technical mitigation measures refined in the Convention Area, with the concomitant success in reducing seabird by-catch, to other areas and RFMOs is contingent, in part, upon sufficiently adequate levels of observer coverage in those RFMO fisheries such that the nature and extent of seabird by-catch can be accurately monitored as well as the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Given the scheduled workshops on pelagic gear mitigation and NPOA best-practice guidelines held after the IMAF meeting in 2006, WG-IMAF discussed possibilities of holding future workshops prior to its meetings. The group recognized the added value of organizing these workshops around the expertise gathered in Hobart. Possible topics include:

- defining best mitigation practice for demersal gear
- same as above but for pelagic gear
- coordination with ACAP's SBWG
- population modeling
- whale depredation

Fish Stock Assessment Working Group (WG-FSA) 9-20 October 2006

Once available, the report of the WG-FSA can be found as Annex 5 to the Scientific Committee's report SC-CAMLR-XXV 2006, posted at http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/sr/drt.htm

Scientific Committee 23-27 October 2006

Once available, the Scientific Committee's report SC-CAMLR-XXV 2006 will be posted at http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/sr/drt.htm. See the Scientific Committee's report for its complete advice to the Commission. The Scientific Committee noted the considerable progress made by some RFMOs and opportunities to work cooperatively with CCAMLR. However, it was recognized that for pelagic longline gear types in particular, there is at present no best-practice mitigation strategy that has been rigorously tested and available for widespread uptake by the major RFMOs operating within the ranges of seabirds that breed and forage in the CCAMLR Convention Area. The development of effective pelagic mitigation measures and their uptake outside the Convention Area should remain a high priority for CCAMLR, particularly for those fisheries where Convention Area seabirds are caught.

The Scientific Committee also advised on several mitigation elements: an expectation that a suite of best-practice seabird by-catch mitigation for Spanish system longline vessels and autoline vessels can be developed in the near future, recommendations for future improvements to Conservation Measures 25-02 and 24-02 (Spanish longline system, mechanized streamer line systems, testing efficacy of paired streamer lines in Southern Ocean conditions, improved data collections with respect to longline gear and mitigation measures used).

The Scientific Committee encouraged the further development by WG-IMAF of a paper describing the methodology and approaches of CCAMLR's risk assessment of fisheries to seabird by-catch. Such a paper is likely to be useful to groups outside CCAMLR seeking to undertake similar processes, particularly those with fishery management responsibilities where Convention Area seabirds are taken outside the Convention Area.

Commission 30 October – 3 November 2006

The Commission report CCAMLR-XXV 2006 is available at http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/cr/06/toc.htm. See Item 5 for section on "Assessment and Avoidance of Incidental Mortality". The Commission endorsed the report, conclusions, and advice provided by the Scientific Committee on the assessment and avoidance of incidental mortality of Antarctic marine living resources (which includes seabirds). Other highlights:

- The Commission noted the continuing low levels of incidental seabird mortality in regulated longline fisheries in most parts of the Convention Area in 2006 and that for the first time, no albatrosses were reported taken in regulated longline fisheries.
- The Commission revised its previous seabird resolution and adopted Resolution 22/XXV http://www.ccamlr.org/pu/e/e_pubs/cm/06-07/r22-xxv.pdf. The revisions focused on enhancing communication between CCAMLR and other RFMOs on the seabird issue, encouragement to Contracting Parties on ways forward with this issue, and requesting WG-IMAF to report, through the Scientific Committee, on the implementation and effectiveness of the resolution.

- The Commission noted the success of net binding in reducing seabird by-catch in the pelagic trawl fishery for *C. gunnari* in Subarea 48.3 and accepted the proposed revision of Conservation Measure 42-01 encouraging the use of net binding.
- The Commission requested that the Secretariat provide a paper to the meeting of the 5 tuna RFMOs in Kobe, Japan, in January 2007, describing the scientific and fisheries management processes CCAMLR has followed in developing its seabird by-catch mitigation measures.
- The Commission encouraged Members to support a BirdLife International initiative at FAO's COFI-27 to advance best-practice guidelines for the setting-up and implementation of NPOA-Seabirds.