



Report of the Namibian Observer Training Workshop

for component 3.2.1 of the

Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ

2-5 October 2017
BirdLife South Africa Seabird Conservation Programme Office
Cape Town, South Africa

Prepared by BirdLife South Africa



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



Workshop Report

Project: FAO-GEF Project *Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ* (GCP/GLO/365/GFF)

Reporting organisation: BirdLife South Africa

Report prepared by: Nini van der Merwe

**Namibian Observer Training Workshop for BirdLife component of the GEF funded
FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project (Output 3.2.1)
2-5 October 2017, Cape Town, South Africa**

BirdLife South Africa report

Aims of the workshop

The main aim of this workshop was capacity building of the national observers responsible for collecting data onboard tuna longline vessels operating out of the Republic of Namibia. In many observer programmes, including in Namibia, observers traditionally collect fisheries data only, and have little understanding or training in bycatch-related data collection. This workshop provided training in the use of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation measures and seabird data collection to enhance and accelerate uptake of these measures by fleets operating in critical fishing areas of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

Furthermore, we also wanted to ensure the following through the implementation of this workshop:

- Promote the EAF principles and sustainability in the Namibian tuna longline industry beyond the Common Oceans (CO) Tuna Project
- Provide comprehensive training for seabird bycatch information to be collected to aid Ministry of Fisheries and Marine resources (MFMR) in meeting its obligations to submit seabird-related data to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

Background – Namibia

BirdLife South Africa, through the Albatross Task Force (ATF), has a long-standing working relationship with Namibia and MFMR. The initial BLSA-hosted CO National Awareness Workshop (NAW) in Walvis Bay in October 2016 was extended to a second workshop hosted in Luderitz in April 2017. Two key outcomes from these workshops were

1. a request from observers for specialised training in seabird-related matters
2. realisation that at the time, no seabird data was being collected in the Namibian tuna longline fleet. In addition, Namibia is required by ICCAT to implement and report on seabird bycatch mitigation measures, which obligation Namibia was unable to fulfil

Participants

BLSA hosted 3 Namibian Fisheries Observers, as well as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Fisheries Observer Agency (FOA) of Namibia. The Port-based Outreach (PBO) Officer for Fiji (at the time he was not on contract to FAO) also attended. This provided a great opportunity to provide in-depth training at the start of his contract, brief him on his position and objectives and meet the team.

A full list of participants is provided in **Annex 1**.

Summary of presentations and facilitated discussions

The workshop agenda is provided in **Annex 2**. We also produced a workbook with key-points discussed during the workshop. This was created so that participants could take notes during presentations and had a tangible tool to take home and use for further training. The workbook can be seen in **Annex 3**.

Annotated list of workshop presentations:

Bycatch and Best Practice:

- Biology and identification:
- Seabird identification: Introduction to seabird biology, and key features to observe when separating seabird species at sea. This was followed by a seabird identification quiz and the pelagic seabird identification excursion allowed for some field training and practise of their newly acquired identification skills.
- Turtle identification: turtle ID, handling and best practice mitigation measures allowed for some valuable discussions between the observers about previous turtle encounters.
- Observers were also taught how to handle live birds and turtles, and in the case of fatality, how to correctly collect samples for further research.
- Seabird and turtle bycatch mitigation measures: information and demonstration models of the most recent scientific mitigation measures available. We also discussed best practice according to the tRFMOs resolutions/requirements and what is currently being used in the Namibian industry.
- The harbour visit allowed observers to get on board a local tuna vessel, during which the skipper explained operations and challenges relating to seabirds and the suggested mitigation measures. This visit also allowed our experienced ATF Instructors from South Africa and Namibia to share their experiences and tips on data collection during fishing operations.

