



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Fourth Meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group

Guayaquil, Ecuador, 22 – 24 August 2011

ACAP Observer Report for ICCAT meetings in 2010 and 2011

**Anton Wolfaardt
United Kingdom**

This paper is presented for consideration by ACAP and may contain unpublished data, analyses, and/or conclusions subject to change. Data in this paper shall not be cited or used for purposes other than the work of the ACAP Secretariat, ACAP Advisory Committee or their subsidiary Working Groups without the permission of the original data holders.

ACAP Observer Report for ICCAT meetings in 2010 and 2011

Meeting Title: Inter-sessional meetings of the Sub-committee on Ecosystems (SC-ECO)

Meeting Organisation: ICCAT Secretariat

Date and Location: 31 May – 4 June 2010, Madrid, Spain; 9-13 May 2011; Miami, USA

Website Address: <http://www.iccat.int/en/>

Your Name/Affiliation: Anton Wolfaardt, United Kingdom Overseas Territories (UKOT)

Capacity of Attendance: Member of UKOT delegation, and ACAP observer

Relevant Paper(s) Tabled:

2010 Meeting

- SCRS/2010/046 Distribution of ecological related species in the Atlantic Ocean: Sighting by Taiwanese Tuna Longline Fishing Vessels from 2004 to 2008. Hsiang-Wen HUANG and Yu-Wen HUANG
- SCRS/2010/047 Report of the by-catch coordinator. Cotter, J.
- SCRS/2010/050 Albatross and petrel distribution in the Atlantic Ocean and overlap with ICCAT longline fishing effort. ACAP
- SCRS/2010/051 Review of seabird bycatch mitigation measures for pelagic longline fisheries ACAP
- SCRS/2010/052 Summary advice for reducing the impact of pelagic longline gear on seabirds. ACAP
- SCRS/2010/053 Albatross Task Force. Developments in Experimental Mitigation Research. ATF Progress Report Extracts January 2010. BirdLife International.
- SCRS/2010/054 Establishing an ICCAT Regional Observer Programme: Minimum Data Standards for Reporting Seabird Bycatch. Birdlife Int.
- SCRS/2010/057 A comparison of the effectiveness of light tori lines and an emerging pelagic tori line design in reducing seabird bycatch in the Brazilian pelagic longline fleet . Marques, C., Peppes, F., Sales, L. and Neves, T.
- SCRS/2010/063 La captura objetivo e incidental en la pesquería de palangre: bases para una interpretación integral. Domingo A., Abreu M., Forselledo R., Jiménez S., Miller P. and Pons. M.
- SCRS/2010/065 Effectiveness of tori-line use to reduce seabird bycatch in the Uruguayan pelagic longline fleet. Jiménez, S. Abreu, M. and Domingo, A.

2011 Meeting

- SCRS/2011/053 Cory's shearwater by-catch in the Mediterranean Spanish commercial longline fisheries: Implications for conservation. Báez J.C., García-Barcelona S., Mendoza M., Ortiz de Urbina J. M., Real R. and Macías D.
- SCRS/2011/056 Pelagic longline seabird by-catch mitigation measures: update of current research. Anderson O.R.J.
- SCRS/2011/061 Bycatch susceptibility in pelagic longline fisheries: Are albatrosses affected by the diving behavior of medium-sized petrels? S. Jiménez, M. Abreu, A. Brazeiro, A. Domingo

- SCRS/2011/062 Japanese activity for development of seabird by-catch mitigation measure and its scientific evaluation in pelagic longline fishery. Ochi D.
- SCRS/2011/064 Preliminary Report of 2010 Weighted Branchline Trials in the Tuna Joint Venture Fishery in the South African EEZ. Melvin E., Guy T. and Sato N.
- SCRS/2011/065 Distribution of seabird by-catch using data collected by Japanese observers in 1997-2009 in the ICCAT area. Inoue Y., Yokawa K., Minami H., Ochi D., Sato N. and Katsumata N.
- SCRS/2011/066 The effect of leaded swivel position and light toriline on bird attack rates in Brazilian pelagic longline. Gianuca D., Peppes F., César J.H. and Neves T.

Author(s) and/or Presenter if Different:

Authors listed above.

Summary of Content and Outcomes for ACAP:

Since ACAP's last Advisory Committee there have been two inter-sessional meetings of ICCAT's Sub-committee on Ecosystems, a meeting of the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics, SCRS (in September-October 2010), and a meeting of the ICCAT Commission (in November 2010). This paper will not consider each of the above papers in detail, but rather presents a brief overview of the relevant meetings, especially the outcomes and recommended actions for ACAP.

Over the last few years there has been an increased focus on seabird bycatch issues by ICCAT, especially after the completion of the ICCAT Seabird Assessment, which was presented at the 2009 inter-sessional meeting of ICCAT's Sub-committee on Ecosystems.

ACAP's best practice advice, was formally presented to the ICCAT SC-ECO at its meeting in June 2010. The key finding of this updated review was the critical importance of line weighting to ensure a rapid sink rate of baited hooks to a depth of 10m within the maximum effective distance of the protection afforded by the tori lines. Other updates relevant to discussions of seabird bycatch mitigation measures at ICCAT include the research by Robertson et al (2010) on the efficacy of line-shooters as mitigation measures, which showed that a mainline set into propeller turbulence using a line shooter without tension, as is normally the case with deep setting, significantly slows the sink rates of hooks. For this reason, ACAP's advice was that the use of a line shooter to set gear deep should not be considered an effective mitigation measure.

