



South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

**2nd Meeting of the Commission
Manta, Ecuador: 27 - 31 January 2014**

COMM-02-08

**Proposed Conservation and Management Measure for minimising bycatch
of seabirds in the SPRFMO Convention Area**

New Zealand

CMM X.XX**Conservation and management measure for minimising bycatch of seabirds in the SPRFMO Convention Area**

The Commission of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation;

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

Recognising the need to strengthen mechanisms to protect seabirds in the Pacific Ocean;

Further recognising that the Convention, in giving effect to its objective, requires that the conservation and management of fishery resources shall take into account international best practices and that fishing shall take into account the impacts on non-target or dependent species.

Taking into account the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds);

Further taking into account the FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries concerning best practices to reduce incidental catch of seabirds in capture fisheries;

Noting the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels has established best practice seabird bycatch mitigation measures for trawl and demersal longline fisheries;

Noting that best practice seabird mitigation is supported by ongoing research and improvements.

hereby adopts in accordance with Article 8 and 20 of the Convention, the following conservation and management measure (CMM):

1. Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCs) shall require vessels flying their flag and using bottom longlines, to implement seabird mitigation measures, as described in Annex I.
2. Members and CNCs shall require vessels flying their flag and using trawl to implement seabird mitigation measures, as described in Annex II.
3. Members and CNCs are encouraged to adopt measures aimed at ensuring that seabirds captured or entangled alive during any fishing operations in the Convention Area are released alive and in as good condition as possible. Research into the survival of released seabirds is encouraged.
4. Members and CNCs shall record data on all interactions with seabirds in accordance with CMM 1.03, and including the level of observer coverage focussed on recording seabird bycatch. Members and CNCs shall report this data annually to the Commission.

5. In their annual national science reports to the Scientific Committee, Members and CNCPs shall report annually, on the seabird mitigation measures used by each vessel flying their flag and fishing in the Convention Area, as well as any observed seabird interaction data and the level of observer coverage focussed on recording seabird bycatch.
6. The Scientific Committee will report on the number and location of seabird interactions annually and provide advice and recommendations to the Commission on any possible improvements to further mitigate seabird interactions, including *inter alia*, the potential use of trigger limits to manage the incidental catch of seabirds in the SPRFMO Convention Area. The Scientific Committee shall consider any relevant advice from the ACAP Advisory Committee.

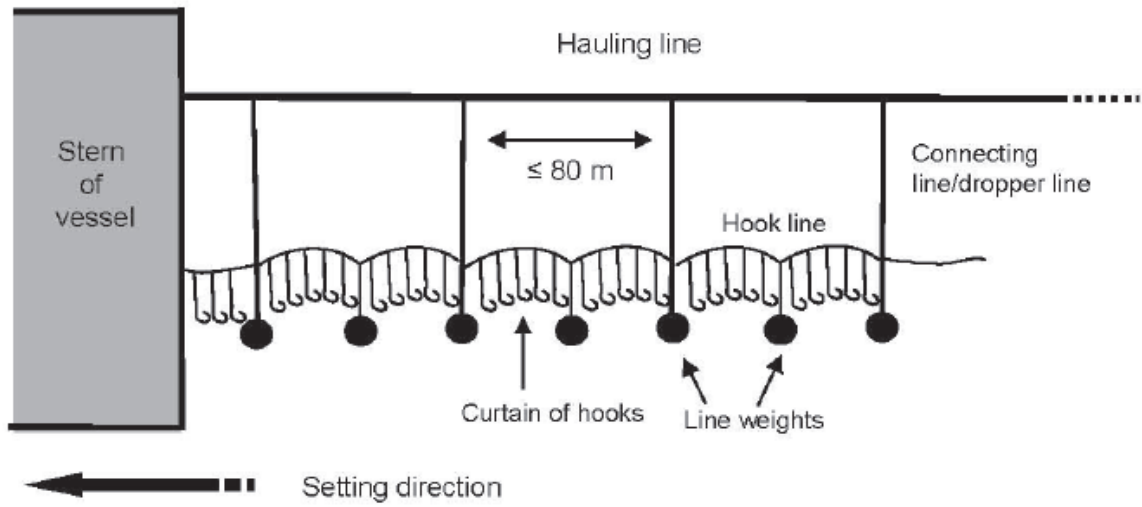
Annex I. Best practice seabird mitigation specifications for bottom longline fishing

