Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Joint Thirteenth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Ninth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group

Swakopmund, Namibia, 26 May 2026

Review and update of the Concerted Action for Antipodean Albatross

New Zealand, Australia, Chile

SUMMARY

AC11 recognised the Antipodes Island population of Antipodean Albatross, *Diomedea antipodensis*, as an ACAP priority population for conservation management.

New Zealand, Australia and Chile worked collaboratively to develop and implement a Concerted Action plan for this priority population, centred on the listing of *D. antipodensis* on Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in 2020. The objective of the listing included to increase cooperation between Range States, RFMOs, ACAP, non-governmental organisations and other concerned parties to improve the uptake and effectiveness of bycatch mitigation use, including compliance monitoring and bycatch data collection, and to reduce the capture of Antipodean Albatross (and other seabird species) in longline fisheries.

A full report on the implementation of the Concerted Action plan for the Antipodean Albatross was provided to the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS in March 2026 (COP15). There was good progress towards achieving various fisheries management and research objectives, in particular, the introduction of new domestic fisheries management measures and intensive satellite tracking. However, progress in addressing high seas fishery bycatch (the greatest threat to the species) remains limited and population monitoring shows little sign of recovery. In response, continuation of the Concerted Action was agreed at COP15, with an updated Concerted Action plan. The updated plan includes a full suite of actions to be taken by the CMS Party Range States and CMS Parties that are Members of, or engage with, key RFMOs. It has a particular focus on addressing fisheries bycatch on the high seas, and aligns closely with the CMS Bycatch Resolution (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.22) and the ACAP RFMCO Strategy (MOP8 Doc 24).

Attachments:

UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.31.2.9 Report on the implementation of the Concerted Action plan for the Antipodean Albatross

UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.31.3.9 Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*) already listed on Appendix I of the Convention

UN environment programme

CMS

CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.31.2.9
24 October 2025
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15th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Campo Grande, Brazil, 23 to 29 March 2026
Agenda Item 31.2.9

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS *(Diomedea antipodensis)*

Summary:

The Governments of Australia, Chile and New Zealand have submitted the attached report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross *(Diomedea antipodensis), UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 13.12*.

This report provides the third implementation update for the Antipodean albatross Concerted Action. Good progress towards achieving the various fisheries management and research objectives is reported. In particular, a number of new domestic fisheries management measures have been implemented and intensive satellite tracking has identified key areas of overlap with fishing activity in the high seas. However, progress in addressing high seas fishery bycatch (the greatest threat) remains limited and population monitoring shows no recovery. As such, a revised Concerted Action is proposed for the next intersessional period, with a particular focus on addressing high seas fishery bycatch.

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS

UNEP/CMS/ CONCERTED ACTION 13.12

CONCERTED ACTION

Title: Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*)

Document number: *UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 13.12*

REPORTING GOVERNMENT or ORGANIZATION

This report is completed by the Governments of New Zealand, Australia and Chile.

TARGET SPECIES/POPULATION

Class: Aves
Family: Diomedeidae
Order: Procellariiformes
Species: *Diomedea antipodensis*

PROGRESS IN ACTIVITIES

New Zealand, Australia and Chile have each undertaken further activities to implement the Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross between May 2023 and October 2025. These are outlined below, in addition to actions taken earlier during the implementation period (from March 2020). Further details are provided in the Annex.

<u>New Zealand</u>

New Zealand continued to implement a range of domestic fisheries bycatch management actions as part of the implementation of the New Zealand National Plan of Action (NPOA) – Seabirds 2020. This plan introduced Mitigation Standards in fisheries that pose bycatch risk to Antipodean albatross, which set best practice mitigation use expectations.

During 2022 a review on the implementation of the Mitigation Standards was initiated to identify opportunities to improve the effectiveness and uptake of the standards. This review led to the introduction of new regulations in 2024, to require the use of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation, in line with advice from the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), in pelagic longline fishing operations (the highest risk domestic fishery for Antipodean albatross).

Implementation of the NPOA has been supported by an expanded outreach programme to assist fishers in developing vessel specific bycatch mitigation plans. The programme included the supply of seabird bycatch mitigation materials, including hook-shielding devices, an innovative best practice mitigation measure, to pelagic longline fishery operators. Mitigation development projects were also commissioned to address the risk of seabird bycatch during the haul and soak periods in longline fisheries. Work is continuing to support uptake of a range of seabird bycatch mitigation devices and practices by fishers and to expand efficacy testing more widely across the fleet.

A programme of improved digital monitoring of fisheries was fully rolled out during this implementation period, including placing of cameras on all pelagic longline vessels. These are improving bycatch and mitigation use data collection.

New Zealand led an extensive multi-year intersessional review of the seabird bycatch measures required in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). Numerous improvements were identified, in line with advice from ACAP, that would reduce the bycatch risk to Antipodean albatross. Unfortunately, as of September 2025, WCPFC has yet to agree to any of the proposed improvements.

As part of the Multi-year Seabird Strategy adopted by the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), New Zealand, together with Japan, has led the development of a spatially explicit seabird bycatch risk assessment framework, which was adopted in October 2025. It is envisaged that this framework will be used to inform future seabird bycatch management actions by CCSBT.

New Zealand, together with Peru, Chile and ACAP, also led a review of the seabird bycatch and data collection measures in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO). As of September 2025, numerous recommendations for improvements have been endorsed by the SPRFMO Scientific Committee, and will be considered for adoption when the SPRFMO Commission meets in March 2026.