Data collection and management:

- ATF data collection procedures were presented and challenges in collecting seabird and fisheries data simultaneously were discussed with the observers. The ATF have developed a system to collect data, which gives a thorough and complete data set relating to seabird abundance during fishing operations, as well as reporting on any seabird interactions and mortalities the vessel may encounter.
- We also discussed the correct ways in which to store and manage data.
- A facilitated discussion on possible ways to improve or streamline the Namibian data collection sheets also took place, and will be further discussed between FOA and ATF. This discussion also aimed to encourage Namibia to start collecting seabird bycatch data in their pelagic long line industry, as they are not currently doing so.

Next steps

1. Stanley Ndara, CEO of the FOA, will use the skills he obtained during the workshop to further train observers in Namibia. Theo Kairua (Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Instructor – Namibia, under the Common Oceans Tuna Project) and the ATF Namibia will be able to provide some assistance with this training.
2. BLSA gave Mr Ndara 3 sets of Seabird ID cards, and will also share the electronic version with him for future workshops.
3. Clemens Noamab (ATF Namibia) and Stanley will communicate with the University of Namibia, to identify a researcher who could autopsy seabird carcasses that observers return to port.

4 | BirdLife South Africa, Namibian Observer Training Workshop, Cape Town, South Africa

4. If no such individual can be established, observers will continue to collect photographic samples, and share these with the ATF, who will in turn share it with BLSA, for ID confirmation.
5. BLSA, ATF Namibia and FOA will work together to condense the seabird bycatch data collection sheets.
6. As per the agreement signed between BLSA and FOA, each observer who received the training will collect seabird-related data according to procedures discussed during the workshop. They will share this data, collected over at least two trips, with BLSA.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Survey of workshop participants

A post-workshop questionnaire was developed (see Annex 3) to assess the usefulness of the workshop and to receive constructive feedback from participants that can be used in the development and implementation of future workshops. All 5 participants completed the questionnaire. The survey and assessment was conducted by Nini van der Merwe. A summary of the questions and responses is included below. The original questions and scoring guidelines are provided in **Annex 3**.

Q1. *[How useful was the information presented at the workshop?]*

Out of 10 presentations (including the at-sea seabird identification training and the harbour visit), **4** (*Seabird biology – Why seabird biology is different from fish biology; Seabird identification and Quiz; Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) Seabird bycatch mitigation measures and Best Practice; Data recording and reporting*) were found to be **very useful** by **100%** of participants. The remaining presentations were found to be either **useful** or **very useful**. None of the presentations were found to be **not useful**.

Q2. *[How clearly did the organisers present material?]* **100%** of participants thought information was presented **very clearly**.

Q3. *[Did the organisers allow enough time for the facilitated discussions?]* **40%** of participants thought that the amount of time allocated for discussion was **too short**, while **60%** thought the time allocated was **good**.

Q4. *[Was the workshop long enough?]* **40%** of participants thought it was **about right**, while **60%** thought it was **too short**.

Q5. *[Overall, how would you rate the workshop?]* **80%** of participants rated the workshop as **very good** while **20%** rated it as **good**.

Q6. *[How would you rate your ability to identify seabirds BEFORE the workshop?]* **100%** of participants said their ability was **poor**.

Q7. *[How would you rate your ability to identify seabirds AFTER the workshop?]* **100%** of participants said their ability was **good**.

Q8. *[Would you agree that after the workshop, you have a better understanding of Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and why this is important to protect natural ocean resources?]* **100%** of participants **agreed** that they have a better understanding of EAF and its importance after the workshop.

Q9. *[After the workshop, are you confident in your ability to collect samples and take photographs of dead seabirds encountered when out at sea?]* **80%** of participants were confident, while **20%** of participants were **somewhat confident**.

Q10. *[Are you confident in your understanding of Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (tRFMO) seabird bycatch mitigation measures and best practice?]* **80%** of participants were confident, while **20%** of participants were **somewhat confident**.

Q11a-c. *[Do you have any concerns collecting data on the following mitigation measures (Bird-scaring lines, line weighting or night setting) while acting as an observer in the Namibian pelagic longline fleet?]* There were **no serious concerns** about collecting data on any of the bycatch mitigation measures mentioned. There was, however, **some concern** about collecting data on bird-scaring lines and line weighting.

