

 <p data-bbox="215 548 454 593">Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p data-bbox="691 241 1406 280" style="text-align: center;">Ninth Meeting of the Advisory Committee</p> <p data-bbox="869 297 1406 336" style="text-align: center;"><i>La Serena, Chile, 9 - 13 May 2016</i></p> <p data-bbox="770 412 1118 450" style="text-align: center;">Secretariat Report</p> <p data-bbox="857 544 1038 577" style="text-align: center;"><i>Secretariat</i></p>
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SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the Secretariat's operations since the Fifth Meeting of the Parties (MoP5).

A major focus of the Secretariat's work during this period has been on building the Agreement's relationships with other intergovernmental organisations and in raising its profile in relevant international fora. Memoranda of Understanding/Arrangements have been negotiated with the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the MoU with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) being extended for a further three years. ACAP has now formal arrangements in place with all of the tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (tRFMOs), as well with other IGOs managing key high seas fisheries.

A further achievement during this period was the negotiation of an amendment to seabird conservation management measure CMM 2012-07 in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). This amendment requires small-scale longline vessels less than 24m in overall length that are fishing north of 23°N to use at least one of the three mitigation measures recommended by ACAP for use in pelagic longline fisheries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Advisory Committee takes note of the outcomes achieved by the Secretariat since MoP5 and:

1. If it considers it appropriate, suggest amendments to the Secretariat's Work Programme (**AC9 Doc 13**).

1. SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS

The Secretariat's office remains at 27 Salamanca Square, Battery Point, Tasmania.

2. STAFFING

Formal advice has been provided to the Australian and Tasmanian Governments concerning the appointment of Dr Favero as ACAP's Executive Secretary from 1 February 2016. Support has also been provided for the relocation of Dr Favero to Hobart.

3. CONTRACTS/CONSULTANTS

Drs Marco Favero and Anton Wolfaardt continued to assist with the implementation of ACAP's RFMO engagement strategy on a contract basis (in Dr Favero's case until his commencement as Executive Secretary). Dr Favero represented the Agreement at the 89th meeting of the IATTC Commission. Dr Wolfaardt represented the Agreement at the Ecosystem Bycatch Working Group of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, as well as at the Scientific Committee of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation. Oncall Conference Interpreters and Translators continued to provide interpretation and translation services for the Agreement.

4. SECONDMENTS/INTERNSHIPS

Four translation and interpretation students from Monash University and the University of New South Wales undertook internships in the Secretariat over a one week period in February 2016.

5. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES

5.1. Relationship with other International Organisations

Since MoP5 a key focus of the Secretariat's work has been on building and formalising the Agreement's relationship with other intergovernmental organisations (IGO). A significant level of success was achieved in this regard, with Arrangements being finalised with a number of RFMOs, as requested by Parties at MoP5.

5.2. Seabird Bycatch Identification Guide

French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese versions of the ACAP Seabird Bycatch Identification Guide have also been finalised and a number of copies distributed to delegates at meetings or forwarded to other interested parties.

5.3. Representation at Meetings of other International Organisations

In addition to the RFMO meetings attended by Drs Favero and Wolfaardt, Mr Warren Papworth, the past Executive Secretary represented the Agreement at the:

- WCPFC E-Reporting and E-Monitoring Workshop
- 2nd Steering Committee of the Common Oceans – Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries Meeting
- 11th Meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee
- 20th Anniversary of the FAO Code of Conduct
- 22nd Annual Meeting of the CCSBT Commission
- 34th Meeting of the CCAMLR Commission
- 24th Regular Meeting of the ICCAT Commission
- 12th Regular Session of the WCPFC Commission

The Agreement's Science Officer, Dr Wieslawa Misiak, represented the Agreement at the:

- 34th Meeting of the CCAMLR Scientific Committee
- 2nd World Seabird Conference

5.4. Arrangements with other International Organisations

As mentioned above, over the course of the past six months Arrangements have been negotiated with the CCSBT and ICCAT and the MoU with CCAMLR has been extended for a further three years. The successful negotiation of an Arrangement with ICCAT was particularly noteworthy, as this organisation has very few Arrangements with other IGOs. As ICCAT prefers to use the term 'Guidelines' for its Arrangements, rather than Memorandum of Understanding', ANCP Circular 2015-11 was sent to Parties seeking their approval of this and a number of other changes to the MoU template approved at MoP3. All responses received were supportive of the amended text and, consequently, approved and communicated (ANCP Circular 2016-03). The Secretariat commenced the arrangements for the exchange of the signed copies between the two organisations. The assistance of ACAP Parties at the meeting, together with Representatives from Japan and the USA, was instrumental in the adoption of this Arrangement with ICCAT.

5.5. Accession of New Parties

The Secretariat has liaised extensively with a number of Range States concerning their possible accession to the Agreement, both electronically and in the margins of international meetings it has attended. A brief summary of current progress follows:

Netherlands – Meetings in the margins of CCAMLR XXXIV with Mr Martijn Peijs from the Department of Nature and Biodiversity were very promising. Mr Peijs advised that The Netherlands may give consideration to acceding to ACAP within the next three years.

USA – There are now advocates for the USA's accession to ACAP in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, which is considered essential for progress to be made with legislative action. In February 2016 a Congressman introduced a bill to implement ACAP. Further implementation of such legislation and Senate advice to the ratification and accession to ACAP will need to occur during this administration finalising this year. Otherwise the bill will need to be reintroduced in the next Congress. The Secretariat has been working with a number of ACAP Parties and Officials to provide relevant information to both Federal Departments/ Agencies as well as to staff within the offices of Federal politicians.

Namibia – progress was being achieved in Namibia to becoming Party to the Agreement. In MoP5 Dr Hannes Holtzhausen informed the meeting that Namibia’s Cabinet supported the accession to the Agreement and that it was expected that the Namibian Parliament would shortly approve this action.

Poland – Discussions were held in the margins of CCAMLR SC XXXIV with Dr Anna Kidawa from the Polish Academy of Sciences. Interest was expressed about finding out more about the work of the Agreement and the financial implications of being a Party.

Mexico – Correspondence has been exchanged with Dr Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz and MSc. Federico Méndez-Sánchez, from the Mexican CSO Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI), to strengthen ACAP’s contacts within Mexico’s research community and to help establish our network within the Mexican Government.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS

The audited financial statements for the 2015 financial year were circulated to ACAP Parties by 30 September 2015, in accordance with financial regulations 10.2 and 11.3.

An interim financial report for the 2016 financial year has been prepared and is submitted for the information/action of the Advisory Committee as **AC9 Doc 08** (a rev of this document will be prepared prior to the meeting). Expenditure is currently within budget allocations, and the cash on-hand in our accounts is sufficient to meet all expected commitments for the current financial year.