



Report of the South African National Awareness Workshop

for component 3.2.1 of the

Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the ABNJ

28 June 2017
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Cape Town, South Africa

Prepared by BirdLife South Africa



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



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REPUBLIC OF 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

**South Africa National Awareness Workshop for BirdLife component of the GEF
funded FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project (Output 3.2.1)
28 June 2017, Cape Town, South Africa**

BirdLife South Africa report

Aims of the workshop

The broad outcome of the National Awareness Workshop 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). One of the main aims of the workshop was to inform new rights holders (of South African tuna longline fishing permits) about mandatory seabird bycatch mitigation measures. This was placed in context of reporting and observer coverage requirements of relevant tuna RFMOs: the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT). Another aim was to discuss the challenges surrounding the current lack of a formally implemented national observer programme. We also wanted to work towards engaging with this fleet, particularly new rights holders, to gain access to vessels for our Seabird Bycatch Mitigation instructor (under the Common Oceans Tuna Project), because BirdLife's experience has shown that talking about requirements can only take projects so far, and actual presence on a boat, to engage with fishers and demonstrate Best Practice, is required to drive changed fishing operations.

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 South African 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 South Africa. Although this workshop was not attended by any observers, we were able to assist government with designing their logbooks in such a way as to adhere to RFMO reporting requirements.

Background – South Africa

South Africa's entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) falls south of 25° South. Therefore, all vessels with a South African fishing permit, must comply with IOTC Res 12/06, ICCAT 11/09 and CCSBT recommendations. The South African large pelagics fleet is made up of a local fleet (traditionally focused on swordfish and sharks) and a joint venture (JV) fleet (with Japan, largely targeting tuna). BLSA has a long-standing working relationship with both fleets, starting in 2006, when the Albatross Task Force (ATF) was created. The ATF has contributed to the development of South African fishing permit conditions that reflect Best Practice for seabird bycatch mitigation. The onboard research that ATF has done with the local fleet aligns with (and indeed helped inform) RFMO best practice in terms of night setting, line weighting and use of bird-scaring lines. SA permit conditions also contain a precautionary, vessel-specific catch limit which, if breached, can result in permits being withdrawn. While fishing permits in South Africa follow IOTC, ICCAT and CCSBT requirements, there is a requirement in South African regulations for 20% observer coverage, despite the lack of a formal observer programme, and coverage in the local fleet is currently negligible.

Participants

Participants were welcomed on behalf of DAFF by Charlene da Silva and on behalf of BirdLife South Africa and FAO by Bronwyn Maree.

The meeting was attended by four government scientists and managers, two new and five existing South African fishing rights holders, representatives from the South African Tuna Longline Association (SATLA), and one representative from CapMarine (an observer management organisation). Anton Wolfaardt, an expert from the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and three BLSA/Common Oceans personnel delivered the workshop. Participation from the key target audience (new rights holders) was poorer than expected. Nonetheless, the meeting represented a key opportunity to meet with the industry, and delivered useful outcomes.

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 the tRFMOs in terms of seabird bycatch reduction measures and reporting requirements, as well as current research available for each measure. Furthermore, we wanted to inform participants of the options available for implementing best practice seabird bycatch mitigation measures, so as to enable them to decide which measures would work best in their fleet. We also discussed the current challenges and obstacles that are preventing the implementation of a functioning and representative (across the two fleets) observer programme in the South African national fleet and the possibility of further testing of mitigation measures on South African tuna longline vessels.

A summary of each presentation is listed below:

1. FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna Project: outline of the four components of the project and the aims of the workshop. Participants also had the opportunity to mention what they expected from the workshop.

2. Introduction to seabird biology and IOTC Res 12/06: Basic information on why seabirds are vulnerable to bycatch and explanation as to why mitigation measures in the longline industry are necessary to ensure the conservation of albatrosses and petrels.
3. ACAP best practice and emerging research: This presentation gave an overview of current ACAP best practice measures, particularly the new weight measurements as of May 2016.
4. Update on current research on seabird bycatch mitigation measures: hook shielding devices (Smart Tuna Hooks and hook pods), sliding leads and bird-scaring lines were discussed.
5. South Africa's tRFMO seabird bycatch mitigation measures, best practice and reporting requirements: data reported to IOTC, ICCAT and CCSBT by South African national and JV fleet was discussed.
6. Current status of SA observer programme: CapMarine discussed the current challenges and possible solutions for an observer programme in the domestic South African tuna longline fleet.

Facilitated discussions:

Due to the long history of a close working relationship between the South African tuna longline industry, the Albatross Task Force (ATF) and DAFF, we already had a clear understanding of many of the challenges and needs within the industry in order to comply with tRFMO reporting requirements.

