



Agreement on the Conservation
of Albatrosses and Petrels

Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee
Wellington, New Zealand, 11 - 15 September 2017

2017 Implementation Report – South Africa

South Africa



Agreement on the Conservation
of Albatrosses and Petrels

Report - MoP-6 (2018)

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Implementation Report for the Meeting of Parties - MoP-6 (2018)

Submitted by - South Africa

Coverage of report - South Africa

1. Overview of implementation of Agreement and Action Plan

- 1.1 Has action been taken to implement the decisions of previous MoPs? (For list of current Resolutions see <http://www.acap.aq/en/documents/resolutions>)
- Yes
- South Africa has participated in several working groups set up by ACAP for the achievement of its resolutions, both at ACAP meetings and intersessionally. Additionally, South Africa conducts regular counts of breeding numbers of six ACAP species that occur at Marion Island. For five of these species, plus one that is not counted, breeding success is also measured at this island. Research projects have been undertaken to examine the impact of two key threats on albatrosses and petrels, mouse predation and large pelagic longline fisheries. Permit regulations aim to minimise the by-catch of seabirds in South Africa's line and demersal trawl fisheries, and are in line with ACAP's recommendations. Observers are deployed on fishing vessels to monitor the bycatch in some fisheries, especially for joint-venture fisheries.
- 1.2 Is action for national implementation planned to occur in the next three years?
- Yes
- South Africa aims to continue monitoring seabird populations at its Prince Edward Islands, to use tracking information to inform the identification of EBSAs and to revise its NPOA -

Seabirds. A feasibility study is leading to a plan to eradicate introduced House Mice at Marion Island in 2020.

2. Species conservation

2.1 Has the Party provided any exemptions to prohibitions on the taking or harmful interference with albatrosses and petrels?	No
2.2 Has any use or trade in albatrosses or petrels occurred?	Yes The bycatch of fisheries has been examined to identify species, sex and maturity of birds that have been killed.
2.3 Has the Party implemented any new single or multi-species conservation strategies / Action Plans?	No South Africa continues its attempt to minimise its bycatch of seabirds through permit conditions that require fisheries to implement mitigation measures in line with ACAP's recommendations.
2.4 Has the Party taken any emergency measures involving albatrosses or petrels?	No
2.5 Has the Party conducted any re-establishment schemes?	No
2.6 Has the Party introduced any new legal or policy instruments for species protection of albatrosses and petrels?	Yes In 2017, South Africa, in terms of its National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, published regulations for threatened or protected marine species, which include all albatross and petrels listed by ACAP that breed at its Prince Edward Islands. South Africa's NPOA – Seabirds that was published in 2008 continues to apply.
2.7 Has the Party implemented any legal or policy instruments for environmental impact assessments?	No
2.8 Does the Party have any species it would like to submit for addition to Annex	No

1?
2.9 Are there any other conservation projects for ACAP species not already mentioned? 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? Yes
As a Special Nature Reserve, established in 1995, the Prince Edward Islands are afforded the highest degree of protection under South African environmental legislation.

3.2 Has the Party implemented any sustainable management measures for marine living resources which provide food for albatrosses and petrels? Yes
Not specifically, but South Africa attempts to manage its fisheries in a sustainable manner.

3.3 Has the Party implemented any management or protection of important marine areas for albatrosses and petrels? Yes
The Prince Edward Islands Marine Protected Area was proclaimed in South Africa's territorial waters around these islands, inter alia to sustain the foraging requirements of seabirds that breed at the islands (Lombard et al. 2007, Antarctic Science 19: 39-54).

4. Management of human activities

4.1 Has the Party completed any new environmental impact assessments related to albatrosses and petrels? Yes
A paper has been published on the bycatch of seabirds in South Africa's large pelagic longline fisheries (Rollinson, D.P., Wanless, R.M. & Ryan, P.G. (2017). Patterns and trends in seabird bycatch in the pelagic longline fishery off South Africa. African Journal of Marine Science 39: 9-25), which shows continued progress in reducing seabird bycatch rates by this fishery over the last 8 years since the previous review (Petersen et al. 2009. African Journal of Marine Science 31: 191-204). A mouse eradication feasibility study for Marion Island has been published: Parkes, J. (2016). Eradication of House Mice *Mus musculus* from Marion Island: a review of feasibility, constraints and risks. In: R.M. Wanless (Ed.). BirdLife South Africa Occasional Report Series No.