Q12. [Do you agree that this workshop has assisted you with having a better understanding of data collection and reporting procedures?] **100%** of participants agreed.

Q12. [Do you have any other comments, suggestions or topics you would like included in future workshops?]

- Two participants mentioned that they would have been more comfortable had the pelagic birding excursion taken place on a bigger vessel*.
- Some attendees voiced that they would have preferred the theoretical seabird identification course prior to the “at-sea” training. - The order of these activities was changed due to weather conditions.
- It was suggested that all observers in Namibia should be given the opportunity to undergo this type of intensive seabird training. - This is why BLSA also invited Mr Ndara to attend the workshop. He is now able to share this training with other Namibian observers, who were unable to attend the workshop.
- It was suggested that a presentation on “blue economy” be included, as well as aspects of co-management with regards to the different government organisations that are involved in the fisheries industry in Namibia.

* While we do realise that comfort is important, we are unfortunately bound by the boats available for such excursions. In addition, during this trip we had sail much further offshore in order to reach an active fishing vessel to view increased seabird activity.

Suggestions for future workshops

- Allocate more time for facilitated discussions.
- Place bigger emphasis on EAF approach and spend more time discussing this.
- When FOA in Namibia host future workshops of this nature, they should include country-specific management procedures, as suggested in the M&E above.
- Identify a dedicated contact person prior to the workshop to liaise with in order to ease logistics.

Conclusions

The workshop was very successful. It allowed observers to increase their knowledge and share some valuable experiences with the BLSA team. The workshop was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. This workshop was also a step towards ensuring that Namibia starts to collect seabird related data in their pelagic longline industry.

It was also very helpful that Mr James Nagan, the new PBO officer for Fiji could attend. It allowed him to interact with the rest of the team, and also increase his knowledge on seabird-related matters. This will serve him well as he starts his interactions with skippers and captains when visiting vessels in port in Fiji.

Acknowledgements

ATF Namibia and South Africa staff are acknowledged for their assistance with presentations. Funding for the workshop (including the venue, catering, travel and DSA for BLSA and FAO staff) was provided through the FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project (LoA4).

Broad project outline

The Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project is the largest of four projects that constitute the Common Oceans Program. The objective of the project is to achieve responsibility, efficiency, and sustainability in tuna production and biodiversity conservation in the ABNJ (Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction), through the systemic application of an ecosystem approach in tuna fisheries.

With support from BirdLife International, BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) is responsible for the implementation of Output 3.2.1 of the project. The revised objectives of Output 3.2.1 are linked to two outputs:

- **Output 3.2.1a:** *The use of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation measures is enhanced and accelerated by fleets operating in critical fishing areas of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and additional methods to monitor the uptake, use and effectiveness of these measures are tested.*
- **Output 3.2.1b:** *The capacity of national institutions to manage and conduct analyses of seabird bycatch data and the effectiveness of bycatch mitigation measures is strengthened, and assessment methods are harmonised to facilitate a joint tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organization (tRFMO) assessment of the current bycatch mitigation measures contained in the relevant Conservation and Management Measures.*

Output 3.2.1 will be achieved through four separate, but linked, elements. This report outlines the outcomes of the Mozambique National Awareness workshop held under Element 1. The main outcomes under this element are to 1) improve awareness of seabird bycatch and its mitigation; and 2) build capacity of the national observer programme, government representatives and the fishing industry to effectively implement best practice seabird bycatch mitigation based on best practice in Mozambique.

