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|  <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p> | <p>Tenth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group <i>Virtual meeting, 17 - 19 August 2021 (UTC+10)</i></p> <p>Enhancing implementation of best practice mitigation</p> <p><i>Secretariat, Igor Debski</i></p> |
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SUMMARY

The SBWG has for several years given high priority to understanding the challenges to and drivers of the uptake of best practice bycatch mitigation or even the implementation of required mitigation measures. A number of recommendations were made by SBWG9, with endorsed decisions by AC11 including to develop a communication strategy and communication products and engage with certification schemes. Considerable progress has been made by ACAP in implementing these decisions, including a communications review and strategy development, focused statements at RFMO and other meetings, promotion of World Albatross Day and engagement with seafood market schemes. Other aspects remain to be fully explored by ACAP, including the use of socio-economic approaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review progress in developing communications channels and resources and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee for further developing key messages, identifying target audiences, effective dissemination mechanisms, and identifying any additional products that ACAP can provide to enhance the implementation of best practice mitigation.
2. Endorse ongoing commemoration of World Albatross Day as a useful communications activity to elevate and maintain awareness around the conservation of albatross as a flagship group of species.
3. Review progress in engagement with certification schemes and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee on the focus for future engagement.
4. Consider any other approaches that should be investigated by SBWG intersessionally, and/or undertaken by ACAP, to enhance the implementation of best practice mitigation.

Mejorar la implementación de las mejores prácticas de mitigación

RESUMEN

Durante varios años, el GdTCS ha dado alta prioridad a comprender los desafíos y los impulsores de la adopción de las mejores prácticas de mitigación de la captura secundaria o incluso la implementación de las medidas de mitigación requeridas. En la Reunión GdTCS9, se formularon varias recomendaciones, y en la Reunión CA11 se aprobaron decisiones, entre ellas, la elaboración de una estrategia y productos de comunicación y la participación en los planes de certificación. El ACAP ha realizado considerables avances en la aplicación de estas decisiones, incluidos una revisión de las comunicaciones y un desarrollo de estrategias, declaraciones enfocadas en las OROP y otras reuniones, la promoción del Día Mundial del Albatros y la interacción con los esquemas del mercado de productos marinos. El ACAP aún no ha explorado plenamente otros aspectos, incluido el uso de enfoques socioeconómicos.

RECOMENDACIONES

1. Examinar los avances logrados en el desarrollo de canales y recursos de comunicaciones y formular recomendaciones al Comité Asesor para que siga desarrollando mensajes clave, identificando públicos objetivo, mecanismos eficaces de difusión y productos adicionales que el ACAP pueda proporcionar para mejorar la aplicación de las mejores prácticas de mitigación.
2. Refrendar la conmemoración en curso del Día Mundial del Albatros como una actividad útil de comunicación para aumentar y mantener la concientización en torno a la conservación del albatros como un grupo insignia de especies.
3. Examinar los avances logrados en la interacción con los esquemas de certificación y formular recomendaciones al Comité Asesor sobre los puntos centrales de las interacciones futuras.
4. Considerar cualquier otro enfoque que deban investigar el GdTCS o el ACAP durante el período entre sesiones para mejorar la aplicación de las mejores prácticas de mitigación.

Amélioration de la mise en œuvre des bonnes pratiques d'atténuation

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis plusieurs années, le GTCA accorde une haute priorité à la compréhension des difficultés contraignantes et des facteurs favorables à l'adhésion aux bonnes pratiques d'atténuation de la capture accessoire ainsi qu'à la mise en œuvre des mesures d'atténuation obligatoires. Plusieurs recommandations ont été formulées par la neuvième réunion du GTCA, avec l'approbation de décisions par le onzième Comité consultatif, notamment de mettre en place une stratégie et des produits de communication et de collaborer avec les mécanismes de certification. Des avancées considérables ont été réalisées par l'ACAP dans la mise en œuvre de ces décisions, incluant la révision des communications et l'élaboration d'une stratégie, des interventions ciblées lors des réunions des ORGP et autres, la promotion de la Journée mondiale de l'albatros et la collaboration avec les mécanismes de certification du marché des produits de la mer. Certains aspects doivent encore être pleinement examinés par l'ACAP, notamment la mise en place d'approches socio-économiques.

RECOMMANDATIONS

1. Suivre les avancées du développement des canaux et des ressources de communication et adresser au Comité consultatif des recommandations de nouveaux messages clés, en indiquant le public ciblé, de mécanismes de diffusion efficaces et de produits complémentaires que l'ACAP peut fournir pour améliorer la mise en œuvre des bonnes pratiques d'atténuation.
2. Approuver la célébration de la Journée mondiale de l'albatros comme une activité de communication utile pour susciter et renforcer la sensibilisation à la conservation des albatros en tant que groupe d'espèces spécial.
3. Suivre les avancées de la collaboration avec les mécanismes de certification et adresser des recommandations au Comité consultatif concernant les priorités pour les collaborations futures.
4. Examiner toute autre approche à étudier par le GTCA pendant la période intersessions et/ou à engager par l'ACAP, afin d'améliorer la mise en œuvre des bonnes pratiques d'atténuation.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. SBWG9 discussion

The SBWG has for several years given high priority to understanding the challenges to and drivers of the uptake of best practice bycatch mitigation or even the implementation of required mitigation measures. SBWG9 discussed this issue under the heading “Drivers and Barriers in the Uptake of Best Practice Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Measures”, but recommended the use of a more neutral/positive expression in the future. This paper accordingly uses the phrase “enhancing implementation”.

SBWG9 made a number of recommendations for enhancing implementation (see [AC11 Doc 10](#), p.22-23).

