

Update on the “Project proposal for enhancing education on and implementation of Ecologically Related Species seabird measures within CCSBT fisheries”

Background

Members of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), with support from BirdLife International and the CCSBT Secretariat, developed a project for enhancing the implementation of Ecologically Related Species (ERS) conservation measures in CCSBT fisheries. The project includes outreach, training and further development of systems to verify onboard implementation of the ERS measures. The project was developed in response to a recommendation from the 2018 meeting of CCSBT's Compliance Committee (CC 13 paras 101 and 111).

Project Concept Development

Since ERSWG 13, when an outline proposal was first discussed, the project has been further developed by an intersessional group involving CCSBT Members, BirdLife International and the CCSBT Secretariat. Listed below is a summary of progress:

- An updated proposal was submitted to CC 14 and was approved and adopted at EC 12
- At CC 15 two papers were presented (CCSBTCC/2010/15 (Rev.2) and 16 (Rev.2)) which included updates to the project following consultation with Members. The papers were both endorsed, and it was agreed that the intersessional seabird correspondence group would continue to further refine the project activities and develop the budgets of the project.
- Since CC 15 Terms of Reference for the Intersessional Seabird Working Group (SBWG) were adopted, and Ms. Stephanie Prince of BirdLife International was elected as Chair of the SBWG.
- At CC 16 a draft workplan was presented and endorsed (see document CCSBT-ERS/2203/BGD5)

Recent Progress

Since CC 16 progress has been made in beginning the recruitment process of the project coordinator. A job description was developed and circulated to the SBWG for comments. The job description has been finalised and the closing date for applications is expected to be the end of March, with interviews in April, and an anticipated start date of June 2022.

Next Steps

During April to June 2022 consultation with flag states on the preparedness for project implementation will be conducted ready for the project start date. At this stage the exact project start date is not known, as it depends on when funding is received from the FAO, but is expected to be in mid-2022. The SBWG will continue to meet on an 'as required' basis.