



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Third Meeting of Seabird Bycatch Working Group

Mar del Plata, Argentina, 8 – 9 April 2010

**ACAP Observer Report
IATTC Technical Meeting on Seabirds
Del Mar, California, 11 May 2009
&
80th Meeting IATTC
La Jolla, California, 8-12 June 2009**

Advisory Committee Chair

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ACAP Observer Report – IATTC Technical Meeting on Seabirds

Advisory Committee Chair

Meeting Title

IATTC Technical Meeting on Seabirds

Location & date

Del Mar, California, 11 May 2009

Website

www.iattc.org

Observer Name and Affiliation

Marco Favero, ACAP Advisory Committee

Capacity of Attendance

Observer

Relevant Papers Tabled

[Also available in <http://www.iattc.org/Meetings2009/IATTCandAIDCPMeetingMay09ENG.htm>]

- IATTC - Status of seabirds in the EPO
- ACAP Albatross and petrel distribution in the EPO - SARM-9-11b
- ACAP - Conservation status and at-sea threats for the Waved Albatross
- ACAP - Mitigation measures for pelagic longline gear
- FAO - Review of measures taken by Intergovernmental organizations to address sea turtle and seabird interactions in marine capture fisheries
- FAO - Expert consultation on best practice technical guidelines for IPOA/NPOA–seabirds
- FAO - Review and assessment of mitigation measures to reduce incidental catch of seabirds in longline, trawl and gillnet fisheries
- BirdLife International - Estimating seabird bycatch rates in longline fisheries
- BirdLife International - Protocol for reporting seabird bycatch in longline fisheries
- BirdLife International - Albatross and petrel distribution: addendum
- Optimizing tori line designs for pelagic tuna longline fisheries: South Africa

Summary

This meeting was organised by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission in anticipation to the Annual Commission Meeting in order to discuss technical aspects of seabird mortality associated to fisheries and its mitigation. A number of issues dealing with the status of seabird populations, at-sea distribution, interaction with fisheries, mortality and mitigation, and observer programmes were addressed during this meeting. The outcomes of this meeting were the basis for staff recommendations to the IATTC during its 80th Meeting.

Outcomes

The meeting was Chaired by the Director of the Commission, Mr. Guillermo Compean, and attended by IATTC Secretariat staff, representatives from Japan, Mexico, the United States, BirdLife International and ACAP. The most relevant outcomes and points raised during the meeting were the following:

- (1) All of the Waved albatross distribution is contained within the Convention area, and that there is an important overlapping with the distribution of the Black-footed albatross (and Laysan albatross to less extent).
- (2) BirdLife International estimated seabird bycatch by industrial longliners fishing in the EPO to be about 4,000 per year. However, observer coverage is low and non-random, species identification is difficult, and there are portions of the fishery that are not observed.
- (3) Mitigation measures were reviewed and described along with FAO best practice technical guidelines. The “two column approach” was introduced and all participants agreed that these measures are best used in combinations rather than a single method.
- (4) It was also discussed the “shrink and defend” approach of defending an area defined in width by the distance between the port and starboard tori lines and in length by the distance from the stern of the boat to the point at which the bait sinks below 10 m. In this case, the two column table includes in column A those measures to reduce in size the box (*e.g.* weighted branch lines, side setting), and in column B those to protect the area where birds can access baits (*e.g.* tori line, offal management, night setting). Vessels shall use at least one method from each column.
- (5) Investigations on the sinking rate of the bait and fishing depths were recommended for artisanal longliners in Ecuador and Peru.
- (6) It was agreed that observer programmes are key to monitoring seabird bycatch and the effectiveness of mitigation measures. A minimum coverage of 20% over a two-year period, with 70-80% of hooks observed on each observed trip was recommended. However, this coverage was questioned, given the limited resources, and 5% with incremental increases over time was considered a more realistic picture.
- (7) For the longline fisheries that are under IATTC, national observer programs need to be encouraged to collect the data required to estimate seabird bycatch and monitor the effectiveness of mitigation measures.
- (8) The need for standardized data collection protocols and observer data from industrial longline vessels was recognised.
- (9) The Chair stated that information provided during the meeting defined a good basis for the IATTC to adopt mitigation measures. He also stressed that IATTC will need to find an approach that will work for multiple and heterogeneous fisheries operating in the EPO.

Recommended Actions for ACAP

Recommendations for the Agreement are specified in the second part of this report. However, it results worth to highlight the importance of having a wider participation of Parties in further Technical Meeting. Having a wider participation - and not mostly from Parties and Organizations already providing technical advice – will allow not only to address and discuss technical aspects but also (and not less importantly) to increase the engagement of Parties in these matters.

ACAP Observer Report - 80th Meeting IATTC

Advisory Committee Chair

Meeting Title

80th Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

Location & date

La Jolla, California, 8-12 June 2009

Website

www.iattc.org

Observer Name and Affiliation

Marco Favero, ACAP Advisory Committee

Capacity of Attendance

Observer

Relevant Paper Tabled/Proposed

IATTC-80-08 Status of seabirds in EPO

IATTC-80-08a Seabird meeting report

List of Documents relevant to ACAP (and forwarded to the Secretariat)

See documents listed in the first part of the report on the Technical seabird Meeting

Outcomes

A proposal for a conservation measure (*Resolution to mitigate the impact on seabirds of fishing for species covered by the Commission*) was originally drafted by Spain and the United States and circulated among different stakeholders. In the margins of the meeting, a drafting group with representations from the European Commission, France, Mexico, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, USA, as well as ACAP, BLI, HSI, and the IATTC Secretariat met with the purpose of discussing the contents of the original draft. Ecuador and Peru also participated in earlier and further discussions. The agreed text was not officially adopted. Although there was an apparent agreement on the document, its adoption was blocked by Japan.

In spite of the final result, there were interesting discussions and share of thoughts in the margins of the meeting. The last version of the resolution will likely be the basement of the text (if not the actual text) that will be introduced for adoption during 2010. In spite that the agreed text does not fully comply with the mitigation methods recommended by ACAP, the whole process to reach consensus was very constructive and allowed us to strength bonds with a number of stakeholders.

A number of matters need to be analysed from the current version of the proposed resolution (already sent to the ACAP Secretariat), such as (1) the application area, (2) the measures contained in columns A and B of the table, (3) the possibility of exceptions for artisanal fisheries and the concept of vessels with outboard engines to define that fishery, and (4) the need for the adoption of technical specifications, among others.

In the margins of the meeting a draft text of a Memorandum of Understanding between IATTC and the ACAP Secretariat was presented to the IATTC Secretariat. The text was not analysed during the week the Commission Meeting was held but it is expected to have a revised draft within the first half of 2010.

Recommended Actions for ACAP

- To participate actively in the discussions for the refinement (if opportunity arises) of the proposal to mitigate seabird bycatch in IATTC waters and also for the development of technical specifications.
- To improve the engagement with the four Parties in common with IATTC (Ecuador, France, Peru and Spain) to assure the delegations attending IATTC meetings are properly brief on ACAP matters.
- To keep in mind recommendations and points raised during the technical meeting at the time of discussing the actions and tasks in the work programme
- Follow up the revision of the draft MoU introduced to the IATTC Secretariat in order to get the next Commission meeting with an agreed text.