



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Fifth Meeting of Advisory Committee

Mar del Plata, Argentina, 13 – 17 April 2010

Report on the Outcomes of the Third Meeting of the Parties

Chair Advisory Committee, Vice-Chair Advisory Committee, Secretariat

Report on the Outcomes of MoP3

Chair & vice-Chair Advisory Committee, Secretariat

The Third Meeting of the Parties (MoP3) was convened between April 27th and May 1st 2009 at Bergen, Norway. Ms Gunn Paulsen (Norway) was elected as Chair of the Meeting of the Parties. This paper highlights relevant outcomes of MoP3 that the Advisory Committee may wish to note. For a full account of the meeting outcomes and reference of the points addressed herein please refer to the full report of the Third Session of the Meeting of the Parties.

The paper is organised in three sections addressing matters concerning the operation of the Secretariat, the operation of the Advisory Committee, and the operation of the Agreement.

1. Operation of the Secretariat

The Agreement's Secretariat introduced the **Report of the Secretariat** (MoP3 Doc 8). In this paper it was stressed that the increased outputs of the Advisory Committee (AC) and its Working Groups (WG) necessitated an increased level of support from the Secretariat. Funding for the Scientific Officer to be increased from part to full-time was requested (point 4.1 in MoP3 final report).

Parties welcomed the **quarterly implementation reports** from the Secretariat and AC Officials. It was agreed that these reports would be made more widely available by publishing them on the web site. MoP3 also requested that in future quarterly reports it would be helpful to identify tasks included in and undertaken by the various Secretariat positions. NGOs attending the meeting pointed that they would be able to improve their interaction with ACAP if they were better informed of progress regarding intersessional tasks (points 4.3.1 to 4.3.4). These Organisations will be included in the lists of recipients for future quarterly reports.

2. Operation of the Advisory Committee

The Chair of the AC introduced the **Report of the Advisory Committee** for the past triennium (MoP3 Doc 12). It was noted that considerable progress had been made by the AC and its WGs in the implementation of the Agreement since MoP2. The substantial progress made by the Seabird Bycatch Working Group was appreciated but it was considered that much work by Parties is still required, particularly in the diplomatic and political arena (point 6.1).

MoP3 endorsed the **AC Work Programme 2010-2012** (MoP3 Doc 23) and adopted Resolution 3.4. The Parties noted that significant resources will be required to undertake the work programme, primarily those of the Secretariat and the AC Officials, but also from Parties, Range States and NGOs (points 6.2.1 to 6.2.4). MoP3 noted the considerable workload of the AC and the resources necessary for its implementation.

A **process to allocate funds** using a prioritised, consistent and transparent procedure from the AC budgetary allocation was presented by the Chair of the AC (point 6.3.1). MoP3 recommended that the AC adopt the procedure outlined in MoP3 Doc 13 Rev3, noting that experience with implementing the procedure should be used to improve it in future. The endorsed procedure was followed for the call for 2009 applications and the lessons learnt during this process used for its refinement (refer to AC5 Doc 30)

Parties also suggested that the outcomes of each project be reviewed as part of the assessment of implementation of the Agreement. The **outcomes of projects supported** by the Advisory Committee during 2008 are compiled in AC5 Inf 1 for consideration of the AC and its WGs.

3. Operation of the Agreement

The **report on the implementation of the Agreement** (MoP3 Doc 11) demonstrated the substantial amount of work done by the Parties to implement the Agreement. However, it was not possible to assess how successful the actions taken to date had been in achieving the objectives of the Agreement (*e.g.* whether the conservation status of albatrosses and petrels has been improved) (point 7.1.3).

Poor information on seabird bycatch in both domestic and high seas fisheries remains a serious impediment to tackling the most important threat for ACAP species. Information on the distribution and amount of fishing effort, and of levels of seabird bycatch from both Parties and RFMOs is a high priority. Some Parties expressed the importance of not

duplicating the work carried out by RFMOs, and the need to clarify the role of ACAP as a body for the cooperation, assessment and coordinating of RFMO actions for the conservation of seabirds.

