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**Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Position Statement to  
WCPFC22**

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**WCPFC22-2025-OP15**

**21 November 2025**

**Submitted by Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)**

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|  <p>Agreement on the Conservation<br/>of Albatrosses and Petrels</p> | <h2>Agreement on the Conservation of<br/>Albatrosses and Petrels</h2> <p>Position Statement</p> <p><i>22nd Regular Meeting of the Western and Central<br/>Pacific Fisheries Commission, Manila, Philippines,<br/>1-5 December 2025</i></p> |
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### Our position

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

- by agreeing to require the use of at least two of three mitigation measures, or hook-shielding devices, in the area between 25° and 30° South, thereby aligning WCPFC with IOTC and ICCAT
- by encouraging longline vessels fishing south of 25° South, to use all three mitigation measures in combination, or hook-shielding devices
- by encouraging minimum weighted branch line specifications to align with ACAP Best Practice Advice.

### 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**

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 WCPFC**

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

ACAP recognises that albatrosses and petrels face a conservation crisis.

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

Within the WCPFC Convention Area the best available scientific evidence:

- highlights that the conservation status of many seabirds is perilous, with some species heading towards extinction
- highlights that bycatch in longline fisheries is the key conservation threat to seabirds
- highlights that the most important habitat for endangered Southern Hemisphere seabirds is the high seas area south of 25° South.

Widespread application of ACAP Best Practice Advice and Guidelines will improve operational, management, and other measures to avoid or minimise the incidental mortality of albatrosses and petrels during fishing activities.

## For more information contact

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