1.2. AC11 decisions

Following discussion of the recommendations from SBWG9, AC11 (see AC11 Report, paragraph 11.1):

- (i) Endorsed the development of a communication strategy and communications products that highlight:
 - a. The ongoing conservation crisis facing albatrosses and petrels,
 - b. Best practice fishing methods (perhaps by providing a toolbox of best practices),
 - c. Success stories,
 - d. Overcoming impediments to implementation,
 - e. Other information resources available from ACAP,
 - f. Modelling on the extinction threat faced by ACAP species.
- (ii) Endorsed the investigation of opportunities to broaden the range of expertise available to ACAP to contribute to future considerations in this area (including media and socio-economic experts).
- (iii) Endorsed the recommendation to engage with certification schemes by contributing to the review of fisheries certification standards relevant to bycatch to encourage these to be fully informed by ACAP advice.
- (iv) Requested that the ACAP Secretariat ask fishery certification schemes to notify it of new applications and to then pass on notifications as information to relevant ACAP Parties and/or SBWG members.

In addition, AC11 supported the establishment of a World Albatross Day (see AC11 report, paragraphs 18.2 to 18.4), as it aligned well with the aim of giving the Agreement greater visibility.

2. ACTIVITIES IN RESPONSE TO AC11 DECISIONS

Over the period June 2019-June 2021, the Secretariat, together with Working Group members and AC members as relevant, has undertaken the following activities in response to the AC11 decisions:

2.1. Communications review and strategy

To help address AC11's decisions in relation to developing a communications strategy and products, the New Zealand Department of Conservation provided in-kind support to the ACAP Secretariat to prepare a paper reviewing current communication platforms (website and Facebook page), and proposing a future direction on how to better convey our message. The paper also identifies a range of audiences and highlights key messages. Some recommendations for actions could be set in train speedily by the Secretariat, with minimal costs. At the same time, recommendations for longer term and potentially higher cost activities are also considered, including allocating funds for a Communications Advisor once the existing voluntary support from John Cooper is no longer available following MoP7. The paper, presented as **AC12 Inf 03**, was initially considered by AC Members during the intersessional decision-making process in October 2020, with the understanding that the communications strategy and any associated resourcing needs would be further discussed at AC12 and MoP7.

2.2. Focused statements at RFMO and other meetings

ACAP representatives at RFMO and other meetings (for example CMS and FAO) have taken the opportunity, in written and verbal statements, to highlight the ongoing conservation crisis facing albatrosses and petrels and to outline ACAP's priorities for addressing this crisis. Please see **SBWG10 Doc 07** (RFMO engagement strategy), Annex 1, for detail of our activities in RFMO meetings.

2.3. World Albatross Day

At AC11 an intersessional group was formed to explore the celebration of the first ever World Albatross Day on 19 June 2020 (WAD2020). The Secretariat's Information Officer worked with members of the Secretariat and of the group to raise awareness of the day over a 12-month period. The Secretariat has received very positive feedback about the inaugural World Albatross Day, which, despite the lack of a dedicated budget and the restrictions caused by COVID-19, successfully raised awareness of albatrosses and ACAP's work through a number of activities, including:

1. Production of a WAD2020 logo and an albatross poster by award-winning artist, Owen Davey, both pro bono.
2. A collaboration with ABUN (Artists & Biologists Unite for Nature) leading to several hundred high-quality paintings, line drawings and photographs of all 22 albatross species being made available for ACAP's use at no cost. The artwork has been used to design posters that are freely downloadable from the ACAP website, and to produce a video with original music.

3. A media release about World Albatross Day in four languages (English, Spanish, French and Portuguese); several interviews and presentations by the ACAP Executive Secretary.
4. Several competitions.
5. Statements of support for WAD2020 from a large number of individuals and organisations around the world.

For World Albatross Day 2021, the theme of “Ensuring Albatross Friendly Fisheries” has been chosen, aimed at communicating the risks to albatrosses from fisheries operations and also highlighting the solutions that are available. This paper was drafted prior to World Albatross Day 2021.

2.4. Engagement with seafood market schemes

As requested by AC11, the Secretariat contracted a consultant, Stephanie Good, to provide advice to ACAP on engaging with seafood market certification schemes to advance our bycatch mitigation objectives. The consultant engaged with interested ACAP Working Group members and has produced a guide for engagement with certification schemes. This was shared with the Seabird Bycatch Working Group and the Advisory Committee in 2020, and can be found as **AC12 Inf 02**. Drawing on the advice in the guide, ACAP experts have already participated in the first round of consultations organised by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), in 2020, as it updates its standards. This includes standards related to ETP (Endangered, Threatened and Protected) species designation and requirements, as well as evidence requirements. The SBWG Convenor provided written feedback following workshops, drawing on material from **AC12 Inf 02**, and with contributions from other SBWG intersessional group participants. Further consultations are planned in mid-2021. This engagement has been important in helping shape the adequacy of future standards in addressing the bycatch of ACAP-listed species in any MSC certified fisheries and should continue as opportunities arise.

3. OTHER APPROACHES AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Whilst the Secretariat has made considerable progress in delivering on recommendations from AC11, as described in Section 2, there remain further avenues to be explored. These include the socio-economic elements touched on in recommendations from SBWG9 and AC11.

Information papers submitted to SBWG10 include some case studies on work to use social science and economic methods to better understand how to enhance mitigation uptake amongst fishers. These and other initiatives may provide insight to shaping the future work of SBWG and the Secretariat.

Both the progress made to date, and opportunities for new direction, should be carefully considered in making recommendations for further work in this area, noting the constraints of limited capacity and ongoing challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.