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Monitoring compliance with seabird mitigation measures through port inspection- determining minimum standards

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Abstract: Based on experience drawn from over ten years of work through the Albatross Task Force and other engagements, BirdLife International makes recommendations for port inspection data fields to enhance the ability of CCSBT Members to monitor use of seabird bycatch mitigation measures by vessels.

Background: Determining levels of compliance with bycatch mitigation measures is an ongoing challenge for all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and indeed for Member States themselves, due to low levels of observer coverage. Nevertheless, opportunities for monitoring exist, including through port inspection, as recognised by the CCSBT Compliance Committee CC12 meeting in 2017. This document seeks to input to the following element of the Compliance Committee 2018 work plan:

Members to provide the Secretariat with fields for monitoring of seabird mitigation measures to add to Annex B of the Resolution for a CCSBT Scheme for Minimum Standards for Inspection in Port

Through the Albatross Task Force since 2005, and more recently through work under the GEF/FAO Common Oceans project, BirdLife International has conducted educational port-based outreach projects with pelagic longline crews in Fiji, Mauritius, Brazil and South Africa. In addition, we have trained fisheries observers on seabird bycatch data collection in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Namibia, and South Africa, and recently we have provided training to Fisheries Compliance Officers in Cape Town. From this experience in working with pelagic longline fleets, and in various countries with observer/port inspection regimes, BirdLife has identified data fields for port inspectors that it feels balance gathering useful compliance data whilst not asking too much of port inspectors.

Data gathered through port inspection has the limitation that presence of measures on a vessel is not the same as confirming use of those measures on a set-by-set basis, but it is possible to detect when mitigation is not being used, for example if no suitable bird-scaring line is onboard, or where mitigation is likely being used for example presence of bird-scaring lines and line weighting that conform to required specifications.

Port inspection data fields: We propose six data fields in Table 1, summarised as questions which are all answerable with a Yes/No tick box for simplicity. We also include a 'Comments' box which would provide inspectors with a space to record further details, and a 'Notes' section that gives guidance to port inspectors on factors to help determine compliance. The six checks are:

- a) Determine if the vessel has fished in areas where seabird regulations should be used.
- b) Night setting compliance: inspect the log book to identify if sets have been conducted within the hours of nautical dusk to nautical dawn.
- c) Presence of compliant tori line/bird-scaring line
- d) Evidence of bird scaring line being used
- e) Presence of tori pole
- f) Line weighting presence and compliance

Request to the CCSBT Compliance Committee: BirdLife International thanks CCSBT for the opportunity to share our experience and to input into the work to enhance the ability of CCSBT to monitor compliance with seabird bycatch mitigation requirements.

Table 1: Suggested checklist questions for seabird mitigation on longline vessels inspected in port

Check	Y/N	Comments	Notes
a) Does the logbook show the vessel has fished south of 25° South ¹ ?	Y/N		Vessels that have fished south of 25° South ¹ are required to use two of three measures: weighed branchlines, night setting or a tori line.
b) Does the logbook show all hooks have been set between nautical dusk and nautical dawn (i.e. at night) south of 25° South ¹ ?	Y/N/ Unsure		Check which time zone is being used in logbook, ask fishing master if unsure. Check location of setting. If unsure if setting is at night for set location, take photos of a few pages to determine compliance later.
c) Compliant tori line on board	Y/N		Ask fishing master to show it. [Photo if possible]. Should comply with RFMO requirements including being at least 150m long and having streamers.
d) Evidence tori line used	Y/N/ Unsure		Notes to help: Is it stored near deployment point? Does it look new or used? Are there spare materials or spare tori line in case of breakage?
e) Tori pole on board	Y/N/ Unsure		Is there a specific tori pole or some other high attachment point at the back of the vessel that fishing master points out? What is the estimated height above the water (not the deck)? Is the design sturdy? If unsure, ask fishing master to demonstrate how he attaches the tori line.
f) Does the line weighting look compliant?	Y/N	Weight (g) = Distance from hook ² (cm) =	Check if all branchlines in a basket are weighted (if any) [Photo if possible] If unable to determine weight, estimate size of the weight. Note the weight should always be within 4 metres of the hook. <i>The actual specifications are; more than 45 g within 1 m of the hook or; more than 60 g within 3.5 m of the hook or; more than 98 g weight within 4 m of the hook.</i>

¹Seabird mitigation measures apply south of 25° South latitude in the IOTC and the ICCAT Convention Areas, and south of 30° South latitude in the WCPFC Convention Area

²Sliding weights may be stored at the hook. Ask where sliding weights are positioned during the set