



Agreement on the Conservation
of Albatrosses and Petrels

ACAP Report to the 45th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee

Marco Favero
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SUMMARY

This report to the 45th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee provides a summary of action taken by the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) during the last year. 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. 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. Another key challenge is to obtain the fisheries data required to improve our understanding and management of seabird bycatch.

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ACAP Secretariat, Advisory Committee Chair

1. Election and appointment of Officers

At the [9th Meeting of the Advisory Committee](#) (AC9), held in La Serena, Chile from 9 to 13 May 2016, all official committee appointments were reviewed and elections held for these positions. Mr Nathan Walker (New Zealand) was elected as Chair, and Ms Tatiana Neves (Brazil) elected as Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee. Dr Anton Wolfaardt (UK) was re-elected as Convenor, and Dr Igor Debski (New Zealand) and Dr Sebastian Jimenez (Uruguay) were elected as Vice-Convenors of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group. Dr Richard Phillips (UK) and Dr Rosemary Gales (Australia) were re-elected as Co-Convenors of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group. Ms Patricia Serafini (Brazil) and Dr Flavio Quintana (Argentina) were elected as Vice-Convenors of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group. Mr Mark Tasker (UK) was elected as Convenor of the Taxonomy Working Group, and Dr Mike Double (Australia) elected as Vice-Convenor of the Taxonomy Working Group.

2. Election and appointment of Executive Secretary

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 (Argentina) as the Agreement's next Executive Secretary. On February 1st 2016, Dr Favero took office and replaced Mr Warren Papworth.

3. Provision of scientific, technical and other advice

During AC9 the Advisory Committee updated tasks and actions against the Work Programme for 2016-18 (MoP5 Resolution 5.4). These updated work programmes can be found in Annexes 4 and 5 of [AC9 Final Report](#). Key achievements are summarised below:

- Further development of the ACAP [data portal](#) to facilitate the work of the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups.
- Review of current population trends of ACAP species.
- Identification of key gaps in tracking data, encouraging data-holders to submit their tracking data to the BirdLife International Seabird Tracking Database to enable multi-species analyses of overlap between ACAP species and fisheries.
- Identification of performance indicators for seabird bycatch and land-based threats.
- Ongoing review and update of the ACAP [species assessments](#)

- Ongoing update and review of [bycatch mitigation best practice](#) advice for pelagic and demersal longline, and trawl fisheries.
- Progress in addressing bycatch, and in the development of best practice advice for gillnets, artisanal/ small-scale and other fisheries.
- 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 the three ACAP languages (English, French and Spanish) as well as Japanese, Korean, Mandarin and Portuguese.
- Progress has been achieved with the adoption and update of seabird conservation measures by relevant RFMOs, based on ACAP's best practice advice.
- The refinement of ACAP Conservation Guidelines including biosecurity, census, eradication, translocation, quarantine, design and implementation of ecological risk assessments, as well as a de-hooking guide and [identification guide](#) for dead seabirds currently available in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese and Traditional Chinese.

4. Other operational and implementation actions

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

- Implementation of a 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 report on the implementation of the Agreement for the triennium 2013 - 2015 (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 capacity building strategy according with objectives, criteria and principles defined in [AC9 Doc 18](#).
- Development of [memoranda of understanding](#) with other international organisations. Currently, ACAP has signed MoU and/or arrangements with: the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), 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 Commission on the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), the South Pacific RFMO, and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. The Secretariat has also entered into negotiations for the signature

of a MoU with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention (IAC) to facilitate cooperation between both Secretariats.

5. Further actions and challenges

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 ensure that these mitigation measures used in those 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 the Agreement has yet to agree the level of detail of data to be submitted and develop an appropriate methodology for the use of such data.

As highlighted in previous reports, one of the most challenging difficulties found is the increasing size and complexity of the Agreement's agenda and the asymmetry with the growth of capacity (both in terms of funds and human resources). This workload could be alleviated by the incorporation and engagement of new players to undertake particular actions. The further implementation of the Agreement's capacity building strategy, including the small grants scheme and secondment programmes may be fundamental in this engagement.