



CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF FISHING ON SEABIRDS

Conservation and Management Measure 2025-05

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC):

Concerned that some seabird species, notably albatrosses and petrels, are threatened with global extinction;

Noting advice from the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources that together with illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, the greatest threat to Southern Ocean seabirds is mortality in longline fisheries in waters adjacent to its Convention Area;

Noting scientific research into mitigation of seabird bycatch in surface longline fisheries has showed that the effectiveness of various measures varies greatly depending on the vessel type, season, and seabird species assemblage present;

Noting the advice of the Scientific Committee that combinations of mitigation measures are essential for effective reduction of seabird bycatch;

Recognising the sovereign rights of coastal States for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing highly migratory fish stocks within areas under national jurisdiction;

Recalling Article 5 of the Convention, which in giving effect to members duty to cooperate in accordance with the 1982 Convention and the UNFSA, requires members of the Commission under Article 5(e) to adopt measures to minimise, inter alia, catch of non-target species; and

Further recognising Article 30 of the Convention and the need to ensure that conservation and management measures do not result in transferring, directly or indirectly, a disproportionate burden of conservation action onto developing States Parties, and territories and possessions.

Resolves as follows:

1. Commission Members, Cooperating Non-members and participating Territories (CCMs) should, to the greatest extent practical, implement the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds) if they have not already done so.

2. CCMs should report to the Commission on their implementation of the IPOA-Seabirds, including, as appropriate, the status of their National Plans of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries.

Adopts, in accordance with Article 5(e) and 10 (1)(c) of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean the following measures to address seabird bycatch:

South of 30° South

1. CCMs shall require their longline vessels fishing south of 30°S, to use either
 - a. at least two of these three measures:
 - i. weighted branch lines;
 - ii. night setting;
 - iii. tori lines; or
 - b. hook-shielding devices.

Table 1 does not apply south of 30° South. See Annex 1 for specifications of these measures.

West of 175°W between 25°S-30°S

2. CCMs shall require their longline vessels fishing in the area, to use either
 - a. at least two of these three measures:
 - i. weighted branch lines;
 - ii. night setting;
 - iii. tori lines; or
 - b. hook-shielding devices.

Table 1 does not apply south of 25° South. See Annex 1 for specifications of these measures.

East of 175°W between 25°S-30°S

3. CCMs shall require their longline vessels fishing in the area to use one of the following mitigation measures:
 - i. weighted branch lines;
 - ii. tori lines; or
 - iii. hook-shielding devices.

Table 1 does not apply in the area 25°S-30°S. See Annex 1 for specifications of these measures.

4. The extension of the requirement to use two out of three mitigation measures or hook shielding devices from the region West of 175° West between 25° S -30° S shall not come into effect until 1 January 2028. Prior to this date the requirements to use only one mitigation measure (paragraph 2) apply.

5. The requirements applying between 25° South -30° South shall not apply in the EEZs of French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Tonga, Cook Islands and Fiji due to the low risk to seabirds. Those SIDS and Territories that have vessels operating south of 25° South are encouraged to collect data on seabird interactions, increase observer coverage rate as appropriate, and implement seabird mitigation measures when they operate within their EEZs.

6. The provisions in paragraph 1-4 shall be reviewed no later than 3 years from the implementation date by the SC, based on the best available scientific information. The review shall consider both the efficacy of the mitigation measures being used and the risk to vulnerable seabirds in areas where mitigation measures are not required including relevant SIDS EEZs and make recommendations to the Commission if needed.

North of 23° North

7. CCMs shall require their large-scale longline vessels of 24 meters or more in overall length fishing north of 23°N, to use at least two of the mitigation measures in Table 1, including at least one from Column A. CCMs also shall require their small-scale longline vessels less than 24 meters in overall length fishing north of 23°N, to use at least one of the mitigation measures from Column A in Table 1. See Annex 1 for specifications of these measures.

Table 1: Mitigation measures

<i>Column A</i>	<i>Column B</i>
<i>Side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines¹</i>	<i>Tori line²</i>
<i>Night setting with minimum deck lighting</i>	<i>Blue-dyed bait</i>
<i>Tori line</i>	<i>Deep setting line shooter</i>
<i>Weighted branch lines</i>	<i>Management of offal discharge</i>
<i>Hook-shielding devices³</i>	

¹ If using side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines from Column A, this will be counted as two mitigation measures.

