Update on bycatch risks to seabirds in the Western Pacific

WCPFC-SC14-2018/EB-WP-11 rev1

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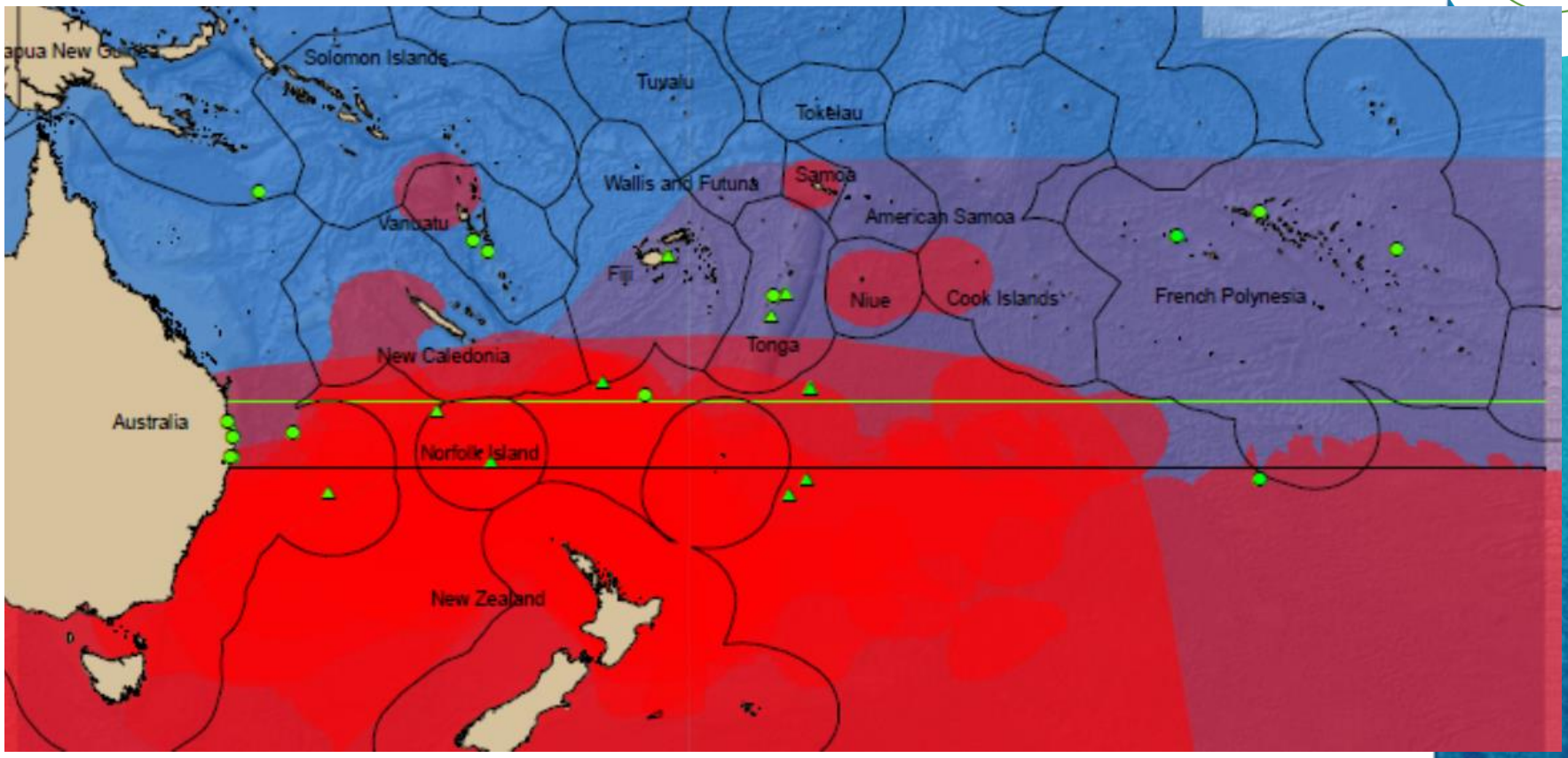
Background

Based on seabird population and distribution data SC12 recgonised:

- the main area of distribution for New Zealand's vulnerable seabirds, especially the Antipodean albatross and the black petrel, is south of 25ºS
- use of effective bycatch mitigation measures across the full range of at-risk seabirds should enhance conservation of those seabirds.