A few key points that were raised/discussed during these sessions:

- The main concerns from industry relate to stringent regulations (and the feeling that these are sometimes imposed with little consultation); mitigation measures that do not work effectively across the varied fleet (such as bird-scaring lines that are designed for larger JV vessels but not for the small local vessels), and the lack of communication between industry and government. BLSA is currently working on a modified bird-scaring line design, based on ACAP guidelines, specifically tailored for the local fleet. Individual vessel owners have assisted BLSA by allowing access to their vessels for at-sea trials.
- The main concern from BLSA and government, is the lack of an observer programme for the domestic fleet. This issue was discussed at length.
- Lack of capacity within government was noted as the reason why the observer programme is not currently in place.
- Industry voiced that they are unwilling to comply to permit conditions (in terms of meeting the required observer coverage of 20% of fishing days per quarter be monitored) until they are regulated. Therefore, it seems the stalemate within the process is still present.
- The JV and South African fleets are very different in many important respects (gear configuration, target species, operational approaches, etc.) and as such their respective risks to seabirds are different. Therefore the requirement for representative coverage was not being met by South Africa only observing the JV fleet.
- Concerns were raised about captains or skippers purposely fishing in "low bird activity zones" when they have an observer on board, and targeting bird "hotspots" when there is no observer present.
- BLSA suggested that Electronic Monitoring (EM) could be a possible solution to the current observer constraints.

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. In total, 7 participants completed the questionnaire. Participants 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?] 53% of participants thought the information was **very useful**, 39% of participants thought the information presented was **somewhat useful** and 7% thought it was **not useful**. The highest ranked topics were: “ACAP best practice and emerging research” and “South Africa’s RFMOs” seabird bycatch mitigation measures, best practice and reporting requirements”.

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 **good**.

Q4. [Was the workshop long enough?] **78%** of participants thought it was **about right**, while **22%** thought it was **too short**.

Q5. [Overall, how would you rate the workshop?] **56%** of participants rated the workshop as **very good** while **44%** rated it as **good**.

Q6. [How would you rate your understanding of seabird bycatch mitigation measures BEFORE the workshop?] **63%** of participants said their understanding was **good**, and **25%** said their understanding was **expert**, and **13%** rated their understanding as **poor**.

Q7. [How would you rate your understanding of seabird bycatch AFTER the workshop?] **50%** of participants said their understanding was **good** and **50%** considered themselves as **expert**.

Q8. [Are you confident to report on bycatch data according to South Africa’s RFMO requirements?] **63%** were **somewhat confident**, **25%** were **not confident** while **13%** were **confident**.

Q9a. [Do you have concerns about implementing bird-scaring (Tori) lines?] On average, **38%** had **no concern**, **38%** were **somewhat concerned** and **25%** of participants were **very concerned**.

Q9b. [Do you have concerns about implementing sliding leads?] On average, **50%** had **no concern** and **50%** were **somewhat concerned**.

Q9c. [Do you have concerns about implementing Smart Tuna hooks?] On average, **14%** had **no concern** and **57%** were **somewhat concerned** and **29%** were **very concerned**.

Q9d. [Do you have concern about implementing Hook pods?] On average, **83%** of participants were **somewhat concerned**, while **17%** were **very concerned**.

Q9e. [Do you have concern about implementing Night setting?] On average, **86%** had **no concern** and **14%** were **somewhat concerned**.

Q10. [Are you supportive of the Observer Programme in the South African Tuna Longline fleet?] **100%** of participants were **supportive**.

Q11. [Are you supportive of the Next Steps discussed during the workshop?] **100%** of participants were supportive.

Q12. [Would you be interested in trying Electronic Monitoring on your vessels?] **57%** of participants said that they would be **interested** while **43%** of participants were **neutral**.

Q13. [Do you have any other comments, suggestions or topics you would like included in future workshops?] Note: In some cases, some of the points below were mentioned by multiple participants.

- Thank you, quarterly workshops are needed for capacity/data reports/mitigation measures etc.
- Bird-scaring lines, sliding leads and night setting needs to be enforced.
- Smart Tuna hooks and hookpods need to be adapted.
- Bird-scaring lines, sliding leads, smart tuna hooks and hook pods are a concern due to costs.
- Night setting is dangerous.
- Permfish **might** be interested in testing EM on vessel, need to check with company.
- Bird-scaring lines are tried and tested
- Smart tuna hooks have a negative environmental effect
- Hook pods can cause entanglements
- More investigation and research needs to be done on mitigation measures
- More details of Species Identification
- Easy ways in which to identify the seabird species caught – any tips/pointers would be helpful
- Smart tuna hooks are wasteful and take up too much space