² If a tori line is selected from both Column A and Column B, this equates to simultaneously using two (i.e. paired) tori lines.

³ Hook-shielding devices can be used as a stand-alone measure.

Other Areas

8. In other areas (between 25°S and 23°N), where necessary, CCMs are encouraged to have their longline vessels employ one or more of the seabird mitigation measures listed in Table 1.

General Principles

9. For research and reporting purposes, each CCM with longline vessels that fish in the Convention Area south of 25°S or north of 23°N shall submit to the Commission in part 2 of its annual report information describing which of the mitigation measures they require their vessels to use, as well as the technical specifications for each of those mitigation measures. Each such CCM shall also include in its annual reports for subsequent years any changes it has made to its required mitigation measures or technical specifications for those measures.

10. CCMs are encouraged to undertake research to further develop and refine measures to mitigate seabird bycatch including mitigation measures for use during the setting and hauling process and should submit to the Secretariat for the use by the SC and the TCC any information derived from such efforts. Research should be undertaken in the fisheries and areas to which the measure will be used.

11. The SC and TCC will annually review any new information on new or existing mitigation measures or on seabird interactions from observer or other monitoring programmes. Where necessary, an updated suite of mitigation measures, specifications for mitigation measures, or recommendations for areas of application will then be provided to the Commission for its consideration and review as appropriate.

12. CCMs are encouraged to adopt measures aimed at ensuring that seabirds captured alive during longlining are released alive and in as good condition as possible and that wherever possible hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the seabird concerned. Research into the survival of released seabirds is encouraged.

13. The intersessional working group for the regional observer programme (IWG-ROP) will take into account the need to obtain detailed information on seabird interactions to allow analysis of the effects of fisheries on seabirds and evaluation of the effectiveness of bycatch mitigation measures.

14. CCMs shall annually provide to the Commission, in Part 1 of their annual reports, all available information on interactions with seabirds reported or collected by observers to enable the estimation of seabird mortality in all fisheries to which the Convention applies. (see Annex 2 for Part 1 reporting template guideline). These reports shall include information on:

- a. the proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures used; and
- b. observed and reported species specific seabird bycatch rates and numbers or statistically rigorous estimates of species-specific seabird interaction rates (for longline, interactions per 1,000 hooks) and total numbers.

15. This Conservation and Management measure replaces CMM 2018-03, which is hereby repealed.

ANNEX 1. SPECIFICATIONS

1. Tori lines (South of 25° South)

1(a). For vessels ≥ 35 m total length

<Minimum Standards>

- i. Deploy at least one tori line. If two tori lines are deployed, both tori lines shall be deployed simultaneously, one on each side of the line being set. During the line setting, baited hooks shall be cast into the water -close to the tori line coverage area, and it shall be avoiding the surface areas of propeller turbulence.
- ii. A tori line using long and short streamers shall be used as follows:
 - a. Long streamers shall be placed at intervals of no more than 5 m, and shall be attached-to avoid entanglement with the main line. Long streamers of sufficient length to reach the sea surface in calm conditions shall be used.
 - b. Short streamers shall be minimum length 1m and shall be placed no more than 1m apart.
 - c. Streamers shall be attached along the tori line for at least the first 100m from behind the stern to the point where the mainline enters the water.
- iii. Vessels shall deploy the tori line to achieve a desired aerial extent greater than or equal to 100m. To achieve this aerial extent the tori line shall have a minimum length of 200m. If a towing object is attached to the end of the tori line, the tori line shall have a minimum length of 120m.
- iv. The tori line shall be attached to a tori pole >7 m above the sea surface located as close to the stern as practical.
- v. If vessels use only one tori line, the tori line shall be deployed windward of sinking baits.

<Technical Guidelines>

- i. **One or two tori lines**
Where practical, vessels are encouraged to use two tori lines at times of high bird abundance or activity.
- ii. **Mainline material**
 - a. It is effective to use different materials of the tori line for the aerial section and for the underwater section.
 - b. For the aerial section, a lightweight material that is easy to insert a streamer is desirable.
 - c. For the underwater section, a material that floats in water is preferable to reduce entanglement with fishing gear, and a rope with a rough texture to provide

underwater drag is preferable too.