For further information, please contact:

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Annex 1: List of workshop participants

(Presenters are marked with *)

Name	Position	Institution
Ross Wanless*	Seabird Conservation Programme Manager	BirdLife South Africa (BLSA)
Bronwyn Maree*	Seabird Bycatch Project Coordinator	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Nini van der Merwe*	International Liaison Officer	BLSA
Andrea Angel*	Albatross Task Forcer (ATF) Leader – South Africa	BLSA
Reason Nyengera*	ATF Instructor – South Africa	BLSA
Clemens Noamab*	ATF Instructor - Namibia	Namibian Nature Foundation (NNF)
Samantha Matjila*	ATF Instructor -Namibia	NNF
James Nagan	Port-based Outreach Officer, Fiji	FAO
Stanley Ndara	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Fisheries Observer Agency (FOA) Namibia
Jonas Inkono	Observer - Namibia	FOA Namibia
Thaswill Julius	Observer - Namibia	FOA Namibia
Benjamin Hoeseb	Observer - Namibia	FOA Namibia

Fig 1



Fig 2



Figure 1. Namibian observers, Namibian ATF and some BLSA staff after the full day at-sea seabird identification training.

Figure 2. Participants and presenters at the end of the workshop.

Annex 2: Workshop Agenda

Day 1: Marine Ecosystems & Seabird Biology*

Time	Presentation	Presenter
08:30 – 09:00	Introduction to Observer Training Programme and participant introductions and expectations	Nini van der Merwe
09:00 – 09:30	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF): A broad-scale perspective	Samantha Matjila
09:30 – 10:15	Seabird biology – Why seabird biology is different from fish biology	Ross Wanless
10:15 – 10:45	<i>Tea break</i>	
10:45 – 12:30	Seabird identification and Quiz	Bronwyn Maree
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30 – 14:45	Dead seabird identification	Samantha Matjila
14:30 – 15:30	Handling live/dead birds, collecting samples and taking photographs	Reason Nyengera

Day 2: Pelagic sea trip, at sea-training

Time	Activity	
06:45	Pelagic sea trip training – seabird identification	Ross Wanless and Nini van der Merwe

Day 3: Mitigation Measures and Best Practice Recommendations

Time	Presentation	
08:30 – 10:00	Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) Seabird bycatch mitigation measures and Best Practice (including Resolutions under International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, ICCAT)	Bronwyn Maree and Nini van der Merwe
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Tea break</i>	
10:30 – 14:00	Harbour visit and in-port training (including lunch)	Clemens Naomab and Reason Nyengera
14:00 – 15:30	Turtle biology, identification and bycatch Best Practice	Andrea Angel

Day 4: Data collection and management

Time	Presentation	Presenter
08:30 – 09:15	Basic data collection – Albatross Task Force (ATF) reporting procedures	Clemens Naomab
09:15 – 10:30	Data recording and reporting and how observer data are supporting National Reporting to RFMOs and improving the sustainable and ecosystem-based management approaches for tuna fishing on the high seas	Bronwyn Maree
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Tea break</i>	
11:00 – 11:30	Training evaluation and discussion	Nini van der Merwe
11:30 – 11:45	Granting certificates and closing	Nini van der Merwe and Bronwyn Maree
13:30	<i>Closing Lunch</i>	

***Due to weather conditions, day 1 and 2 were switched.**

Annex 3: Workshop workbook

Day 1: Marine Ecosystems & Seabird Biology

1. Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF): A broad-scale perspective – Samantha Matjila

An ecosystem is made up of living and non-living parts each dependent on the other to a greater or lesser extent. Examples of marine ecosystems include open oceans, coral reefs, rocky shores, and sandy beaches. Fisheries ecosystems are complicated and include tiny plants and animals at the bottom of the food web (phytoplankton and zooplankton) all the way up to top fish predators, marine mammals and seabirds. Humans are an important part of the ecosystem. Living things depend on one another to survive. A food chain simply shows how each living thing gets food. Food webs exist in a delicate balance. If one animal’s food disappears, many other animals in the food chain are affected. Humans are at the top of the food chain and are often responsible for disrupting food webs.

What is an Ecosystems approach?

- It is a management approach which seeks to protect and enhance the marine ecosystem health as a whole, on which life and human benefits depend.
- It is based on a transparent and participatory management system which tries to look at ecosystem health, different social needs, and economic development, and aims to address the shortfalls of the single species approach
- If an activity is sustainable it can continue forever. Over-fishing is not sustainable!



