Commission for the Conservation of
Southern Bluefin Tuna

みなみまぐろ保存委員会

Report of
The Sixteenth Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group

3 – 6 March 2026

Canberra, Australia

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Agenda Item 1. Opening

1. The independent Chair of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG), Dr Martin Cryer, welcomed participants and opened the meeting. The Chair advised that discussion for some agenda items had commenced in advance of the meeting by correspondence and thanked participants for their cooperation with this arrangement. The Chair also advised that this meeting is being held in a hybrid format, with both in-person and online participants equally given opportunities to speak.
2. Each delegation introduced its participants. The list of participants is shown in **Attachment 1**.
3. The Executive Secretary announced the administrative arrangements for the meeting.

1.1 Adoption of Agenda

4. The agenda was adopted through the discussion commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting. The agreed agenda is provided in **Attachment 2**.

1.2 Adoption of Documents List

5. The adopted list of documents for the meeting is shown in **Attachment 3**. The Chair noted that some documents were submitted after the due date for the meeting. The ERSWG agreed to accept these late documents.
6. The Chair thanked participants for developing and submitting documents to the meeting. In particular, the Chair expressed appreciation to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and BirdLife International (BLI) for providing documents requested by the Secretariat.

1.3. Appointment of Rapporteurs

7. New Zealand, Australia and BLI volunteered to rapporteur agenda item 5 with the Secretariat to rapporteur the remainder of the agenda.

Agenda Item 2. Annual Reports

2.1. Members

8. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

9. The European Union did not submit its annual report to the ERSWG.

10. A summary of comments and key responses to questions is provided below.

Australia

- The main purpose of the electronic monitoring (EM) program by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) for longline fisheries is to improve and validate fisher logbook reports, and now AFMA uses logbook data, not EM data, to measure bycatch levels in the fishery and assess management needs;
- Australia applies a targeted risk-based approach to manage longline fishing impacts on seabirds, and focuses management responses where they are needed at the vessel level and if necessary targeted at wider temporal and spatial scales;
- Australia's EM audit is based on a random 10 % selection of shots;
- In Australia's Annual Report, "total observed effort" means the number of audited hooks;
- In both the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF), at-sea observers have been replaced by electronic monitoring, and therefore there are no human observer data available;
- ETBF has now permanently banned daylight setting when longline fishing south of 40°S latitude during the period between 1 September and 30 April, and also banned offal (including bait) discharge during setting;
- All ETBF and WTBF vessels are required to deploy a baseline level of mitigation (when fishing south of 25°S latitude), including tori lines, line weighting or hook shielding devices, use of non-frozen bait, and applying additional mitigation if individual vessels meet certain bycatch triggers;
- For ETBF, all hooks have to be set between nautical dusk and dawn when fishing south of 40°S between 1 September and 30 April; and
- To improve species identification of bycaught seabirds (dead), Australia has developed a simple and accurate genetic method applicable to DNA extracted from feather samples. However, this program has been on hold since January 2024 in response to potential risks associated with the highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Fishing Entity of Taiwan

- In relation to the significant reduction in reported seabird bycatch from 2023 to 2024, Taiwan advised that the unusually high seabird bycatch recorded in 2023 was largely attributable to a single vessel. Upon identifying this issue through observer data, the Fisheries Agency of Taiwan promptly contacted the vessel operator and captain to reinforce regulatory requirements and provide technical guidance on the correct implementation of mitigation measures. Follow-up communication and oversight were conducted to ensure compliance;
- Although there was an elevated bycatch of specific species in Area 8, the observed spike was vessel-specific and not representative of a broader fleet-wide trend, and the available data at present does not indicate a systemic or recurring risk that would justify area-wide additional mandatory measures;

- For the very high rate (77.76 %) of single mitigation measure use in Area 14 in 2024, Taiwan is taking several actions to strengthen compliance, including reinforcing regulatory requirements through direct communication with vessel operators, enhancing observer awareness regarding accurate recording of mitigation use, and exploring practical solutions to improve uptake of additional measures; and
- For species identification, there was only one "unidentified" bycaught seabird recorded in 2023 and none in 2024. As a result of reviewing photos taken by observers, it was found that about 12 % seabirds were misidentified, which is a similar level to the previous 5 years.

Indonesia

- Indonesia confirmed that the data provided in the Annual Report has been distinguished between catch of Indonesian longline vessels registered with CCSBT and the total number of Indonesian longline vessels operating in the Indian Ocean;
- Indonesia is in the process of compiling data on hook rate (catch per 1,000 hooks), particularly from its observer program;
- Training on ERS identification, mitigation, and handling practices on Indonesian longline vessels has so far been provided only to observers and has not yet been delivered specifically to longline skippers, but observers are equipped with various materials to support their onboard monitoring and advisory roles for longline skippers;
- In general, Indonesian longline vessels conduct hauling process in daylight between approximately 10:00 and 22:00, and in contrast, conduct setting at night, typically between 03:00 and 06:00 or 07:00, when light levels are low and seabird interactions with longline gear are minimal;
- Based on observer data, seabirds are caught primarily during the hauling process, particularly during daylight conditions;
- The use of tori lines for longline vessels operating at latitudes of 25° or higher is mandatory. However, night setting is not yet a formal requirement, although most Indonesian LL vessels typically set their gear during dark conditions;
- To guarantee compliance with ERS measures, informational posters are displayed at fishing ports so that skippers and crew members can read and understand ERS measures while they are in port; and
- It requires to further review data from the observer program to provide additional information on the proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures.

Japan

- Although Japan has made efforts to develop its observer deployment plan each year to achieve the 10 % observer coverage in entire Tasman sea, there were some areas where the observer coverage did not reach the target due to the actual formulation of the SBT fishing ground and the vessels' operational plans;
- Japan's scientific observer program includes training for observers on how to identify species at sea. In addition, if it is difficult to identify the species during the trip, photographs are taken and identification is carried out by experts after the fishing trips;

- Japan does not implement area or bird species specific measures or adjustments, and instead it aims a range of initiatives targeting fishers toward reducing seabird bycatch mortality itself; and
- Japan considers that reference species should be defined at the genus or species group level to implement Spatially Explicit Fisheries Risk Assessment (SEFRA) with a realistic resolution, considering current challenges on adequate species identification across all Members;

New Zealand

- Camera footage review is based on a model of both targeted and random review within a risk-based approach, and generally, there are higher review rates in fisheries with a higher risk of protected species interaction;
- For EM review rate, New Zealand stated that it ensures a minimum of 10 % representative effort of SBT fisheries is reviewed, as set out in the Scientific Observer Program Standards (SOPS);
- New Zealand stated that it does not disclose specific EM footage review rates for individual methods and fisheries. New Zealand reports the overall percentage of footage reviewed every quarter across all fisheries and methods and it was 18 % in the last quarter (July to September 2025);
- New Zealand has high confidence in the accuracy of fisher reporting as a result of cameras and the commercially reported datasets (e.g. Tables 24 – 27 of its Annual Report) are the most reliable data source for protected species interactions;
- New Zealand actively monitors for compliance with seabird mitigation measures, both via camera footage review and by in-port inspections. All occurrences of non-compliance that are detected are referred to Fisheries Compliance Officers for actioning in order to minimise risk to seabirds;
- For comparison of logbook reporting with EM reporting, New Zealand reports reviewer detected protected species events that were also reported by fishers every quarter. In the last quarter (July to September 2025), there was 98 % consistency between fisher-reported and analyst-detected captures;
- "Total observed effort" in New Zealand's Annual Report means total monitored effort where an active camera was operating during the fishing event, rather than the number of hooks actually reviewed by EM analysts;
- To the question if New Zealand intends to retrospectively adjust its historical bycatch estimate in light of the substantial increase in seabird mortalities following the change in reporting basis in 2024, New Zealand noted that estimation of seabird captures has always been based on scaled observed captures, and that the number of seabird captures provided by limited observer coverage in 2023 (3.3 %) would be expected to be significantly lower than that provided by 92 % camera monitored e-logbook data;
- Between March and September 2024, use of hook-shielding devices was not mandatory as long as tori lines and either night setting or line weighting were used. During this time period, 14 of 18 active surface longline (SLL) vessels reported using hook-shielding devices on 90.6 % of all SLL events (noting fishers were not necessarily using hook-shielding devices on all hooks during these events);

- New Zealand advised that in-port inspections generally check fisher adherence to mitigation specifications, e.g. tori line and streamer lengths, not seabird bycatch data which is verified by cameras; and
- For species identification, in 2024, seabirds capture footage was sent for expert identification and species-level identification was able to be established for 97.3 % of captures.

Republic of Korea

- In response to the question on possible species misidentification, Korea confirmed that it can provide photographic evidence if necessary, and that there were no specific environmental conditions or operational differences in Area 9 when penguins were caught;
- Korea clarified that, according to the Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) on reducing seabird bycatch adopted by the tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs: ICCAT[1], IOTC[2] and WCPFC[3]), Korean longline fisheries operating south of 25°S are obligated to use 2/3 options (night setting, seabirds scaring line and weighted line);
- Korea has implemented the Electronic Reporting (ER) system since 1 September 2015, which includes releases/discards information of not only SBT but also other species, and implemented the scientific observer program and the ER system that fishermen should record not only catch information but also seabird mitigation measures used to ensure compliance;
- Korea confirmed that:
    - The entire fleet were monitored by scientific observers over time;
    - Seabird species identification training is conducted before deploying observers using species identification guide materials through observer training program;
    - The common weighted branch line regime for the Korean fleet is deploying 45 g weight at 40-50 cm above the circle hook;
    - In the Korean fleet operation, portside tori line (height 5 m, total line length 120-150 m) is deployed; and
    - The scientific observer covered only CCSBT Statistical Area 9 in 2023 and 2024.

South Africa

- The entire domestic fleet of South Africa operates exclusively within the national Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and does not fish on the high seas.
- South African vessels are required to implement two of three mitigation measures, with night setting mandatory, and based on observer report, vessels consistently deploy line weighting, while tori lines are used less consistently;
- For chartered vessels, South Africa confirmed that, prior to departure, each vessel is subject to a mandatory inspection. As part of this process, the vessel is required to verify and confirm the presence of an observer on board;

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[1] International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
[2] Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
[3] Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

- At present, mitigation measures are applied consistently across the fleet; however, area-specific mitigation requirements may be considered if existing management interventions, including vessel-level compliance and performance measures, are found to be insufficient to address bycatch levels;
- There is an exemption from night setting, which is currently under investigation along the east coast north of 31°S (Area 14), a region historically associated with minimal to no seabird bycatch during night setting operations. Vessels operating under this exemption are required to deploy line weighting and tori lines, and an observer must be present on board if day setting is undertaken. During the 2024–2025 exemption period, no seabird captures were recorded.
- A review of observer records from 2023–2024 identified no compliance concerns, and South Africa considers the increase in seabird mortality rate was likely contributed by a combination of operational and environmental factors;
- South Africa advised that the subsequent decline and recent absence of Yellow-nosed albatross in observer records are considered mainly attributable to reduced fishing activity in Area 14, as vessels shifted effort to more productive areas. The absence of recent records should be interpreted as reflecting changes in fishing patterns and coverage rather than a confirmed shift in species distribution;
- In relation to turtle reporting data, South Africa noted that the turtle records reported in skipper logbooks are not interpreted as discrepancies, but rather as an improved reflection of interactions occurring across the fleet in time and space beyond the approximately 10 % observer coverage achieved in 2024. To enhance reporting quality, South Africa will continue to promote accurate logbook reporting practices, including the provision of guidance and contact support to assist with species identification where necessary;

11. Regarding Table 1 of the ERSWG Annual Report template, the meeting agreed that Members may either prepare the table themselves or request the Secretariat to produce it using EDE data. Members are asked to contact the Secretariat well in advance of future ERSWG meetings to confirm whether they wish the Secretariat to produce the table for inclusion in their Annual Report.

2.2. Secretariat report on the ERSWG Data Exchange

12. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

13. The Secretariat submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/04, which presented summaries of data provided for the ERSWG Data Exchange (EDE) including the 2025 EDE with data provided for 2024. As tasked at ERSWG 10, the summaries are aggregated over Members and include observed and actual effort, observer coverage rate, observed mortalities and estimated total mortalities. Aggregation was also to be by year, CCSBT statistical area and species/species groups. Data from 2019 have been provided by 5x5 degree square, so the summaries include 5x5 maps using data from 2019 onwards. In the 2025 EDE, data were provided by all Members apart from the EU (who has no ERS data to report) and Indonesia. The combined longline observer coverage is substantially higher in 2023 and 2024 than previous years (apart from 2019), with overall coverage at 19.3 % and 22.4 %

respectively. The total number of observed bird mortalities in 2024 appears to be lower than previous years where observer data are not missing, noting that there are no capture data for areas 5 and 6.

14. The Secretariat recalled that, as the Introduction section of the ERSWG Data Exchange Requirements specifies, the EDE is intended for the sharing of information for "general" ERSWG purposes. The ERSWG is expected to conduct assessments from time to time that will require more detailed information and CCSBT Members have expressed their willingness, in principle, to share more detailed information on a case-by-case basis with those who have been tasked with leading such assessments.

15. A summary of key responses to questions is provided below:

    - The Secretariat accepts EDE data as provided by Members, and ERSWG is expected to interrogate and question the data as part of discussions related to the Member's national reports and the Secretariat's summary paper;
    - It is not possible to calculate Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) of bycaught species by specific mitigation measures from EDE data, since ERS catch data are not provided to the EDE by specific mitigation measures and only the proportion of observed effort by specific mitigation measure is provided per aggregated cell of effort (year, quarter, 5x5); and
    - The code and definition of hook shielding devices (HSDs) in the context of EDE may vary across the Membership.

16. Indonesia submitted the ERS data for 2023 and 2024 during the pre-meeting discussion period of the ERSWG 16 meeting. These data will be reflected in the next Secretariat report as appropriate.

17. New Zealand advised that it considers the rollout of onboard cameras to provide for a high degree of confidence in the accuracy of fisher-reported data and that commercially reported datasets are the most accurate data source for protected species interactions. However, going forward, New Zealand will ensure that the 10 % required percentage of effort for EM data will be randomly reviewed and will provide the reviewed EM data to future EDEs.

18. Members discussed the continuing issue of non-compliance with mitigation measures, how Members and the ERSWG should address and respond, and what mechanisms are available to make recommendations to other CCSBT subsidiary bodies and other RFMOs. It was agreed to discuss this in the margins of the meeting and continue the discussion at agenda item 13.

19. Regarding a suggestion on changing the EDE data format to allow for the calculation of ERS CPUE by mitigation measure, some Members noted that this request would be difficult to accommodate but that this type of targeted analysis could be done in the future. The meeting agreed to maintain the current reporting requirements and format.

Agenda Item 3. Reports of meetings and/or outcomes of other organisations relevant to the ERS Working Group

20. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

21. The Chair advised that all organisations with long-term observer status for CCSBT's ERSWG meetings have been invited to attend and to present a report to the meeting, and they may also present relevant meeting reports from organisations not present at the ERSWG meeting.

22. The Chair reminded Members that the list of relevant ERS measures from other RFMOs is updated annually in Annex I of the Resolution to Align CCSBT's Ecologically Related Species measures with those of other tuna RFMOs (ERS Resolution) before the annual Extended Commission (EC) meeting, according to any decisions taken on ERS at the annual meetings of the ICCAT, IOTC, and WCPFC.

23. To the question on CCSBT's role regarding WCPFC's research related to the southern hemisphere porbeagle shark stock, the Secretariat advised that there have been no previous decisions by the CCSBT to undertake a stock assessment for Porbeagle shark. In addition, the CCSBT has not received a request from WCPFC (or any other organisation) to take responsibility for future stock assessments of porbeagle shark.

24. WCPFC Secretariat confirmed that the revised seabird bycatch mitigation measure is now adopted as CMM 2025-05 (Conservation and Management Measure to Mitigate the Impact of Fishing on Seabirds), thanking Australia for highlighting the update and acknowledging Japan and New Zealand for leading the work at WCPFC22.

25. Regarding porbeagle shark, identified as a WCPFC key shark species, the WCPFC Secretariat noted that the SC 19 mid-term review of the Shark Research Plan indicated that an assessment of southern hemisphere porbeagle shark may be more appropriately undertaken within CCSBT, as most reported catches occur in the CCSBT Convention Area. WCPFC could support such an assessment through provision of relevant data. The WCPFC Secretariat clarified that WCPFC has not made any recommendation or decision to formally request another organisation to assume responsibility for conducting a porbeagle shark stock assessment, and no assessment is currently scheduled within WCPFC.

26. WCPFC also confirmed the adoption of a new shark measure, *CMM 2025-06 - Conservation and Management Measure for Sharks*.

27. IOTC advised that it has recently adopted a new resolution on sharks that may be of interest to the CCSBT. It is in the process of developing a seabird strategy and is hoping to learn from the CCSBT's experience in developing its seabird strategy.