- d. It should be noted that entanglement between fishing gear and tori-lines poses serious safety risks, including pole breakage. To avoid such incidents, it is advisable to incorporate a mechanism that allows the main line to be disconnected when excessive tension is applied. Examples of such safety measures include connecting lower-durability rope sections along the line to create break points, or using hardware that disconnects under high tension loads.

iii. **Towing object**

The towing object attached to the end of the tori line should generate sufficient drag to achieve required aerial extent greater than or equal to 100m.

iv. **Streamer color**

Streamers should be brightly colored.

v. **Streamer attachment method**

Light weight swivels, plastic joints or pulleys, or long streamers made of relatively rigid materials, can be used to prevent entanglement.

vi. **Pole height**

Note that raising the tori-line attachment position may require extending the total line length or adding an additional towing device to ensure sufficient aerial extent.

vii. **Operational practice**

A spare tori-line and streamers should be carried onboard to repair or replace damaged tori lines. Tori lines and streamers should be examined regularly and maintained as necessary. When using a bait-casting machine, the landing position should be adjusted in advance.

1(b). For vessels <35 m total length

- i. A single tori line using either long and short streamers, or short streamers only shall be used.
- ii. Streamers shall be: brightly coloured long and/or short (but greater than 1m in length) streamers must be used and placed at intervals as follows:
 - a. Long streamers placed at intervals of no more than 5m for the first 75 m of tori line.
 - b. Short streamers placed at intervals of no more than 1m.
- iii. Long streamers should be attached to the line in a way that prevent streamers from wrapping around the line. All long streamers shall reach the sea-surface in calm conditions. Streamers may be modified over the first 15 m to avoid tangling.

- iv. Vessels shall deploy the tori line to achieve a minimum aerial extent of 75 m. To achieve this aerial extent the tori line shall be attached to a tori pole >6m above the sea surface located as close to the stern as practical. Sufficient drag must be created to maximise aerial extent and maintain the line directly behind the vessel during crosswinds. To avoid tangling, this is best achieved using a long in-water section of rope or monofilament.
- v. If two tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

2. Tori lines (North of 23° North)

2(a). Long Streamer

- i. Minimum length: 100 m
- ii. Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point a minimum of 5m above the water at the stern on the windward side of the point where the hookline enters the water.
- iii. Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- iv. Streamers must be less than 5m apart, be using swivels and long enough so that they are as close to the water as possible.
- v. If two (i.e. paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

2(b). Short Streamer (For vessels ≥ 24 m total length)

- i. Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point a minimum of 5m above the water at the stern on the windward side of a point where the hookline enters the water.
- ii. Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- iii. Streamers must be less than 1m apart and be 30 cm minimum length.
- iv. If two (i.e. paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the main line.

2(c). Short Streamer (For vessels <24 m total length)

This design shall be reviewed no later than 3 years from the implementation date based on scientific data.

- i. Must be attached to the vessel such that it is suspended from a point a minimum of 5m above the water at the stern on the windward side of a point where the hookline enters the water.
- ii. Must be attached so that the aerial extent is maintained over the sinking baited hooks.
- iii. If streamers are used, it is encouraged to use the streamers designed to be less than 1m

apart and be 30cm minimum length.

- iv. If two (i.e. paired) tori lines are used, the two lines must be deployed on opposing sides of the mainline.

3. Side setting with bird curtain and weighted branch lines

- i. Mainline deployed from port or starboard side as far from stern as practicable (at least 1m), and if mainline shooter is used, must be mounted at least 1m forward of the stern.
- ii. When seabirds are present the gear must ensure mainline is deployed slack so that baited hooks remain submerged.
- iii. Bird curtain must be employed:
 - a. Pole aft of line shooter at least 3m long;
 - b. Minimum of 3 main streamers attached to upper 2m of pole;
 - c. Main streamer diameter minimum 20mm;
 - d. Branch streamers attached to end of each main streamer long enough to drag on water (no wind) – minimum diameter 10mm.

