



Report of the Malaysian National Awareness Workshop

for component 3.2.1 of the

Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ

19-20 September 2018
Ministry of Fisheries
Putrajaya, Malaysia

Prepared by BirdLife South Africa



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

**Malaysia National Awareness Workshop for BirdLife component of the GEF funded
FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project (Output 3.2.1)
19-20 September 2018, Putrajaya, Malaysia**

BirdLife South Africa report

Background – Malaysia

In December 2017, at the IOTC Scientific Committee meeting, BirdLife International (BLI) became aware of increased activity of Malaysia's Distant Water Fleet (DWF) operating south of 25°S ([malaysia-national-report-2017](#)). They further reported that there had been no record of any seabird interaction with their vessels, despite the absence of a national or regional observer programme. BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) realised there was need for a National Awareness Workshop with Malaysia, and set about contacting the correct government officials to allow for such a workshop to be hosted.

Aims of the workshop

The broad outcome of the National Awareness Workshop (NAW) is that 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 (Project Output 3.2.1a). Further more, knowing that Malaysia does not have an active observer programme or a National Plan of Action for Seabirds (NPOA-S), BLSA intended to facilitate discussion between multiple governmental departments in order to identify current and possible future hurdles and offer solutions for the challenges faced by the Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DOFM). BLSA also planned to present current seabird bycatch mitigation measures to industry representatives, to inform them of the options available to them to prevent the accidental bycatch of seabirds.

Participants

A full list of attendees is provided in Annex 1

Participants were welcomed on behalf of DOFM by Tengku Balkis Binti Tunku Shahar and on behalf of BLSA and FAO by Ross Wanless.

The workshop was attended by government representatives from the department of fisheries and wildlife, vessel owners, Malaysia Nature Society (MNS) and BLSA.

Outcomes

The workshop succeeded in establishing a positive working relationship between DOFM and BLI/BLSA. The workshop allowed BLSA to gain a better and more nuanced understanding of the Malaysian longline fleet and its operating procedures. There were three very positive outcomes from this workshop:

1. We had a frank and open discussion on the need for a national observer programme, and gained an understanding of the challenges DOFM is facing. We put them in contact with an observer agency that would either be able to implement the programme on their behalf or that could offer training once a programme has been established.
2. Malaysia does not currently have a NPOA-S. We provided guidance on how to best go about drafting and implementing a NPOA-S. As we had invited MNS to participate

in the workshop, we were pleased that MNS indicated a willingness to support DOFM in the drafting of a plan and offered other expert input if required.

3. A vessel owner asked that the use of line-weighting (specifically the use of Sliding Leads) be demonstrated on his vessel. We did not expect this offer, and were very happy to then be able to discuss the possibility of at-sea demonstrations within the Malaysian DWF.

Summary of presentations and facilitated discussions

The workshop agenda is provided in Annex 2.

The workshop was designed to give a broad understanding of the Common Oceans Tuna Project, an introduction to what is required by t-RFMOs in terms of seabird bycatch mitigation measures and reporting requirements, as well as current research available for each measure. DOFM presented on Malaysia's DWF, expanding on their management approach and challenges. MNS offered a presentation on Malaysia's seabird population as well as seabird related research they are currently involved with and highlighted possible areas for future collaboration between DOFM and MNS.

The presentation on *Seabird biology and conservation mitigation measures* was particularly well received. Malaysia has very few seabirds present in their national waters, and no albatrosses or petrels, and no known interactions/bycatch between seabirds and tuna longline operations within Malaysia's EEZ. None of the participants had any real understanding of why a workshop on seabirds was needed before the presentation was made, or how these species forage and how they are endangered by longline fishing operations. All mitigation measures presented elicited multiple questions and a constructive discussion evolved amongst the participants.

Facilitated discussions:

As this was BLSA's first official engagement with Malaysia, it was necessary for us to have a number of facilitated discussions to get a better and more nuanced understanding of how their fishery is managed. We also aimed to identify possible areas where we could provide them with additional assistance to ensure their fleet is compliant with IOTC resolutions and prevent the accidental bycatch of seabirds and capacity building within DOFM.

We discussed the current challenges and obstacles that are preventing the implementation of a functioning and representative observer programme and touched on possible alternative solutions, such as electronic monitoring (EM). Malaysia has recently installed CCTV cameras on three of their longline vessels (one which operates south of 25°S). Due to the nature of the system, all footage is stored onboard and can only be viewed once the vessels return to port. The vessels are expected to return before the end of the year, at which time DOFM will be able to view the footage. DOFM mentioned that they did not have a clear plan for how they were going to view/analyse the footage, to which BLSA suggested they get in contact with Fiji to inquire about the software they are using in their Common Oceans EM pilot project.