Despite earlier setbacks in New Zealand's research programme on Antipodean albatross (and all other subantarctic programmes) during 2021-23 due to COVID-19, annual monitoring continued at Antipodes Island and annual monitoring was reinstated at Adams Island in 2022. Whilst there appears to be some stabilization of the decline in number of breeding pairs, population modelling under status quo conditions predicts ongoing and alarming declines in the population. Further intensive satellite tracking was undertaken and numerous fishery overlap and risk assessments have been reported using the data collected. The continued research programme also allowed for the collection of samples for diet and pollutant exposure studies.

An internship programme was established to provide opportunities for Ngāi Tahu (the principal indigenous tribe of the southern region of New Zealand) to engage with management and conservation actions for Antipodean albatross (and other related seabirds).

Australia

Australia implements a range of domestic management arrangements of relevance to the conservation of the Antipodean albatross: Threat Abatement Plan for the incidental catch (or bycatch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations, National Recovery Plan for albatrosses and petrels, and National Plan of Action for minimising the incidental catch of seabirds in Australian capture fisheries.

Australia's Threat Abatement Plan identifies the research, management and other actions needed to reduce the impacts of oceanic longline fishing operations to an acceptable level. It requires Commonwealth agencies to act in a manner consistent with the objectives of the plan – to achieve a zero bycatch of seabirds, especially threatened albatrosses and petrels in all longline fisheries.

Under the Threat Abatement Plan, the development of DNA markers is helping to resolve uncertainties in seabird bycatch from longline fisheries in Australian waters. Feather samples are collected by fishing operators from dead bycaught seabirds, with genetic methods used to provide a streamlined framework for the identification of seabird bycatch to validate information collected in logbook entries, observer reports and audits of imagery captured by

electronic monitoring systems. SBWG11 Doc 12 provides details of the genetic methods and the potential for their wider application by ACAP Parties, including identifying Antipodean albatross bycatch.

The Australian National Recovery Plan, released in 2022, guides the activities of government, industry, research organisations and other stakeholders in the protection, conservation and management of listed threatened albatross and petrels under Australia's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth). The plan's objective is to improve the conservation status of albatrosses and petrels so that these species are on a trajectory towards no longer being threatened in Australia's jurisdiction. Among other things, the plan provides updated advice about the conservation status of, and threats to the Antipodean albatross in Australia's jurisdiction, and identifies research and management actions to support the recovery of this, and other threatened albatross and petrel species.

Australia implements a range of actions under the National Plan of Action. The plan aims to minimise and, where practicable, eliminate the incidental catch of seabirds in capture fisheries. The plan promotes national coordination to better understand and mitigate impacts of fishing activities on seabirds across jurisdictions, recognising that the state, Northern Territory and Australian Governments have separate regulatory authority in their own jurisdictions and are best placed to determine what mitigation measures are needed. Under the plan, annual reports are available and include seabird bycatch data for the Commonwealth, States and Northern Territory. These reports detail the seabird bycatch trends, actions taken and mitigation in place for each jurisdiction. The plan is currently being reviewed for its relevance and effectiveness.

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) continues to work with the fishing industry to reduce seabird bycatch, particularly that of threatened albatross and petrel species, in Commonwealth-managed fisheries including the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery, and the Southern Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. With the COVID-19 pandemic easing, outreach with Australian commercial fishers and access to research and monitoring sites is gradually improving.

Further details are provided in the Annex.

Chile

As part of the implementation of an ecosystem-based fisheries management strategy, and following the recommendations of the FAO and other fisheries forums, with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of the oceans and food security, Chile has been developing a process for diagnosing, reducing and controlling discards and bycatch in its national fisheries since 2012. This process has involved the participation of regulatory, research and control agencies, together with collaborative work with fisheries users, which has enabled the country to gradually resolve the problem.

Furthermore, considering the challenges involved in controlling and recording discards and by-catches at sea, since 2020, the use of EMS (Image Recording Devices (IRDs) and Electronic Logging Systems (ELS)) has been made mandatory to monitor compliance with the measures, with different applications depending on the type of fleet and vessel, together with the strengthening of human observation programmes on board fishing vessels for scientific purposes.

With regard to specific measures aimed at reducing the incidental capture and mortality of seabirds during fishing operations, based on the results obtained by programmes with observers on board, together with the information provided by on-board camera systems and electronic logbooks (EMS), in 2014, 2019 and 2021, measures to reduce the incidental capture

of seabirds were enacted for industrial and artisanal longline fleets, as well as for industrial trawl fleets, through Exempt Resolutions No. 2110/2014, 2941/2019 and 2569/2021. Among other aspects, these measures established the mandatory use of deterrent devices, the application of codes of good fishing practice and the reporting of bycatch in electronic logbooks. Deterrent devices include: i) the use of pairs of bird-scaring lines or bird deflectors, depending on the size of the vessel; (ii) a curtain to visualise or alert seabirds to the presence of the third cable, which is used in addition to scare lines; and (iii) the use of a pasteca to bring the third cable closer to the water surface and reduce its exposure to the air. In addition, good fishing practices include: i) cleaning the net before setting; ii) setting at night; iii) mooring the net when setting to increase its sinking rate and minimise the time it remains on the water surface; and iv) managing discards to avoid attracting birds at critical moments of the fishing operation.

These requirements have been applied differently depending on the target fishery, the fishing gear and the type of fleet. It should be noted that these measures were designed in consultation with experts and presented to the respective Fisheries Management Committees or users (shipowners, captains and crews) of the fisheries involved for adjustment and practical validation. Likewise, their design took into account different aspects that would allow for adequate control through electronic monitoring systems (EMS). Once established, extractive fishing activities that contravened the provisions of the aforementioned seabird bycatch reduction rules were prohibited.

