



SUMMARY

This report to the 44th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee provides a summary of action taken by the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) since COP11. Collectively, ACAP Parties, the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups have made good progress in furthering the Agreement's objective of achieving and maintaining a favourable conservation status for species listed under Annex 1 of the Agreement. A wide range of advice has been developed on actions that can be taken to address threats to albatrosses and petrels, both at sea and on land and action taken to assist with the implementation of this advice by relevant authorities.

A substantial proportion of this information is readily accessible through the ACAP website. For land-based threats, it includes conservation guidelines for: the eradication of predators, biosecurity and quarantine at ACAP species' breeding sites, translocation guidelines; and a review of diseases and pathogens known to impact on ACAP species. For at sea threats, best practice advice for bycatch mitigation measures in longline and trawl fisheries has been developed and a seabird bycatch identification guide published.

Now that effective mitigation measures have been identified for the key fishing activities known to result in the incidental catch of ACAP species, the challenge ahead is to have these mitigation measures implemented in fisheries where seabird bycatch is occurring. Another key challenge is to obtain the fisheries data required to improve our understanding and management of seabird bycatch. In this context ACAP has yet to develop an appropriate methodology for the use of this data.

1.2 Election and appointment of Officers

At the 8th Meeting of the Advisory Committee, held in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 15-19 September 2014, all official committee appointments were reviewed and elections held for these positions. Dr Marco Favero (Argentina) was re-elected as Chair, and Mark Tasker (United Kingdom) was re-elected as Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee. Dr Anton Wolfaardt (UK) was elected as a Convenor, and Dr Igor Debski (New Zealand) and Tatiana Neves (Brazil)

were elected as Vice-Convenors of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group. Dr Richard Phillips (UK) and Dr Rosemary Gales (Australia) were elected as Co-Convenors of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group. Dr Henri Weimerskirch (France) and Dr Flavio Quintana (Argentina) were elected as Vice-Convenors of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group. Dr Mike Double (Australia) was re-elected as Convenor of the Taxonomy Working Group.

At the 5th Session of ACAP's Meeting of the Parties (MoP5), held in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain from 4-8 May 2015, Parties agreed to the appointment of Dr Marco Favero as the Agreement's next Executive Secretary. Dr Favero replaces Mr Warren Papworth and will take up this position on 1 February 2016.

2. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

2.2.1 Provision of scientific, technical and other advice

A summary of progress made by the Advisory Committee against the Work Programme for 2013-15 (MoP4 Resolution 4.4) is provided in [MoP5 Doc 09](#). A summary of progress made by the Agreement's Secretariat against its Work Programme for 2013-15 is provided in [MoP5 Doc 08](#).

Key achievements are summarised below:

- There has been further development of the ACAP [database](#) to facilitate the work of the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups. The database contains demographic and breeding site data compiled for each species listed on Annex 1 of ACAP, as well as summary information on fisheries managed by each Party. It also provides a platform for national reporting on the implementation of the Agreement.
- A review of current population trends of ACAP species has been completed.
- Identification of key gaps in tracking data have been identified.
- Use and further refinement of the prioritisation framework has been undertaken to guide the work of the Agreement (refer [MoP5 Doc 15](#)).
- Agreement has been reached on the identification of preliminary performance indicators for seabird bycatch and on indicators for land-based threats, and progress made in the development of performance indicators related to capacity building (see [MoP5 Doc 20](#)).
- There has been an ongoing review and update of the ACAP [species assessments](#).
- Effective mitigation measures have now been identified, described and promoted to relevant fisheries managers for those fishing activities known to cause significant incidental mortality to species listed under Annex 1 of the Agreement.
- There has been an ongoing review of [bycatch mitigation best practice](#) advice for pelagic and demersal longline, and trawl fisheries.
- Some progress has been made in addressing bycatch, and in the development of best practice advice for gillnets (and other net fisheries), artisanal/ small-scale and intentional take.
- The ACAP - BirdLife International [mitigation fact sheets, which are](#) aimed at fisheries managers to assist in reducing bycatch in longline and trawl fisheries, have been reviewed. The fact sheets are available on the ACAP website in a number of relevant languages.

- Significant progress has been achieved with the adoption of seabird conservation measures by relevant RFMOs, based on ACAP's best practice advice.
- Development of the [de-hooking guide](#) and identification guide for dead seabirds has been completed.
- The refinement of biosecurity, quarantine and eradication [guidelines](#) for ACAP seabird breeding sites has continued.
- An update of a review of diseases and pathogens in albatrosses and petrels has been conducted in collaboration with One Health Institute, School of Veterinary Medicine, UC Davis.
- The development of translocation guidelines for surface and burrow nesting species has been completed.

Other action taken to further improve the operation of the Agreement has included:

- Development of a draft sponsorship policy to provide guidance on the financial support of delegates and experts to attend meetings of the Agreement (see [MoP5 Doc 27](#)).
- Development of the triennial report on the implementation of the Agreement (see [MoP5 Doc 11](#)).
- Drafting of criteria for listing and de-listing species to Annex 1 of the Agreement (see [MoP5 Doc 21](#)).
- Implementation of the Agreement's Grant Scheme and Agreement's Secondment Programme (see section 2.2.6).
- Implementation of the Agreement's capacity building strategy according with objectives, criteria and principles defined in [MoP4 Doc 18](#) and [MoP4 Final Report](#).

2.2.2 Progress with standard reference text on taxonomy of species covered by the Agreement

There has been no change in the taxonomy of species covered by the Agreement since the last report. The Taxonomy Working Group has been tasked to consider the need to harmonise ACAP's taxonomy with that followed by other relevant organisations.

2.2.3 Listing of new species

MoP5 agreed to the listing of the Pink-footed Shearwater '*Ardenna creatopus*, syn. *Puffinus creatopus*' under Annex 1 of the Agreement. There are now 31 species of albatrosses and petrels listed under ACAP.

2.2.4 Development of memoranda of understanding with other international organisations

A memorandum of understanding with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) has been renewed for a further five-year period. MoP5 authorised the Secretariat to renew and/or negotiate memoranda of understanding with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Organizacion Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero (OLDEPESCA), the Inter-

American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC), the One Health Institute, and the Secretariat of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).

2.2.5 Criteria for listing and de-listing species in Annex 1

MoP5 adopted criteria for the listing of new species under Annex 1 of the Agreement, as well as a process for submitting nominations. It also endorsed further work on the identification of criteria for de-listing species and for arrangements to review listed species when there are taxonomic changes.

2.2.6 Conflict of Interest and Bias

MoP5 reviewed a proposed procedure to manage conflicts of interest and bias (refer [MoP5 Doc 25](#)). It was decided that this procedure would be refined further at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee in order that a policy on this issue could be considered for adoption at MoP6.

2.2.7 Lethal Experimentation

MoP5 reviewed and adopted principles to guide the assessment, by the Advisory Committee's Grants Subcommittee, of project applications where lethal experimentation is proposed (refer [MoP5 Doc 26 Rev1](#)).