After extensive discussions during AC4, it was noted that substantial financial and human resources would be required to achieve an increasingly complex work programme. In this regard, the Advisory Committee had supported the creation of an additional **science support position in the Secretariat**. This proposal was approved by MoP3. In addition, Parties approved a budget to allow for the effective operation of the Advisory Committee.

MoP3 discussed the budget presented by the Secretariat (MoP3 Doc 24 Rev 4) for the next triennium. Parties approved a budget of AUD \$639,431 for 2010; AUD \$659,014 for 2011; and AUD \$679,154 for 2012 (point 7.9). The **Agreement Budget 2010 – 2012** was adopted as Resolution 3.6 (Annex 6). The approved budget for Appropriation 4 (Advisory Committee Work Programme) is AUD \$91,000 for 2010, AUD \$80,621 for 2011 and AUD \$79,670 for 2012.

Parties recognised that for the **implementation of the Agreement**, the most important outcomes over the next triennium are: (a) the widespread adoption of bycatch mitigation measures by Parties, Range States and RFMOs; (b) the implementation of a strategy for capacity building; (c) the implementation of the Waved albatross plan of action, and (d) further removal of introduced species from breeding sites.

In order to achieve these outcomes, the following **actions and products** will be required: (a) the completion and implementation of the prioritisation framework; (b) the development of a process for reporting information on bycatch and fishing effort; (c) the collation of data on distribution of fishing effort and mortality of albatrosses and petrels attending fisheries and its incorporation into the ACAP database; (d) the refinement and implementation of a strategy for engagement with RFMOs; (e) the revision and update of species assessments, and (f) the revision and update of best-practice conservation guidelines.

In order to better **implement the Agreement** MoP3 requested that: (a) Parties review the efficacy of seabird bycatch mitigation measures used in the fisheries that they manage; (b) Parties provide the necessary resources for the priority research activities identified by the WGs; and (c) the AC recommend improvements in the systems for Parties to provide information and to measure progress in implementing the Agreement.

MoP3 Doc 28 reviewed how well the current template for the **report on the implementation of the Agreement** met the collective needs of Parties and the AC. MoP3 agreed with the recommendations on the need for improvements and the development and testing of a new reporting system, noting that considerable work prior to AC5 would be needed if a revised system was to be available for reporting for MoP4. Ideally, a revised format should be available for trialling at AC5, but not later than AC6 (point 7.2).

Resolution 3.1 drafted by the UK, Australia and South Africa to add the three North Pacific albatrosses (Short-tailed, Black-footed and Laysan albatrosses) to **Annex 1 of the Agreement** was introduced and adopted (point 7.3). Annex 1 of the Agreement now lists all species of albatross.

The process for the **identification of priority actions for conservation measures** started prior to AC4 was introduced to the Parties (MoP3 Doc 20). MoP3 welcomed and endorsed the recommendations contained in the document and agreed that the Advisory Committee should continue the work as a high priority (point 7.4).

A paper on the development of **indicators to measure progress** in meeting the objectives of ACAP was introduced to the Parties (MoP3 Doc 27). This activity was closely related to the development of the framework for prioritisation and could not be completed until the priorities had been established (point 7.5). Parties agreed to the recommendations contained in it, and welcomed the observations of BirdLife International supporting the development of a small number of outcome-related indicators based on State-Pressure-Response.

MoP3 endorsed the process commenced for the development of a **capacity building strategy** for the Agreement, in accordance with the steps outlined in MoP3 Doc 18 (point 7.6).

Parties discussed document MoP3 Doc 19 Rev 1 on **arrangements with relevant international organisations** (point 7.7). Several suggestions were made to emphasise that the arrangements are non-legally-binding. MoP3 adopted a template to be used by the Secretariat in negotiating future Memoranda of Understanding (Annex B to Resolution 3.7), agreeing that Parties must approve any substantive derogation from the template that is more than merely editorial and that parties must also give in principle approval to the Secretariat before it can commence formal negotiations with an organisation or institution.