Survey of workshop participants

A post-workshop questionnaire was developed 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. In total, 18 participants completed the questionnaire (some participants left before the workshop concluded). Those directly involved in the organisation and implementation of the workshop did not complete the survey. 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 on the following topics presented at the workshop?]*

88% of participants found the presentations to be **very useful**, **11%** of participants found the presentations to be **somewhat useful**. **Due to changes in the agenda, not all participants were present for all presentations.**

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?]* **100%** of participants thought that the amount of time allocated for discussion was **about right**

Q4. *[Was the workshop long enough?]* **100%** of participants thought it was **about right**.

Q5. *[Overall, how would you rate the workshop?]* **50%** of participants rated the workshop as **very good**, while **50%** of participants rated it as **good**.

Q6. *[How would you rate your understanding of Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries BEFORE the workshop?]* **75%** of participants rated their understanding as **good**, and **25%** rated their understanding as **poor**.

Q7. *[How would you rate your understanding of Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries AFTER the workshop?]* **13%** of participants rated themselves as **expert**, **87%** rated themselves as **good**

Q8. *[Do you have concerns about employing any of the presented seabird bycatch mitigation measures in the Malaysian longline fleet? Please rank your concerns and reasons (e.g. cost, capacity, etc.):]* **42%** of participants were **very concerned** about implementing mitigation measures in the longline fleet, **43%** were **somewhat concerned** while 15 showed **no concern**. The mitigation measure which elicited the most concern was hookpods (due to financial implications).

Q9. *[Do you agree that this workshop has assisted you in finding possible solutions to the implementation of a national observer programme?]* **56%** of participants **somewhat agreed** while **44%** **agreed**.

Q10. *[Are you confident that the “next steps” discussed for the DWF to comply with RFMO regulations are achievable?]* On average, **81%** of participants were **somewhat confident** while **19%** were **confident**.

Q11. *[Do you have a clear understanding of the reporting requirements for vessels fishing south of 25° degrees South?]*

31% of participants indicated that they were **very clear**, **56%** of participants were **moderately clear** and **6%** were **not at all clear**. **7%** of participants were not present for this presentation.

Q12. [Are you supportive of implementing a National Plan of Action for Seabirds in Malaysia?] **16%** of participants were **supportive**, **88%** of participants were **neutral** while **13%** of participants were **not supportive**.

Q13. [Do you have any other comments, suggestions or topics you would like included in future workshops?]

Comments included the following:

- A request for further engagement, especially with more stakeholders, was made.
- Department of Fisheries representatives requested information and experience sharing with other nations who could provide them with assistance, specifically with implementing an observer programme.
- A suggestion was made that the landing port could be used as a location/opportunity to observe vessels. (BLSA comment: *There could be scope for a Port-Based Outreach Officer in Malaysia.*)

Going forward with the project - next steps

The following next steps for Malaysia were noted from discussions:

- BLSA will share contact details with DOFM of possible observer agencies who could assist them with outsourcing their observer programme until such a time that they can implement their own national observer programme.
- DOFM and the Wildlife department will discuss the way forward to draft and publish a NPOA-S for Malaysia. MNS has indicated that they will be willing to assist with this if required.
- BLSA will share contact details with DOFM of stakeholders in the Fiji EMS pilot project, to assist them with constructing a plan to analyse the data they will shortly receive from the CCTV cameras on their vessels.
- BLSA will put together a draft project proposal for at-sea demonstrations of a line-weighting regime for the Malaysian DWF.
- DOFM will share the proposal, and a letter of motivation, with their superiors in order to start discussions on the possibility of such a joint project.

Suggestions for future workshops

- Ample time for facilitated discussions is very beneficial in a small group setting.
- Once again, we have learnt that there is immense value in facilitating a way for all relevant stakeholders to be in the same room. Various inter-departmental structures often prevent fluid communication, especially when mandates are not the explicit remit of any one department.

Acknowledgements

DOFM are acknowledged for their time and assistance with logistics and presentations and providing a venue for the workshop, as well as their interest in possible future collaboration. MNS are thanked for the time they provided to participate and prepare presentations for the workshop. They are also acknowledged for their insight and guidance with relation to local political structures and their offer to assist and collaborate on future projects. Funding for the workshop (including the catering, travel and DSA) was provided through the FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project (LoA7).

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 Malaysian 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 Malaysia.