2. Seabird biology – Why seabird biology is different from fish biology – Ross Wanless

Seabirds vary in size, but they all use the ocean as their dominant habitat. They spend most of their life at sea and have adapted to the marine habitat by evolving unique features to help them survive.

Seabirds	Fish

3. Seabird identification and Quiz – Bronwyn Maree

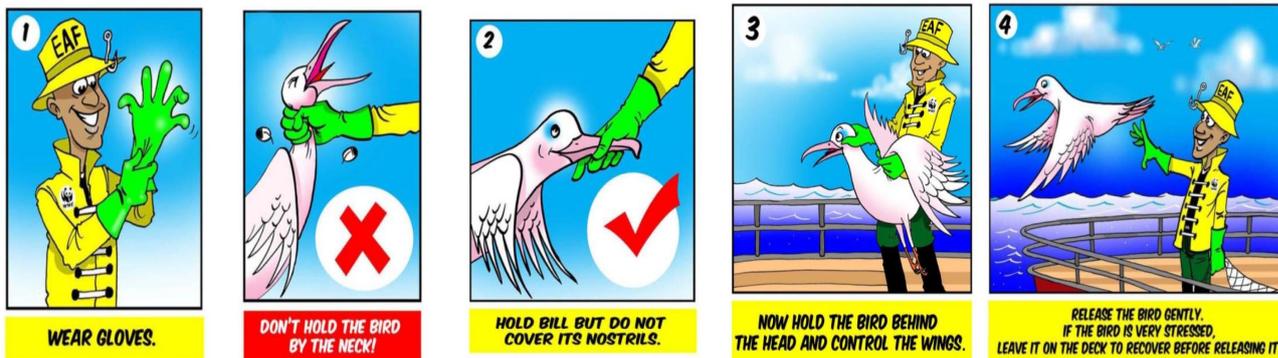
While it might seem daunting to remember all the different aspects necessary to correctly identify a seabird, there are a few tips and tricks that make it a bit easier. Write down some notes to help you later.

4. Dead seabird identification – Samantha Matjila

Identifying a live seabird is very different from identifying a dead seabird. There are however some identifying markers to look out for:

5. Handling live/dead birds, collecting samples and taking photographs – Reason Nyengera

How to handle a live bird:



How to collect samples from a dead seabirds:

Day 2: Pelagic Sea Trip, at sea-training

Write down any memorable sightings, comments or questions you have after the pelagic sea trip:

Day 3: Mitigation Measures and Best Practice Recommendations

1. RFMOs Seabird bycatch Mitigation Measures (MM) and Best Practice (BP) - Bronwyn Maree and Nini van der Merwe

WCPFC, IOTC, CCSBT, ICCAT (South of 25 ° S)

