

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p>Joint Thirteenth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Ninth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group</p> <p><i>Swakopmund, Namibia, 26 May 2026</i></p> <p>Seabird strikes with seismic survey vessel cables in the Southwest Atlantic: first evidence and mitigation testing using bird-scaring lines</p> <p><i>Juliana Vallim Gaiotto, Tatiana S. Neves, Gabriel Canani</i></p>
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SUMMARY

Albatrosses and petrels are among the most threatened groups of birds globally. Recently the expansion of offshore industrial activities has introduced further potential threats to seabirds. Despite growing attention to these impacts, interactions between seabirds and offshore seismic survey operations remain poorly documented. We conducted a dedicated onboard monitoring program to assess seabird interactions with a seismic survey vessel operating in the Pelotas Basin, with particular focus on collision events with door cables (“cable strikes”). We also developed and implemented an adapted version of a bird-scaring line (toriline), specifically designed for use in seismic operations, and experimentally evaluated its effectiveness in reducing collision risk. By comparing scenarios with and without mitigation measures, we further assessed changes in seabird behavioral responses, including avoidance and flight modification patterns. Collision events were evaluated under three operational scenarios: absence of torilines, presence of a single toriline, and presence of two torilines. Data presented in this study were collected during three field campaigns conducted between May 2024 and March 2026.

A total of 35 confirmed seabird collisions with seismic survey vessel cables were recorded across the three campaigns, indicating that this type of interaction may represent a previously undocumented source of mortality for seabirds in offshore environments. The main species recorded in collision events were: *Pterodroma incerta*, *Thalassarche melanophris* and *Calonectris borealis*. Threatened species also were recorded, as *Procellaria aequinoctialis*, *Procellaria conspicillata* and *Thalassarche chlororhynchos*. Our results suggests that adapted torilines may contribute to reducing seabird collision risk in seismic operations. The reduction in collision rates observed when torilines were deployed on both sides suggests that this approach may be an effective mitigation strategy, and that protecting only one side of the vessel may be insufficient to reduce overall collision risk.