Annex 1: List of workshop participants

(Presenters and mediators are marked with *)

Name	Company/agency	Designation
Mr Tan Choo Eng*	Malaysia Nature Society (MNS)	Chairman, Bird Conservation Council
Mr Faedzul Rahman	MNS	Marine Conservation Division
Mr Ahmad khusaini bin mohd kharip Shah	Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan)	Wildlife officer
Mr Mohd izmer bin md Aris	Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM)	Economy officer
Mrs Noor azlida mohd Khazin	LKIM	Economy officer
Dr Zainoddin Jamari	Fisheries Research Institute (FRI), DOFM	Senior research director
Miss Noor hanis bt abu Halim	FRI, DOFM	Research officer
Mr Abdul razak bin Latun	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)	Senior research officer
Mr Foo See Thong	Kha yang marine sdn. Bhd.	Financial controller
Mr Syed azhar syed Ellias	Fajar arenaniaga sdn. Bhd.	Director
Mr Ricky Pua	Asia Tank Trading (m) sdn. Bhd.	Director
Miss Katherine Goh	Asia Tank Trading (m) sdn. Bhd.	Secretary
Miss Noor suhailis bt Zelani	Planning and international division, DOFM	Fisheries officer
Mrs Nor khalilah bt Zainuddin	Extension and transfer of technology division, DOFM	Fisheries officer
Mrs Faizah nor bt Mohamed	Biosecurity division, DOFM	Assistant fisheries officer

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Miss Noraisah bt Zainuddin	Biosecurity division, DOFM	Assistant fisheries officer
Mrs Noor hasmayana bt Yahaya	Resource management division, DOFM	Head of marine resource section
Mrs Tengku balkis bt tunku Shahar*	Resource management division, DOFM	Head of tuna development section
Mrs Marlinda anim binti Marham	Resource management division, DOFM	Head of licencing section
Mrs Nor azlin binti Mokhtar	Resource management division, DOFM	Senior fisheries officer
Mr Mohd faizrus anwar Roslan	Resource management division, DOFM	Fisheries officer
Mr Muhammad asraf bin mohd Ghaus	Resource management division, DOFM	Fisheries officer
Mr Azizol Bin Ros	Resource management division, DOFM	Fisheries assistant
Nini van der Merwe*	Birdlife South Africa (BLSA)	International liaison
Dr Ross Wanless*	Birdlife South Africa (BLSA)	BIMP Africa coordinator

Participants at the Malaysia National Awareness Workshop, September 2018



Annex 2: Workshop Agenda

Day 1	DATE
Time	Session (Presenters)
09:00-09:05	REGISTRATION, all presentations copied to Presentation Laptop
09:05-09:20	Welcome from the host country (Balkis binti Tunku Shahar, Malaysia Fisheries Department)
09:20-09:40	Welcome from BirdLife and explanation of workshop purpose (Ross Wanless, BirdLife South Africa) Introductions (all)
09:40-10:00	FAO ABNJ Common Oceans programme introduction and expectations from participants (Nini van der Merwe, BLSA)
10:00-10:30	Malaysia Nature Society – Seabird Work (Tan Choo Eng, MNS)
10:30-11:00	Morning tea break
11:00-11:45	Description of Malaysia's Distant Water Fleet (DWF) and management approaches and challenges (BbTS, DOFM)
11:45-12:15	Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries (NvdM, BLSA)
12:15-13:00	Introduction to seabird biology and bycatch mitigation measures (RW and NvdM, BLSA)
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-14:45	Bycatch mitigation continued (RW and NvdM, BLSA)
14:45-15:30	Challenges and solutions in dealing with bycatch mitigation for the DWF: presentation and facilitated discussion (RW, BLSA)
15:30-16:00	IOTC Res 11/04 and IOTC's annual Reporting requirements (RW, BLSA)
16:00-16:30	Discussion on annual reporting requirements (RW, BLSA)
16:30-16:45	Closing of day 1 (NvdM, BLSA)
Day 2	
08:30-09:00	Attendees arrive, morning coffee
09:00-09:10	Recap of Day 1/announcements (NvdM, BLSA)
09:10-09:40	The need for a National Observer Programme to meet IOTC Res 11/04, and Global Seabird Assessment (RW and NvdM, BLSA)
09:40-10:30	Next steps for DWF to comply with RFMO regulations: facilitated discussion (RW, BLSA and BbTS, DOFM)
10:30-11:00	Morning Tea break and group photograph
11:00-11:45	Developing an FAO National Plan of Action – Seabirds for Malaysia (RW, BLSA and TCE, MNS)
11:45-12:15	Workshop monitoring and evaluation (NvdM, BLSA)
12:15-12:30	Closing remarks and workshop wrap-up (Final word from DOFM)