28. ACAP noted the update to its best practice advice for mitigation measures which is detailed as part of CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info06, is now available in Bahasa Indonesia.

Agenda Item 4. Review of progress with the work program from ERSWG 15

29. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

30. The Secretariat submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/05 on Progress on Action Items from the ERSWG 15 work program. This paper provided a brief update on progress made with the work program from ERSWG 15. Progress on some workplan activities (e.g. the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy) is not presented in the paper and will instead be discussed in the agenda items indicated in the paper.

31. The meeting noted the information provided by the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 5. Information and advice on ERS

5.1 Seabirds

5.1.1 Information on stock status

32. ACAP presented the related part of paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info04 on conservation status of albatrosses and petrels and advice on reducing their bycatch in CCSBT longline fisheries. Incidental mortality (bycatch) of seabirds in commercial fisheries remains a critical conservation concern, particularly for the 31 ACAP-listed species of albatross and petrel species. Based on new evidence on the continued decline in population status, ACAP-listed species face a conservation crisis due to incidental mortality in fisheries. Of the 22 albatross species listed by ACAP, 18 breed or forage in the CCSBT Area, as do seven of the nine listed petrel species. ACAP has also identified nine High Priority Populations, which represent more than 10 % of a species' global population, and were declining at more than 3 % per year over a 20-year period for which a major underlying cause was incidental mortality in fisheries. Seven of these populations breed and forage in the CCSBT area. This paper summarised the population status and current trends of these 25 species as requested by the CCSBT Secretariat.

33. Members thanked ACAP for its paper and acknowledged that it provided important context on the population status and trends of relevant seabird species to support ERSWG discussions.

34. Members discussed the utility of seabird population trend information for evaluating the effectiveness of fisheries mitigation measures. Some Members noted that while long-term datasets provide clearer indications of the impacts of fishing on certain species, shorter-term trend information may also be needed to inform management evaluations. It was noted that population trend data can be affected by environmental variability and differences in monitoring intensity across breeding sites, and that interpreting these trends can be challenging for non-specialists.

35. ACAP highlighted that for several species with well-monitored breeding populations, long-term declines are a direct result of commercial longline bycatch. ACAP emphasised the importance of the ERSWG to consider the outcomes of the SEFRA and potential management actions, in line with the direction from the EC.

36. Members expressed concern about several seabird populations with poor conservation status. It was noted that attribution of decline to specific threats can be complex, but that information presented by ACAP should be considered alongside outputs of SEFRA to better understand potential drivers of population change. Some Members noted that CCSBT is well placed to contribute to risk reduction through improved management in high-risk areas.

37. In discussing the proportion of declining species overlapping with CCSBT fisheries, Members sought clarification on whether these declines were primarily linked to SBT fishing operations. ACAP noted that threats to seabirds occur at sea and on land with pelagic longline fishing a key, well-recognised source of mortality for many species. ACAP noted that effective mitigation within areas where CCSBT fleets operate can materially reduce the threat posed to seabirds.

38. Members also discussed approaches to evaluating mitigation effectiveness. It was noted that SEFRA represents a useful framework for assessing risk, particularly when supported by improved input data. Members acknowledged that SEFRA does not consider multiple threat sources but can support monitoring of trends in risk from fisheries when updated with a new time series. One Member suggested that ERSWG should consider including some way of detecting the effect of any management intervention when performing assessments and noted the value of supporting information such as annual monitoring by jurisdictions with key breeding populations.

39. New Zealand noted that it undertakes annual monitoring for many albatross and petrel populations and that data can be made available to support any time-step analyses. New Zealand has conducted multi-threat risk assessments for some seabird species which allows all sources of anthropogenic impacts to be compared with population trends.

40. It was acknowledged that improving the accuracy of mortality estimates relies on Members' observer coverage, data quality, and reporting, and that addressing these issues is the responsibility of individual Members.

41. ACAP noted that global frameworks for responsible fishing have long emphasised the need to minimise bycatch where possible. ACAP also observed that SEFRA results reinforce longstanding concerns that for several ACAP-listed species, fishing mortality alone is sufficient to drive population declines without effective mitigation.

42. ACAP and BLI submitted a joint paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info05 on the Status of Seabird Distribution data used in the 2025 SEFRA for seabirds. The 2025 CCSBT SEFRA distribution maps represent a major advancement in identifying the spatio-temporal "hotspots" where seabirds are most vulnerable to longline fishing. By integrating high-precision tracking data, weighting by colony size and phenological data (average timing of breeding and migration), and disaggregating information to a monthly resolution, these models move beyond static range maps to provide a temporally dynamic understanding of bird density across the Southern Hemisphere. The power of this approach lies in its ability to weight distributions by colony size, ensuring that the influence of major populations is better reflected and that conservation efforts can be directed toward areas with the highest potential areas of seabird bycatch in CCSBT fisheries. However, these results must be interpreted with caution, as the models use minimum known distribution

information and thus likely results in biased estimates of total risk. To adopt a robust precautionary approach, it is recommended that enhanced bycatch mitigation measures be implemented over broader geographic regions. While these efforts should be centred on identified high-risk hotspots—such as the Tasman Sea, the south-eastern Indian Ocean, and the south-eastern Atlantic—they must extend further to account for the wider dispersal of juveniles and immatures and distributions of un-tracked colonies.

43. Members thanked ACAP and BLI for the joint paper.

44. BLI noted several considerations relevant to interpreting SEFRA results, including the exclusion of juveniles from distribution models, potential underestimation of exposure, reliance on adult-based relative mortality estimates, gaps in species-specific data, assumptions regarding spatial uniformity of catchability, and the use of temporally static population inputs. BLI commented that these limitations suggest that identified high-risk areas are likely conservative, and that management measures may need to be applied more broadly.

45. One Member also noted that while fishing effort distributions are relatively well understood, there remains uncertainty around observer-reported bycatch data, which may influence the accuracy of some model outputs.

46. New Zealand submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info01 on Overlap between pelagic longline fisheries and Black Petrels in the WCPFC Convention Area. Black Petrels are endemic to New Zealand, exclusively breeding on two island colonies. This species is highly vulnerable to bycatch in commercial fisheries, including in commercial pelagic longlines. Bycatch of Black Petrels in New Zealand fisheries is well monitored, and estimated mortality levels place this species at a relatively high-risk level. However, this species' range extends well beyond New Zealand's jurisdiction. Little is known about bycatch risk beyond New Zealand's EEZ both during the breeding period when Black Petrels forage widely, and when birds migrate across the Pacific during the non-breeding period. This study aims to estimate overlap between Black Petrels and commercial pelagic longline fishing effort across the WCPFC Convention Area, as a proxy for bycatch risk. To achieve this, fine- and coarse-scale Black Petrel tracking data were combined with fishing effort data, inferred from Automatic Identification System data sourced from the Global Fishing Watch, to calculate year-round fisheries overlap in the WCPFC Convention Area. While the highest density of commercial pelagic longline overlap occurred close to New Zealand and south of 30°S, considerable overlap was evident in latitudes where fewer bycatch mitigation methods are required (30°S - 25°S) or not mandated (north of 25°S). Additionally, relative overlap of Black Petrels with commercial pelagic longline fishing effort was highest north of 25°S. Therefore, though this species spends reduced time north of 25°S in the WCPFC Convention Area, overlap with commercial pelagic longline fishing, and potential bycatch risk, is high when they do. This study concluded that year-round tracking of this species has shown high overlap with bycatch-prone fisheries in areas of the WCPFC Convention Area with reduced bycatch mitigation efforts.

47. New Zealand submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info02 on Diving Ecology of *Procellaria* Petrels Highlights the Necessity of Combining Bird-Scaring Lines, Weighted Branch Lines, and Night Setting in Pelagic Longline Fisheries. Many seabirds are at risk of bycatch including in pelagic and demersal longline fisheries.

Bycatch mitigation methods must be informed by seabird foraging behaviour to be effective. Deep-diving seabirds are especially vulnerable to bycatch and also increase risks for less adept divers by bringing baited hooks back to the surface. This study deployed time-depth recorders paired with geolocation sensors or GPS loggers in Aotearoa New Zealand to quantify the diving ecology of three *Procellaria* petrel species (combined total number of dives=12,767), all of which are vulnerable to bycatch in longline fisheries. This study presented the deepest dives recorded for each species, with Westland Petrels (*Procellaria westlandica*; n=32) reaching 17.3 m, White-chinned Petrels (*P. aequinoctialis*; n=14) reaching 21.7 m, and Black Petrels (*P. parkinsoni*; n=10) reaching 38.5 m, the deepest dive recorded by a *Procellaria* petrel. All species dived faster than the best practice longline sink rate of 0.5 m/s. All dived throughout both day and night, but Black Petrels dived more frequently during the day, while Westland Petrels dived more frequently at night. These results suggested that simultaneous implementation of weighted branch lines, bird-scaring lines, and night setting is necessary to reduce bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries. This integrated approach effectively protects hooks from deep-diving *Procellaria* petrels and prevents them from retrieving hooks and increasing risk to other seabirds. These results also bear direct relevance for custom, target-specific mitigation methods in demersal longline fisheries. Overall, this study provided the most in-depth investigation into *Procellaria* petrel diving ecology to date with wide-ranging implications for seabird conservation globally.

48. New Zealand submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info03 on Fine-scale overlap analyses of Gibson's and Southern Buller's Albatross with pelagic longline fishing effort. Gibson's Albatross (*Diomedea antipodensis gibsoni*) and Southern Buller's Albatross (*Thalassarche bulleri bulleri*) are endemic to New Zealand and predominantly forage within the WCPFC Convention Area. Both taxa are highly susceptible to bycatch in commercial pelagic longline fisheries, and both are currently declining at their New Zealand colonies. The distribution of these taxa and spatiotemporal overlap with pelagic longline fisheries are assessed, enabling the identification of high-risk areas. Specifically, 100 adult and juvenile Gibson's Albatross were tracked during 2019 and 2022 - 2025, and 48 adult Southern Buller's Albatross were tracked during 2024 - 2025 using GPS-PTT satellite transmitters. Fishing effort, inferred from Automated Identification System (AIS) data by Global Fishing Watch, was then used to assess spatiotemporal overlap of tracked birds with pelagic longline fishing effort. Of the albatrosses tracked in this study, 80 % of Gibson's Albatross and 75 % of Southern Buller's overlapped with pelagic longline fishing effort. This overlap occurred almost exclusively within the WCPFC Convention Area (97 % of overlap events with Gibson's Albatross, and 98 % of overlap events with Southern Buller's Albatross). This study found substantial overlap in the High Seas within the WCPFC Convention Area (79 % and 15 % respectively) as well as in Australia's EEZ (16 % and 35 %). Additionally, for Southern Buller's Albatross, the New Zealand EEZ was also an area of high overlap (50%), but since the New Zealand pelagic longline fleet implements highly effective mitigation methods, overlap with this fleet represents a lower risk. The overlap varied considerably among the latitudinal bands relevant to CMM 2018-03. Gibson's Albatross, the more threatened and more steeply declining of the two taxa, exhibited considerable overlap with High Seas fishing effort between 25°S and 30°S (20 % of bird hours within this area overlap with

fishing vessels). As such, the information presented here can inform the review of CMM2018-03 by identifying where effective mitigation methods are needed.

5.1.2 Ecological risk assessment

49. The Chair advised that the ERSTech2025 finalised the model for the Spatially Explicit Fisheries Risk Assessment (SEFRA) for seabirds and that the EC in October 2025 approved the Report of the Technical Working Group on CCSBT collaborative risk assessment for seabird bycatch with surface longlines in the Southern Hemisphere 2025 (CCSBT SEFRA Technical Report 2025) to support the ERSWG's ongoing work in line with the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy. The CCSBT SEFRA Technical Report 2025 was submitted to the ERSWG 16 as CCSBT-ERS/2603/06.

50. ACAP introduced paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info 07, its Position Statement to CCSBT. ACAP stated that the SEFRA has now been accepted by the EC of the CCSBT, which emphasised that the next step should be for the ERSWG to consider the outcomes of the assessment and potential management actions.

51. BLI submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info09 on A probabilistic time geographic approach to quantifying seabird-vessel interactions. Accounting for uncertainty is essential for precautionary approaches to managing seabird bycatch in commercial fisheries. However, there is no existing mechanism to explicitly quantify the uncertainty of seabird-vessel interactions (i.e. co-occurrence in space and time). Here the author developed a time geographic method to measure the probability of individual birds encountering (co-occurring within 30 km) and attending (within 5 km) individual fishing vessels. The approach involved creating voxel-based probabilistic space–time prisms (PSTPs) to model the movements of individual birds and vessels, with trajectory data from bird-borne GPS devices and vessel Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). The study intersected these PSTPs to quantify the probability of interaction between bird-vessel pairs over time and space. The study demonstrated the approach with a case study of interactions of Endangered Toroa (Antipodean Albatross; *Diomedea antipodensis antipodensis*) with pelagic longline vessels in part of the South Pacific high seas. The study found 15 vessels within 150 km and 3 h of two birds, yet interaction occurred with only two of those vessels. The probability of encounter and attendance over time and space was visualised and determined that interactions lasted several hours each (up to 6.2–14.1 h attendance, 20.8–26.1 h encounter for one bird-vessel pair). The time geographic approach adds to existing tools to quantify seabird bycatch risk by providing an explicit measure of uncertainty of seabird-vessel interactions. This provides a flexible methodological pathway and R scripts, that can allow managers to estimate interaction probability for multiple marine species and fisheries, including those with lower-resolution positional datasets.

5.1.3 Assessment and advice on mitigation measures

52. The Chair advised that, under this Agenda item, the ERSWG 16 needs to address the following Actions from the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy taking into account the SEFRA outputs:

- *1A: To agree on a SBT seabird bycatch target for reducing the level of impact of SBT fishing operations on seabird populations, including, but not limited to:*
    - *a. Targets based on nominal reported seabird bycatch rates.*
    - *b. Targets based on SEFRA outputs*
- *1C: Evaluate the effectiveness of the seabird CMMs introduced around 2005 by tuna RFMOs, in the context of reducing the overall seabird mortalities, taking into consideration fleet differences and seabird distributions and identify the areas for improvement. The outcomes from the evaluation will be communicated across tuna RFMOs and used as a basis for future evaluations.*
- *1D: Agree on the list of priority species and corresponding management targets, taking into account the status of seabird population, distributional overlaps with SBT fisheries, and significance of SBT fisheries in their mortality.*
- *1F: Establish a robust definition of high-risk areas that takes into account the precautionary approach by:*
    - *a. Establishing a definition of high-risk areas.*
    - *b. Identifying areas that meet the definition.*
    - *c. Characterising the nature of the risk in each area.*
    - *d. Developing tailored measures aimed at reducing those risks.*

Priority Species and High-Risk Areas

53. Japan presented the discussion paper for SEFRA output: evaluating relationships between bycatch risk and SBT fishery (CCSBT-ERS/2603/13). Based on the SEFRA results conducted by CCSBT ERSWG, Japan conducted the analyses on spatial overlap between SBT catch CPUE and seabird distribution density and those between fishing effort and seabird density distribution, for the period 2012-23 using catch and effort data extracted from CCSBT Data Exchange. This paper discussed future seabird management strategies in the CCSBT, based on the results of above-mentioned analyses, together with the process of SEFRA development to date. In this paper, the author:
    - Proposed great albatrosses, which have the most at-risk species, as the reference species group based on SEFRA output results noting that it is difficult to determine criteria for quantitatively classifying reference species groups with current information alone;
    - Provided different aspects for spatial analysis to identify more effective areas for conservation of seabirds by SBT fisheries, noting the balance with fisheries and areas where mismatches between fishing efforts and risks are observed should be taken into account; and
    - Suggested that the SEFRA assessment should be conducted at least on a four-year span and noted the need for periodic collection and provision of seabird population information from seabird researchers.
54. Members thanked Japan for the effort and thought put into the proposal.
55. Members discussed the approach proposed for identifying reference species groups and defining high-risk areas. Technical clarifications were sought on the calculation of the proposed “balance index” and management at the genus level.

56. Several Members expressed concern that using a balance index to prioritise high-risk areas could implicitly frame management as a trade-off between bycatch risk and target catch rates, potentially drawing attention away from SEFRA-identified high-risk areas. Members considered that the objective should remain to address risk where it occurs, noting that implementation of best-practice mitigation has not been demonstrated to reduce SBT catch rates.

57. The Chair reiterated that ERSWG should focus on species-level results from the SEFRA which represent the best available information.

58. BLI thanked Japan for its paper and reminded the ERSWG that it is important for accountability and taxonomic precision to be maintained in order to support high-resolution models such as SEFRA, and that mortality hotspots are targeted regardless of fishing effort overlap. BLI further recommended that assessment cycles are sufficiently frequent to enable timely responses to mortality spikes and prevent irreversible population declines in albatrosses and petrels from SBT fisheries.

