



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Sixth Meeting of Advisory Committee

Guayaquil, Ecuador, 29 August – 2 September 2011

Report on the Implementation of the Agreement 2008-2011 – BirdLife International

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Report for the Meeting of Parties - MOP-4 (2012)

Submitted by - BirdLife

Coverage of report - BirdLife

1. Overview of implementation of Agreement and Action Plan

1.1 Has action been taken to implement the decisions of previous MoPs?	Yes
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BirdLife has undertaken the following actions to implement the decisions of previous MoPs (not in order of priority): (a) Capacity Building BirdLife worked closely with the Governments of Argentina and Ecuador and the ACAP Secretariat to plan and execute an observer training and exchange programme between national observers from Ecuador and Argentina. The Guayaquil (Ecuador) workshop was held in May 2008 (AC4 Inf 54) and a follow-up exchange for Ecuador Observers was conducted in Argentina in November 2010. Oli Yates (ATF Coordinator, Chile), Esteban Frere (GSP South American Coordinator, Argentina) Jorge Samaniego (Aves y Conservacion, Ecuador) and Fabian Rabuffetti (Aves Argentinas, Argentina) were all instrumental in the planning and execution of this important capacity-building initiative. BirdLife and the RSPB (UK BirdLife Partner) are in the fifth year of funding the BirdLife Albatross Task Force (ATF) in seven countries, six of which are ACAP Parties (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Namibia and South Africa). This represents a long term commitment to supporting the development of skilled capacity in these countries to address the technical and, in some cases political, aspects of reducing seabird bycatch (e.g. AC4 Inf 2, SBWG3_11, SBWG3_12). For details of mitigation research undertaken by the ATF since April 2008, see Section 5.1 below. (b) Indicators Ben Sullivan and Oli Yates (BirdLife) worked closely with Barry Baker, Graham Robertson and Mike Double (Australian Antarctic Division) and Spencer Clubb (New Zealand) to populate the fisheries data in the database being developed to identify ACAP conservation priorities. (c) International Important Breeding Sites BirdLife have contributed considerably to the identification of ACAP Internationally Important Breeding Sites (e.g. AC 4 Doc 19) and conducted an analysis using the BirdLife IBA criteria for AC5 (AC5 Doc 33) as a basis for enabling ACAP to conclude this work. (d) Waved Albatross Action Plan (WAAP) BirdLife first raised awareness of the urgent plight of the Waved albatross (MoP2 Inf 8), arising from which ACAP proposed the drafting of the WAAP. BirdLife has contributed to the implementation of this plan on two main fronts. In June 2007, in conjunction with the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), BirdLife hosted a workshop on seabirds in Peru, including interactions with fisheries (BirdLife International, 2008). A main focus of the meeting was identifying some of the steps required in Ecuador and Peru, both in the breeding colonies and at sea, to help halt the decline of Waved Albatross. The ATF commenced work in Ecuador in 2009, and in January 2010 we started a research programme in the demersal hake fishery in Santa Rosa (southern Ecuador) to reduce surface time of artisanal long lines in an important foraging area for Waved Albatross. In 2010, ACAP granted BirdLife (XXX) to support this work aimed at

delivering a key objective of the WAAP. (e) Red List BirdLife continues to provide updates to both the AC and MOP on changes in the IUCN status of species on ANNEX I of the Agreement (AC4 Inf 5, AC5 Inf 34). The Red List Index continues to be the interim approved indicator to measure the success of the Agreement (MoP3 Inf 2). BirdLife has also worked with the UK and Australia (MoP3 Doc 27) to help develop indicators to measure the success of the implementation of the ACAP Agreement (AC5 Inf 8). (f) ACAP Species Assessments Staff at the BirdLife Secretariat worked closely with ACAP Secretariat staff to provide critical information on the distribution, threats and conservation status of ACAP species for inclusion in the ACAP Species Assessments. (g) Remote Tracking The BirdLife Global Procellariiform Tracking Database, which currently contains 4,936 tracks representing 26 ACAP listed species, has been a powerful tool to drive change in tuna RFMOs. At MoP2 (MoP2 AC Work Plan 4.1), ACAP granted BirdLife AUSD\$25,000 to undertake an analysis of the distribution of ACAP species and the overlap with longline fishing effort from the five tuna RFMOs (IOTC, ICCAT, CCSBT, WCPFC IATTC). The final paper in this series was submitted to AC5 in 2010 (SBWG-3_20, SBWG-3_28, SBWG-3_29, SBWG-3_30). In 2009, BirdLife provided a detailed gap analysis to the second meeting of the SBWG (SBWG-2_12) and ACAP provided AUS \$10,000 to enhance and secure the future of the Global Procellariiform Tracking Database and, in particular, to support the processing of new tracking data submitted to the database and to develop web based analytical tools. The application of the TOW database has been used in the development of ecological risk assessment of the impacts of fishing mortality on seabird populations, with an emphasis on albatross and petrels. Three projects have been conducted, producing ERAs for New Zealand, the Atlantic tuna commission (ICCAT) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), in collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey, UK (Richard Phillips), CSIRO, Australia (Geoff Tuck) and the South Pacific Commission (David Kirby) (AC5 Doc 32). (h) RFMO engagement In addition, BirdLife has provided strategic advice and support for ACAP engagement with RFMOs (AC4_Inf 56) and intersessionally has worked closely with ACAP and its representatives at all governance levels of the five tuna RFMOs to strengthen measures and steps taken to reduce seabird bycatch in their fisheries. (i) NPOA-Seabirds (MoP2, AC Work Plan 2007-2009, 4.7) BirdLife has worked closely with FAO and ACAP Parties and the ACAP Secretariat to gain the support of the FAO Committee of Fisheries (COFI) for the development of Best Practice Technical Guidelines (BPTG) (AC4_Doc 42, MoP3_Inf 3), which were drafted at an FAO Expert Consultation in Bergen (Norway) in September 2008. These guidelines were then adopted at the following meeting of COFI in 2009 (MoP Inf 3). In accordance with Agreement text, MoPs have consistently called for Parties to assist in the preparation, adoption and implementation of FAO NPOA-Seabirds (MoP2 AC Work Plan 4.7, MoP3 AC Work Plan 4.15). BirdLife Partners from around the world are actively involved in this process. Royal Forest and Bird New Zealand,(BirdLife Partner) has been actively involved as a member