4. Night setting

- i. No setting between nautical dawn and before nautical dusk.
- ii. Nautical dusk and nautical dawn are defined as set out in the Nautical Almanac tables for relevant latitude, local time and date.
- iii. Deck lighting to be kept to a minimum. Minimum deck lighting should not breach minimum standards for safety and navigation.

5. Weighted branch lines

- i. Following minimum weight specifications are required:
 - e. one weight greater than or equal to 40g within 50cm of the hook; or
 - f. greater than or equal to a total of 45g attached to within 1 m of the hook; or
 - g. greater than or equal to a total of 60 g attached to within 3.5 m of the hook; or
 - h. greater than or equal to a total of 98 g weight attached to within 4 m of the hook.

6. Hook-shielding devices

- i. Hook-shielding devices encase the point and barb of baited hooks to prevent seabird attacks during line setting. The following devices have been approved for use in WCPFC fisheries:

a. Hookpods, which comply with the following performance characteristics⁴

1. the device encases the point and barb of the hook until it reaches a depth of at least 10 metres or has been immersed for at least 10 minutes;
2. the device meets current minimum standards for branch line weighting as specified in this Annex; and
3. the device is designed to be retained on the fishing gear rather than being lost.

7. Management of offal discharge

- i. Either no offal discharge during setting or hauling;
- ii. Or strategic offal discharge from the opposite side of the boat to setting/hauling to actively encourage birds away from baited hooks.

8. Blue-dyed bait

- i. If using blue-dyed bait it must be fully thawed when dyed.
- ii. The Commission Secretariat shall distribute a standardized colour placard.
- iii. All bait must be dyed to the shade shown in the placard.

9. Deep setting line shooter

- i. Line shooters must be deployed in a manner such that the hooks are set substantially deeper than they would be lacking the use of the line shooter, and such that the majority of hooks reach depths of at least 100 m.

⁴ Noted by SC14.

ANNEX 2. GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING TEMPLATES FOR ANNUAL PART 1 REPORTS

The following tables should be included in the Annual Report Part 1, summarising the most recent five years.

Table x: Effort, observed and estimated seabird captures by fishing year for [CCM] [South of 30°S; 25°S-30°S; North of 23°N; or

[23°N – 25°S¹]. For each year, the table gives the total number of hooks; the number of observed hooks; observer coverage (the percentage of hooks that were observed); the number of observed captures (both dead and alive); and the capture rate (captures per thousand hooks).

Year	Fishing effort				Observed seabird captures	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Number	Rate ²
[year]						
[year]						
[year]						
[previous year e.g. 2017]						
[current year e.g. 2018]						

¹ Insert 'North of 23°N', 'South of 30°S', '25°S-30°S' or '23°N – 25°S'. For CCMs fishing in all areas, provide separate tables for each area.

² Provide data as captures per one thousand hooks.

Table y: Proportion of mitigation types¹ used by the fleet in [year].

	Combination of Mitigation Measures	Proportion of observed effort using mitigation measures				
		South of 30°S	<u>West of 175°W between 25°S-30°S</u>	<u>East of 175°W between 25°S-30°S</u>	25°S to 23°N	North of 23°N
	No mitigation measures					
Options required south of 25°S	TL + NS					
	TL + WB					
	NS + WB					
	TL + WB + NS					
	HS					
Other options 25°S-30°S	WB					
	TL					
Other options north of 23°N	SS/BC/WB/DSLS					
	SS/BC/WB/(MOD or BDB)					

¹ TL = tori line, NS = night setting, WB = weighted branch lines, SS = side setting, BC = bird curtain, BDB = blue dyed bait, DSLS = deep setting line shooter, MOD = management of offal discharge, HS = hook-shielding device.

Provide any other combination of mitigation measures here						
	Totals (must equal 100%)					

Table z: Number of observed seabird captures in [CCM] longline fisheries, 2012, by species and area.

Species	South of 30°S	<u>West of 175°W between 25°S-30°S</u>	<u>East of 175°W between 25°S-30°S</u>	North of 23°N	23°N – 25°S	Total
E.g. Antipodean albatross						
[species name]						
[species name]						
[species name]						
[species name]						
[species name]						
[species name]						
Total						