59. New Zealand presented its Updated High-Risk Areas discussion paper (CCSBT-ERS/2603/15). Based on this paper, and as a starting point for discussion, New Zealand proposed:

    - Priority species are identified as those species with a relative mortality of greater than or equal to 0.1 based on the 2025 SEFRA output;
    - The five grid cells with the highest combined relative mortality are used to identify high-risk areas. New Zealand proposed that the high-risk classification is applied more broadly than these grid cells to the wider CCSBT Statistical Areas – therefore areas 4, 7, 8, and 9 are defined as high-risk. These areas account for 8.5 % of CCSBT Member pelagic longline effort.
    - As a first step towards improving management of seabird bycatch in CCSBT fisheries, strengthen monitoring requirements within defined high-risk areas to 20 % human observer coverage, or 100 % electronic monitoring on all vessels with minimum 10 % footage review. Improving monitoring in these limited-effort areas would reduce uncertainty in future risk estimates and enable more effective assessment of adherence to existing mitigation requirements.

60. Members raised several questions about the New Zealand discussion paper, specifically the temporal elements, the spatial scale for any management or monitoring response, the value of iterative updates to SEFRA and the importance of reducing uncertainty and verifying mitigation implementation.

61. ACAP considered the proposed relative mortality threshold a useful starting point for identifying priority species. ACAP further noted that its position was that monitoring alone would be insufficient to reduce risk to seabirds and that the ERSWG needed to develop tailored measures aimed at reducing identified risks to seabirds that draw upon best-practice measures.

62. The Chair convened a small technical group to discuss more technical aspects of both Japan's and New Zealand's proposals and design a proposal to achieve actions outlined under the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy.

63. Based on the outcomes of the small technical group discussions, the ERSWG extensively discussed Action Item 1A, 1C, 1D and 1F of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy (including priority species, high-risk areas, and options for additional

management measures in those high-risk areas). The ERSWG's recommendations on each of these elements are provided in **Attachment 4**.

64. The ERSWG noted when discussing the high-risk areas proposal that there was scope for a choice in level of risk being considered within the high-risk areas, and recommended the EC decide among three identified thresholds for determining the level of risk covered within the high-risk areas. The ERSWG noted that when choosing a threshold, there is a trade-off between a) restricting the number of cells defined in high-risk areas and b) ensuring a sufficient amount of relative mortality addressed across taxa in high-risk areas.

    - At a low risk threshold (e.g. 50 %), there is a low number of cells and the relative mortality addressed is mainly limited to the highest risk taxon.
    - At a medium risk threshold (e.g. 60 %), there is still a relatively low number of cells and the relative mortality addressed is spread across taxa (higher risk taxa).
    - At a high-risk threshold (e.g. 70 %), there is a relatively larger number of cells and the relative mortality addressed is across taxa.

Advice on Additional Management Measures in High-Risk Areas

65. Notwithstanding the existing measures required of Members under the CCSBT ERS Resolution, the ERSWG agreed to recommend the EC to adopt additional measures, either singly or in combination, to address high-risk areas of seabird bycatch using the following toolbox to better understand and reduce risk to seabirds in identified high-risk areas:

    - Option 1: Improving monitoring requirements (specified levels of EM or observer placement taking into account scientific literature) - XX% e-monitoring with XX% review rate, or XX% human observer placement.
    - Option 2: Reducing effort in high-risk areas by XX% (e.g. spatial/temporal limits).
    - Option 3: Enhancing mitigation measures when operating in identified high risk areas (e.g. 'three out of three', hook-shielding devices, prioritising night setting), or establishing and delivering on a bycatch limit or rate – noting a minimum monitoring requirement if this option is selected.

66. ERSWG also agreed to recommend the EC:

    - Phasing in the approach over time and over areas (accounting for risk level in each area) and to progress from better understanding risk to reducing risk over time and ideally aligning timeframes across Members.
    - Establish a process to annually notify Member commitment to a seabird bycatch mitigation plan in identified high-risk areas to the Secretariat, starting reporting in 2027 including timeframes for implementation. The plan must include at least one of the above three options. This could include a new section of the annual report reviewed by ERSWG, and the Compliance Committee (CC) as appropriate, and added as new agenda items in ERSWG and CC meetings.
    - CCSBT Members collaboratively work with other tuna RFMOs to enact above options in other areas of competence.

67. Depending on the technology available to a CCSBT Member, management plans should be tailored to achieve the stated goals in the identified High-Risk Areas. These could be achieved for example by Member specific plans at:

    - High-Risk Area scale
    - CCSBT Statistical Area scale
    - Latitudinal band scale

68. Members noted the value, demonstrated in other fora, of facilitating closer interaction between scientists and managers when developing management responses, as this can help progress work more efficiently. It was suggested that if the ERSWG provides only high-level guidance, additional discussion may be required at the EC to translate that advice into operational direction.

69. ACAP made several points under this sub-agenda item, which are captured in full in **Attachment 5**.

Best Practice for Seabird Mitigation Measures

70. ACAP presented paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info06 on Updated ACAP Best Practice Advice on Reducing the Bycatch of Albatrosses and Petrels in CCSBT Fisheries. This paper presented the most recent ACAP Best Practice Advice for Reducing the Impact of Pelagic Longline Fisheries on Seabirds, which was last reviewed in August 2024, at the 12th meeting of the Seabird Bycatch Working Group (SBWG12), with updates endorsed by the 14th meeting of ACAP's Advisory Committee (AC14). ACAP highlighted information directly relevant to the CCSBT in implementing the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy, to reduce the impact of SBT fisheries on seabirds. ACAP's Best Practice Advice is that the simultaneous use of weighted branch lines, bird scaring lines and night setting is the most effective approach to mitigate seabird bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries. A number of hook-shielding devices, and one underwater bait setting device have been assessed as standalone best practice measures for mitigating seabird bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries. SBWG12 updated the minimum standards on branch line weighting. Currently all tuna RFMO seabird bycatch management measures fall short of ACAP's Best Practice Advice, making them substantially less effective at reducing seabird bycatch than they could be. A range of ACAP resources for fisheries managers and operators were also highlighted.

71. South Africa expressed its support for the recommendations of ACAP that vessels operating in high-risk areas implement three key seabird mitigation measures: bird-scaring lines (tori lines), night setting, and line weighting. Based on its recent operational experience, the use of two out of the three measures is not always fully effective, particularly under high-risk conditions such as periods of bright moonlight, including full-moon phases, when seabirds can continue accessing baited hooks. For this reason, South Africa believes that requiring the simultaneous use of all three mitigation measures in high-risk areas should be seriously considered. Moving from two to three measures generally requires only minor operational adjustments and minimal additional cost, while offering clear benefits in reducing seabird interactions.

72. Although South Africa's fisheries do not significantly interact with the species highlighted during this meeting, it is concerned about recent increases in seabird interactions. It is therefore investigating areas of elevated risk in its waters and

considering measures requiring the use of all three mitigation methods south of 30°S, where seabird bycatch risk is known to be higher. It is also exploring management triggers, whereby if a threshold of 0.05 seabirds per 1,000 hooks is exceeded, additional responses such as area avoidance, increased observer coverage, or strengthened mitigation requirements may be implemented.

73. Finally, while electronic monitoring is not yet implemented in its fleet and observer coverage remains aligned with requirements under IOTC and ICCAT. South Africa is investigating a locally developed tori-line monitoring device that records tension on the line to verify that the bird-scaring line is deployed and functioning during fishing operations. In summary South Africa supports: a) the 3/3; b) a trigger (which can be a rate or a number of priority seabirds); and c) the initiation of additional responses such as area avoidance, increased observer coverage, or strengthened mitigation requirement when a trigger has been breached.

74. Humane World for Animals (HWA) submitted paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info10 on Seabird Safe Pelagic Longline Hook Development. This paper introduced the new type of weighted tuna hook which offers acceptable operational and fish-catch performance, and which reduces the hazard of lead exposure to crew and the environment. HWA indicated the paper be taken as read but invited Members to discuss with HWA if interested.

5.1.4 Seabird species identification

75. The Chair advised that this Agenda item provides the opportunity to consider updates on any improvements in seabird identification practices or methodology, and also noted that actions from the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy that are most relevant to the seabird identification are:

    - *2E: Agree on the CCSBT standard protocols for collecting feather samples and photographing dead bycaught seabirds, based on ACAP guidance; and*
    - *2H: Review procedures and protocols to facilitate improved reporting of seabird interactions to species level by:*
        a. *Consistent reporting of seabird interactions across SBT fishing fleets.*
        b. *Removing any ambiguity about species groupings.*

76. Australia presented paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/14 on Protocols for collecting feather samples from dead bycaught seabirds for genetic analysis and photographing dead bycaught seabirds. Recalling the Action item 2E of the CCSBT's Multi-year Seabird Strategy, Australia developed a Guide to collecting feather samples from dead seabirds for genetic analysis and to photographing dead seabirds. The guide describes methods for collecting feather samples from dead seabirds and holding dead seabirds in close view of an EM camera in a series of specified positions. The introduction of these methods has facilitated the reliable, species-level identification of seabirds bycaught in Australia's longline fisheries. In this paper, Australia noted that identifying bycaught seabirds to species-level is challenging and highlighted the value of applying genetic methods to deliver reliable taxonomic data on bycaught seabirds.

77. Members thanked Australia for the paper and discussed practical aspects of feather-sample collection and seabird identification under both observer and EM programmes. Members sought clarification on how feather sampling can be undertaken on vessels that rely predominantly on EM rather than onboard observers.

78. New Zealand noted that while the transition to EM has reduced the amount of necropsy-based information available, species-level identification remains robust, supported by recent analyses showing a 97.3 % species identification accuracy using an expert review process. New Zealand also noted the importance of educating fishers on how to position birds to the cameras for effective identification.

79. One Member sought clarification on who collects samples and under what circumstances. It was clarified that feather samples are collected from dead seabirds, typically by observers where present.

80. Australia noted that the feather-collection programme previously used in its fleet (prior to avian flu) had proven simple and effective, as crew were able to collect and store feathers without special handling requirements. Australia highlighted that its goal remains to reintroduce this programme.

81. ACAP commented that both feather sampling and high-quality photographs of bycaught seabirds are important to improving species level identification, and encouraged Members to continue building photographic catalogues that could support the future development of machine learning tools to assist with species identification. This may address issues around the difficulty of species-level identification that had been raised by several Members.

82. ACAP introduced paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/Info08 related to the ACAP's poster on Avian Flu alert for fisheries crews onboard vessels, which is also available in Bahasa Indonesia. The meeting noted ACAP's paper on avian influenza awareness material for vessel crews and thanked ACAP for providing the information. Some Members highlighted practical challenges associated with retaining seabird specimens collected on the high seas, including biosecurity restrictions during port inspections.

5.1.5 Progress on the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy

83. Discussion for this sub-agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

84. The Chair noted that the Secretariat has provided a paper providing an initial assessment of progress to date against Multi-Year Seabird Strategy actions through the Secretariat's paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/07 and 08 and that exchanges on this topic began in the pre-meeting discussion document based on the Secretariat's paper. The Chair advised that the meeting should focus the discussion on what steps need to be taken and potentially incorporated into the ERSWG work program in order to ensure delivery of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy's objectives.

85. The Secretariat paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/08 provided Progress Against Actions Assigned to the CC in the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy. In this paper, the Secretariat provided a report back to the ERSWG on actions under the Multi-Year

Seabird Strategy Action item 4B and an update on work to date related to action 4C.

86. For Action 4B, the Secretariat concluded that CC already annually considers all identified non-compliance, including concerning seabird interactions, and options to strengthen management responses. In addition, existing policy already provides for the timely reporting of non-compliance events.

87. For Action 4C, the Secretariat concluded that, in many areas, CCSBT reporting requirements may already be providing some level of harmonisation of data collected by CCSBT authorised vessels across the different RFMO areas.

88. Members supported the Chair's proposal to defer the review of the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy to an ERSTech meeting in 2027. The Chair invited Members to indicate willingness to lead the review, and the Secretariat noted that there is precedent for joint leadership arrangements for substantial work items. Members advised that they need additional time to consider volunteering, while observer organisations expressed interest in being involved in the process. Members noted that the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy contains both technical and compliance components and that any future review may require engagement across multiple CCSBT fora. The Chair invited Members to consider nominating a participant to lead the review ahead of the EC meeting.

89. In discussing Paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/08, one Member raised questions regarding the policy status of certain elements of the Strategy and the mechanisms through which they might become binding. The Secretariat clarified that any such changes would need to be progressed through the CC. Members also considered the potential value of exchanging compliance-related information across tuna RFMOs and noted that this may help streamline reporting, though the Secretariat advised that existing memoranda of understanding primarily support scientific rather than compliance data exchange. It was further noted that some compliance information held by other RFMOs can be sensitive, and that any proposals for broader exchange would require careful consideration by the CC.

90. Members also discussed the reporting requirements associated with the Resolution to align with the ERS measures of other tuna RFMOs, noting that the current reporting is informational rather than evaluative. The view was expressed that a more structured compliance monitoring plan for ERS issues may be useful, though Members agreed that this would require a dedicated discussion paper for ERSWG consideration. The Secretariat observed that, without a clearly scoped proposal, there is a risk of the matter being passed back and forth between CC and ERSWG.

5.2 Sharks

5.2.1 Information on stock status

91. The Chair noted that no papers were submitted by Members or Observers for this sub-agenda item.

92. The Chair also noted that the ERSWG's previous advice on sharks was that "there were no specific or additional concerns about shark bycatch which warranted action by ERSWG."

93. Members briefly discussed shark stock assessments in the context of other tuna RFMOs and noted that some recent assessments have not been accepted or have been removed from those organisation's research plans. Given the overlap in membership across tuna RFMOs, Members agreed that those other tuna RFMOs are the most appropriate for progressing future shark stock or risk assessments. Members further agreed that CCSBT's role should focus on contributing relevant data to support these processes.

5.2.2 Estimates of ERS mortality and associated uncertainty

94. The Chair noted that no papers were submitted for this sub-agenda item.

5.2.3 Progress on the Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy

95. Discussion for this sub-agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

96. The Secretariat provided paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/09 (Rev.1) on Progress on the Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy (ERS Bycatch Strategy). In this paper, the Secretariat provided its initial comments on progress to date and recommendations to each Action to achieve the Specific Objectives of the ERS Bycatch Strategy. The Secretariat also provided a list of recent assessments for shark species by other tuna RFMOs, following the direction of the ERSTech2025.

97. The stock assessment of shark species in the CCSBT's context was discussed under Agenda Item 5.2.1.

5.3 Other ERS

98. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

99. The Chair advised that the Secretariat paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/09 was considered through the pre-meeting discussion process, and there were no specific comments from participants.

100. The Chair noted that no papers were submitted by Members or Observers for this agenda item, but Members were invited to raise issues and encouraged to present information about the impacts of SBT fishing on other ERS species.

101. Members discussed sea turtles in terms of risk assessments conducted by other RFMOs, the potential overlap with SBT fisheries and the need to understand the risk posed to these species by SBT fisheries. It was noted that the current reporting requirements of the EDE for sea turtles appear to be satisfactory and the number of reported captures appears to be relatively low, but it is not clear how the CCSBT's impact on sea turtles is currently being assessed.

102. The ERSWG noted that CCSBT currently implements sea turtle mitigation through alignment with ERS measures of other tuna RFMOs, but determining the adequacy of these measures depends, to an extent, on the outcomes of fisheries risk assessments. Members noted that previous data-limited assessments by IOTC and ICCAT highlighted gaps in interaction data that still persist. Members noted also that several sea turtle populations overlapping with other tuna RFMO areas

are listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN[4], meaning even low interaction levels in SBT fisheries may be significant. Members acknowledged that many turtle species likely have less overlap with SBT fisheries and agreed that other tuna RFMOs are generally better placed to lead assessments. The ERSWG supported CCSBT continuing to contribute data to those processes but also noted that the ERSWG would benefit from understanding which sea turtle Regional Management Units overlap with SBT fisheries to better monitor relevant populations. The ERSWG recommends that Members continue supporting risk assessment efforts in other tuna RFMOs.

103. It was noted that the template for Annual Member Reports to the ERSWG has a section for reporting marine mammal interactions, but it is not a requirement of the EDE. The Secretariat confirmed this and clarified that marine mammals were reported by Members, but it was on a voluntary basis and not reported on in the EDE summaries prepared by the Secretariat.

104. Members agreed to add marine mammals to Table 3 of the EDE requirements for recommendation to the EC. The revised table can be found in **Attachment 6**.

Agenda Item 6. CCSBT Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028

105. CCSBT 30 adopted the revised CCSBT Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028, which takes into account recommendations from the 2021 CCSBT Performance Review. The Chair advised that the discussions under this agenda item will inform the Secretariat's report back to the EC on progress against the actions of the Strategic Plan that relate to ERSWG.

106. The Secretariat presented paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/10, which provided the previous report from the ERSWG on progress against the ERSWG-related elements of the CCSBT Strategic Plan, with some preliminary updates by the Secretariat.