Choice of 2/3 measures

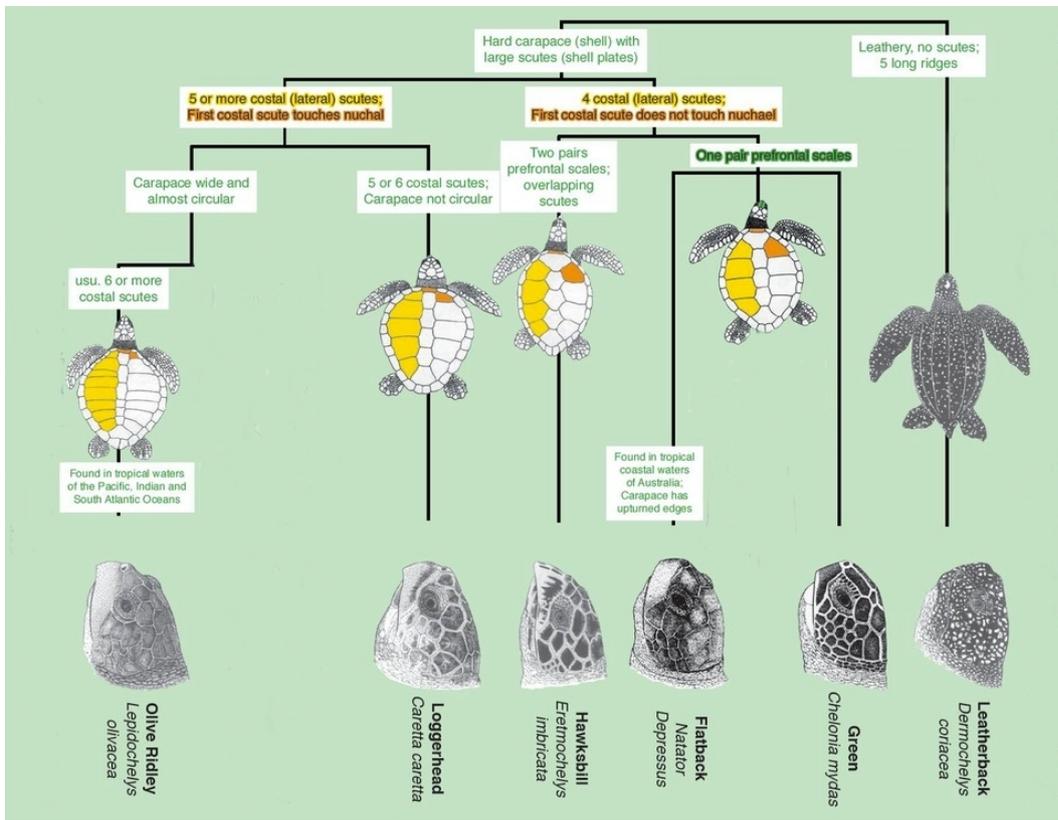
1. Setting lines at night
2. Bird scaring (or *Tori*) lines
3. Weighting branchlines

Comments on each mitigation measure:

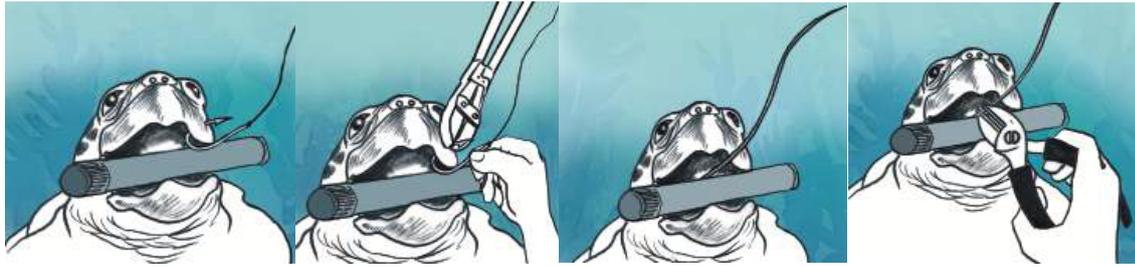
Night setting	Bird scaring lines	Line weighting

New technology and developments:

2. Turtle biology, identification and bycatch best practice – Andrea Angel



How to retrieve a sea turtle:



Removing a hook or line from a turtle:

3. Harbour visit and in-port training – Clemens Naomab and Reason Nyengera

Write down any comments or questions you had about the harbour visit:

Day 4: Data collection and management

1. Basic data collection - ATF reporting procedures – Clemens Noamab

Fill in the data sheets provided.

2. Data recording and reporting and how observer data are supporting National Reporting to RFMOs and improving the sustainable and ecosystem-based management approaches for tuna fishing on the high seas – Bronwyn Maree

The work you do, as an observer who collects data, is very important. It is the connection between scientists - who want to save species, and governments – who impose mitigation. The data that you collect out at sea gives an important insight into the field and what is really going on in the oceans.

13. Do you have any other comments; suggestions or topics you would like included in future workshops?

Thank you for your time 😊