Paper EB-WP-11-Rev1 provides an update on the conservation status and spatial distribution of New Zealand-breeding seabirds, with a focus on Antipodean albatross

SC12 recap



Currently CMM 2017-06 requires mitigation is used south of 30°S.

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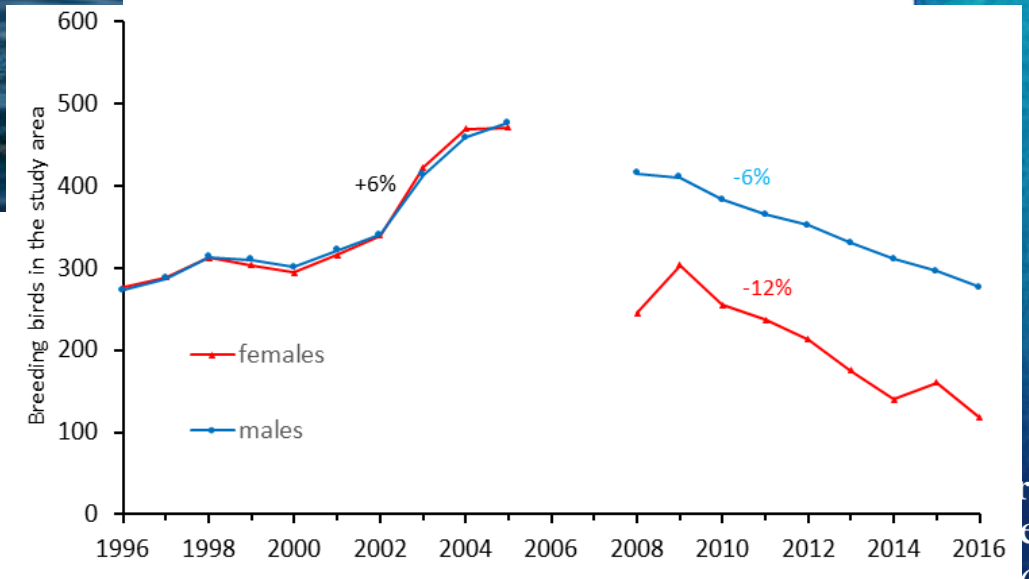
Antipodean wandering albatross

Diomedea antipodensis antipodensis

- ACAP Priority Conservation Concern (2017)
- Uplisted by IUCN to Endangered (2017)
- Nationally Critical (NZTCS)



Methods

- Tracking data collected using geolocation (GLS) tags using light and activity/temperature data
- We chose repeatable methods using recent published algorithms
- Locations identified by an iterative forward step selection probability algorithm in the probGLS package (Merkel 2016)
- At-sea distribution of the tracked birds was mapped using fixed kernel density estimate (avoiding type II error)
- Year round distribution used as birds are biennial breeders and sample size is low (n=9)