107. During the ERSWG 16 meeting, a small group was convened to reflect on outcomes from ERSWG 16 and finalise the draft progress report to the EC. Ms Heather Benko from New Zealand led this small group discussion.

108. The meeting thanked Ms Benko for her work in leading the discussion and agreed to the Report Back from the ERSWG to the EC on Progress Against the Strategic Plan (**Attachment 7**).

6.1 Capacity Building Needs Assessment

109. CCSBT 31 in 2024 adopted the CCSBT's Capacity Building Workplan, which aims at prioritising needs and delivering effective capacity building initiatives to improve performance in key areas, particularly for developing Members. ERSWG is expected to conduct its first needs assessment following the Capacity Building Workplan.

[4] International Union for Conservation of Nature

110. The Secretariat presented paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/11 on Capacity Building Needs Assessment for the ERS-related area. In this paper, the Secretariat conducted its initial assessment focusing on Objective 1 (Improve Data Collection) and Objective 2 (Improve Scientific Analysis) of the Capacity Building Workplan, with Objective 3 (on compliance-related activities) reserved for CC. For Objective 1, ERSWG Chair and the Secretariat considered it appropriate that the ERSWG review the related part of Indonesia's implementation plan regarding observer coverage (submitted on 31 December 2025) and then consider what forms of support may feasibly be provided. For Objective 2, ERSWG Chair and the Secretariat concluded that the current practice aimed at improving scientific analysis is sufficient and recognised the role of the MPF in maintaining/enhancing capacity and supporting its ongoing use.

111. New Zealand noted that it has been cooperating in capacity-building activities related to data collection and electronic monitoring, particularly for developing Members, and expressed its intention to continue engaging actively in this area.

112. New Zealand also stated that it would consult with Indonesia intersessionally and explore a possible capacity-building initiative on EM for consideration by the EC.

Agenda Item 7. Electronic Monitoring

7.1 Consideration to incorporate EMS data into CCSBT data requirements

113. New Zealand noted that the Secretariat did not incorporate its capture data submitted to the 2024 EDE into the EDE summaries on the basis that it was "fisher" data that was not observed by humans and was not reviewed EM data. It considers that these data provide a high degree of confidence and are the best source of ERS data that, while not currently used by the CCSBT, will provide value in the future. To satisfy the current EDE requirements, New Zealand will provide ERS data from reviewed EM footage that will also satisfy the minimum 10 % observer coverage rate.

114. New Zealand added that its exact EM review rate is not made publicly available for individual fleets in order to maintain a strong incentive for fishers to report accurately, but New Zealand will provide data from 10 % reviewed footage to the EDE going forward.

Agenda Item 8. Education and public relations activities

115. Discussion for this agenda item commenced by correspondence in advance of the ERSWG meeting.

116. The Seabird Project Manager, Dr Ross Wanless, presented paper CCSBT-ERS/2603/12, which provided updates on the Seabird Project to Enhance Awareness of and Implementation of Seabird Measures. The Secretariat reported that Elements 1 (skipper/vessel owner/crew training) and 2 (compliance officer/observer training) of the project have already completed in 2025. For Element 3 (electronic monitoring), the 2nd Electronic Monitoring workshop was held in Bali, Indonesia immediately after the CCSBT 32 meeting in October 2025. For Element 4 (seabird risk assessment), utilising the 2025 CCSBT-SEFRA model

and adding new data, as well as following the direction from the intersessional online meeting, a model-based global seabird risk assessment was conducted and CCSBT Members reviewed a draft report, including comparison to the 2019 risk assessment.

117. Dr Wanless expressed his appreciation to Members whose collaboration helped deliver outcomes throughout the project

118. The meeting expressed its appreciation for Dr Wanless' significant contribution to the Seabird Project over the past three years and congratulated the successful completion of the project.

Agenda Item 9. Climate Change

119. The CCSBT's ERS Bycatch Strategy, adopted by CCSBT 32 in 2025, specifies having a standing agenda item on Climate Change at future ERSWG meetings. The Chair advised that no papers submitted by Members or Observers for this Agenda item.

120. It was noted that several studies on the relationship between climate change and fisheries or fish stocks have been conducted by various parties, and Members were encouraged to submit documents relevant to the CCSBT for future ERSWG meetings.

Agenda Item 10. Agenda for the Technical ERSWG 2027

121. The Chair advised that, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Technical Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSTech), the ERS Tech meeting will be held in years where no in-person ERSWG meeting is taking place, either in a hybrid or online format. The ERSWG needs to determine whether an ERSTech meeting should be held in 2027 and, if so, to recommend to the EC the topics, meeting format (including the hosting Member when it is held as a hybrid meeting) and timing of the meeting.

122. The meeting agreed to recommend that the EC hold the ERSTech meeting in March 2027, noting that:

- The meeting would focus on the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy but there were several other issues to discuss, such as how best to deal with data deficiencies, that would be detailed at a later date;
- An online meeting would be sufficient, unless the EC raises issues with the ERSWG's recommendations on seabirds, in which case an in-person or hybrid meeting may be required.

123. The meeting agreed to consider, intersessonally and before CCSBT 33, which Member should lead the work on the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy.

Agenda Item 11. Future work program

124. The ERSWG developed the following work program. Tasks of an ongoing or administrative nature are not shown unless they are new for 2026.

Activity	Approximate Period	Resource
Contact the Secretariat well in advance of future ERSWG meetings if they request the Secretariat to produce Table 1 of the Annual Report Template	Future ERSWG meetings	Members
Consider ERSWG's recommendations and advice on seabirds and take necessary actions	CCSBT 33	Members
Progress Multi-Year Seabird Strategy Action items	As specified in the Seabird Strategy	Members, Secretariat
Add a standing Agenda Item on Members' seabird bycatch mitigation plan	Future CC and ERSWG from 2027	Secretariat
Report seabird bycatch mitigation plan in high-risk areas, pending approval from the EC	2027	Members
Collaboratively work with other tuna RFMOs to enact options of additional management measures in high-risk areas in other areas of competence	After close of CCSBT 33	Members
Progress ERS Bycatch Strategy Action items	As specified in the ERS Bycatch Strategy	Members, Secretariat
Supporting risk assessments by other tuna RFMOs on sea turtles and marine mammals	As necessary	Members, Secretariat
Supporting risk or stock assessments by other tuna RFMOs on sharks	As necessary	Members, Secretariat
Provide marine mammal interaction information through EDE, following the revised EDE requirements shown in **Attachment 6**	From ERSWG 17 onwards	Members
Explore a possible Capacity Building Initiative on EM	CCSBT 33	New Zealand, Indonesia
Hold ERS Tech meeting in 2027 as an online meeting	March 2027	Members, Secretariat
Nominate Member participants or joint leads to work on the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy	Before CCSBT 33	Members
New Zealand to work with Secretariat to ensure that New Zealand data are appropriately integrated into CCSBT datasets.	Ahead of next EDE submission	New Zealand, Secretariat

Agenda Item 12. Other business

125. There was no other business.

Agenda Item 13. Referral of ERS matters for consideration by CCSBT subsidiary bodies

126. In accordance with the ERSWG's Terms of Reference, the full report of the ERSWG will be provided to the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC), which may provide comments on the report to the EC.

127. HWA noted that TAC setting advice provided to EC by ESC in accordance with the CCSBT MP can alter fishing effort and have corresponding seabird bycatch implications, particularly if increasing fishing effort occurs where seabirds have been identified by SEFRA to be at greatest risk. Such consequences of change in TAC and distribution of fishing effort is not provided in advice to EC by ESC or ERSWG either separately or collectively. And in the current situation of progressive TAC increase, a seabird capture rate reduction could nevertheless result in total seabird mortality increase. To assist in higher risk seabird area management, a better understanding of the relationship between TAC increase, catch allocations and increased fishing effort is now necessary. The roles, responsibilities and reporting protocols of ERSWG and ESC to EC therefore require clarification, as outlined in the Report from ERSWG on Progress against Strategic Plan (**Attachment 7** to this report), so that in future, EC has such information available to include in TAC setting and allocation decisions.

128. The working group noted the persistent non-compliance issue with seabird mitigation measures and referred that matter to the CC and the EC for further discussion in the context of the recommendations of the ERSWG regarding the need to reduce seabird bycatch.

Agenda Item 14. Recommendations and advice to the Extended Commission

129. The ERSWG recommends that the EC:

1) Decide seabird priority species and high-risk areas on seabird bycatch within CCSBT fisheries based on the recommendations and advice from ERSWG in **Attachment 4**;
2) Adopt additional measures to address high-risk areas of seabird bycatch using the toolbox specified in paragraph 65 of this report to better understand and reduce risk to seabirds in identified high-risk areas;
3) Support a phasing in approach over time and over areas (accounting for risk level in each area) and progress from better understanding risk to reducing risk over time and ideally aligning timeframes across Members;
4) Establish a process to annually notify Member commitment to a seabird bycatch mitigation plan in identified high-risk areas to the Secretariat starting reporting in 2027, including timeframes for implementation;
5) Add a standing Agenda Item for future CC and ERSWG meetings from 2027 on Members' seabird bycatch mitigation plan in high-risk areas;

6) Adopt the revised ERSWG Data Exchange Requirements, as shown in **Attachment 6**;
7) Confirm resources to lead the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy, which is due at the next meeting of the ERSWG;
8) Hold ERS Tech meeting in March 2027 focusing on the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy as an online meeting, unless the EC raises issues with the ERSWG's recommendations on seabirds, in which case an in-person or hybrid meeting may be required;
9) Discuss the persistent non-compliance issue of Members with seabird mitigation measures in the context of the recommendations of the ERSWG regarding the need to reduce seabird bycatch;
10) Approve ERSWG's work program for 2026/2027.

130. The ERSWG wishes to advise the EC of the following matters:

1) ERSWG agreed that its previous advice on seabirds (shown in bullet points below) is still relevant but it builds on that advice with the recommendations above;
    - The level of interaction between seabirds and SBT fisheries remains a significant concern.
    - The ERSWG noted that the most recent version of the SEFRA indicates that Wandering and Royal Albatross species groups are at high-risk. Species in these groups are of high conservation concern and ACAP indicated that some populations are in sharp decline.
    - The SEFRA indicates areas with higher risk in some parts of the Tasman Sea (especially), Southern Atlantic, and Southern Indian Ocean. These areas account for a large proportion of the modelled risk to seabirds from SBT surface longline fisheries, but contain a very small proportion of SBT surface longline fishing effort.
    - Based on the best scientific information available, the ERSWG recommends that CCSBT Members consider taking further actions that would ensure robust seabird mitigation measures and effective monitoring of implementation of the mitigation measures, whilst minimising impacts on SBT surface longline fisheries effort.
2) ERSWG thanked ACAP and BLI for providing papers requested by the CCSBT Secretariat for the ERSWG 16;
3) It was acknowledged that improving the accuracy of mortality estimates relies on Members' observer coverage, data quality, and reporting, and that addressing these issues is the responsibility of individual Members;
4) For sharks, given the overlap in membership across tuna RFMOs, Members agreed that those other tuna RFMOs are the most appropriate for progressing future shark stock or risk assessments and that CCSBT's role should focus on contributing relevant data to support these processes;
5) For sea turtles, Members acknowledged that many turtle species likely have less overlap with SBT fisheries and agreed that other tuna RFMOs are generally better placed to lead assessments. The ERSWG recommended that Members continue supporting risk assessment efforts in other tuna RFMOs;

6) New Zealand and Indonesia will work together intersessionally to explore a possible capacity-building initiative on EM for consideration by the EC;
7) To satisfy the current EDE requirements, New Zealand will provide the 10 % random representative portion of reviewed camera data for input to the "observed" CCSBT dataset, noting that its exact EM review rate is not made publicly available for individual fleets;
8) ERSWG expressed its appreciation for the Seabird Project Manager's significant contribution to the Seabird Project over the past three years;

Agenda Item 15. Conclusion

15.1 Recommendation on timing and topic of next technical/in-person ERSWG meetings

131. For the timing of the next ERSTech meeting, the meeting agreed that the meeting would take place around March 2027.

132. The format of the next ERSTech meeting will be online, unless the EC raises issues with the ERSWG's recommendations on seabirds, in which case an in-person or hybrid meeting may be required, and be mainly used to consider the review of the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy.

133. The next in-person ERSWG meeting will be held in 2028, and the timing will be determined next year.

15.2 Adoption of meeting report

134. The report was adopted.

15.3. Close of meeting

135. The meeting closed at 12:02PM, 6 March 2026 in Canberra time.

List of Attachments

Attachment

1. List of Participants
2. Agenda
3. List of Documents
4. High-Risk Areas
5. Statement by Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) on Seabird Management Actions for High-Risk Areas
6. Revised ERSWG Data Exchange Requirements
7. Report from ERSWG on Progress Against Strategic Plan

Attachment 1

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The 16th Meeting of Ecologically Related Species Working Group

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Attachment 2

Agenda
Sixteenth meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group
3–6 March 2026
Hybrid: online and Canberra, Australia

1. Opening
   - 1.1 Adoption of the Agenda
   - 1.2 Adoption of Document List
   - 1.3 Appointment of Rapporteurs
2. Annual reports
   - 2.1 Members
   - 2.2 Secretariat report on the ERSWG Data Exchange
3. Reports of meetings and/or outcomes of other organisations relevant to the ERS Working Group
4. Review of progress with the work program from ERSWG 15
5. Information and advice on ERS
   - 5.1 Seabirds
     - 5.1.1 Information on stock status
     - 5.1.2 Ecological risk assessment
     - 5.1.3 Assessment and advice on management measures
     - 5.1.4 Seabird species identification
     - 5.1.5 Progress on the CCSBT Multi-year Seabird Strategy
   - 5.2 Sharks
     - 5.2.1 Information on stock status
     - 5.2.2 Estimates of ERS mortality and associated uncertainty
     - 5.2.3 Progress on the Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy
   - 5.3 Other ERS
6. CCSBT Strategic Plan 2023–2028
   - 6.1 Capacity Building Needs Assessment
7. Electronic Monitoring
   - 7.1 Consideration to incorporate EMS data into CCSBT data requirements
8. Education and public relations activities
9. Climate Change

10. Agenda for the Technical ERSWG 2027

11. Future work program

12. Other business

13. Referral of ERS matters for consideration by CCSBT subsidiary bodies

14. Recommendations and advice to the Extended Commission

15. Conclusion

    15.1. Recommendation on timing and topic of next technical/in-person ERSWG meetings

    15.2. Adoption of meeting report

    15.3. Close of meeting

Attachment 3

List of Documents
Sixteenth Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group

(CCSBT-ERS/2603/)

1. Provisional Agenda
2. List of Participants
3. List of Documents
4. (Secretariat) Summaries from the 2025 ERSWG Data Exchange (ERSWG Agenda Item 2.2)
5. (Secretariat) Progress on Action Items from the ERSWG 15 Workplan (ERSWG Agenda Item 4)
6. (CCSBT) Report of the Technical Working Group on CCSBT collaborative risk assessment for seabird bycatch with surface longlines in the Southern Hemisphere 2025 (ERSWG Agenda item 5.1.2)
7. (Secretariat) Progress on the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.5)
8. (Secretariat) Progress Against Actions Assigned to the Compliance Committee in the CCSBT Multi-Year Seabird Strategy (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.5)

9 (Rev.1). (Secretariat) Progress on the CCSBT Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.2.3 and 5.3)

10. (Secretariat) Report against Strategic Plan (ERSWG Agenda Item 6)
11. (Secretariat) Capacity Building Needs Assessment (ERSWG Agenda Item 6.1)
12. (Secretariat) Update on Seabird Project to Enhance Awareness of and Implementation of Seabird Measures (ERSWG Agenda Item 8)
13. (Japan) Discussion paper for SEFRA output: evaluating relationships between bycatch risk and SBT fishery (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.2)
14. (Australia) Protocols for collecting feather samples and photographing dead bycaught seabirds (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.4)
15. (New Zealand) Updated High risk areas discussion paper (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.3)

(CCSBT-ERS/2603/BGD)

1. (New Zealand) High risk areas discussion paper (*Previously* **CCSBT-ERS/2406/18 (Rev.1)**) (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.3)

(CCSBT-ERS/2603/Annual Report- ）

Australia	Australian Country Report Ecologically Related Species in the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery 2022–23 and 2023–24
Fisning Entity of Taiwan	National Report of Taiwan: Ecologically Related Species in the Taiwanese Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery 2023-24
Indonesia	Overview of ecologically related species (ERS) monitoring in the Indonesian southern bluefin tuna fishery in 2025
Japan	National Report of Japan Overview of Researches on Ecologically Related Species in Japanese SBT Longline Fishery, 2023-2024 (Rev.1)
New Zealand	Report to the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (Rev.1)
Republic of Korea	2026 Annual Report to the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG)
South Africa	South Africa's Annual Report to the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG) of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, 2024

(CCSBT- ERS/2603/Info)

1. (New Zealand) Overlap between pelagic longline fisheries and Black Petrels in the WCPFC Convention Area (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.1)
2. (New Zealand) Diving Ecology of *Procellaria* Petrels Highlights the Necessity of Combining Bird-Scaring Lines, Weighted Branch Lines, and Night Setting in Pelagic Longline Fisheries (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.1)
3. (New Zealand) Fine-scale overlap analyses of Gibson's and Southern Buller's Albatross with pelagic longline fishing effort (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.1)
4. (ACAP) Conservation Status of Albatrosses and Petrels (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.1)
5. (ACAP and BirdLife International) Status of Seabird Distribution Data used in the 2025 SEFRA (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.1)
6. (ACAP) Updated ACAP Best Practice Advice on Reducing the Bycatch of Albatrosses and Petrels in CCSBT Fisheries (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.3)
7. (ACAP) Position Statement of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels to CCSBT (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.5)

8. (ACAP) ACAP poster: Avian Flu alert for fisheries crews onboard vessels (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.4)
9. (BirdLife International) A probabilistic time geographic approach to quantifying seabird-vessel interactions (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.2)
10. (Humane World for Animals) Seabird Safe Pelagic Longline Hook Development (ERSWG Agenda Item 5.1.3)

(CCSBT-ERS/2603/Rep)

1. Report of the Thirty Second Annual Meeting of the Commission (October 2025)
2. Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the Compliance Committee (October 2025)
3. Report of the Thirty First Annual Meeting of the Commission (October 2024)
4. Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Compliance Committee (October 2024)
5. Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (June 2024)
6. Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (March 2022)
7. Report of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (May 2019)

Attachment 4

High Risk Areas

5.1.3 Assessment and advice on management measures

ERSWG16 - Canberra

Action 1A

To agree on a SBT seabird bycatch target for reducing the level of impact of SBT fishing operations on seabird populations, including, but not limited to:

a. Targets based on nominal reported seabird bycatch rates.

b. Targets based on SEFRA outputs

ERSWG agreed that relative mortality for each seabird population (as estimated using a SEFRA model like that finalized in 2025) should be reduced, so that the median is less than 0.10 and the upper 95% C.I. bound is less than 0.50.