In addition, through empirical research aboard crustacean and hake trawl fleets, the Biobío Fishing Industry Association, together with ATF-Chile, has explored and tested improvements to the mandatory seabird deterrent devices mentioned above to make their use safer, more practical and more efficient, taking into account the various characteristics of trawlers, such as the smaller ones used in crustacean fishing. The results (Suazo et al., 2024) address the construction, maintenance and deployment of bird-scaring lines, the reduction of the impact of the third cable on seabirds through the use of a net curtain (construction and minimum standards), the assessment of the impact on seabirds of the exposed upper part of the third cable, the construction and minimum standards of the bird deflector (stern curtain), the use of additional devices for the safe deployment of bird-scaring lines, such as arms and telescopic rods, and the use of shorter bird-scaring lines for crustacean fishing, where smaller vessels operate (Suazo et al., 2023). The results were translated into recommendations, which were presented to the respective Fisheries Management Committees for validation and subsequent adjustment to current regulations.

On the other hand, the factory trawler fleet has developed and tested an innovation or alternative to the use of the currently required Snatch pasteca to reduce the exposure of the third cable (Netsonda). This innovation consists of adding a weighted cable along the third cable, which minimises its aerial exposure. These results were also presented to the respective Fisheries Management Committees for validation and subsequent incorporation into the regulations on reducing the incidental capture of seabirds.

Finally, it is important to note that all these measures also emphasise compliance with the obligations set out in Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78 Convention), in particular Regulation 3, which prohibits the discharge into the sea of any plastic material, including ropes, synthetic fibre fishing nets and plastic garbage bags. Other types of waste, such as food scraps and waste resulting from domestic tasks and routine work on vessels (excluding fresh fish and any portion thereof), must be treated and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of Annex V of the Agreement.

The results obtained to date have shown significant reductions in bycatch and mortality of seabirds in Chilean fisheries due to the proper implementation and enforcement of the measures established.

CHANGES TO THE CONCERTED ACTION (IF ANY)

No changes were made to the Concerted Action, although New Zealand, Australia and Chile have submitted a proposal for the continuation and update of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*), for consideration by the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP15).

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ACTION

Given the lack of recovery of Antipodean albatross, and the slow progress in addressing the greatest threats (fisheries bycatch in the high seas), we propose an updated Concerted Action is endorsed for the next intersessional period. The updated Concerted Action will guide and prioritise future actions, in particular towards addressing the threat of fisheries bycatch in the high seas.

ANNEX

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
1. Fisheries bycatch in Range State jurisdictions					
1.1 Continue implementation of effective bycatch mitigation measures in pelagic longline fisheries, trawl and any other relevant fisheries, including outreach to fishers regarding seabird bycatch	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised within Range State jurisdictions	Ongoing	New Zealand	Implementation of New Zealand's NPOA-Seabirds 2020, including review and update of Mitigation Standards, supported by an expanded outreach programme to assist fishers.	Continued implementation with a view to ongoing improvement.
			New Zealand	Introduction of regulations in 2024 to require the use of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation in domestic pelagic longline fisheries.	
			Chile	Continued implementation of Chile's NPOA-Seabirds, with update of actions to implement resolution 2941 (August 2019). From 2014 onwards, mandatory measures to reduce bird bycatch have been established for different fisheries. Effective compliance is monitored at sea during fishing operations through on-board camera systems and electronic logbooks (EMS) operated by the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Service. These EMS systems have been mandatory since 2020 in industrial fleets and are in the process of being implemented in all artisanal vessels with a length of 15 metres or more. At the same time, scientific observer programmes are continuing.	
			Chile	Development of proposals to list Antipodean Albatross in the National Species Classification Process, and a National Strategy for the Conservation of Wild Bird Species which both consider fisheries threats and bycatch mitigation	
			Australia	Ongoing implementation of Australia's TAP-Seabirds and NPOA-Seabirds ensures effective mitigation of seabird bycatch in oceanic longline and trawl fisheries, in particular in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) along Australia's eastern seaboard.	

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
1.2 Ensure there is adequate observation coverage to monitor mitigation use and identify any seabird bycatch to species level	Fisheries bycatch levels and risk, at species level, are known and can be reported	Ongoing	New Zealand	Continued implementation of New Zealand's fishery observer programme and full rollout of cameras on all pelagic longline vessels (and other inshore fisheries).	Continued ongoing monitoring.
			Australia	Australian Fisheries Management Authority's (AFMA) e-monitoring programme applies to the ETBF along Australia's eastern seaboard, and the TAP-Seabirds aims to identify bycaught seabirds to species level though collection of feather samples and photographs.	
			Chile	Continuation and reinforcement of the monitoring of bycatch on board fishing vessels for scientific purposes by observers on board the various fleets. This involves ongoing training and capacity building, and the development of identification guides and specific forms. Furthermore, the use of cameras on board industrial fishing vessels (EMS) involves improvements in image analysis in order to detect accidental catches of seabirds and the use of mandatory mitigation devices.	
1.3 Develop and maintain bilateral/multilateral collaboration on mitigation development, data collection, data sharing and risk assessment. A cooperation arrangement between New Zealand and Chile on seabird conservation has already been agreed and provides a framework for this activity between these two Range States	Collaboration facilities achieving Activities 1.1 and 1.2	Ongoing	New Zealand and Chile	Continued collaboration between New Zealand and Chile under an inter-governmental cooperative arrangement on seabird conservation, including bycatch risk and management.	Continued ongoing collaboration
			New Zealand and Australia	Continued collaboration between New Zealand and Australia to better understanding bycatch risks in the Tasman Sea.	
2. Fisheries bycatch on the high seas					
2.1 Support regular review, and improvement where necessary, of	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised in	2020-2022 for initial review;	New Zealand	New Zealand led a thorough review the WCPFC seabird bycatch measure CMM2018-03 over 2023-25.	Achieving improved seabird bycatch mitigation

