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Status of Seabird Conservation and Management Measures in CCSBT related tRFMOs

In accordance with the Resolution to Align CCSBT's Ecologically Related Species measures with those of other tuna RFMOs, the following measures of IOTC, WCPFC, or ICCAT are binding on Members of the CCSBT when fishing within the relevant area of competence. This paper provides a brief update of BirdLife's contribution to improvements to seabird measures in these RFMOs.

ICCAT

In 2023, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas adopted the joint Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and BirdLife International proposal ([SCRS/2023/078](#)) to review the ICCAT seabird mitigation measures (Recommendations [07-07](#) and [11-09](#)). This review will take place at the ICCAT intersessional meeting of the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch (SC-ECO) in May 2024. Since Rec 11-09 was adopted, there has been substantial progress in research on the effectiveness of mitigation measures to reduce seabird bycatch in pelagic longline fisheries. ACAP routinely reviews and updates this research to produce best practice seabird bycatch mitigation advice. The SC-ECO meeting will consider the up-to-date scientific evidence in their review.

IOTC

In 2023, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission adopted [Resolution 23/07 'On reducing the incidental bycatch of seabirds in longline fisheries'](#), which will enter into force on July 1, 2024. The Resolution is updated to include approved hook shielding devices, updates to specifications for bird scaring lines, the requirement for all vessels operating south of 25°S to implement two out of three mitigation measures (bird scaring lines, line weighting, and night setting) or hook shielding devices, and a commitment to develop advice on best practice line weighting by 2024. Although the updated measures and technical specifications for seabird mitigation measures do not fully match ACAP best practice advice, the adoption of this resolution represents a significant improvement in seabird mitigation measures in the IOTC.

https://www.ccsbt.org/sites/default/files/userfiles/file/other_rfmo_measures/iotc/Resolution%2023_07.pdf

In 2022, ACAP and BirdLife submitted a joint proposal for IOTC to develop a seabird workplan ([IOTC-2022-WPEB18-26](#)). Development of a draft workplan is scheduled to take place at the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch meeting in September 2024 ([IOTC-2023-SC26-R; Appendix 36](#)).

WCPFC

A review of [CMM 2018-03 Seabird Measures](#) is currently underway with Aotearoa New Zealand expecting to submit a revised CMM to the Scientific Committee, Technical and Compliance Committee, and Commission meetings in 2024. Aotearoa New Zealand will lead informal intersessional meetings with interested CCMs to review the latest scientific evidence on seabird bycatch mitigation and gather views on the review of CMM 2018-03. To-date one intersessional meeting has been held virtually in March 2024. Representatives from Australia, Canada, Cook Islands, China, Chinese Taipei, French Polynesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Caledonia, Aotearoa New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, United States of America, BirdLife International along with several eNGOs participated in the meeting. The scientific evidence available on the impacts to populations from longline fisheries was presented and examined, along with the available literature on the efficacy of seabird bycatch mitigation measures. The literature was critiqued for limitations and gaps in understanding discussed. In addition, changes in requirements for certification schemes, notable MSC, were also discussed in relation to a revised CMM. Measures that are currently in the WCPFC CMM2018-03 Seabirds were examined against updated evidence including those that are not considered best practice by ACAP (consequently these may be removed from a revised measure). A second meeting is scheduled for May.