Action 1C

Evaluate the effectiveness of the seabird CMMs introduced around 2005 by tuna RFMOs, in the context of reducing the overall seabird mortalities, taking into consideration fleet differences and seabird distributions and identify the areas for improvement. The outcomes from the evaluation will be communicated across tuna RFMOs and used as a basis for future evaluations.

In conjunction with all other threats and risks to seabird populations, despite the seabird CMMs in place for tuna RFMOs, many seabird taxa are still threatened with extinction, declining, and still subject to significant bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries. In that context, although those CMMs may have been effective at reducing seabird bycatch, they have not resulted in the recovery of such populations. This is partly because any reduction in overall seabird bycatch rate has not necessarily resulted in sufficient reduction of the bycatch of species of concern. ERSWG believes that the focused effort of monitoring and reducing bycatch in the high risk areas identified with SEFRA, using available methods that are well understood, practical, and have minimal impact on target species catch, would be more effective and that improvements over time can be tracked using periodic SEFRA analyses estimating catchability and risk over different time blocks.

Action 1D

Agree on the list of priority species and corresponding management targets, taking into account the status of seabird population, distributional overlaps with SBT fisheries, and significance of SBT fisheries in their mortality.

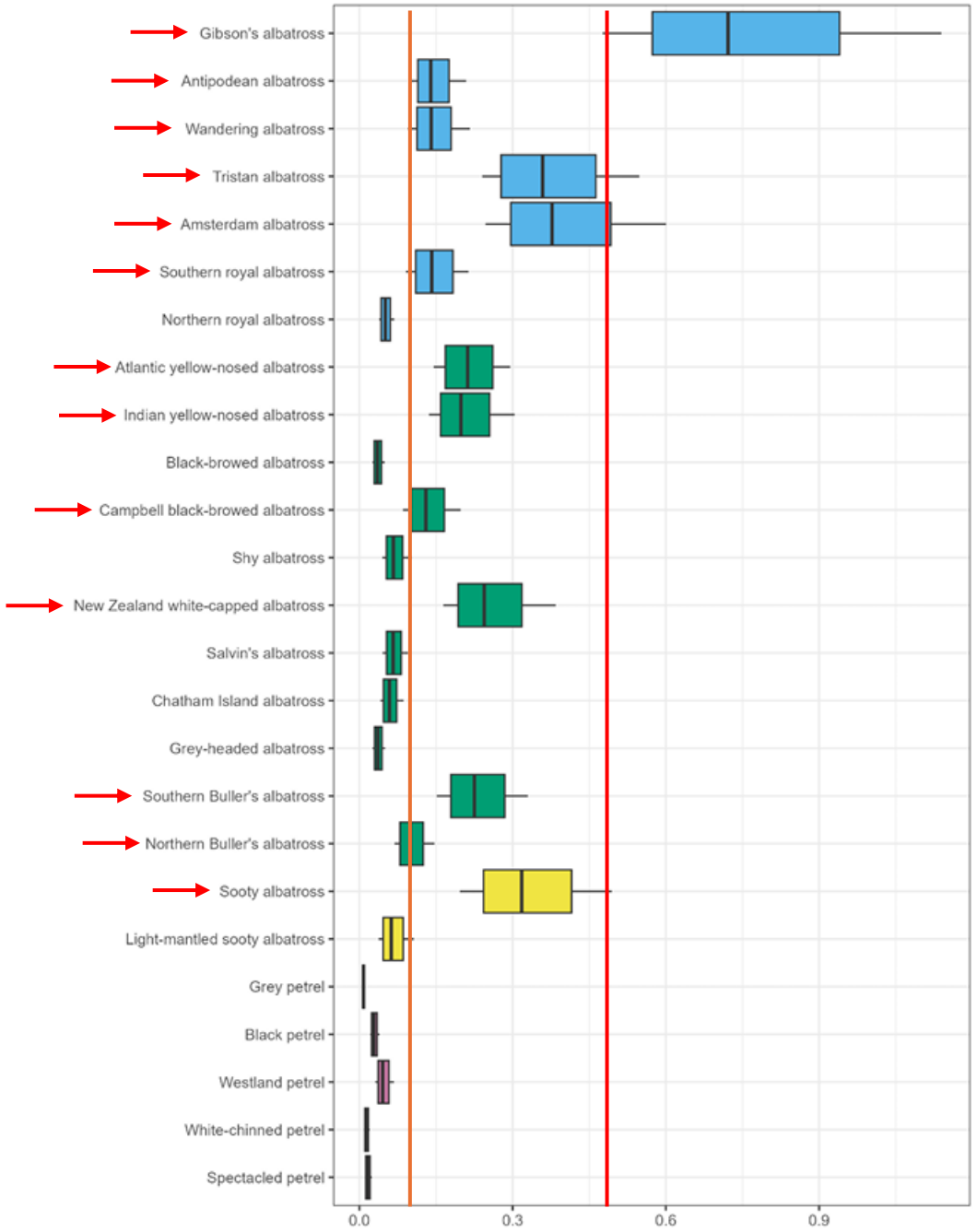
Thirteen species of seabirds were assessed as having a median or upper 95% C.I. 0.1 or 0.5 respectively from contributing CCSBT member pelagic longline fisheries. ERSWG agreed that these should be considered as priority species. Within this group, the four species at highest risk, Gibson's, Amsterdam, Tristan, and Sooty albatrosses. These had the largest effect on the overall risk surface for the priority species.

Action 1D

Preferred option for selecting Priority Species

Relative Mortality

- Median 0.1
- Upper 95% C.I. 0.5



Action 1D

Preferred option for selecting Priority Species

Relative Mortality

- Median 0.1
- Upper 95% C.I. 0.5

FAO Code	Common name	Spp. Group	IUCN	Total RM
DIW	Gibson's albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.735
DQS	Antipodean albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.142
DIX	Wandering albatross	Great albatross	VU	0.143
DBN	Tristan albatross	Great albatross	CR	0.356
DAM	Amsterdam albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.387
DIP	Southern royal albatross	Great albatross	VU	0.142
DIQ	Northern royal albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.051
DCR	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.211
TQH	Indian yellow-nosed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.201
DIM	Black-browed albatross	Mollymawk	LC	0.035
TQW	Campbell black-browed albatross	Mollymawk	VU/LC	0.13
DCU	Shy albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.067
TWD	New Zealand white-capped albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.245
DKS	Salvin's albatross	Mollymawk	VU	0.067
DER	Chatham Island albatross	Mollymawk	VU	0.06
DIC	Grey-headed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.036
DSB	Southern Buller's albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.228
DNB	Northern Buller's albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.101
PHU	Sooty albatross	Sooty albatross	EN	0.319
PHE	Light-mantled sooty albatross	Sooty albatross	NT	0.064
PCI	Grey petrel	Medium petrel	NT	0.008
PRK	Black petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.029
PCW	Westland petrel	Medium petrel	EN	0.046
PRO	White-chinned petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.013
PCN	Spectacled petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.016

Action 1F

Establish a robust definition of high-risk areas that takes into account the precautionary approach by:

a. Establishing a definition of high-risk areas.

b. Identifying areas that meet the definition.

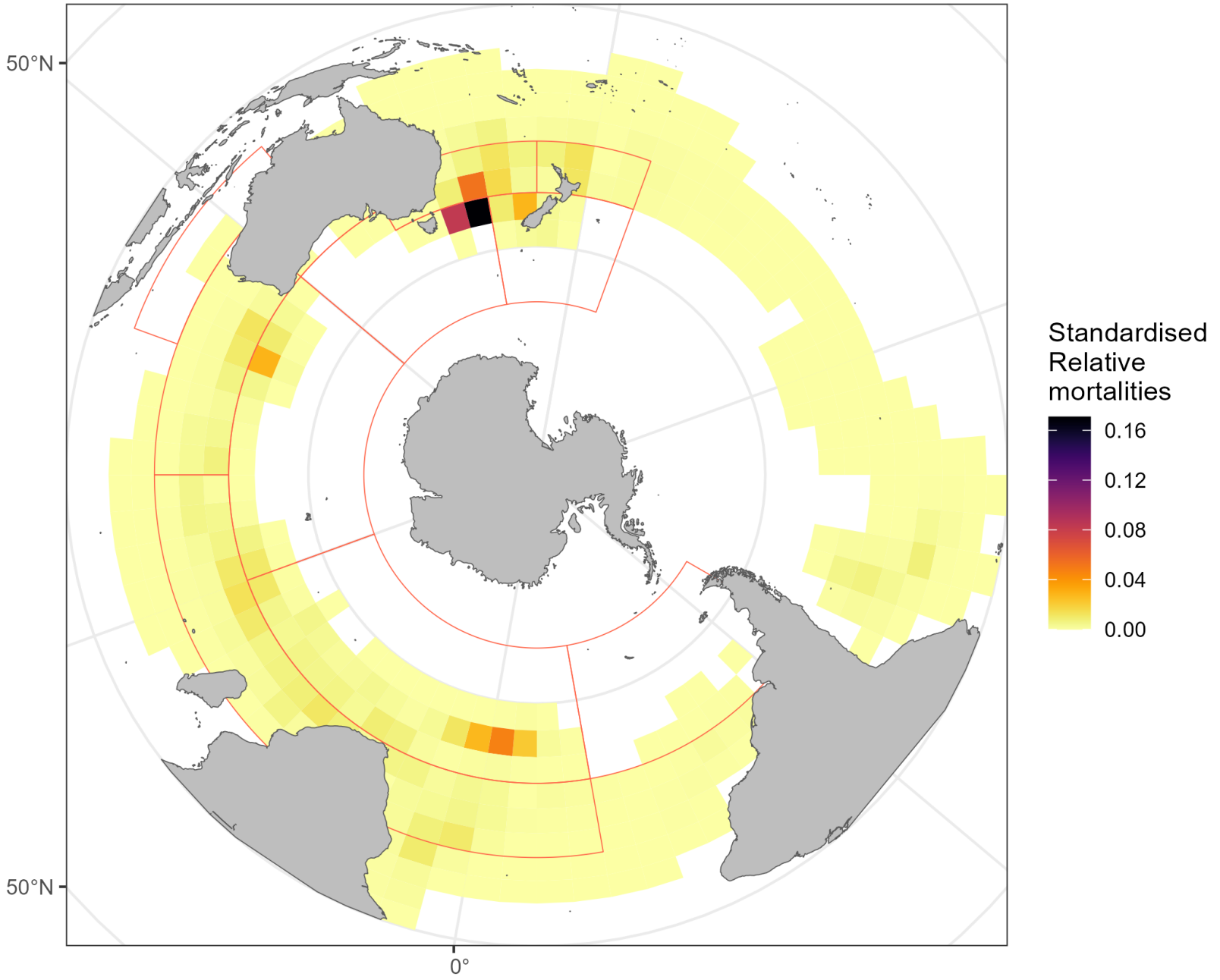
c. Characterising the nature of the risk in each area.

d. Developing tailored measures aimed at reducing those risks.

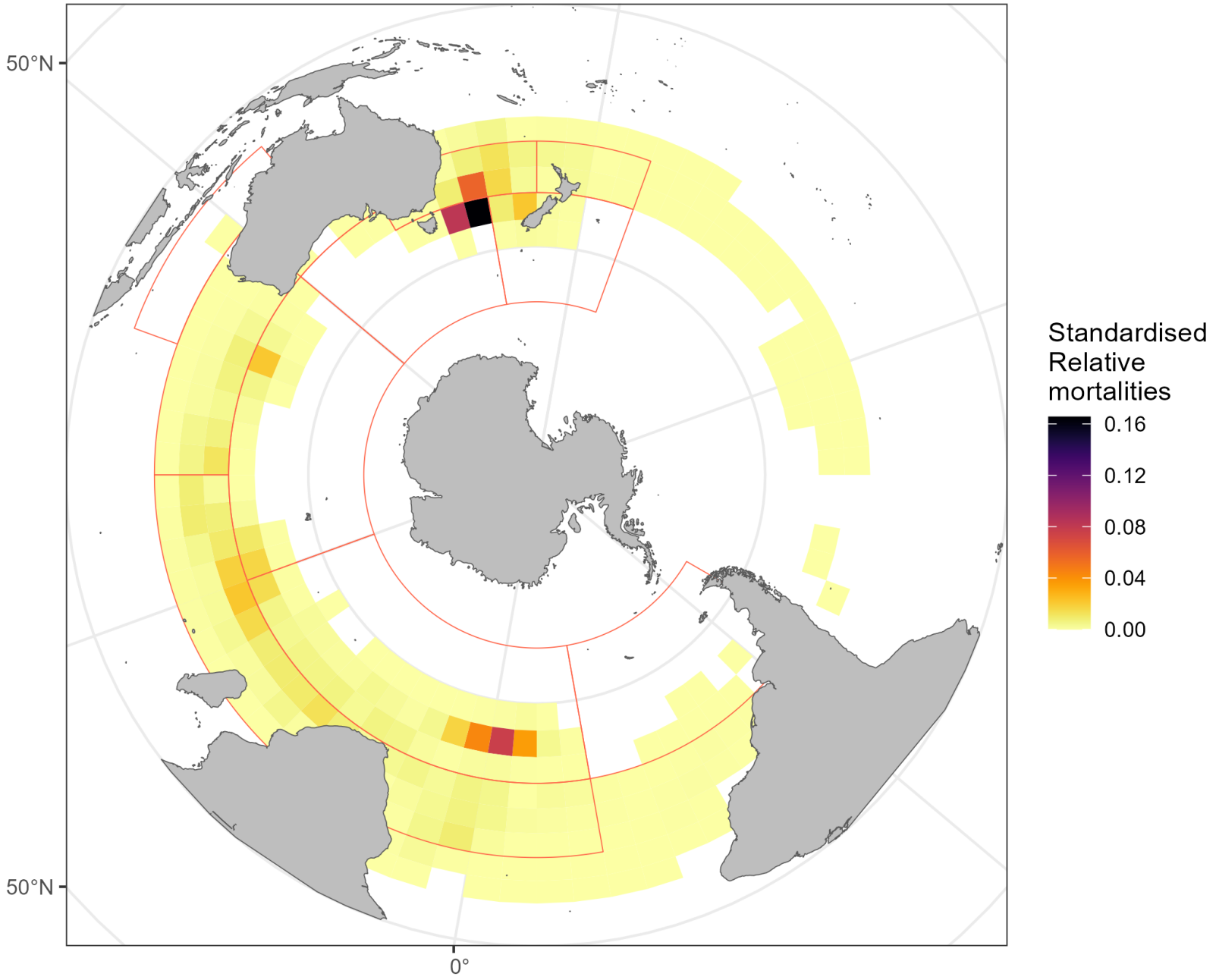
a) ERSWG agreed that high risk areas could be robustly established by identifying the 5x5 degree squares that contained 50, 60 or 70% of the total risk posed to priority species by contributing CCSBT member pelagic longline fisheries.

b) Such areas can readily be mapped using outputs from the 2025 SEFRA and appear in the Tasman Sea (where Gibson's albatross are caught), Indian Ocean (where Amsterdam albatross are caught) and South Atlantic (where Tristan albatross and Sooty albatross are caught).