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
seabird bycatch conservation and management measures to ensure use of effective bycatch mitigation measures is required, in the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and in relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs): Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin (CCSBT) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries management Organisation (SPRFMO)	relevant RFMOs through use of effective bycatch mitigation measures	further regular reviews - ongoing	New Zealand and Australia	Australia and New Zealand supported the development and endorsement of a multi-year Seabird Strategy by CCSBT to reduce or eliminate seabird bycatch in Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) fisheries and a spatially explicit risk assessment framework was endorsed in 2025.	use in high seas pelagic longline fisheries is urgently needed and a high priority.
			New Zealand, Chile and Peru	In 2025, New Zealand, together with Chile and Peru, led a review of SPRFMO conservation and management measures CMM 09-2017 (minimisation of seabird bycatch) and CMM 02-2022 (data standards) based on ACAP's best practice advice on seabird bycatch and data collection in 2025.	
			IATTC	IATTC developed a multi-year seabird action plan and reviewed seabird distribution and associated fishery impacts in 2025.	
2.2 Support development and distribution of outreach materials to fishers regarding seabird bycatch, including seabird identification guides	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised in relevant RFMOs through increased awareness, improved use of mitigation by fishers, and	Ongoing	New Zealand	New Zealand continued the development and update of a range of resources for commercial fishers on seabird bycatch reduction: https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/conservation-services-programme/csp-resources-for-fishers/	Continue ongoing support.
			Australia	Australia provides a range of resources to fishers about reducing seabird bycatch, safe release of any live caught seabirds, and concerning seabird identification.	
			Chile	Chile provides outreach talks on seabird protection and bycatch measures to fishing crews. It has also developed	

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
	more accurate reporting to species level			and provided fishing users with species identification guides in general and seabird identification guides in particular for more accurate recording of interactions and bycatch in electronic logbooks by fishermen.	
2.3 Support compliance monitoring of seabird bycatch conservation and management measures in relevant RFMOs	The compliance monitoring and reporting against each RFMO seabird bycatch conservation and management measure is demonstrated in RFMO reports	2020-2022 (and maintained ongoing)	New Zealand	New Zealand's high seas monitoring in the WCPFC area was affected by COVID-19 and later by changes in resources available. Surveillance over-flights continued. Inspection of vessel in New Zealand ports resumed in late 2022.	Ongoing action to ensure seabird bycatch mitigation requirements are being fully implemented is a high priority.
			Australia	Australia continues to prioritise effective development and implementation of compliance schemes in the RFMOs it is a party to, including supporting efforts to include seabird bycatch reporting to inform both compliance processes and management actions.	
			Chile	Chile continues to monitor for scientific purposes and to monitor compliance with seabird conservation measures, both in its jurisdictional waters and in the RFMOs to which it belongs.	
2.4 Support robust bycatch related data collection and sharing in relevant RFMOs	Fisheries bycatch risk is documented and measurable through data reporting	Ongoing	Australia and New Zealand	Australia and New Zealand, working closely with Japan, supported the development and endorsement of a Multi-year Seabird Strategy by CCSBT which includes actions to improve data collection.	Improved data collection in high seas fisheries is required.
			New Zealand, Chile and Peru	New Zealand, together with Chile and Peru, led a review of the SPRFMO data collection CMM in relation to seabird bycatch relevant data.	
2.5 Support robust bycatch data reporting and periodic bycatch assessments in relevant RFMOs	Estimation of fisheries seabird bycatch risk at RFMO scale	Ongoing	Australia and New Zealand	Australia and New Zealand, working closely with Japan, supported the development and endorsement of a Multi-year Seabird Strategy by CCSBT which includes actions to improve data reporting and bycatch assessments, in particular the development of a spatially explicit risk assessment framework.	Ensure robust assessments are made by relevant RFMOs
			New Zealand	New Zealand undertook a quantitative multi-threat risk assessment for Antipodean Albatross, including	

