



Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

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Implementation of Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels Action Plan in Brazil

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Introduction

Brazil adopted, voluntarily, to develop its own National Plan of Action for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels. Since then, several sectors have been working to accomplish this important task, which involves governmental areas, private companies and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). Supported by FAO, the Projeto Albatroz and BirdLife International - Brazilian Programme investigated necessary actions for the conservation of albatross and petrel species within national territorial boundaries and their relationships with fisheries. Projeto Albatroz, which has been involved with this group of seabirds for over a decade, maintains in its databases historical information concerning the interaction of seabirds with fisheries. The National Plan of Action for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels – NPOA-Seabirds/Brazil was launched by IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Natural Renewable Resources) during the Second Meeting of the ACAP (Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels) Advisory Committee in Brasília on 5-8 June 2006.

Considering that Brazil is close to ratification of the ACAP, it is the country's desire, as a signatory nation to the ACAP, to provide the information on the implementation of the Action Plan in Brazil as our duty with the conservation of the Procellariiformes and to inform the party nations on the progresses we have made.

1. Agreement and Action Plan Implementation

- The Permanent Committee of Management for Tuna Fisheries determined that the Scientific Sub-committee for Tuna Fisheries offered two new seats for bycatch experts in order to include the discussion about the solution for seabirds and sea turtle incidental captures by longline fisheries in Brazil.
- Implementation of the Working Group for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels under IBAMA. The group is under reorganization to become a permanent Committee and to include, among others, the Brazilian representatives at FAO, ICCAT and CCAMLR.

- Creation of Working Group to address conjunctly bycatch of seabirds, sea turtle, marine mammals and elasmobranchs with the mandate to elaborate guidelines for reduction incidental captures in fishing activities with special emphasis on threatened species.
- IBAMA defined albatrosses and petrels conservation actions and the implementation of National Plan of Action as a high priority issue. In order to reach this aim IBAMA has funded research activities by its specialized centre - CEMAVE, contracted experts and is developing its partnership with Projeto Albatroz.
- The Ministry of the Environment and IBAMA organized a Workshop on Alien Invasive Species to discuss with the scientific community and other institutions ways to prevent, control and eradicate them in several areas of Brazil.
- Brazil strongly encourages the creation of a fund for implementing the ACAP Action Plan and means to provide technical assistance to further develop conservation and management research in the scientifically least developed countries.

2. Habitat Conservation and Restoration

- IBAMA is establishing a partnership with the Brazilian Navy to develop research and conservation activities with Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*) at Trindade Island.
- An interministerial program (PROTRINDADE) was established in February 2007¹, with the goal to promote and manage the development of scientific researches at Trindade and Martin Vaz Islands and adjacent sea areas. This program will facilitate the access of scientists to Trindade Island and provide logistic and financial support for their projects.
- The National Museum of Rio de Janeiro has implemented a project to restore the native vegetation in a degraded field in the Trindade Island planting over a thousand saplings of *Colubrina glandulosa* Perkins (Rhamnaceae).
- The conservation of breeding grounds located in oceanic islands is a high priority according to National Plan of Action-Seabirds Brazil.
- As a signatory of MARPOL Convention, Brazil has committed with the prevention of pollution of the marine environment by ships from operational or accidental causes and from fishing vessels.

¹ PORTARIA CIRM N° 129, DE 15 DE MAIO DE 2007.

- Limitation of tourism activities in the Itatiaia Islands (Espírito Santo state), where breeds the Brazilian endangered Audubon's shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri*.
- Insufficient research in the Brazilian territory does not make necessary to establish general procedures to avoid research disturbance. Still, IBAMA licenses specific research initiatives in accordance with Brazilian regulations.
- Brazilian Navy is providing logistical facilities for the development of researches on the petrels from Trindade Island within the Programme PROTRINDADE.

3. Management of human activities

- Identification of the "Itaipava fishery" as an important cause of mortality for seabirds, including endangered species such as Yellow-nosed albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* and Spectacled petrel *Procellaria conspicillata*. A broad study of fishing methods, fleet, fishing grounds, and seabird species interactions was carried out on ports and by onboard observers. A scientific manuscript was produced and the manuscript is available.
- Seabird distribution, abundance and bycatch in longline fisheries off Southern Brazil were presented at the ICCAT Inter-sessional Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Ecosystems, Madrid, Spain, February 19-23th, 2007.
- Publication of a volume with the results of studies carried out under the EEZ Live Resources Program of Brazilian Government about seabirds distribution and abundance in south Brazil, interaction of seabirds with pelagic and bottom longline fisheries and foraging behaviour of four main species of Procelariiformes in Brazil (Black-browed Albatross, Yellow-nosed Albatross, White-chinned Petrel and Spectacled Petrel).
- Eight national longline vessels based in Southern Brazil are voluntarily testing and adopting the mitigation measures, mainly torilines, to reduce the seabird bycatch. Also, there are more fishermen interested to test the torilines and blue baits.
- Specialization courses to professional observers from National Observers Program to capacitate them to collect data on seabirds (identification, abundance, tracking, and bycatch), to support the fishermen during the mitigation measures test and to accomplish environmental education onboard.
- Elaboration of a federal act, obliging the use of mitigation measures by all longliners, determining combined methodologies for vessels that do not use artificial baits. Such measures must be mandatory for all national and leased fleet, considering the specificity of each fisheries modality. This document was written