Total risk layer
Priority spp.
Non-zero



Total risk layer
Top 4 spp., RM > 0.3
Non-zero



c) Characterising the nature of the risk in each area.

Data sources for ocean basin coordinates:
Limits of Oceans and Seas (1953), International Hydrographic Organization, *Special Publication N.28 p.45*

63.—Tasman Sea.

On the West.

A line from Gabo Island (near Cape Howe, 37°30' S) to the Northeast point of East Sister Island (148° E) thence along the 148th meridian to Flinders Island; beyond this Island a line running to the Eastward of the Vansittart Shoals to Barren Island, and from Cape Barren (the Easternmost point of Barren Island) to Eddystone Point (41° S) in Tasmania, thence along the East coast to South East Cape, the Souhern point of Tasmania.

On the North.

The parallel of 30° S from the Australian coast Eastward as far as a line joining the East extremities of Elizabeth Reef and South East Rock (31°47' S, 159°18' E) then to the Southward along this line to the South East Rock.

On the Northeast.

From the South East Rock to the North point of Three Kings Islands (34°10' S, 172°10' E) thence to North Cape in New Zealand.

On the East.

In Cook Strait.

A line joining the South extreme of the foul ground off Cape Palliser (Ngawi) and the Lighthouse on Cape Campbell (Te Karaka).

In Foveaux Strait (46°45' S).

A line joining the Light on Waipapapa Point (168°33' E) with East Head (47°02' S) of Stewart Island (Rakiura).

On the Southeast.

A line running from South West Cape, Stewart Island, through The Snares (48° S, 166°30' E) to North West Cape, Auckland Island (50°30' S, 166°10' E), through this island to its Southern point.

On the South.

A line joining the Southern point of Auckland Island (50°55' S, 166° E) to South East Cape, the Southern point of Tasmania.

45.—Indian Ocean.

On the North.

The Southern limits of the Arabian Sea (39) and the Laccadive Sea (42), the Southern limit of the Bay of Bengal (43), the Southern limits of the East Indian Archipelago (48), and the Southern limit of the Great Australian Bight (62).

On the West.

From Cape Agulhas in 20° long. East, Southward along this meridian to the Antarctic Continent.

On the East.

From South East Cape, the Southern point of Tasmania down the meridian 146°55' E to the Antarctic Continent.

On the South.

The Antarctic Continent.

32.—South Atlantic Ocean.

(*) *On the Southwest.*

The meridian of Cape Horn (67°16' W) from Tierra del Fuego to the Antarctic Continent; a line from Cape Virgins (52°21' S, 68°21' W) to Cape Espiritu Santo, Tierra del Fuego, the Eastern entrance to Magellan Strait.

On the West.

The limit of the Rio de La Plata (33).

On the North.

The Southern limit of the North Atlantic Ocean (23).

On the Northeast.

The limit of the Gulf of Guinea (34).

On the Southeast.

From Cape Agulhas along the meridian of 20° East to the Antarctic continent.

On the South.

The Antarctic Continent.

Proportion of risk contributed from the three basins identified to contain High Risk Areas

Priority spp. Non-zero

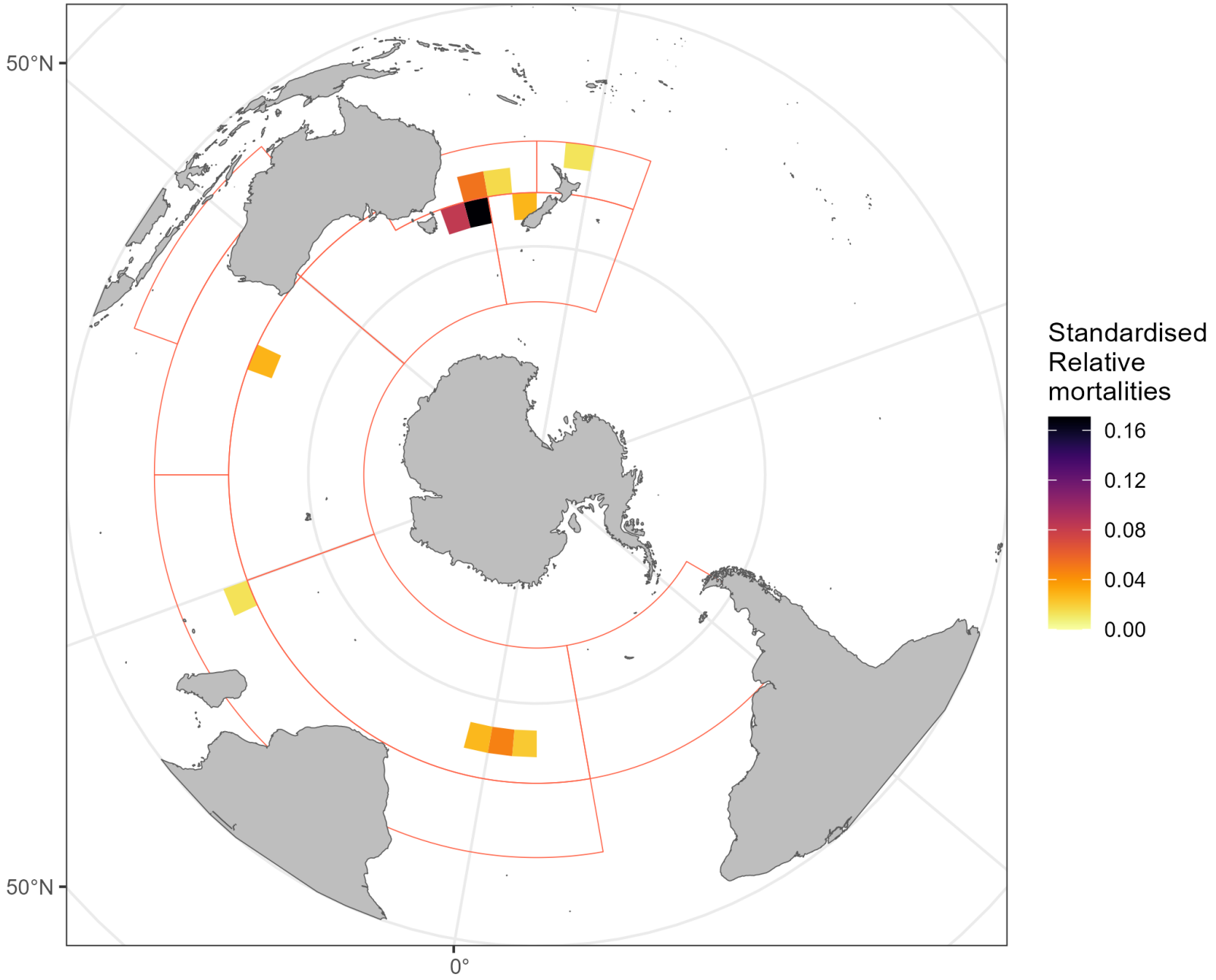
Note, these columns do not sum to 100% as there is some risk outside the Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, and TasmanSea

Spp. Code	Common name	Spp. Group	IUCN	RM Total	Atlantic Ocean %	Indian Ocean %	Tasman Sea %
DIW	Gibson's albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.735	0%	0%	97%
DQS	Antipodean albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.142	0%	0%	49%
DIX	Wandering albatross	Great albatross	VU	0.143	7%	82%	8%
DBN	Tristan albatross	Great albatross	CR	0.356	82%	18%	0%
DAM	Amsterdam albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.387	0%	100%	0%
DIP	Southern royal albatross	Great albatross	VU	0.142	3%	1%	89%
DIQ	Northern royal albatross	Great albatross	EN	0.051	10%	32%	21%
DCR	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.211	92%	8%	0%
TQH	Indian yellow-nosed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.201	2%	81%	17%
DIM	Black-browed albatross	Mollymawk	LC	0.035	52%	23%	10%
TQW	Campbell black-browed albatross	Mollymawk	VU/LC	0.130	0%	32%	55%
DCU	Shy albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.067	4%	37%	59%
TWD	New Zealand white-capped albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.245	7%	19%	70%
DKS	Salvin's albatross	Mollymawk	VU	0.067	1%	13%	28%
DER	Chatham Island albatross	Mollymawk	VU	0.060	0%	0%	7%
DIC	Grey-headed albatross	Mollymawk	EN	0.036	44%	38%	15%
DSB	Southern Buller's albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.228	0%	0%	75%
DNB	Northern Buller's albatross	Mollymawk	NT	0.101	0%	0%	16%
PHU	Sooty albatross	Sooty albatross	EN	0.319	52%	48%	0%
PHE	Light-mantled sooty albatross	Sooty albatross	NT	0.064	18%	34%	47%
PCI	Grey petrel	Medium petrel	NT	0.008	27%	21%	26%
PRK	Black petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.029	0%	0%	20%
PCW	Westland petrel	Medium petrel	EN	0.046	0%	0%	81%
PRO	White-chinned petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.013	41%	33%	4%
PCN	Spectacled petrel	Medium petrel	VU	0.016	99%	1%	0%

Action 1F
Option summary

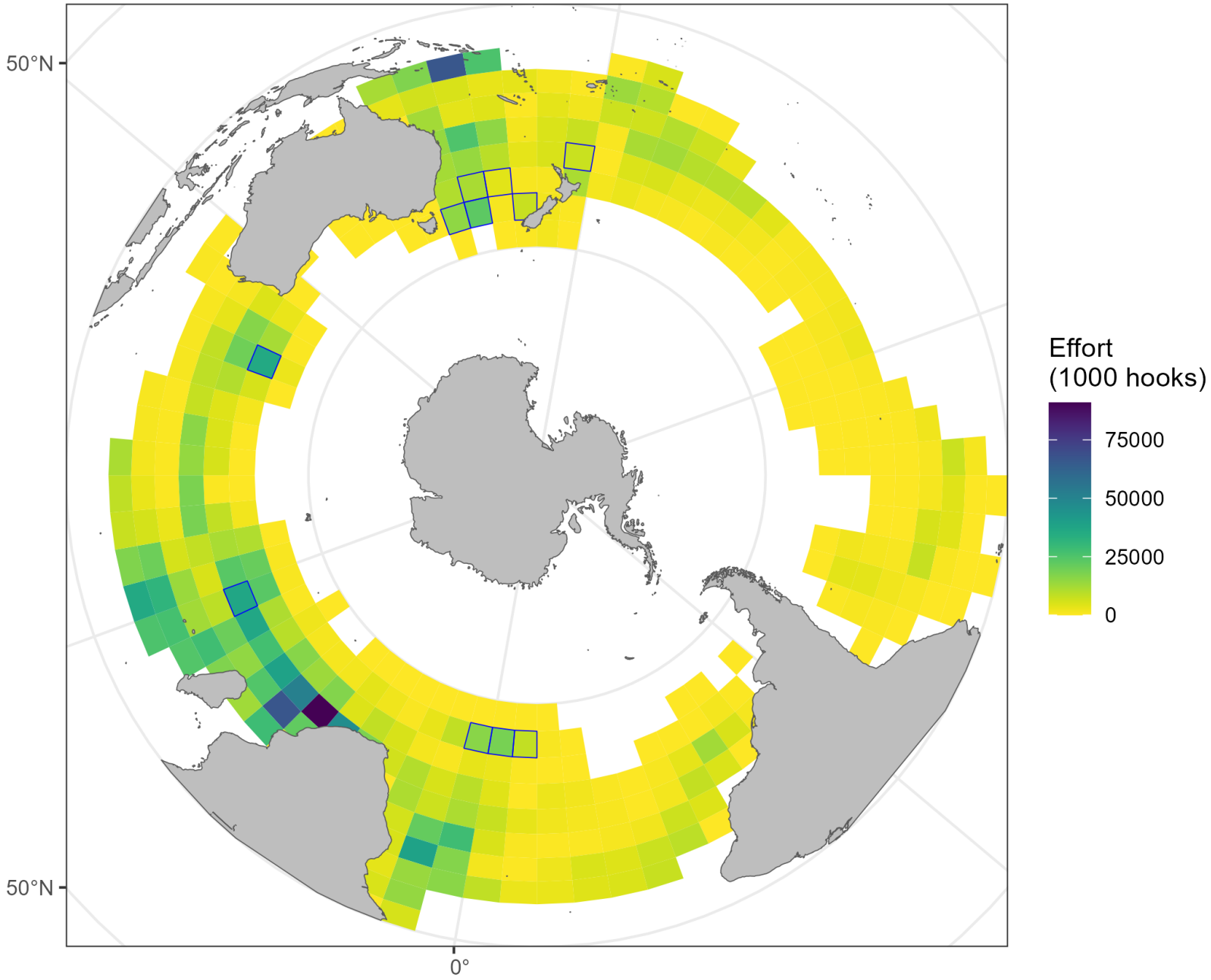
1. High Risk Areas defined as 50% of cumulative standardised risk to Priority Species identified under Action 1D
2. High Risk Areas defined as 60% of cumulative standardised risk to Priority Species identified under Action 1D
3. High Risk Areas defined as 70% of cumulative standardised risk to Priority Species identified under Action 1D

Action 1F
Option 1
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 50%



Action 1F
Option 1
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 50%

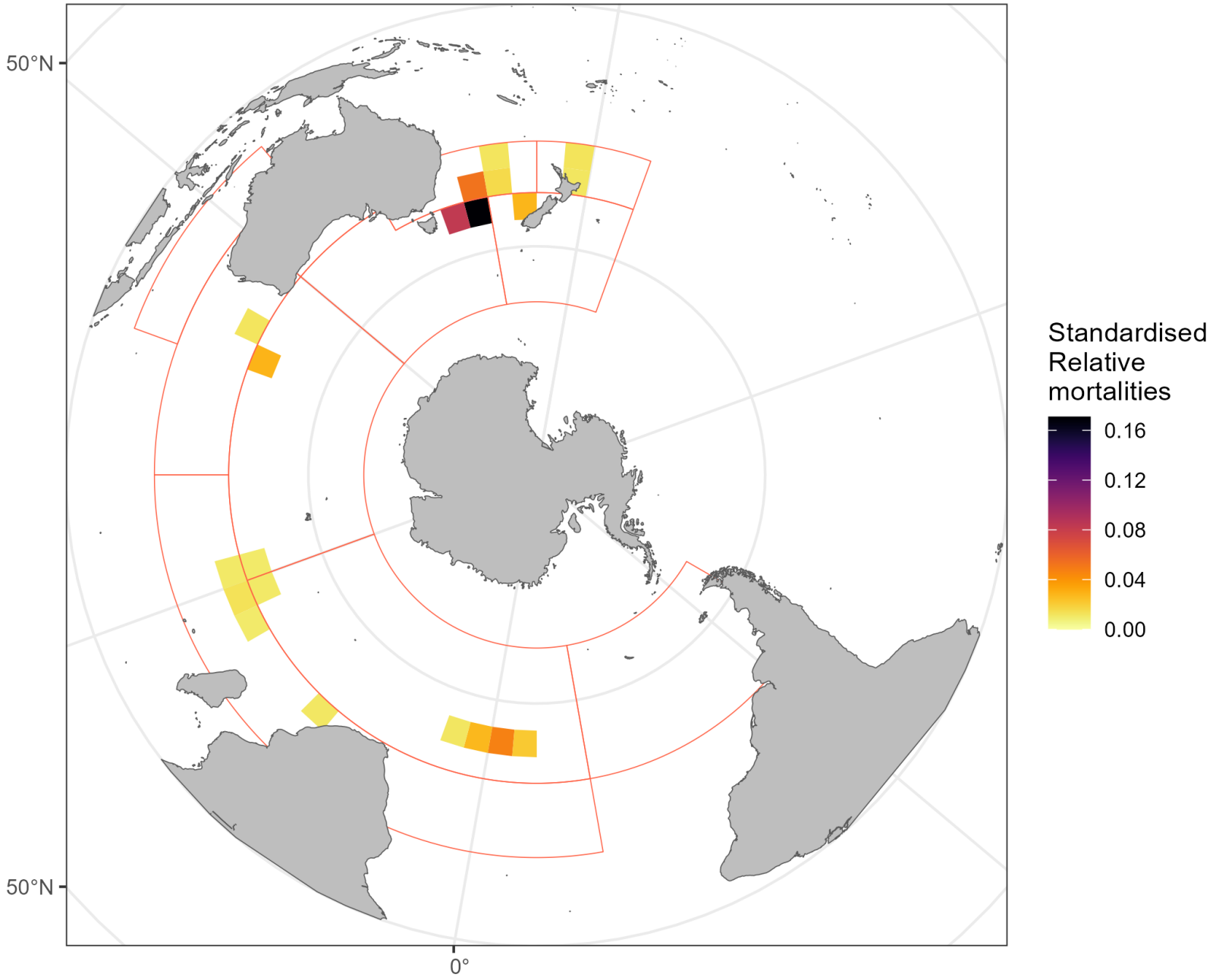
7.9% of contributing CCSBT member effort within areas that overlap with assessed priority albatross and petrel species