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
				assessment of available RFMO data, as well a range of fishery overlap analyses.	
2.6 Support data gathering in high seas fisheries where other types of seabird interactions, including possible utilization of seabirds as wild meat, remains poorly known.	Risks posed by all relevant fishing methods are understood	2020-2025	New Zealand, Chile and Peru	New Zealand, together with Chile and Peru, led a review to recommend improved data collection in SPRFMO fisheries, including observer collected data on any seabird interaction with squid jig fisheries (CMM 09-2017 (minimisation of seabird bycatch) and CMM 02-2022 (data standards))	Ensure adequate data is collected in order to assess the potential risk form these fisheries.
2.7 Develop collaborations on seabird bycatch mitigation measures with non-CMS Parties fishing in the range of Antipodean Albatross	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised through use of effective bycatch mitigation measures	Ongoing	New Zealand	New Zealand has continued communication/collaborations with non-CMS Parties whose fisheries have been identified as overlapping with Antipodean Albatross, including China, Chinese Taipei, the USA and Japan.	Further develop relevant collaborations to address fisheries bycatch.
			New Zealand and Australia	New Zealand and Australia worked closely with Japan in the development and implementation of a Multi-year Seabird Strategy for CCSBT.	
			New Zealand and other WCPFC members	New Zealand worked closely with the USA, China, Chinese Taipei, Japan and other interested WCPFC Members to propose revisions to the WCPFC seabird bycatch measure.	
			New Zealand, Chile, Peru and ACAP	New Zealand, together with Chile, Peru and ACAP, worked closely with interested SPRFMO Members to propose revisions to the SPRFMO seabird bycatch and data collection measures CMM 09-2017 (minimisation of seabird bycatch) and CMM 02-2022 (data standards)	
3. Research					
3.1 Continue a multi-year population project to provide a platform for key research questions (e.g. foraging range, diet) and monitor progress over time	Ongoing assessment of the current status of the population and a better understanding of biological	Population monitoring: annual for 2019-2024, then reassess	New Zealand	Despite setbacks in New Zealand's research programme on Antipodean Albatross (and all other subantarctic programmes) during 2021-23 due to COVID-19, annual monitoring continued at Antipodes Island and annual monitoring was reinstated at Adams Island in 2022.	Continue long term monitoring programme.

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
	drivers of change				
3.2 Continue the deployment of tracking devices to better describe areas of fisheries overlap	Detailed knowledge of foraging range, suitable to inform detailed overlap analysis with fishing effort and spatially explicit fisheries risk assessment	2019-21	New Zealand	Intensive satellite tracking at New Zealand's Antipodes and Adams Islands has continued, across both adult and juvenile birds at both sites. A range of fisheries overlap and bycatch risk analyses have been completed.	Continue analysis of tracking data to inform fisheries bycatch management.
3.3 Continue diet-related sample collection, and undertake analysis, to describe diet and any changes in diet over time	Better understanding of any changes in diet and how this affects population parameters	2019-2024	New Zealand	A range of feather and blood samples have been collected for analyses of stable isotopes and stress hormones as well as the collection of boluses and faecal samples. These samples will allow for future assessments of diet and changes.	Undertake further analyses of samples collected
3.4 Assess levels of plastic ingestion	Better understanding of the potential risk posed by plastic pollution	2021-2024	New Zealand	Boluses and faecal samples have been collected, allowing for future assessments of plastic ingestion. Additionally, a multi-threat risk assessment provided estimates of relative exposure risk.	Undertake analyses of samples collected.
3.5 Investigate the nature, extent and drivers of land slips at Antipodes Island	Better understanding of potential	2021-2024	New Zealand	No progress, though drone surveys were completed and will enable further investigation.	Analyse data available.

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress by	Progress	Changes or solutions
	risks posed by land slips				
3.6 Develop opportunities into mātauranga Māori (New Zealand's indigenous knowledge) to inform the management of the species and help facilitate opportunities for Ngāi Tahu (the principal indigenous tribe of the southern region of New Zealand) to develop a stronger connection between Ngāi Tahu and *D. antipodensis*	Mātauranga Māori available to inform future management and conservation actions	Ongoing	New Zealand	An internship programme was established to provide opportunities for opportunities for Ngāi Tahu (the principal indigenous tribe of the southern region of New Zealand) to engage with management and conservation actions for Antipodean Albatross (and other related seabirds).	Continue to internship programme and seek additional mechanisms for engagement.
4. Breeding site management					
4.1 Eradication of mammalian pests at Auckland Island	Safe and protected breeding sites with no human-induced threats	Programme under development, with 10-year indicative timeline	New Zealand	A feasibility study on the eradication of pigs, cats, and mice has been completed in 2021. The New Zealand Government committed a further NZD3.65 million in 2024 to complete foundational work to ready the project for initiation. With appropriate resourcing and sequencing, the eradication of all three species can be achieved, but can take up to 10 years at the cost of NZD84 million.	Develop a committed investment strategy to enable progress on implementation of the eradication.
4.2 Continued protection and biosecurity control to main breeding site islands	Safe and protected breeding sites with no human-induced threats	Ongoing	New Zealand	Implementation and enforcement of all protection measures was continued.	Ongoing implementation of measures.

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CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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Agenda Item 31.3.9

PROPOSAL FOR CONTINUATION OF A CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS (*Diomedea antipodensis*) ALREADY LISTED ON APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION*

Summary:

The Governments of New Zealand, Australia and Chile have submitted the attached proposal for a continuation of the Concerted Action for the Antipodean albatross *(Diomedea antipodensis)*, in accordance with the process elaborated in Resolution 12.28 (Rev.COP14).

*The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CMS Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author

PROPOSAL FOR CONTINUATION OF A CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS (*Diomedea antipodensis*) ALREADY LISTED ON APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION

The Concerted Action for Antipodean albatross *(Diomedea antipodensis)*, agreed by the 13th Conference of Parties (2020) has been updated by proponents as follows:

Proponents

Governments of New Zealand, Australia and Chile.

Target species, lower taxon or population, or group of taxa with needs in common

Diomedea antipodensis (Robertson & Warham 1992), which includes two subspecies: *Diomedea antipodensis antipodensis* and *Diomedea antipodensis gibsoni*.

Geographical range

Diomedea antipodensis breeds on four island groups off southern New Zealand and migrates across the waters of the South Pacific Ocean, from Chile to Australia.

Summary of Activities

This Concerted Action focuses on managing fisheries bycatch, which continues to be considered the greatest threat to *Diomedea antipodensis*, This threat occurs across national jurisdictions as well as in the high seas, where its magnitude is thought to be greatest.