by Projeto Albatroz with the collaboration of fishermen, who have experience in the use of mitigation measures.

4. Research and Monitoring

- Study on abundance, bycatch and genetic of the Spectacled petrel *Procellaria conspicillata* was performed in cooperation with Projeto Albatroz/Brazil, Federal University of Rio Grande/Brazil, RSPB/UK, and University of Cape Town/South Africa.
- Study on trophic structure of Procelariiform community off Brazil based on stable isotope signatures was initiated in cooperation between University of Glasgow and Projeto Albatroz.
- Study on torilines models developed by fishermen of National longline fleet based in Southern Brazil and their efficiency using different materials in their compositions.
- Continuation on Spectacled petrel movements, started in June 2006 with deployment of satellite transmitters captured in Brazilian fishing grounds, aiming to determine overlap with fisheries and displacement along the South-western Atlantic Ocean. This study received more funds and it will deploy 4 transmitters in July/August 2007.
- A study has been performed on systematic of breeding petrels at Trindade Island (*Pterodroma* spp.). The Trindade Island were visited from December 2006 to April 2007 to collect data on Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*), ringing birds, census of population, blood samples for taxonomy study, and at sea tracking using geolocators aiming to clarify specific status of the group and identify important feeding areas for breeding birds.
- Encouragement and education for the return to land of non-degradable wastes, including plastics, batteries, light sticks, and plastic packaging bands, produced by fishing activities.
- Monitoring longline fishery fleet in Santos-SP and Itajaí-SC fishing terminals (Southern Brazil) to collect information on seabird bycatch, thought logbooks filled by Skippers.
- Monitoring longline fishery fleet at-sea in Santos-SP and Itajaí-SC (Southern Brazil) thought the observers onboard with the objective to collect information on seabird bycatch, and distribution, to deploy of satellite transmitters for tracking seabirds, and to collect fishery production information. Observers carry out awareness activities with fishermen during the fishing trips, exchanging

experiences and talking about marine environment conservation and sustainable fishery.

- In November and December 2006, it was accomplished two researcher cruises in a fishery vessel, mainly, to controlled tests of mitigation measures (torilines and blue baits), sponsored by Special Secretariat of Aquaculture and Fisheries of the Presidency of the Republic (of Brazil) – SEAP.

5. Education and Public Awareness

- Establishment of a partnership between Projeto Albatroz and BirdLife International to develop the Albatross Task Force project in Brazil, aiming the introduction of mitigation measures in the Brazilian longline fleet throughout educational approach.

Establishment of sponsorship from Petrobras (Brazilian Oil Company) to the Projeto Albatroz to develop the awareness, education and implementation of mitigation measures to reduce seabird bycatch in the national longline fleet.

Projeto Albatroz contracted the counselling from Education Environmental Center, of University of Vale do Itajaí to develop approach methodologies to know the perception of fishermen regarding the fisheries and the marine environmental and how they deal with it

- Several media programs, articles and reports focusing albatross conservation have been broadcasted on TV, newspapers, magazines, radio, and Internet directed to the public in general.
- Accomplishment of *I South American Fishermen Forum to Reduce the Seabirds Bycatch* occurred on 12 -14th December, 2006, at the Delphin Hotel in Guarujá city, Sao Paulo littoral. The event was organized by Projeto Albatroz a a Brazilian NGO and Southern Seabird Solutions, sponsored by Care for the Wild International and supported by Government State Department of the United States. The forum's major goal was to promote the information exchange between fishermen, ship owners, researchers, Governmental and Non Governmental Organization to illustrate and talk about the fisheries practices to reduce seabird's bycatch in South American countries, especially by longline and trawler fisheries. Sixty participants, as fishermen and researchers from many different countries as Australia, New Zealand, United States, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Brazil attended this event.
- Brazilian participation on the 5th International Fisheries Observer Conference, May 15-18th 2007, accomplished in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, to exchange experiences on observers program around the world and to get new ideas to improve the National Onboard Observer Program and Projeto Albatroz

Observer Program regarding to training, safety, management at-sea and collected data on seabirds.

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