of the stakeholder group responsible for the on-going process to revise the NZ NPOA-Seabirds. Aves Argentinas (BirdLife Partner in Argentina) has worked closely with government agencies and industry to assist in the recently adopted NPOA-Seabirds Argentina. The ATF team in Namibia have worked to try to ensure that the drafting of the Namibian NPOA reflects the standards established by the FAO Best Practice Technical Guidelines. Falklands Conservation (BirdLife Partner) was contracted to write a national plan of action for reducing seabird mortality in trawl fisheries. (j) Mitigation Fact Sheets (Mop2, AC Work Plan 4.6) In 2006, BirdLife commenced the process of drafting a series of best practice Mitigation Fact Sheets (SBWG-2_09) for pelagic and demersal longline and trawl fisheries (for an example see AC5_Inf_04). The fact sheets are designed to inform and influence technical advisors and fishery managers of national and regional fishery organisations, who are responsible for developing regulations or measures in fisheries under their jurisdiction. At AC5, ACAP approved a BirdLife application for funding (\$18,216) for the translation and maintenance of this series of Mitigation Fact Sheets, which have been co-branded BirdLife International and ACAP. It was agreed that ACAP, specifically the SBWG, should collaborate to maintain, update and disseminate the Best Practice Mitigation Fact Sheets as an electronic resource and that individual fact sheets would be selected for translation into target languages based on their priority for fisheries that overlap with ACAP listed species. Target languages currently include; English, Spanish, French, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese, and Korean. Discussions are on-going about potentially co-branding the fact sheets with FAO. (k) ACAP Observers The BirdLife Global Seabird Programme Asia Coordinator, Mayumi Sato, based in Tokyo, has been working to encourage the Japanese Government to send representatives to the AC6 meeting in Ecuador.

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1.2 Is action for national implementation planned to occur in the next three years?

Not answered

2. Species conservation

2.1 Has the Party provided any exemptions to prohibitions on the taking or harmful interference with albatrosses and petrels?

Not answered

2.2 Has any use or trade in albatrosses or petrels occurred?	Not answered
2.3 Has the Party implemented any new single or multi-species conservation strategies / Action Plans?	Not answered
2.4 Has the Party taken any emergency measures involving albatrosses or petrels?	Not answered
2.5 Has the Party conducted any re-establishment schemes?	Not answered
2.6 Has the Party introduced any new legal or policy instruments for species protection of albatrosses and petrels?	Not answered
2.7 Has the Party implemented any legal or policy instruments for environmental impact assessments?	Not answered
2.8 Does the Party have any species it would like to submit for addition to Annex 1?	<p>Yes</p> <p>At MoP3 (April 2009), the Northern Hemisphere albatrosses were added to Annex I of the Agreement following on from which there was further discussion about the inclusion of Puffinus shearwaters. It was agreed that the inclusion of shearwaters on the Annex would require relevant Parties (e.g. Spain and France) to submit a detailed proposal to justify this. BirdLife has worked intersessionally to try to support such a proposal for Balearic shearwater (<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>) from Spain, but this has been complicated by a change in government structures and responsibilities for ACAP engagement. Depending on the outcome of discussions on the potential scope of the Convention on Migratory Species at forthcoming meetings, BirdLife may wish to suggest to AC6 the consideration of including additional seabird species within ACAP.</p>

2.9 Are there any other conservation projects for ACAP species not already mentioned?

Not answered

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

Falklands Conservation (FC) has led on the development of several management plans for important breeding sites for ACAP species. This includes the production of a management plan for Sea Lion Island (a breeding island for Southern Giantpetrel and has and recently (2011) designated as a National Nature Reserve), and the development of a Management Plan for Steeple Jason and Grand Jason Islands(important breeding sites for Black-browed albatross and Southern Giant petrels). FC has also collaborated with the RSPB and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to investigate the impacts of house mice on the avifauna of Steeple Jason Island, under the Darwin Initiative Project “Building Capacity for Eradication of Mice in the UK OTs”. To date, RSPB and FC scientists have spent 10 weeks on Steeple Jason monitoring the distribution of mice and their impact on nesting birds.