The activities to address fisheries bycatch under this Concerted Action include:

- the use of effective seabird bycatch mitigation measures in all pelagic longline fishing operations across the geographical range, and associated monitoring and compliance;
- continued data sharing and bycatch risk assessment, including for other fishing methods, such as trawl and demersal longline that are known to pose some level of risk, and the use of effective seabird bycatch mitigation where appropriate; and
- the collection of data from other fisheries such as squid jigging where there may be a risk of bycatch, vessel collision or other indirect effects.

Other activities, such as maintaining protection and quarantine of breeding sites, and research to better understand the population dynamics and foraging behaviour, have either been undertaken or are continuing to be undertaken by the New Zealand Government. The research programme provides opportunities to further develop mātauranga Māori (New Zealand's indigenous knowledge) and strengthen the connection between Ngāi Tahu (the principal indigenous tribe of the southern region of New Zealand) and *Diomedea antipodensis*. Further international collaboration with the scientific elements would be beneficial.

Activities and expected outcomes under this Concerted Action cover the following work areas:

1. Fisheries bycatch on the high seas;
2. Fisheries bycatch in Range State jurisdictions;
3. Research; and
4. Breeding site management.

Activities and expected outcomes can be found in the Annex : Concerted Actions for Conservation of Antipodean albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis*) under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

Associated benefits

The risk posed by bycatch in fisheries is not restricted to *Diomedea antipodensis* alone, but also impacts other migratory seabird species that overlap with fishing effort. Indeed, the Eighth Meeting of the Parties of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) declared a conservation crisis in May 2025, based on the continued decline in population status of albatrosses and petrels, with thousands of birds dying every year as a result of fisheries operations.

Other species affected include those albatross and petrel species listed on Appendix II of CMS that forage exclusively or in part in the South Pacific Ocean. The bycatch mitigation practices that reduce the risk of bycatch of *Diomedea antipodensis* will also reduce the risk of bycatch of other seabird species.

Whilst the activities required for *Diomedea antipodensis* are restricted to the South Pacific Ocean, these Concerted Actions may act as a precedent to improve seabird bycatch management in similar fisheries operating in other oceans.

Additional benefits include opportunities for awareness raising of the conservation status of *Diomedea antipodensis* and the threats it faces amongst CMS Parties and non-CMS Parties that belong to relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). The Concerted Action may also create a catalyst for capacity building activities relating to seabird bycatch mitigation and data collection among CMS Parties.

Timeframe

Timeframes have been identified for each activity (see Annex 1).

Relationship to other CMS actions

This Concerted Action supports implementation of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032 (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 14.1) and the CMS Bycatch Resolution (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.22).

It also supports and complements the work of the ACAP, a CMS subsidiary agreement.

Conservation priority

The conservation priority of *Diomedea antipodensis* is extremely high and is classified as Endangered (IUCN).

Both subspecies have undergone substantial population declines since 2004, following a period of population increase or stability in 1990s. The Antipodes Island breeding population has halved since 2004. These great albatross species don’t begin nesting until they are typically 10-12 years or older and only raise a maximum of one chick every two years. The current rate of decline, if it continues, would lead to >90% decline, or extinction, across three generations. The Antipodes Island population is recognised as a priority conservation concern by ACAP.

This Concerted Action will contribute to achieving priority conservation actions in the CMS Bycatch Resolution (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.22).

Relevance

The major threat to *Diomedea antipodensis* is fisheries bycatch at an ocean-basin scale, across multiple jurisdictions and the high seas. The widespread nature of this threat is due to the highly migratory nature of the species, which breeds only in one jurisdiction (New Zealand). To meaningfully manage this threat across the migratory range of the species requires cooperation and alignment of fishery management efforts by the Range States and states operating distant water fishing fleets in the area. The Range States include a number of CMS Parties.

Absence of better remedies

Other mechanisms in place to improve the conservation status of *Diomedea antipodensis* and address the threats it faces include cooperation amongst ACAP Parties on matters such as development of seabird bycatch mitigation advice, and through conservation and management measures adopted by RFMOs. In spite of these mechanisms in place, a number of challenges remain, such as New Zealand having limited influence in management organisations such as Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) where *Diomedea antipodensis* forages. While it is important to continue working in ACAP and RFMOs, a Concerted Action under CMS will increase awareness among CMS Parties and will facilitate action by a broader number of Parties. A Concerted Action under CMS is therefore considered fundamental to improving the conservation status of *Diomedea antipodensis* and will complement and potentially enhance mechanisms already in place.

Readiness and feasibility

The activities identified in this Concerted Action are focussed on continued use of existing conservation and fisheries management structures in which many Parties already engage. Effective seabird bycatch mitigation practices, such as those options recommended as ACAP best practice mitigation advice, have been proven and are used by a number of fleets. Current challenges in the type of fisheries management activities described in this Concerted Action may include observer coverage, monitoring of use of mitigation and data collection and sharing. It is envisaged that adoption of this Concerted Action will facilitate the cooperation to overcome these challenges. As such, the activities are ready and feasible, and require leadership driven by this Concerted Action to achieve the desired outcomes.

The research activities are largely underway and based on standard protocols and are thus ready and feasible. Risk assessment methods have been developed and used at a number of scales, and the main challenge (as already highlighted) will be to source adequate data on fishery operations. Breeding site management and biosecurity controls are already in place.

