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A Paper by the CCAMLR Secretariat

Report of the XXIII Commission: Resolution 22/XXIII

RESOLUTION 22/XXIII
International Actions to Reduce the Incidental Mortality
of Seabirds Arising from Fishing

The Commission,

Recollecting¹ that together with the potential impact of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing for toothfish within the Convention Area, the greatest current threat to species and populations of Southern Ocean seabirds breeding in the Convention Area is mortality in longline fisheries in waters outside the Convention Area,

Noting that the seabirds caught are almost entirely albatrosses and petrels and of species which are threatened with global extinction²,

Concerned at increasing evidence of incidental mortality of seabirds in trawl fisheries, especially in waters outside the Convention Area³,

Noting the substantial reduction⁴ of incidental mortality of seabirds in the Convention Area as a result of conservation measures implemented by the Commission,

Concerned that, despite such measures, many populations of albatross species breeding in the Convention Area continue to decline⁵,

Noting reports of substantial levels and rates of incidental mortality of seabirds breeding in the Convention Area in longline fisheries in waters outside the Convention Area⁶,

Recognising that fisheries in high-seas waters outside the Convention Area are regulated by regional fishery management organisations (RFMOs),

Recalling repeated attempts to communicate these concerns to RFMOs⁷,

1. Invites listed RFMOs (Appendix 1) to implement or develop, as appropriate, mechanisms to require the collection, reporting and dissemination of data on incidental mortality of seabirds, particularly:
 - (i) rates of incidental mortality of seabirds associated with each fishery, details of the seabird species involved, and estimates of total seabird mortality (at least at the scale of FAO area);
 - (ii) measures to minimise or avoid mortality of seabirds that are in use in each fishery and the extent to which any of these are voluntary or mandatory, together with an assessment of their effectiveness;
 - (iii) the nature of scientific observer programs, including observer coverage, associated with each fishery.
2. For areas where such mechanisms are currently unavailable or where systematic data reporting has not commenced, requests Flag States conducting longline fishing (or other fishing methods) outside the Convention Area, which incidentally take seabirds of species breeding in the Convention Area, to provide the CCAMLR Secretariat with summary data as specified in paragraph 1 above.

3. Urges Members that are also members of listed RFMOs to:
 - (i) request that the topic of seabird incidental mortality be included on the agenda of pertinent meetings of each RFMO and, where appropriate, to send relevant experts to these meetings;
 - (ii) identify those areas and circumstances within the listed RFMOs where incidental mortality of seabirds occurs;
 - (iii) identify those mitigation measures which would be most effective at reducing or eliminating such mortality and to require such measures to be implemented in the relevant fisheries.
4. Encourages Flag States involved with new and developing RFMOs to request that incidental mortality of seabirds (and other by-catch taxa as appropriate) is adequately addressed and mitigated. Appropriate initiatives might include:
 - (i) establishment or expansion of existing observer programs and adoption of appropriate data collection protocols on seabird incidental mortality;
 - (ii) establishment of by-catch working groups that will address incidental mortality issues and make recommendations for suitable, practicable, and effective mitigation measures, including evaluation of established and innovative technologies and techniques;
 - (iii) evaluations of fishery impacts on the affected seabird populations;
 - (iv) cooperate (e.g. on data exchange) with listed RFMOs.

¹ SC-CAMLR-XX, paragraph 4.73; SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, paragraph 6.273; CCAMLR-XX, paragraph 6.33

² SC-CAMLR-XXIII/BG/22; SC-CAMLR-XXII, paragraph 5.26; SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, paragraphs 6.138 to 6.145

³ SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, paragraphs 6.248 and 6.250

⁴ SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, Table 6.3; CCAMLR-XXIII, paragraph 5.2(i); SC-CAMLR-XXIII, paragraph 5.46(i)

⁵ CCAMLR-XXIII, paragraph 5.1; SC-CAMLR-XXIII, paragraphs 5.46(viii) and 5.20(v); SC-CAMLR-XXIII, Annex 5, paragraphs 7.151 and 7.152

⁶ SC-CAMLR-XXIII, paragraph 5.19; SC-CAMLR-XXIII, Annex 5, paragraphs 7.124 to 7.128; SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, paragraph 6.130

⁷ CCAMLR-XXI, paragraph 6.16; SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.30 to 5.34; CCAMLR-XXII, paragraph 5.17; SC-CAMLR-XXII, paragraph 5.28; SC-CAMLR-XXII, Annex 5, paragraphs 6.177 and 6.178; SC-CAMLR-XXIII, paragraphs 5.21(iii) and 5.48(iv); SC-CAMLR-XXIII, Annex 5, paragraphs 7.165 and 7.166

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations identified for contacts with respect to tasks on the mitigation of by-catch of Southern Ocean seabirds

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (I-ATTC)

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO)

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)

Agreement on the Organization of the Permanent Commission on the Exploitation and Conservation of the Marine Resources of the South Pacific, 1952 (CPPS)

South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) - when it is established

The Fourth Inter-Governmental Consultation on the establishment of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission was held in Mahe, Seychelles, from 11 to 16 July 2004.

Commission for Highly Migratory Species in the Central and Western Pacific (WCPFC)

The Convention, establishing WCPFC has entered in force On 19 June 2004. The Commission does not yet exist as functioning body.

Western Indian Ocean Tuna Organization Convention (WIOTO)

The Organization does not have regulatory power.