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

4.3 Has the Party introduced any new measures to minimise the disturbance to albatrosses and petrels in marine and terrestrial habitats?

No
It continues to manage access to its Prince Edward Islands through the issuing of permits. South Africa abides by conservation measures as a signatory party to CCAMLR.

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?

Yes
Population trends are monitored, e.g. Schoombie, S., Crawford, R.J.M., Makhado, A.B., Dyer, B.M. & Ryan, P.G. (2016). Recent population trends of sooty and light-mantled albatrosses breeding on Marion Island. African Journal of Marine Science 38: 119-127. For some species individual marking is undertaken in order to obtain estimates of demographic parameters. Ad hoc monitoring also confirmed the presence of Avian pox in Wandering Albatrosses on Marion Island (Schoombie et al. in press).

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

Yes
BirdLife South Africa (Albatross Task Force), Nelson Mandela University and FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology (University of Cape Town).

6. Education and public awareness

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

Yes
BirdLife South Africa (Albatross Task Force) has undertaken training of South African fishers.

6.2 Has the Party conducted training or

No

provided information to the general public? However, there have been several talks, articles and other media stories on the issue of fishery bycatch, and especially introduced mice on seabirds.

7. Reporting against priorities for land-based conservation actions (see MoP5 Doc 15 Rev 1 - Prioritising ACAP Conservation Actions)

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

No

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

Yes

Over the last decade South African scientists have worked with UK researchers to publish papers on the impacts of mice on seabirds breeding at this island and on answering questions towards their eradication raised by a feasibility study: Cooper, J., Cuthbert, R.J. & Ryan, P.G. (2013). An overlooked biosecurity concern? Back-loading at islands supporting introduced rodents. *Aliens: The Invasive Species Bulletin* 33: 28-31. Cuthbert, R.J., Visser, P., Louw, H. & Ryan, P.G. (2011a). Palatability and efficacy of rodent baits for eradicating house mice (*Mus musculus*) from Gough Island, Tristan da Cunha. *Wildlife Research* 38: 196-203. Cuthbert, R.J., Parker, G., Louw, H., Rexer-Huber, K., Parker, G. & Ryan, P.G. (2011b). Preparations for the eradication of mice from Gough Island: results of bait acceptance trials above ground and around cave systems. In: C.R. Veitch, M.N. Clout & D.R. Towns (Eds). *Island Invasives: Eradication and Management*, pp. 47-50. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Cuthbert, R.J., Louw, H., Parker, G., Rexer-Huber, K. & Visser, P. (2013a). Observations of mice predation on dark-mantled sooty albatross and Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross chicks at Gough Island. *Antarctic Science* 25: 763-766 Cuthbert, R.J., Broome, K., Bradley, J. & Ryan, P.G. (2014). Evaluating the effectiveness of aerial baiting operations for rodent eradications on cliffs on Gough Island, Tristan da Cunha. *Conservation Evidence* 11: 25-28. Cuthbert, R.J., Wanless, R.M., Angel, A., Burlé, M.-H., Hilton, G.M., Louw, H., Visser, P., Wilson, J. & Ryan, P.G. (2016). Drivers of predatory behaviour and extreme body size in House Mice *Mus musculus* on Gough Island. *Journal of Mammalogy* 97: 533-544. Davies, D., Dilley, B.J., Bond, A.L., Cuthbert, R.J. & Ryan, P.G. (2015). Trends and tactics of mouse predation on Tristan Albatross *Diomedea dabbenena* chicks at Gough Island, South Atlantic Ocean. *Avian Conservation and Ecology* 10(1): 5. doi.org/10.5751/ACE-00738-100105. Dilley, B.J., Davies, D., Bond, A.L. & Ryan, P.G. (2015). Effects of mouse predation on burrowing petrel chicks at Gough Island. *Antarctic Science* 27: 543-553. Ryan, P.G., Whittington, P.A. & Crawford, R.J.M. (2009). A tale of two islands: contrasting fortunes for sub-Antarctic skuas at the Prince Edward Islands. *African Journal of*