Likelihood of success

The management of all fisheries impacts, including possible utilization for food by vessel crews operating in the high seas, is the most substantive and readily manageable threat to the species and thus represents the management intervention with the highest potential benefit to the species. Whilst many of the key outcomes identified in the 2020 Concerted Action have yet to be achieved, there has been substantive work undertaken to deliver activity against actions. Recognising the long time-frames required to achieve outcomes such as changes in fisheries management, continued implementation of the revised Concerted Action is required to maximise the likelihood of success. There remains some uncertainty as to the level of threat to *Diomedea antipodensis* that fisheries bycatch poses. As such, there remains the risk that the population could still decline even with well managed fisheries bycatch.

Magnitude of likely impact

The activities described in this Concerted Action aim to reduce seabird bycatch across fisheries in the South Pacific Ocean south of the area approximately 25° South. In particular, the plan focuses on actions to reduce bycatch in the high seas, where current bycatch management is insufficient and where greatest risk is posed. Other seabird species known, or likely, to be bycaught in fisheries operating in these areas, and therefore also impacted by the activities to be addressed in this Concerted Action Plan, include the following CMS Appendix II and ACAP-listed species: *Diomedea exulans, Diomedea epomophora, Diomedea sanfordi, Thalassarche carteri, Thalassarche melanophris, Thalassarche impavida, Thalassarche chrysostoma, Thalassarche bulleri, Thalassarche cauta, Thalassarche steadi, Thalassarche eremita, Thalassarche salvini, Phoebetria palpebrata, Macronectes giganteus, Macronectes halli, Procellaria aequinoctialis, Procellaria westlandica, Procellaria parkinsoni* and *Procellaria cinerea*.

Cost-effectiveness

The activities identified in this Concerted Action are focussed on using existing fisheries management structures. As such any additional costs related to management of domestic fisheries, or engaging with relevant RFMOs, are low and will consist of resourcing sufficient capacity, and/or prioritising existing capacity, to engage with the bycatch management elements of these fisheries management processes. For relevant fishing fleets that do not currently deploy effective seabird mitigation measures, and/or collect data on seabird interactions, there may be costs involved in improving their operations. Additional costs would be related to the monitoring of the use of mitigation practices and recording the data. However, it must be noted that actions taken by fishing fleets to reduce the risk of *Diomedea antipodensis* bycatch will also reduce the risk of other seabird species bycatch and therefore enhance sustainability aspects of their operation.

Costs for baseline research and monitoring of the species have already been allocated by the New Zealand Government. Collaboration or additional funds would allow an expanded programme of research (e.g. additional at-sea tracking, diet assessment).

The costs for continued protection and biosecurity control of the breeding sites have already been allocated by the New Zealand Government. The mammalian pest eradication at Auckland Island has been allocated an additional NZD3.65 million by the New Zealand Government to complete foundational work to ready the project for initiation, but further funds to complete the programme have yet to be secured. The costs of these site-based management actions benefit a range of other species of conservation concern.

Consultations planned/undertaken

All CMS Range States were consulted on the original Concerted Action, as well as the ACAP Secretariat, Birdlife International and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

Consultation was also undertaken with Ngāi Tahu, the principal Māori (indigenous) iwi (tribe) of the southern region of New Zealand where the Antipodean albatross, or Toroa, breed.

Consultations around actions to conserve *Diomedea antipodensis* have been undertaken through ACAP, including at the 8th Meeting of Parties in 2025.

Activities and expected outcomes

Annex. Concerted Actions for Conservation of Antipodean albatross *(Diomedea antipodensis)* under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Activity	Output/outcome	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
1. Fisheries bycatch on the high seas				
1.1 Influence the review, and improvement where necessary, of seabird bycatch conservation and management measures to ensure use of effective bycatch mitigation measures is required, in the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and in relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs): Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin (CCSBT), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries management Organisation (SPRFMO)	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised in relevant RFMOs through use of effective bycatch mitigation measures	2025-2030 for influencing current multi-year reviews; further regular reviews - ongoing	CMS Parties that are Members of, or engage with, key RFMOs	This can be met either through reprioritisation of existing capacity from Parties engaging with RFMOs, or by additional capacity which will require funds for time and travel to meetings
1.2 Enhance compliance monitoring of seabird bycatch conservation and management measures in relevant RFMOs	The compliance monitoring and reporting against each RFMO seabird bycatch conservation and management measure is demonstrated in RFMO reports	2025-2030 for initial improvement (and maintained ongoing)	CMS Parties that are Members of, or engage with, key RFMOs	This can be met either through reprioritisation of existing capacity from Parties engaging with RFMOs, or by additional capacity which will require funds for time and travel to meetings
1.3 Influence improved bycatch related data collection and sharing in relevant RFMOs	Fisheries bycatch risk is documented and measurable through data reporting	Ongoing	CMS Parties that are Members of, or engage with, key RFMOs	This can be met either through reprioritisation of existing capacity from Parties engaging with RFMOs, or by additional capacity which will require funds for time