Antipodean albatross

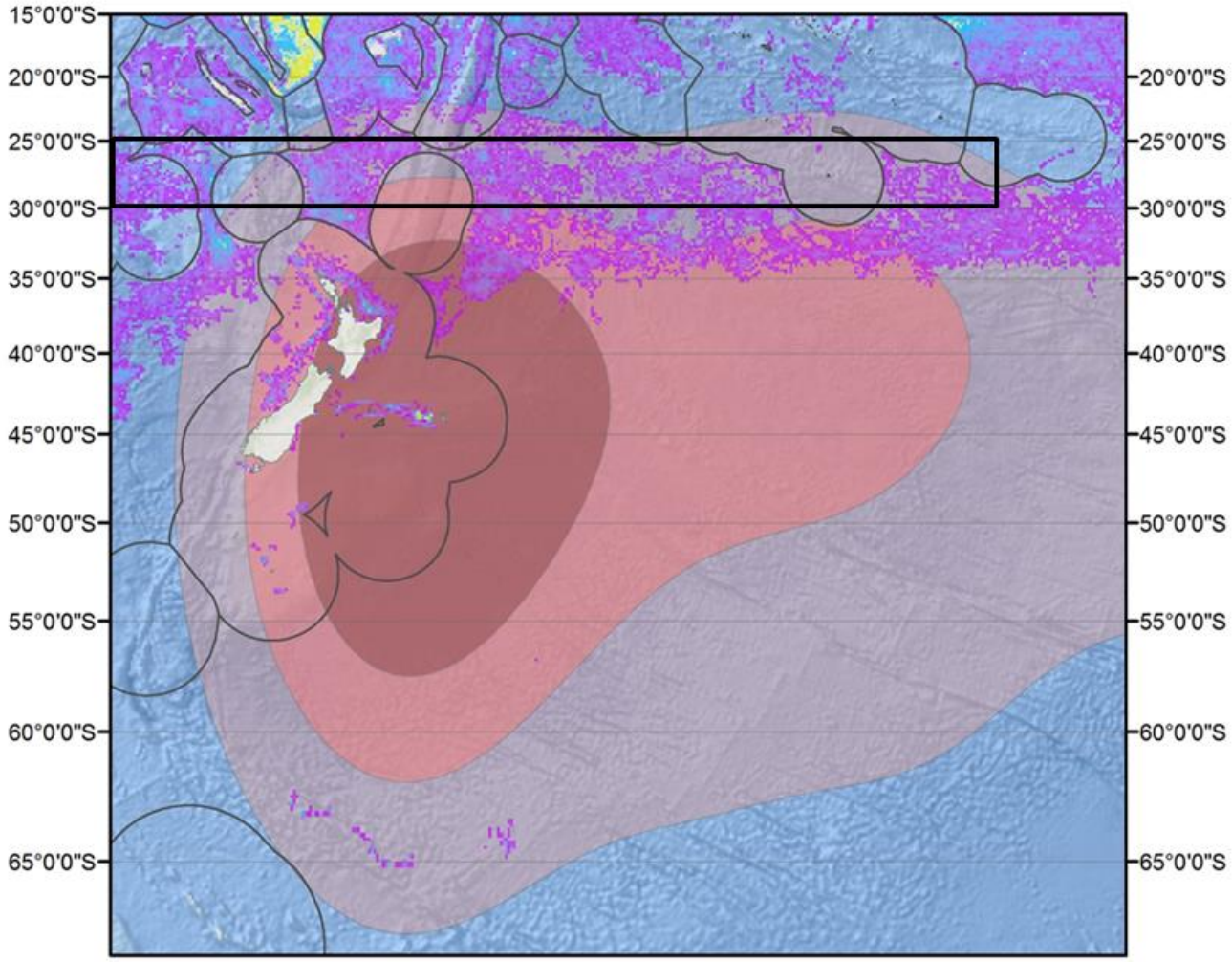


Figure 1. Combined breeding and non-breeding distribution of Antipodean albatross 2016-2018 and distribution of drifting longline fishing effort.