A number of other seabird papers were also presented, including an updated analysis of the degree of overlap between the distribution of seabirds and ICCAT fishing effort, and results from ongoing research into the efficacy of seabird bycatch mitigation measures in pelagic longline fisheries in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and South Africa.

The ACAP review and best-practice advice and the results of the other research papers presented at the SC-ECO meeting in June 2010 were all noted and incorporated into the 2010 SC-ECO report. In this report, the SC-ECO reaffirmed the recommendations it made in 2009 on the need to strengthen Recommendation 07- 07 (ICCAT's seabird bycatch mitigation measure). The SC-ECO report (2010) further recognised that a combination of mitigation measures are required to be used to protect sufficiently seabirds from baited hooks, and that ensuring a rapid hook sink rate was a critical element in achieving this

objective. It was reported at the SC-ECO meeting, and noted in the SC-ECO report, that research on line weighting is still in progress.

The ACAP position for the 2010 ICCAT meetings was to lay markers for the submission of a stronger seabird bycatch mitigation measure, but to delay the submission of such a proposal until the following year (2011) or later. The reason for this delay was to ensure that the proposal is informed and supported by the results of current and ongoing research into optimum line weighting configurations as well as other mitigation measures and, importantly, combinations of measures, for pelagic longline fisheries. Consequently, no proposal was submitted at the ICCAT Commission meeting.

A Recommendation (binding measure in ICCAT) to establish minimum standards for vessel scientific observer programmes was adopted at the 2010 Commission meeting (Rec 10-10). The Recommendation sets minimum standards for national scientific observer programmes, which are different from the ICCAT regional programmes. This includes a requirement to ensure a minimum of 5% observer coverage of fishing effort for all longline (and purse-seine) vessels. The Recommendation provides guidance for collecting and recording data and training of observers, and requires CPCs to provide these data as well as information on the CPC's domestic observer programme to the SCRS. The SCRS should review the observer data and the observer programme structure in order to provide recommendations at the 2012 meeting.

Further research results were presented at the 2011 inter-sessional meeting of ICCAT's SC-ECO. The key findings reinforced previous recommendations from the SC-ECO that the combined use of tori lines, line weighting and night setting would be the most effective way to reduce seabird by-catch in pelagic longline fisheries. It was also noted by the SC-ECO that a variety of tori line designs and line weighting regimes were shown to be effective at reducing seabird by-catch when used in combination. Based on the research presented, the SC-ECO recommended in the meeting report that seabird bycatch mitigation measures ensure the sinking of baited hooks below the diving depth of seabirds within the aerial extent and protection of the tori lines.

Other relevant recommendations in the SC-ECO report of 2001 include:

- The SC-ECO re-iterated the need for all CPCs to collect and provide by-catch data to the SCRS, and highlighted the need for further analysis combining species distribution and bycatch data to fill existing data gaps, and to monitor levels and impacts of by-catch.
- The SC-ECO recommended that guidelines for the presentation and analysis of bycatch statistics be developed in conjunction with the ICCAT Working Group of Stock Assessment Method (WGSAM) and that these guidelines be made available as part of the ICCAT Manual. Furthermore, it was recommended that SC-ECO should work with WGSAM to evaluate how these data can be used as part of a risk management advice framework.
- A recommendation to restructure the SC-ECO to include two section rapporteurs, one responsible for bycatch assessment and mitigation, and the second for dealing with Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM).
- The SC-ECO also noted that the By-catch Coordinator position remains unfilled and strongly recommended that this position be recruited promptly. This would certainly

provide some impetus in developing further the bycatch data collection and reporting requirements.

- Finally, the SC-ECO recommended that the Secretariat attempt to collate user manuals or protocols describing data collection from CPC observer programs. Also, an attempt should be made to identify historical changes to the data collection protocols that might complicate data analyses and interpretation.

Outlook for Future ACAP Involvement:

There is great value in ACAP continuing to be involved in efforts to strengthen the current seabird bycatch mitigation measure (Rec 07-07) and to encourage and support the development of an effective observer programme (Rec 10-10). At its 2011 meeting, the SC-ECO indicated that it would be useful for ACAP's updated review and advice on seabird bycatch mitigation in pelagic longline fisheries to be presented at the SCRS meeting in September-October 2011. This would serve to strengthen the SCRS support for an updated proposal to be submitted and considered at the ICCAT Commission meeting in November 2011. Key issues which need to be considered are the specifications of the best practice mitigation measures (especially the line weighting regime) and the areas of application.

Recommended Actions for ACAP:

Present updated ACAP review and advice on seabird bycatch mitigation in pelagic longline fisheries (from SBWG-4 and AC6) at the ICCAT SCRS meeting in September-October 2011. Work with ACAP Parties and others (e.g. Japan) to prepare and support a proposal to strengthen the current seabird bycatch mitigation Recommendation (07-07) at the ICCAT Commission meeting in November 2011.

Have relevant papers been forwarded to Secretariat:

Yes