Marine Science 31: 431-437. Ryan, P.G., Dilley, B.J. & Jones, M.G.W. (2012). The distribution and abundance of white-chinned petrels (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*) breeding at the sub-Antarctic Prince Edward Islands. *Polar Biology* 35: 1851-1859. Wanless, R.M., Angel, A., Hilton, G.M. & Ryan, P.G. (2005). Cultural evolution in the introduced house mouse: evidence for the cultural transmission of a unique predatory behaviour on Gough Island. Paper delivered at the 19th Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology Conference, Brasília, Brazil, 15-19 July 2005. Wanless, R.M., Angel, A., Cuthbert, R.J., Hilton, G.M. & Ryan, P.G. (2007). Can predation by invasive mice drive seabird extinctions? *Biology Letters* 3: 241-244. Wanless, R.M., Fisher, P., Cooper, J., Parkes, J. & Ryan, P.G. (2008). Bait acceptance by house mice: an island field trial. *Wildlife Research* 35: 806-811. Wanless, R.M., Ryan, P.G., Altwegg, R., Angel, A., Cooper, J., Cuthbert, R. & Hilton, G.M. (2009). From both sides: dire demographic consequences of carnivorous mice and longlining for the critically endangered Tristan albatrosses on Gough Island. *Biological Conservation* 142: 1710-1718. Wanless, R.M., Cooper, J., Slabber, M.J., & Ryan, P.G. (2010). Risk assessment of birds foraging terrestrially at Marion and Gough Islands to primary and secondary poisoning. *Wildlife Research* 37: 524-530. Wanless, R.M., Ratcliffe, N., Angel, A., Bowie, B.C., Cita, K., Hilton, G.M., Kritzing, P., Ryan, P.G. & Slabber, M. (2012). Predation of Atlantic petrel chicks by house mice on Gough Island. *Animal Conservation* 15: 472-479.

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| 7.3 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to reindeer on Kerguelen (Grande Terre)? | No |
| 7.4 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Formentera? | No |
| 7.5 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Menorca? | No |
| 7.6 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Kerguelen (Grande Terre)? | No |
| 7.7 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Cabrera? | No |
| 7.8 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Cabrera? | No |

7.9 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Formentera?	No	
7.10 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Ibiza?	No	
7.11 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Mallorca?	No	
7.12 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Menorca?	No	
7.13 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Ile Saint Lanne Gramont?	No	
7.14 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to black rats on Ile Saint Lanne Gramont?	No	
7.15 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to brown rats on South Georgia (Islas Georgias del Sur)?	No	
7.16 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to cats on Auckland Island?	No	
7.17 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to pigs on Auckland Island?	No	
7.18 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to house mice on Marion Island?	Yes	Yes, and a plan is being formulated to attempt an eradication of mice in 2020, following the planned eradication of mice on Gough Island in 2019. A suite of research papers and reports on the impacts of mice on seabirds has been published in the last decade: Angel, A. & Cooper, J. (2011). A review of the impacts of the House Mouse <i>Mus musculus</i> on sub-Antarctic Marion Island, Prince Edward Islands. Report to the Prince Edward Islands Management Committee, South African National Antarctic Programme. Cerfonteyn, M. & Ryan, P.G. (2016). Have burrowing

petrels recovered on Marion Island two decades after cats were eradicated? Evidence from sub-Antarctic skua prey remains. Antarctic Science 28: 51-57. Dilley, B.J., Schoombie, S., Schoombie, J. & Ryan, P.G. (2016a). 'Scalping' of albatross fledglings by introduced mice spreads rapidly at Marion Island. Antarctic Science 28: 73-80. Dilley, B.J., Schramm, M. & Ryan, P.G. (2016b). Modest increases in densities of burrow-nesting petrels following the removal of cats *Felis catus* from Marion Island. Polar Biology 40: 25-637. Dilley, B.J., Davies, D., Schramm, M., Connan, M. & Ryan, P.G. (2017). The distribution and abundance of Blue Petrels (*Halobaena caerulea*) breeding at subantarctic Marion Island. Emu – Austral Ornithology 117: 222-232. Dilley, B.J., Schoombie, S., Stevens, K., Davies, D., Perold, V., Osborne, A., Schoombie, J., Brink, C.W., Carpenter-Kling, T. & Ryan, P.G. (submitted ms). Mouse predation affects breeding success of burrow-nesting petrels at sub-Antarctic Marion Island. Jones, M.G.W. & Ryan, P.G. (2010). Evidence of mouse attacks on albatross chicks on sub-Antarctic Marion Island. Antarctic Science 22: 39-42. Schoombie, S., Crawford, R.J.M., Makhado, A.B., Dyer, B.M. & Ryan, P.G. (2016). Recent population trends of sooty and light-mantled albatrosses breeding on Marion Island. African Journal of Marine Science 38: 119-127. A mouse eradication feasibility study for Marion Island has been published: Parkes, J. (2016). Eradication of House Mice *Mus musculus* from Marion Island: a review of feasibility, constraints and risks. In: R.M. Wanless (Ed.). BirdLife South Africa Occasional Report Series No. 1. Johannesburg, South Africa: BirdLife South Africa. South Africa has commenced a planning process to eradicate Marion Island's mice by aerial baiting in 2020: Preston, G., Dilley, B.J., Cooper, J. et al. (submitted ms). A plan of action to eradicate introduced house mice on South Africa's sub-Antarctic Marion Island. In Veitch, D. (Ed.). Proceedings of the Third Island Invasives Conference, Dundee. Scotland, July 2017. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