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Antipodean albatross

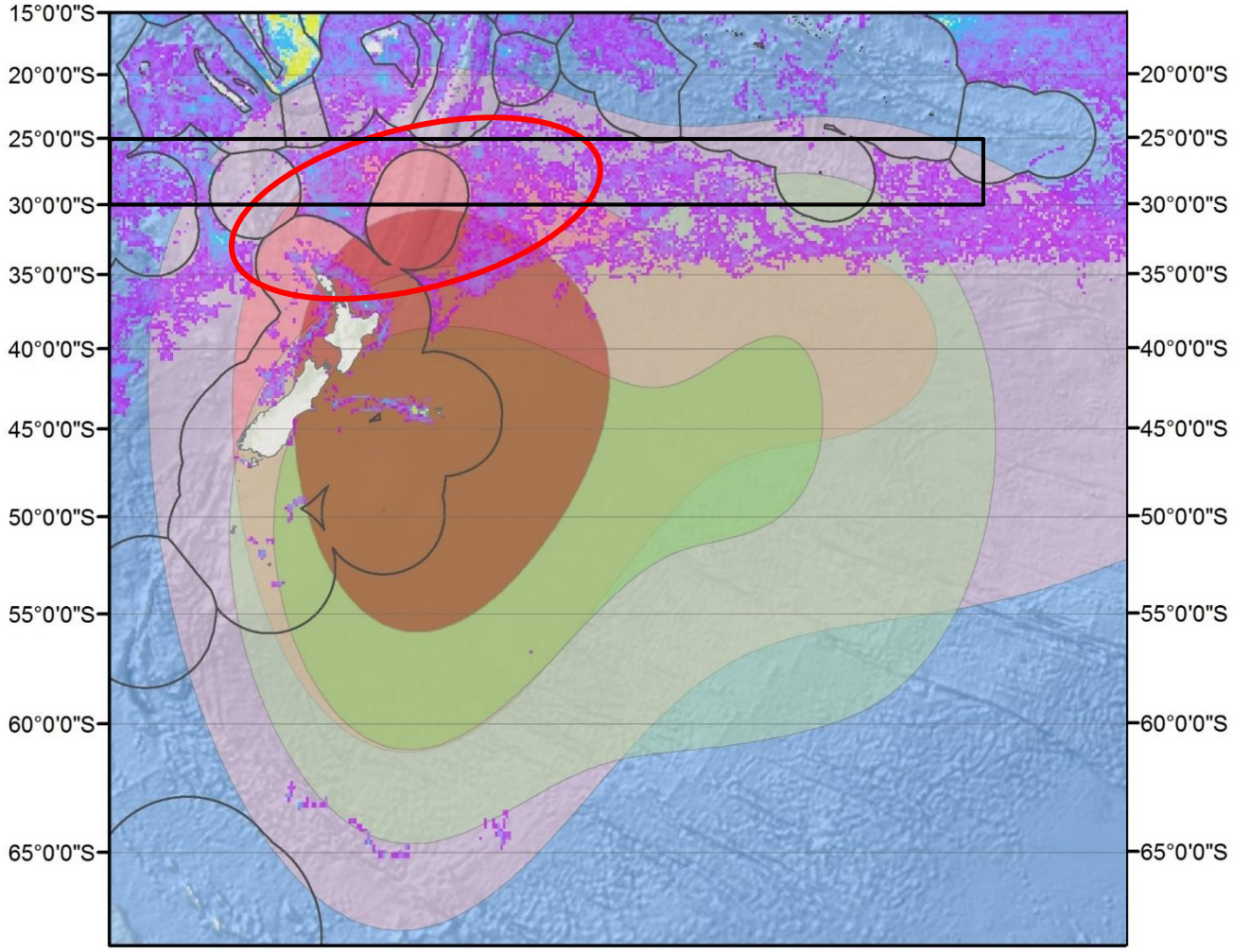

Figure 2. Distribution of female (red shading) and male (green shading) Antipodean albatross.

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Conclusions

- While recognising that our sample sizes of birds tracked is small, and that our analysis of overlap with fishing effort is based on the GFW data set as an indication of the distribution of fishing effort, this data represents the latest available information on where Antipodean wandering albatross forage.

- This evidence further supports the previous conclusions of SC that extending the requirement for use of seabird bycatch mitigation to 25°S will provide enhanced conservation of Antipodean wandering albatross.

Recommendations

1. Agree that the most recent data on Antipodean wandering albatross, a priority population of conservation concern, confirms the extent of foraging to waters north of 25° S.
2. Agree that substantial fishing effort occurs in waters of the WCPFC area between 30°S and 25°S where Antipodean wandering albatross forage.
3. Agree that as CMM2017-06 does not require the use of seabird mitigation in the WCPFC area between 30°S and 25°S, this fishing effort poses a bycatch risk to Antipodean wandering albatross and other species foraging in the area.
4. Agree that implementation of seabird mitigation measures south of 25°S will reduce the bycatch risks faced by Antipodean wandering albatross and other seabirds.
5. Agree to recommend that TCC consider and WCPFC revise the 30ºS boundary of the seabird CMM to south of 25°S to mitigate seabird bycatch across the area of main extent of their foraging range.