Action 1F
Option 1
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 50%

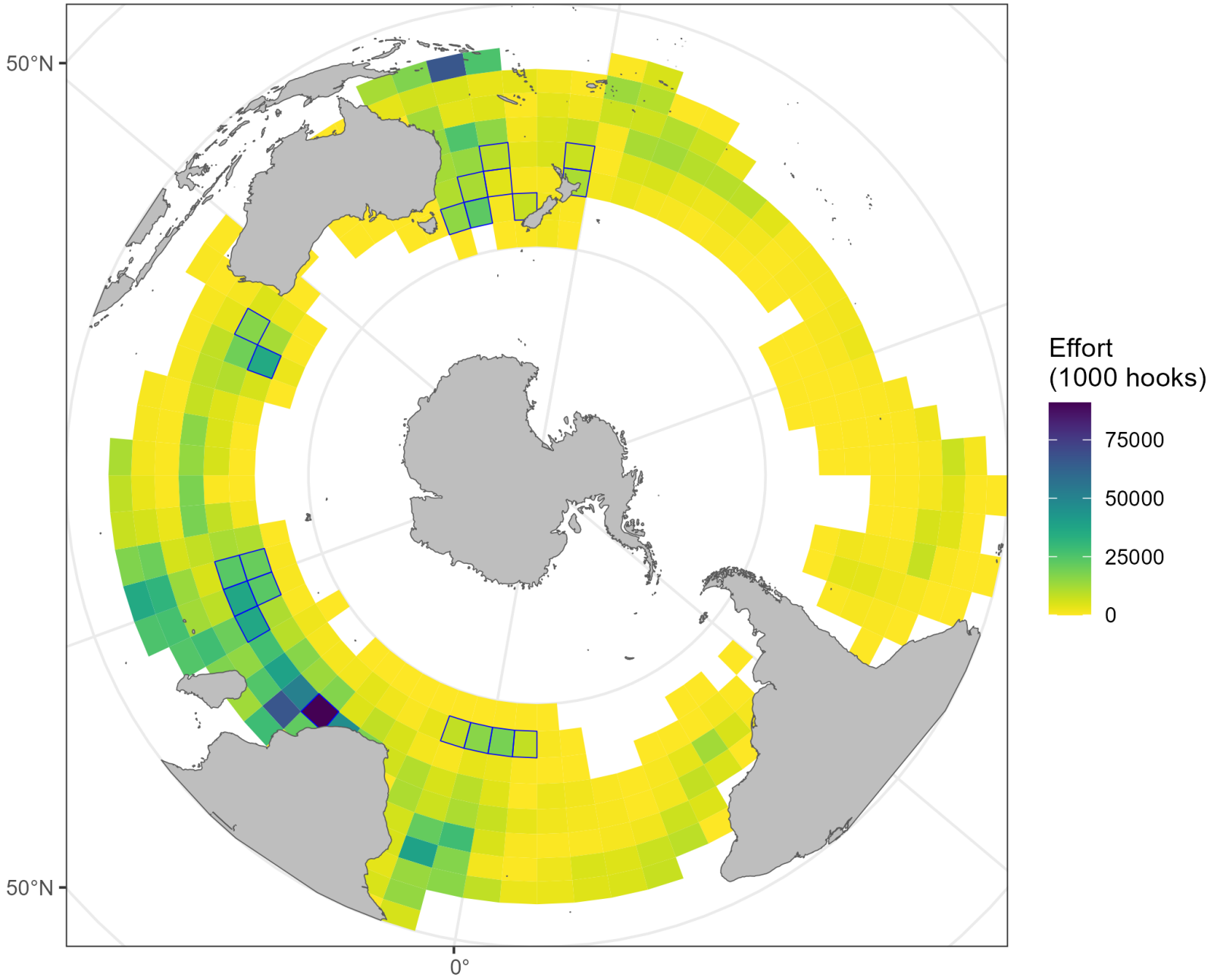
Spp. Code	Common name	Genus	RM Total	RM HRA50	Percent
DIW	Gibson's albatross	Diomedea	0.735	0.621	84%
DBN	Tristan albatross	Diomedea	0.356	0.164	46%
TWD	New Zealand white-capped albatross	Thalassarche	0.245	0.157	64%
DSB	Southern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.228	0.154	67%
PHU	Sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.319	0.133	42%
DIP	Southern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.111	78%
TQW	Campbell black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.130	0.073	56%
TQH	Indian yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.201	0.070	35%
DQS	Antipodean albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.064	45%
DAM	Amsterdam albatross	Diomedea	0.387	0.059	15%
PHE	Light-mantled sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.064	0.041	65%
DCU	Shy albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.041	62%
DCR	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.211	0.036	17%
PCW	Westland petrel	Procellaria	0.046	0.028	61%
DIX	Wandering albatross	Diomedea	0.143	0.021	14%
DIC	Grey-headed albatross	Thalassarche	0.036	0.017	49%
DKS	Salvin's albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.017	26%
DIQ	Northern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.051	0.017	33%
DNB	Northern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.101	0.013	13%
DIM	Black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.035	0.006	17%
DER	Chatham Island albatross	Thalassarche	0.060	0.004	7%
PCI	Grey petrel	Procellaria	0.008	0.003	39%
PRK	Black petrel	Procellaria	0.029	0.003	10%
PRO	White-chinned petrel	Procellaria	0.013	0.001	8%
PCN	Spectacled petrel	Procellaria	0.016	0.000	0%

Action 1F
Option 2
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 60%



Action 1F
Option 2
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 60%

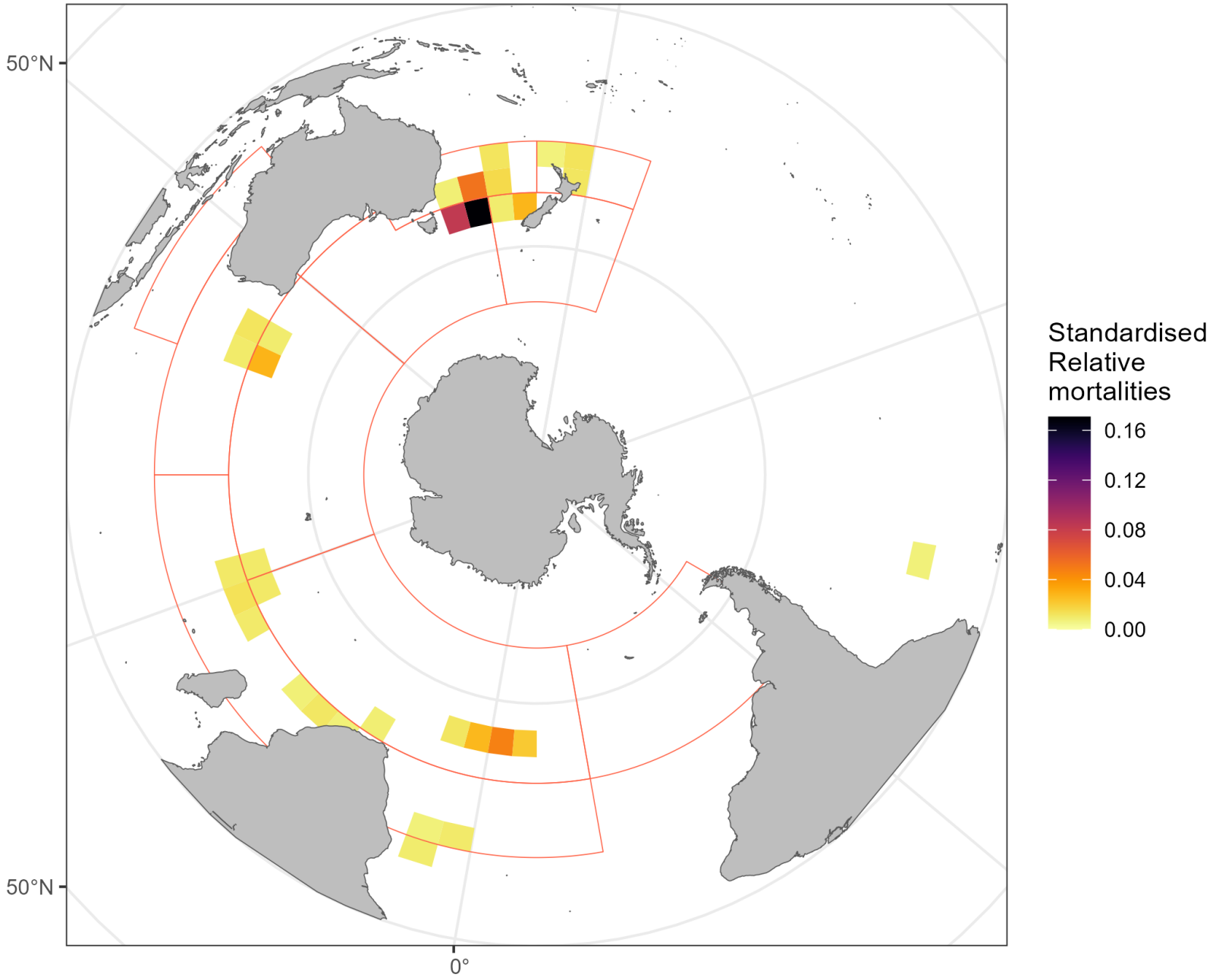
18.2% of contributing CCSBT member effort within areas that overlap with assessed albatross and petrel species



Action 1F
Option 2
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 60%

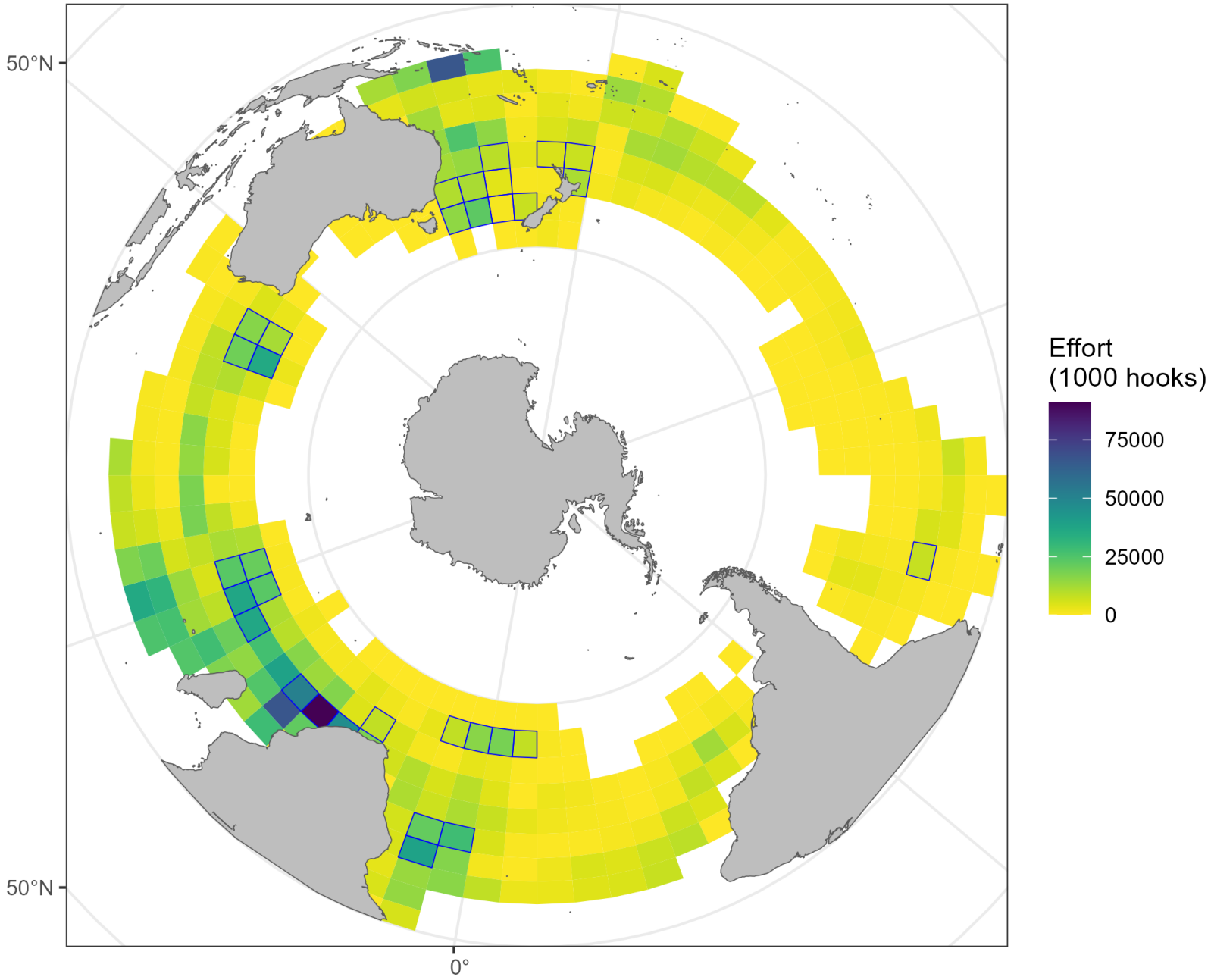
Spp. Code	Common name	Genus	RM Total	RM HRA60	Percent
DIW	Gibson's albatross	Diomedea	0.735	0.648	88%
DBN	Tristan albatross	Diomedea	0.356	0.192	54%
PHU	Sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.319	0.186	58%
TWD	New Zealand white-capped albatross	Thalassarche	0.245	0.173	71%
DSB	Southern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.228	0.164	72%
DAM	Amsterdam albatross	Diomedea	0.387	0.153	39%
DIP	Southern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.118	83%
TQH	Indian yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.201	0.096	48%
TQW	Campbell black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.130	0.088	68%
DQS	Antipodean albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.080	56%
DIX	Wandering albatross	Diomedea	0.143	0.046	32%
DCU	Shy albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.046	68%
PHE	Light-mantled sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.064	0.045	71%
DCR	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.211	0.041	19%
PCW	Westland petrel	Procellaria	0.046	0.035	75%
DIQ	Northern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.051	0.028	54%
DKS	Salvin's albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.025	38%
DIC	Grey-headed albatross	Thalassarche	0.036	0.021	58%
DNB	Northern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.101	0.020	20%
DIM	Black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.035	0.008	23%
PRK	Black petrel	Procellaria	0.029	0.007	25%
DER	Chatham Island albatross	Thalassarche	0.060	0.007	12%
PCI	Grey petrel	Procellaria	0.008	0.005	62%
PRO	White-chinned petrel	Procellaria	0.013	0.002	17%
PCN	Spectacled petrel	Procellaria	0.016	0.000	1%

Action 1F
Option 3
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 70%



Action 1F
Option 3
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 70%

29.0% of contributing CCSBT member effort within areas that overlap with assessed albatross and petrel species



Action 1F
Option 3
Cumulative standarised Relative Mortality
- 70%

Spp. Code	Common name	Genus	RM Total	RM HRA70	Percent
DIW	Gibson's albatross	Diomedea	0.735	0.684	93%
DBN	Tristan albatross	Diomedea	0.356	0.237	67%
PHU	Sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.319	0.204	64%
TWD	New Zealand white-capped albatross	Thalassarche	0.245	0.200	82%
DSB	Southern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.228	0.183	80%
DAM	Amsterdam albatross	Diomedea	0.387	0.177	46%
TQH	Indian yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.201	0.134	67%
DIP	Southern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.125	88%
DCR	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Thalassarche	0.211	0.109	51%
TQW	Campbell black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.130	0.105	80%
DQS	Antipodean albatross	Diomedea	0.142	0.089	62%
DIX	Wandering albatross	Diomedea	0.143	0.058	41%
DCU	Shy albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.052	78%
PHE	Light-mantled sooty albatross	Phoebetria	0.064	0.048	75%
PCW	Westland petrel	Procellaria	0.046	0.038	83%
DNB	Northern Buller's albatross	Thalassarche	0.101	0.036	36%
DKS	Salvin's albatross	Thalassarche	0.067	0.032	48%
DIQ	Northern royal albatross	Diomedea	0.051	0.031	60%
DIC	Grey-headed albatross	Thalassarche	0.036	0.022	62%
DIM	Black-browed albatross	Thalassarche	0.035	0.014	41%
DER	Chatham Island albatross	Thalassarche	0.060	0.013	23%
PRK	Black petrel	Procellaria	0.029	0.010	35%
PRO	White-chinned petrel	Procellaria	0.013	0.006	43%
PCI	Grey petrel	Procellaria	0.008	0.005	68%
PCN	Spectacled petrel	Procellaria	0.016	0.000	2%

Code

High Risk Areas - ERSWG.r

Attachment 5

Statement by Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) on Seabird Management Actions for High-Risk Areas

With the outcomes of the CCSBT Spatially Explicit Fisheries Risk Assessment (SEFRA) model now available, ACAP highlighted to the Thirty Second Annual Meeting of the Commission the importance of CCSBT moving directly to developing area-based measures. Members emphasised at CCSBT32 that the next step should be for the ERSWG to consider the outcomes of the assessment and potential management actions.