1. To minimise the incidental interaction with seabirds in demersal longlines, demersal longline vessels shall implement the combined use of the following measures:
 - a) Use of an appropriate line weighting regime, as specified in paragraph 3, to maximise hook sink rates close to vessel sterns to reduce the availability of baits to seabirds.
 - b) Actively deterring birds from baited hooks by means of bird scaring lines, as specified in paragraph 5.
 - c) Setting at night, between the times of nautical twilight (nautical dark to nautical dawn).
2. Further measures that may be implemented include bird deterrent curtains at the hauling bay as specified in paragraph 6, responsible offal management as specified in paragraph 7 and avoiding peak areas and periods of seabird foraging activity.
3. Where trot lines are used, the use of cachalotera nets is considered to be best practice mitigation, although global minimum standards are not yet developed. Members are encouraged to report details of gear configuration used to the Science Committee.
4. Specification of weighting regime: Line weighting must meet or exceed the minimum standards listed here for each type of bottom line gear. Vessel operators must use a longline weighting regime that achieves a demonstrable minimum longline sink rate of 0.3 metre/second to 15 metre depth for gear. Alternatively:
 - a) External weighted lines - Spanish system and trot lines: A minimum of 8.5kg mass at 40m intervals if rocks are used, 6kg mass at 20m intervals for concrete weights, and 5kg weights at 40m intervals for solid metal weights.
 - b) External weighted lines - autoline. A minimum 5 kg mass at intervals no more than 40 m, which must be released from vessels in a manner that avoids tension astern (tension astern may lift sections of the longline already deployed out of the water).
 - c) Internal weighted lines must have a lead core of 50g/m.
5. Specification of bird scaring lines: One or more bird scaring lines must be carried at all times and must be deployed whenever fishing gear is being set from the vessel.
 - a) The bird scaring line must be attached to the vessel so that when deployed the baits are protected by the streamer line, even in cross winds.
 - b) The bird scaring line shall use brightly coloured streamers long enough to reach the sea-surface in calm conditions ("long streamers") placed at intervals of no more than 5 m for at

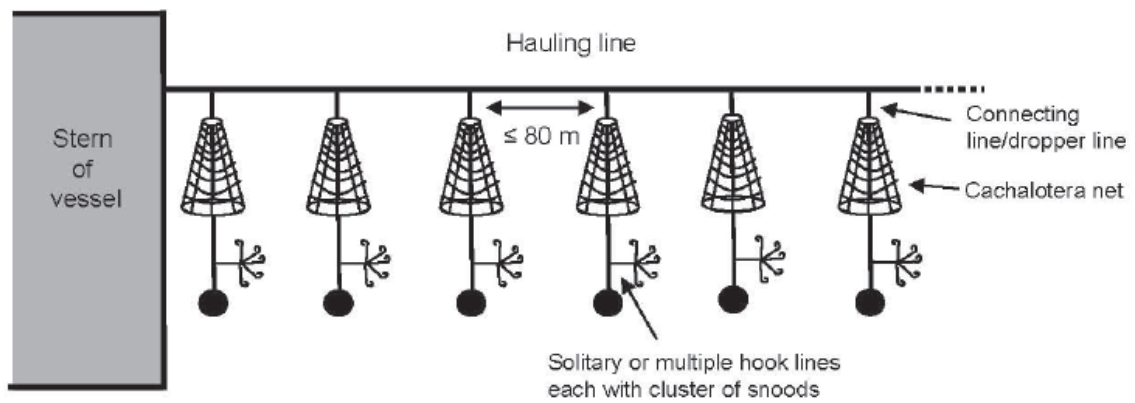
least the first 55 m of streamer line and shall be attached to the line with swivels that prevent streamers from wrapping around the line.

- c) The bird scaring line may also use streamers a minimum of 1 m in length (“short streamers”) placed at intervals of no more than 1m.
 - d) If the bird scaring line that is in use breaks or is damaged, it must be repaired or replaced so that the vessel meets these specifications before any further hooks enter the water;
 - e) The bird scaring line shall be deployed so that it remains above the water surface to a distance where the hooks have sunk to a depth of 15 m, or for a minimum length of 150 m extent and suspended from a point on the vessel at least 7 m above the water in the absence of swell.
6. Specification of bird deterrent curtains: these devices must be constructed in order to achieve the following operational characteristics:
- a. Deterrence of birds flying directly into the area where the line is being hauled.
 - b. Prevention of birds that are sitting on the water surface from swimming into the hauling bay area.
7. Use of responsible offal discharge management to avoid attracting seabirds to the vessel includes:
- a. Avoiding discharge of any biological material during shooting and hauling.
 - b. Where possible and appropriate, converting offal into fish meal and retaining all waste material with any discharge restricted to liquid discharge/ sump water to minimise the number of birds attracted. Where this is not feasible, vessels should batch waste for two hours or longer.

Typical configuration of Spanish system



Typical configuration of trotline method



Annex II. Best practice seabird mitigation specifications for trawl fishing.