- 7.19 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Avian cholera on Ile Amsterdam? No
- 7.20 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to mosquitos on Isla Espanola? No
- 7.21 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Avian pox virus on Albatross Island (AU)? No
- 7.22 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to Australasian gannets on Pedra Branca? No

7.23 Has the Party taken any actions in relation to human disturbance (recreation/tourism) of breeding sites on Ibiza? No

8. Reporting against priorities for at-sea conservation actions (see MoP5 Doc 15 Rev 1 - Prioritising ACAP Conservation Actions)

8.1 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Angola Pelagic longline fishery? No

8.2 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Argentina Demersal trawl fishery? No

8.3 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia demersal longline fishery? No

8.4 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia demersal trawl fishery? No

8.5 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia Pelagic trawl fishery? No

8.6 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Australia trawl fishery? No

8.7 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil

demersal longline fishery?

8.8 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil Pelagic longline fishery? No

8.9 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Brazil Pelagic longline fishery (Itaipava fleet)? No

8.10 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the CCSBT Pelagic longline fishery? Yes

Permit conditions of the 2017/2018 season for long-line fishing reflect closely the ACAP Best Practice advice, especially the strengthened line weighting regime, i.e. branch lines (snoods) shall be properly weighted: 40 g or greater attached within 0.5 m of the hook (to minimize gear loss from shark bite-offs), or 60 g or greater attached within 1 m of the hook, or 80 g or greater attached within 2 m of the hook. 1. BirdLife South Africa, through the Common Oceans ABNJ tuna project, and in close collaboration with the Department Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), hosted a National Awareness Workshop for tuna longline rights holders, in July 2017. The purpose was to engage with new rights holders in the fishery, as well as to strengthen governance of this fishery and explore options for improving the level of observer coverage, in the absence of a formal observer programme. 2. DAFF has approved a research permit for BirdLife South Africa to trial designs of Bird Scaring Lines for small vessels (< 35 m), noting that the design specified in SA's tuna longline fishing permit conditions is appropriate for large vessels, but domestic fleet operators have indicated they cannot use them as expected on their vessels.

8.11 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the IATTC Pelagic longline fishery? No

8.12 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the ICCAT Pelagic longline fishery? Yes
 Yes. See under 8.10.

8.13 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the ICCAT Pelagic longline fishery? Yes
 Yes. See under 8.10.

bycatch in the IOTC Pelagic longline fishery?	No
8.14 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia Demersal longline fishery?	No
8.15 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia demersal trawl fishery?	No
8.16 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia Pelagic longline fishery?	No
8.17 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Namibia Pelagic trawl fishery?	No
8.18 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Peru demersal longline fishery?	No
8.19 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Peru Pelagic longline fishery?	No
8.20 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the SEAFO demersal trawl fishery?	No
8.21 Has the Party taken any actions relevant to seabird bycatch in the Spain demersal longline fishery?	No
8.22 Has the Party	No

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

8.23 Has the Party No

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

8.24 Has the Party No

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

8.25 Has the Party No

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

8.26 Has the Party No

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

8.27 Has the Party No

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

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?

10. Additional Comments

Final submission details

Report is closed for editing.

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Report by Rob Crawford

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Agenda Item 9

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