SEFRA clearly demonstrates that CCSBT fisheries alone are a significant conservation threat to seabirds, especially threatened albatrosses and petrel species. The risks posed by pelagic longline fishing by CCSBT Members to these species recognised by ERSWG which has identified key areas where management actions should be targeted.

ACAP urges that prompt and effective management action be taken in these high-risk areas to reduce the risk of further population declines for species already identified as threatened with extinction and that are in decline.

ACAP encourages CCSBT to consider the full range of management actions available to address this conservation crisis. The range of management actions available to CCSBT include, but are not limited to:

- Adoption of the 3/3 recommended ACAP Best Practice Measures, or hook-shielding devices as a standalone alternative.
- Requiring pre nomination by vessels intending to fish for SBT in identified high-risk areas.
- Requiring all such nominated SBT fishing vessels to either carry observers onboard or to install operational EM systems to improve monitoring of fishing operations, recording of interactions with seabirds, and the effective implementation of the seabird mitigation measures.
- Requiring Members to delineate high-risk areas within Members' VMS monitoring and identification systems.
- Requiring all fishing vessels that wish to pass through but not conduct fishing operations in high-risk areas to stow all fishing gear onboard while transiting these areas, and to advise their management authorities prior to and after completing the transit of any high-risk area.
- Requiring Members to identify and report annually on what compliance actions have been taken for any of their fishing vessels that enter a high-risk area that has not pre-nominated to fish in such areas, or has not
- Where only a 2/3 mitigation measures are used, requiring fishing vessels to immediately adopt night settling where three or more incidental mortalities of high-priority species occur, recognising that if species identification is not achieved then this management action will apply if three or more seabirds are

bycaught. Requiring such vessels to continue to adopt night setting for the remainder of the fishing season when fishing occurs in any high-risk area.

- Requiring night setting to be completed entirely during the night, recognising that setting longlines across night and day does not represent night setting: either when setting commences at night and finishes after the nautical dawn, or when setting commences prior to the nautical dusk and continues into the night.
- Requiring a fishing vessel to cease fishing in any high-risk area for the remainder of the fishing season if, after adopting night setting, a further three or more incidental mortalities of high-priority species occur, recognising that if species identification is not achieved then this management action will apply if a further three or more seabirds are bycaught.

ACAP recognises that CCSBT defers to ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC regarding the development of conservation and management measures (CMMs). Therefore, ACAP urges Members to develop and agree to the management actions for high-risk areas and then advocate collectively for their immediate incorporation in the relevant CMMs.

Attachment 6

ERSWG Data Exchange

(Revised at the Thirty-Third Annual meeting, 8 October 2026)

Introduction

The ERSWG Data Exchange is divided into three sections:

1. Data to be provided;
2. Frequency & timeframe for data provision; and
3. Confidentiality.

The Data Exchange described here is intended for the sharing of information for "general" ERSWG purposes. It is expected that the ERSWG will conduct assessments from time to time that will require more detailed information and CCSBT Members have expressed their willingness, in principle, to share more detailed information on a case by case basis with those who have been tasked with leading such assessments.

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1. Data to be provided

ERSWG 9 made three important recommendations to the Extended Commission that form the basis of this data exchange proposal. These are that:

- For the purpose of the ERS Data Exchange, the SBT fishery is defined as all fishing effort by authorised vessels[1] for shots/sets where SBT was either targeted or caught[2]. Data for the full SBT fishery as defined here is to be provided as part of this data exchange. Data should not be provided for fishing that does not match this definition.
- Data are to be provided by year, quarter, and 5x5 degree square..
- The specific data items to be provided are:
    - Country/Fishing Entity (*suggest using 2 digit country code, e.g. "JP"*)
    - Calendar year
    - Quarter
    - Species (*or group*[3])
    - Fishery (*defined by a combination of gear and fleet – see Attachment A*)
    - Human observer / Electronic monitoring
    - Stratum (*5x5 degree squares*[4])
    - Total effort[5]
    - Total observed effort[5]
    - Fate of observed captures (*number*), separated into 3 categories:
        - Retained (dead)
        - Discarded (dead)
        - Released (live)
        - Other[6]
    - Proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures

  For the actual exchange of data, the above data items will be provided in two separate tables as outlined in **Attachment A**. This style of data provision would prevent double counting and possible confusion in relation to the effort information.

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[1] Authorised vessels are vessels on the CCSBT authorised list of vessels during the relevant calendar year.

[2] For clarification, it is intended that the only information that would be included in the exchange is information from those shots that targeted **or** caught SBT. Hence, if a bycatch vessel only caught 1 SBT for the year, it would only be data from that one SBT shot that would be included in the exchanged information.

[3] Information should be provided by species (including the scientific name) wherever practical. For species where species specific reporting is not practical (e.g. due to insufficient data, or the high level of work involved), then the level of taxonomic reporting should be at least to the level specified in Table 3. The ideal way to provide species information would be to use the 3 alpha FAO Species Code. If this is not possible, provide a code for the species and provide a separate lookup table that gives the species code, scientific and common names, family name etc.

[4] Provide top left coordinates of 5x5 degree square. Use integer format with a minus sign for south latitudes and west longitudes, e.g. -120, -35.

[5] For longline provide number of hooks, for purse seine provide number of sets.

[6] All other captures not included in the columns for Retained (dead), Discarded (dead), and Released (live), e.g. released with undetermined life status.

To be consistent with standard practise of the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC):

- Data will be provided for the most recently completed calendar year (e.g. the 2018 data exchange would provide data for the 2017 calendar year); and
- The data exchange will include any updates for the previous calendar year (i.e. the 2018 data exchange would also include revised data for 2016).

For the very first exchange of data:

- Data for 2010 and 2011 will be provided by 30 April 2013 for all species[7]; and
- Data for 2012 will be provided by 31 July 2013.

For an initial period after the first data exchange (possibly 3 years, but still to be determined), Members will work towards improving the quality of their data and they will be able to revise any submitted data with improved information during this period. After this initial period of data improvement, changes to past data should be accompanied by an explanation of the changes.

2. Frequency & timeframe for data provision

Consistent with standard practise of the Extended Scientific Committee (ESC), it is proposed that:

- The ERS data exchange occurs on an annual basis, regardless of whether there is an ERSWG meeting in that year[8].
- The required ERS data is submitted to the Secretariat by 31 July.

3. Confidentiality

The data will be treated in accordance with the "Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the CCSBT" and will be rated as "low risk". This means that the data will not be publicly available but are available to Members and CNMs without specific approval and may be placed on the CCSBT Data CD and on the private area of the CCSBT web site. Under certain defined conditions these data may also be shared with other RFMOs

It is envisaged that the Secretariat would load exchanged ERS data to a special section of the private area of the web site titled "ERSWG Data Exchange" that Members and CNMs can access.

[7] It may be useful to have a longer time-series of data, but there will almost certainly be problems in the first data submission so it makes sense to keep the initial time-series short while these problems are "ironed-out". Discussion on whether or not a longer time-series is necessary could take place at an ERSWG meeting after the initial data submission.

[8] For data required as part of the CCSBT Management Procedure, the ESC decided that these data should be provided every year despite these data only being required every third year. This was to ensure that the skills and knowledge required to provide the necessary data were retained and so that there would be very few problems in provision of that data when required. This has proved to be a successful strategy for the ESC that makes equally good sense for an ERS Data Exchange.

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Attachment A

Proposed Format for Providing Data for the ERSWG Data Exchange

The information should be provided in electronic form in two separate tables (e.g. 2 MS-Excel spreadsheets) as described below. The common columns in the two tables are highlighted in yellow.

Table 1: Total fishing and observed effort per country, year, fishery and strata.

Country / Fishing Entity[9]	Calendar Year	Quarter	Fishery		Human Observer / EM[10]	Area[11]		Total & Observed Effort		Proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures								
			Gear Code[12]	Fleet Code[13]		Longitude	Latitude	Total Effort[5]	Total Observed Effort[5]	TP + NS[14]	TP + WB[14]	NS + WB[14]	TP + WB + NS[14]	TP[14]	NS[14]	WB[14]	NIL[14]	Others (add additional columns if required)

Table 2: Observed and estimated captures/mortalities for each species, by country, year, fishery and strata.

Country / Fishing Entity[9]	Calendar Year	Quarter	Fishery		Human Observer / EM[10]	Area[11]		Species Code *(or group code)*[3]	Species Scientific Name or Species Group Name	Observed Captures			
										Fate (numbers)			
			Gear Code[12]	Fleet Code[13]		Longitude	Latitude			Retained (dead)	Discarded (dead)	Released (live)	Other[15]

[9] Use the two digit country code (e.g. AU, EU, ID, JP, KR, NZ, TW and ZA).
[10] Use codes OBS = human observer, EM = Electronic monitoring. The ERSWG recognised that there was no agreement that EM replace the requirement for 10% observer coverage, and that the proposed inclusion of the option to report on EM results was not intended to imply any such agreement but only to clarify the source of any data that were reported
[11] Provide top left coordinates of 5x5 degree square. Use and integer format with a minus sign for south latitudes and west longitudes, e.g. -120, -35.
[12] Use the gear codes described in the CCSBT CDS Resolution (e.g. "LL" for longline, "PS" for purse seine, "TROL" for troll, etc.).
[13] In most cases, this is just the two digit country code, followed by "D" for domestic for the domestic fleet (e.g. AUD, IDD, JPD, KRD, NZD, TWD, ZAD and PHD). In some cases, the final letter is different, such as for the New Zealand Charter Fleet, which has the code "NZC". Contact the Secretariat if in doubt.
[14] TP = tori poles, NS = night setting, WB = weighted branchline, NIL = no mitigation measures used.
[15] All other captures not included in the columns for Retained (dead), Discarded (dead), and Released (live), e.g. released with undetermined life status.

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Table 3: Minimum taxonomic level at which information should be reported in Table 2 (providing that such taxonomic detail is available)[16]. Information should be provided to species level where this is practical. Reporting of any of the following species and/or groups within table 2 should include an appropriate stratification of the data.

Species/Species Group	Comments
Sharks	
Blue Shark	
Shortfin Mako Shark	
Porbeagle	
Other sharks	
Turtles	For sea turtles, the number of species is small (approximately 7), so it is feasible to report data by stratum for each species.
Species specific	*Data should be provided separately for each species*
Seabirds	For seabirds, there are a large number of species, and it is often difficult to separately identify species by pictures only. Reporting of seabird data by species would contain identification errors.
Large albatrosses	*Including: Wandering, Tristan, Gibson's, Antipodean, Southern Royal, and Northern Royal*
Dark coloured albatrosses	*Including: Sooty and Light-mantled*
Other albatrosses	*Including: Black-browed, Campbell, Grey-headed, Atlantic yellow-nosed, Indian yellow-nosed, Buller's, Shy, Salvin's, Chatham and White-capped*
Petrels	*Including: Giant petrels, White-chinned petrel, Grey petrel, Flesh-footed shearwater etc.*
Other seabirds	*Including: Skua etc.*
Marine mammals	For marine mammals, there are a large number of species, and it is often difficult to separately identify species by pictures only. Reporting of marine mammal data by species (except Orca/Killer whale) would contain identification errors.
Mysticeti	Including: blue whales, fin whales, right whales, pygmy right whales, etc.
Physeteroidea	Including: Sperm whale, Pygmy sperm whale, Dwarf sperm whale
Ziphiidae	Including: Beaked whales
Delphinidae	Including: Oceanic dolphins such as Common dolphin, Bottlenose dolphin, False killer whale, Pilot whale, etc.
Phocoenidae	Including: Porpoises
Other cetaceans	Including: Other or unidentified cetaceans
Phocidae	Including: True seals such as elephant seals
Otariidae	Including: Sea lions and fur seals such as New Zealand fur seal, South African fur seal, etc.
Other pinnipeds	Including: Other or unidentified pinnipeds
Orca/Killer whale	

[16] The minimum taxonomic level will be subject to improvement (become more species specific) in future. Furthermore the ERSWG might recommend specific species to be reported based on risk assessments or based on advice it may seek from organisations with the necessary expertise.

Attachment 7

Report from CCSBT Subsidiary Bodies on Progress Against Strategic Plan	
Subsidiary Body: ERSWG	**Year: 2026**
Vision and Goals	
	Comments from Subsidiary Body
Management of SBT The Commission agrees the SBT tuna stock is to be managed at a biomass level that supports the maximum sustainable yield, and the risks related to fishing for SBT and impacts from fishing for SBT on ecologically related species are mitigated. • This includes strategies concerning stock rebuilding, allocation and ecologically related species. • This also includes consideration and review of all other risks including, but not limited to, marine pollution and human safety.	• ERSWG developed, and EC 32 adopted the CCSBT Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy. • ERSWG has adopted and is in the process of actioning the Multi-year Seabird Strategy – for 2026 this includes defining high risk areas and priority species, and defining a relative mortality rate, as well as making a recommendation to the EC on possible management actions. • ERSWG developed and ran a SEFRA for seabirds. The CCSBT SEFRA model was finalised in 2025, and the EC 32 approved the 2025 SEFRA Technical Report. • The CCSBT SEFRA model contributed to the Global Risk Assessment for Seabirds under the CCSBT Seabird Project funded by Common Oceans ABNJ II project.
Operation/Administration of the Commission and Secretariat It was agreed the Commission should operate effectively and efficiently, to responsibly manage fishing for SBT. • This includes strategies for effective and efficient operation of Commission, its subsidiary bodies and Secretariat, including harmonisation with other RFMOs.	• ERSWG 15 has developed and agreed new Terms of Reference for the ERS Technical Group, and ERSTech2025 was held in April 2025 in Wellington as a hybrid meeting. • ERSWG has agreed to meet on an annual basis by including a technical working group in the years where ERSWG does not meet to continuously advance the ecologically related species work .

Participation and implementation by Members, including Compliance Members are actively participating in management of SBT through the Commission and implementing its decisions. • This includes strategies concerning MCS, sanctions and assistance to developing countries.	• The CCSBT Seabird Project has actively engaged with Members to improve on MCS measures, specifically emphasising engagement with developing countries. • Members reported ERS data submission[1], mitigation measures and education. In addition, some Members took part in the evaluation on mitigation measures, assessment of SBT-fishery-bird interaction, and outreach activities through the Seabird Project. • Compliance with ERS measures, and relevant corrective actions including sanctions for any non-compliance, is considered annually at Compliance Committee. • The Member Participation Fund was utilised in both 2025 and 2026 to support developing Member participation at ERS meetings.	
Action Plan		
Action	**Progress since previous report**	**Planned work**
Noting the Multi-year Seabird Strategy adopted at ERSWG 14, develop an Ecologically Related Species and Bycatch Action Plan based on the recommendations from the Performance Review.	• CCSBT 32 in 2025 adopted the ERS Bycatch Strategy.	• This Action is completed. • ERSWG and Members are committed to actioning the adopted ERS Bycatch Strategy. • ERSWG16 updated the EDE template to include marine mammals which interact with SBT fisheries.
Ongoing Work Plan		
Action	**Changes since previous report**	**Planned work**
PR2021-24: CCSBT should continue to implement CMMs based on ESC and ERSWG advice for both target and non-target species.	• ERSWG15 updated its advice to EC on seabirds.	

[1] The inability of some Members to reach the target level of observer coverage is constraining availability of useful ERS data for analysis.

PR2021-25: CCSBT members should continue to strengthen the implementation of the IPOAs and FAO guidelines in fishing operations.	• In 2024, Members noted that some NPOAs have been adopted, e.g. Australia's NPOA-Sharks, South Africa's NPOA-Sharks. • Indonesia planned to update its NPOA-Seabirds in 2025. • South Africa is currently in the process of updating its NPOA–Seabirds, which is now in the final stages of approval and sign-off. • Taiwan and New Zealand are updating their NPOA-seabirds and plan to publish it in 2026.	• Members continue to review NPOAs in line with IPOAs and FAO guidelines.
PR2021-13: Achieve a better balance between the scientific efforts dedicated to SBT and ERS.	• ERSWG has undertaken a technical SEFRA risk assessment examining the risk to ACAP seabirds from CCSBT fisheries. • Members provided extensive effort to the intersessional SEFRA work in 2024 and 2025, including many meetings of the SEFRA Technical Group and the ERSTech, and the CCSBT SEFRA model was finalised. • CCSBT 32 approved the 2025 SEFRA Technical Report to support the ERSWG's ongoing work in line with the CCSBT's Multi-Year Seabird Strategy.	• The future of the SEFRA initiative will be dependent on the decision of the EC, however, could entail additional iterations using supplementary Member data, implementing additional mitigation/monitoring measures in high-risk areas, and/or socialising the work with other RFMOs. • Review working and reporting relationships between ESC and ERSWG and the Extended Commission.