3.2 Has the Party implemented any sustainable management measures for marine living resources which provide food for albatrosses and petrels?

Not answered

3.3 Has the Party implemented any management or protection of important marine areas for albatrosses and petrels?

Yes

Royal Forest and Bird New Zealand have developed a marine Important Bird Area framework for New Zealand and identified all sites for ACAP species which qualify as Important Bird Areas. They have also established a Site Support Group for the main Westland petrel breeding site, with a network of volunteers to assist with monitoring and research programmes. Aves Argentinas is collaborating with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to identify and map marine IBAs, which include 30 candidate sites for seaward extensions from breeding colonies, including three Southern Giant petrel breeding sites.

4. Management of human activities

4.1 Has the Party completed any new environmental impact assessments related to albatrosses and petrels? Not answered

4.2 Has the Party implemented any new measures to minimise discharge of pollutants and marine debris (MARPOL)? Not answered

4.3 Has the Party introduced any new measures to minimise the disturbance to albatrosses and petrels in marine and terrestrial habitats? Not answered

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

Albatross Task Force In 2009, the ATF conducted their first year of mitigation research onboard commercial longliners and trawlers to identify best practice mitigation measures for pelagic longline and trawl vessels. The results of these trials were presented to AC5 (SBWG3_11, SBWG3_12) In 2010, the ATF conducted their second year of mitigation research and collected valuable data to support our work in ATF targeted fisheries and our advocacy work in other fisheries, including high seas tuna fisheries. Research conducted in each country consisted of: Longline fleets • Effect of different line weighting regimes on the sink rate of baited hooks (Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, South Africa); • Effect of different line weighting regimes on the seabird attack rate on baited hooks (Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, South Africa); • Effect of different line weighting regimes on the target species (fish) catch (South Africa); • Investigating best practice combination of tori lines and line weight to reduce seabird mortality (Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, South Africa); Trawl fleets • Offal management to reduce seabird mortality (South Africa) • Use of a modified towed device for tori lines (Argentina); • Use of tori lines to reduce seabird mortality (Argentina, South Africa, Namibia). Results of these trials will be presented to AC6 and SBWG4 (Ecuador 2010) Hook Pod and Safe Leads Since 2005, BirdLife has worked closely with Fishtek (UK engineering company) to develop and trial two emerging mitigation measures for pelagic longline fisheries; Safe Leads (SBWG3_16) and the Hook Pod (aka Bait Pod). In 2008, ACAP granted AUS\$20,000 to BirdLife to work with Fishtek to conduct at-sea trials to test the operational effectiveness of the hook pod. The results of these trials were reported at the AC 5 (SBWG 3_17). Further hook pod trials were conducted in Australia in November 2010 and the results will be tabled at AC6/SBWG4. Safe Leads have now been trialled extensively in ATF countries and are ready for commercial sales. A MKII version is currently undergoing trials in Australia; preliminary results look very promising and they have been well received by fishermen.

5.2 Does the Party have any additional national institutions (authorities or research centres), or NGOs involved in albatross and petrel conservation? Not answered

6. Education and public awareness

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

Albatross Task Force instructors from all seven ATF countries regularly work with fishermen in ports, at-sea and in workshops to raise awareness of the urgent conservation need to introduce mitigation measures to target fisheries. This includes the development of targeted educational materials in English, Spanish and Portuguese. They also provide advice on the adoption of best practice mitigation to fishers, government agencies and national observer programmes. One the legacies of the ATF will be national observer programmes with an improved understanding of the a range of seabird bycatch related issues, and strengthened data collection protocols to record and analyse seabird bycatch and monitor the adoption of best practice mitigation.

6.2 Has the Party conducted training or provided information to the general public? Not answered

ATF instructors in all target countries are involved at some level in presenting information to the public For example, in South Africa the ATF team organise and run an annual event called Save our Seabirds (SOS), which lasts for a week in Cape Town and includes demonstrations, displays and presentations to the public to raise awareness of threats facing albatrosses and petrels and then solutions available. The event has been running for two years, is very well attended and raises considerable sponsorship and funds from the event, which are used directly to fund seabird conservation

7. Other

Does the Party have any new information to report on research into observed impacts, or mitigation of, climate change on albatrosses and petrels? Not answered

8. Additional Comments

Final submission details

Report is closed for editing.

Status - Submitted to ACAP - 25-Mar-2011

Report by Ben Sullivan