Going forward with the project - next steps

The following next steps for South Africa were noted from discussions:

- DAFF asked for assistance with a contact person at IOTC in order for them to access the correct reporting requirements. BLSA connected them with an IOTC representative and as a result DAFF were able to acquire the correct reporting format
- DAFF and SATLA need to improve their communication.
- DAFF needs to issue the mandate that will enforce regulations relating to observer coverage within this fishery
- EM should be revisited as a possibility for monitoring seabird bycatch on the national and JV fleets.
- BLSA's Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Instructor, is well placed to assist the South African tuna longline fleet with ensuring that they comply to RFMO regulations. He can also assist with trialing new mitigation measures in South African waters, to test their efficiency.
- The above-mentioned position will also, if allowed on to vessels, allow South Africa to update their current seabird bycatch data, as these have not been updated since early 2008.
- Send a species identification guide through to participants when the report is distributed

Suggestions for future workshops

- Find ways to ensure that the correct representatives from government are present.
- Ample time for facilitated discussions is very beneficial in a small group setting.

Conclusions

Due to the current relationship between DAFF and the industry, the meeting was strained from the onset. DAFF currently lacks the capacity to properly manage all aspects that affect the industry, while the industry feels that their interests are not taken into account.

It was useful to be able to discuss the lack of coherence amongst different tRFMO reporting requirements. DAFF has been made aware of this, and are in the process of ensuring that their reporting methods will adhere to all relevant tRFMO requirements. BLSA was able to assist in providing them with the correct reporting requirements from IOTC. DAFF has committed to send a representative to all the tRFMO meetings relevant to South Africa.

It is essential that an observer programme is launched and adhered to, although given the current status within DAFF this is unlikely to be any time in the near future.

Acknowledgements

DAFF scientists are acknowledged for their assistance with logistics and presentations at the workshop. Funding for the workshop (including the venue, catering, travel and DSA for the invited expert and his time) was provided through the FAO Common Oceans Tuna Project (LoA4).

Annex 1: List of workshop participants

(Presenters are marked with *)

Name	Organisation
N Macedo	Rights holder – Henque 4102
F Issel	Rights holder – Premier Fishing
S Walker	SATLA/CPSMME
A Wolfaardt	ACAP*
J de Goede	DAFF – Pelagic and High Seas Fisheries management
T Wilson	SATLA/Viking fishing
R Wanless	BLSA
B Maree	FAO*
N van der Merwe	BLSA
A Angel	BLSA*
C da Silva	DAFF – Research
K Drist	Impala fishing
V Ngcongco	CapMarine*
H Winker	DAFF - Research
M Meyer	DAFF - Research
C Wilke	DAFF

Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 1 shows Albatross Task Force Leader Andrea Angel and Nini van der Merwe holding up a demo version of a bird-scaring line. Andrea is explaining how the line maintains its aerial lift when dragged behind a vessel.

Fig 2 shows most of the attendees of the South African National Awareness Workshop.

Annex 2: Workshop Agenda

Day 1	
Time	Session and presenter
08:30-09:00	Arrival, tea and coffee available, all presentation copied to presentation laptop
09:00-09:10	Welcome from the host country (BLSA and DAFF)
09:10-09:30	Introductions (All)
09:30-09:45	FAO Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna project introduction (Bronwyn Maree, FAO)
09:45-10:15	An Introduction to Seabird Biology and bycatch in the Tuna Longline industry (Andrea Angel, BLSA)
10:15-10:45	Morning Tea Break
10:45-11:25	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels best practice and emerging research (Anton Wolfaardt, ACAP)
11:25-12:15	Update on current research on seabird bycatch mitigation measures (Andrea Angel, BLSA)
	Smart Tuna Hooks
	Sliding leads
	Bird-Scaring lines (current research on new lines)
12:15-12:45	Facilitated discussion on seabird bycatch mitigation measures (BLSA)
12:45-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:00	South Africa's RFMO seabird bycatch mitigation measures, best practice and reporting requirements (Bronwyn Maree, FAO)
14:00-14:30	Current status of the South African observer programme - Victor Ncgongo
14:30-15:15	Facilitated discussion: observer programme (Bronwyn Maree, FAO)
15:15-15:45	Afternoon Tea Break
15:45-16:15	Discussion on future research needs – Electronic Monitoring (Ross Wanless, BLSA)
16:15-16:30	Workshop monitoring (N van der Merwe, BLSA)
16:30-16:40	Closing remarks

12. Would you be interested in trying Electronic Monitoring on your vessels?

1) Interested

2) Neutral

3) Not interested

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

Thank you for your time 😊