				and travel to meetings. If increased levels of observation are required, this will require funds from relevant RFMO Members
1.4 Require robust bycatch data reporting and periodic bycatch assessments in relevant RFMOs	Estimation of fisheries seabird bycatch risk at RFMO scale	Ongoing	CMS Parties that are Members of, or engage with, key RFMOs	Assessments may be funded through RFMO or other budgets, or may require funds from supporting Parties on a case by case basis
1.5 Support further development and distribution of outreach materials to fishers regarding seabird bycatch, including seabird identification guides	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised in relevant high seas fisheries through increased awareness, improved use of mitigation by fishers, and more accurate reporting to species level	Ongoing	CMS Parties that have the opportunity to engage with relevant high seas fishing fleets	Development of any new materials will require funds on a case by case basis
1.6 Gather data in high seas fisheries where other types of seabird interactions, including possible utilization of seabirds as wild meat, remains poorly known.	Risks posed by all relevant fishing methods are understood	2025-2030	CMS Parties that have the opportunity to engage with relevant high seas fishing fleets	This can be met either through reprioritisation of existing capacity from Parties engaging with relevant high seas fleets, or by additional capacity which will require funds for time and travel to meetings. If increased levels of observation are required this will require funds from relevant flag states, such as those operating squid jig fleets
1.7 Further develop collaborations on seabird bycatch mitigation measures with non-CMS Parties fishing in the range of Antipodean albatross	Fisheries bycatch risk minimised through use of effective bycatch mitigation measures	Ongoing	CMS Party Range States	Collaborative actions may require new funds on a case by case basis, though many actions will be based on existing activities
2. Fisheries bycatch in Range State jurisdictions				
2.1 Require implementation of effective bycatch mitigation measures in pelagic longline fisheries, trawl and any other relevant fisheries, including	Near zero Fisheries bycatch risk minimised within Range State jurisdictions	Ongoing	CMS Party Range States	Mechanisms are in place to manage fisheries bycatch. Any new requirements for fisheries operators may incur costs to them

	outreach to fishers regarding seabird bycatch				
	Ensure there is adequate observation coverage to monitor mitigation use and reliably estimate rates of seabird bycatch	Fisheries bycatch levels are known and can be reported	Ongoing	CMS Party Range States	Observation programmes are already in place, and increased requirements will require funding from relevant Parties. May require improvements in seabird identification in some fisheries
2.2	Implement effective species level identification of seabirds and monitor risk, at species level,	**Australia has developed a DNA-based method to accurately identify bycaught seabirds using feathers collected during longline fishing activities in Australian waters.**	Ongoing	CMS Party Range States	Feather collection program in place for all longline fishing operations occurring in Australian waters.
2.3	Continue bilateral/multilateral collaborations on mitigation development, data collection, data sharing and risk assessment.	Collaboration facilities achieving Activities 1.1 and 1.2 A cooperation arrangement between New Zealand and Chile on seabird conservation has already been agreed and provides a framework for this activity between these two Range States	Ongoing	CMS Party Range States	Collaborative actions may require new funds on a case by case basis, though many actions will be based on existing activities
3.	**Research**				
3.1	Continue the long-term population project to provide a platform for key research questions (e.g. foraging range, diet) and monitor progress over time	Ongoing assessment of the current status of the population and a better understanding of biological drivers of change	Population monitoring: annual for 2025-2028, then reassess	New Zealand with collaboration from other interested CMS Parties	Funds for annual research visits over a three-year period have been committed by the New Zealand Government
3.2	Continued analysis of tracking data to better describe areas of fisheries overlap	Detailed knowledge of foraging range, suitable to inform detailed overlap analysis with fishing effort and spatially explicit fisheries risk assessment	2025-2028	New Zealand with collaboration from other interested CMS Parties	Funds for continued analyses through to 2026 have been committed by the New Zealand Government. Extension will require additional funds
3.3	Investigate risks posed by the development of offshore wind farms within the range of *D. antipodensis*	Assessment of potential mortalities caused by collisions with offshore wind farm installations, including flight height	2025-2030	New Zealand and Australia	Funds for an initial research programme have been committed by Australia and are supported by

	assessments and collision risk modelling exercises.			funds committed by New Zealand in 3.1.
3.4 Analyses to describe diet and any changes in diet over time	Better understanding of any changes in diet and how this affects population parameters	2027-2030	New Zealand with collaboration from other interested CMS Parties	Sample collection is funded through the programme outlined in 3.1. The Government of New Zealand has committed funds to enable the analysis of 50% of the samples, but additional funds or collaboration will be required for further analyses.
3.5 Assess levels of plastic ingestion	Better understanding of the potential risk posed by plastic pollution	2027-2030	New Zealand with collaboration from other interested CMS Parties	Sample collection is funded through the programme outlined in 3.1. Additional funds for collaboration will be required for further analysis
3.6 Investigate the nature, extent and drivers of land slips at Antipodes Island	Better understanding of potential risks posed by land slips	2027-2030	New Zealand with collaboration from other interested CMS Parties.	Data collection is funded through the programme outlined in 3.1. Additional funds or collaboration will be required for further analysis
3.7 Develop further opportunities into mātauranga Māori (New Zealand's indigenous knowledge) to inform the management of the species and help facilitate opportunities for Ngāi Tahu (the principal indigenous tribe of the southern region of New Zealand) to develop a stronger connection between Ngāi Tahu and *D. antipodensis*	Mātauranga Māori available to inform future management and conservation actions	Ongoing	New Zealand	An annual internship programme is funded by the New Zealand Government. Additional funds will be required on a case by case basis
4. Breeding site management				
4.1 Eradication of mammalian pests at Auckland Island	Safe and protected breeding sites with no human-induced threats	Programme under development, with 10-year indicative timeline	New Zealand	The New Zealand Government committed a further NZD3.65 million in 2024 to complete foundational work to ready the project for initiation, but additional

				funds will be required for completion of the programme
4.2 Continued protection and biosecurity control to main breeding site islands	Safe and protected breeding sites with no human-induced threats	Ongoing	New Zealand	Funds are committed by the New Zealand Government for ongoing site management