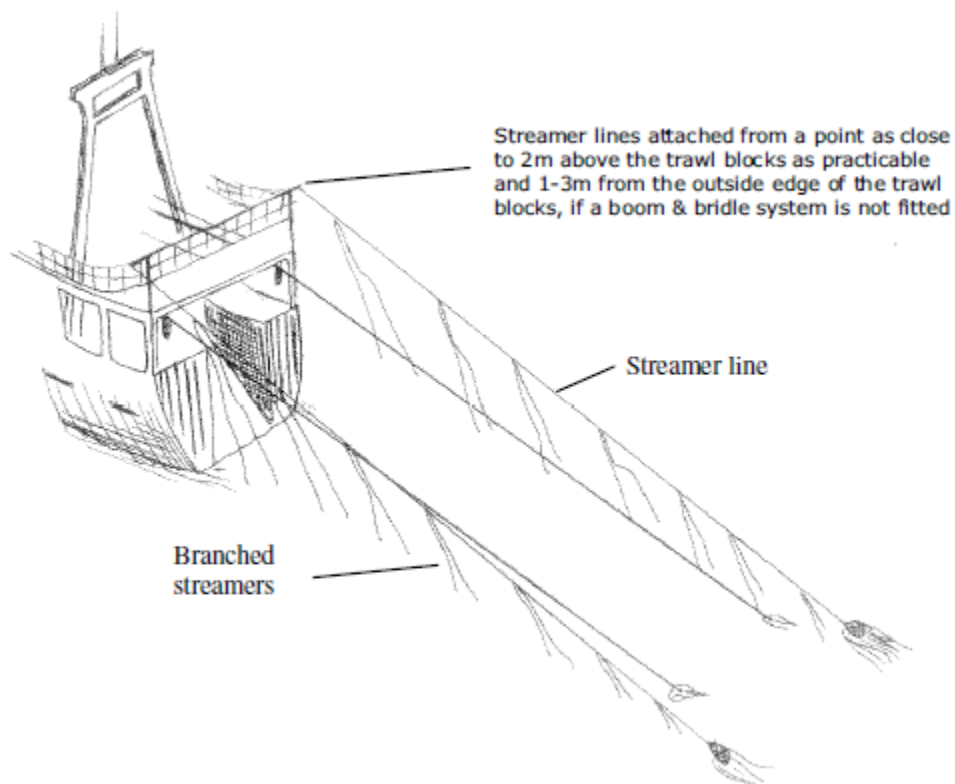
1. Best practice mitigation to minimise the incidental take of seabirds in trawl fishing is the combined use of the following measures:
 - a) Deploy, while fishing, at least one of the following bird scaring devices to deter birds away from warp cables and net monitoring cable:
 - i. two bird scaring lines, as specified in paragraph 2.
 - ii. a bird baffler, as specified in paragraph 3, if fishing operational practices are likely to limit the effectiveness of bird scaring lines, such as feature fishing in deepwater trawl fisheries.
 - b) Use responsible discharge management to avoid attracting seabirds to the vessel:
 - i. where possible, avoid discharge of any biological material during shooting and hauling.
 - ii. where possible and appropriate, convert offal into fish meal and retain all waste material with any discharge restricted to liquid discharge / sump water to reduce the number of birds attracted to a minimum. Where this is not feasible, vessels should batch waste for two hours or longer.

The use of the following measures is also encouraged where possible:

- c) Clean nets after every shot to remove entangled fish (“stickers”) and benthic material to discourage bird attendance during gear shooting.
 - d) Minimise the time the net is on the water surface during hauling through proper maintenance of winches and good deck practices.
2. Specification of bird scaring lines: Two bird scaring lines must be carried at all times and must be deployed whenever the trawl net is in the water.
 - a) Bird scaring lines must be attached to both the port and starboard sides of a vessel, above and outside of the warp blocks.
 - b) To avoid deflection of bird scaring lines away from cables in strong cross winds, the bird scaring lines must tow a buoy or cone attached to the end of line to create tension and keep the line straight. It is recommended that for every metre of block height 1.2 kg of terminal object drag weight be used.
 - c) The bird scaring line must be long enough to extend beyond the point at which warp and net monitoring cables reach the water surface. It is recommended that for every metre of block height 5 m of backbone be deployed.

- d) The bird scaring line must have brightly coloured streamers long enough to reach the sea-surface in calm conditions. These must be placed at intervals of no more than 5 m apart, preferably at 3 m apart.
3. Specification of bird baffle. A bird baffle consists of two or more booms attached to the stern quarter of the vessel, with at least one boom attached to the starboard stern quarter and at least one boom attached to the port stern quarter;
- a) each boom shall extend outwards not less than four metres from the side or stern of the vessel;
- b) dropper lines, shall be attached to the booms no more than 2 metres apart;
- c) plastic cones, rods or other brightly coloured and durable material shall be attached to the ends of the dropper lines, so that the bottom of the cone, rod or material is not more than 500 millimetres above the water, in the absence of wind and swell; and
- d) lines or webbing may be attached between the dropper lines to prevent tangling.

“Bird scaring lines”



“Bird baffle”

