

 Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels Position Statement <i>29th Regular Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, Seville, Spain, 17-24 November 2025</i>
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Our position

ACAP calls on ICCAT to strengthen its seabird conservation efforts by reflecting ACAP Best Practice Advice and Guidelines in seabird bycatch mitigation measures:

- by agreeing to include the use of Hook-Shielding Devices as a stand-alone seabird mitigation measure in ICCAT pelagic longline fisheries, thereby aligning ICCAT with IOTC and WCPFC.
- by continuing work to review the existing seabird bycatch mitigation measures, particularly the minimum requirements for branch line weighting
- by agreeing to further updates to the seabird bycatch mitigation measures, no later than 2027.

Basis for our position

ACAP's Best Practice Advice and Guidelines

- reflect the best available scientific evidence on ways to avoid or minimise the incidental catch of seabirds during fishing operations
- are developed and refined from the results of extensive, robust scientific research on the technologies and techniques that are necessary to avoid or minimise the significant threat posed by fishing gears to seabirds
- are assessed against rigorous criteria to determine whether a particular technology or technique can be considered best practice to reduce the incidental mortality of albatrosses and petrels in fishing operations.

The ACAP Best Practice Advice assessment criteria are:

1. Individual fishing technologies and techniques should be selected from those shown by experimental research to significantly (in the statistical context) reduce the rate of seabird incidental mortality to the lowest achievable levels (determined by either a direct reduction in seabird mortality or by reduction in seabird attack rates, as a proxy).
2. Fishing technologies and techniques, or a combination thereof, should have clear and proven specifications and minimum performance standards for their deployment and use.
3. Fishing technologies and techniques should be demonstrated to be practical, cost effective and widely available.
4. Fishing technologies and techniques should, to the extent practicable, maintain catch rates of target species.

5. Fishing technologies and techniques should, to the extent practicable not increase the bycatch of other taxa.
6. Minimum performance standards and methods of ensuring compliance should be provided for fishing technologies and techniques and clearly specified in fishery regulations.



Commitment

ACAP is committed to ongoing cooperation with ICCAT:

- we will continue to advocate for strengthened conservation and protection of albatrosses and petrels, and other seabirds
- our engagement in ICCAT forums shall be facilitative in nature
- we will continue to support efforts to minimise the incidental bycatch of albatrosses and petrels in the ICCAT Convention Area.



Context

The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) is an international organisation that aims to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for albatrosses and petrels.

Of the 13 ACAP Parties, six are also ICCAT Parties (France, Norway, South Africa, Spain (via the European Union), Uruguay, and the United Kingdom).

We encourage international cooperative action to conserve and protect seabirds by all States and Fishing Entities whose fishing activities cause the incidental bycatch of seabirds.

Our focus is on the most threatened group of seabirds globally: all 22 species of albatross, as well as an additional nine species of petrels listed in Annex 1 to ACAP. All these species require urgent conservation action to address the threats at-sea and on land to their long-term survival in nature.

Populations are declining across each of six key albatross and petrel populations that occur in the ICCAT Convention Area:

- **Critically Endangered:** Tristan Albatross *Diomedea dabbenena*
- **Endangered:** Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos*, Grey-headed Albatross *Thalassarche chrysostoma*
- **Vulnerable:** Wandering Albatross *Diomedea exulans*, White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis*
- **Least Concern:** Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophris*.



For more information contact

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