



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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EIGHTH MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Nairobi, 20-25 November 2005
Agenda items 14 (b)

REVIEW OF ARTICLE IV AGREEMENTS ALREADY CONCLUDED

1. The Secretariat is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, the report provided by the Secretariat of the **Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)**, to accompany document UNEP/CMS/Conf.8.10.
2. The report is provided unedited in the format and language that it was submitted.

EXAMEN DES ACCORDS DE L'ARTICLE IV DEJA CONCLUS

1. Le Secrétariat diffuse ci-joint, pour l'information des participants à la 8ème session de la Conférence des Parties à la Convention sur les espèces migratrices, le rapport développé fourni par le Secrétariat del Accord sur les mesures de Conservation pour les Albatros et Pétrels (ACAP) pour accompagner le document UNEP/CMS/Conf. 8.10.
2. Le rapport est fourni sans avoir été mis au point, dans le format et la langue dans lesquels il a été soumis.

REVISIÓN DE ACUERDOS ARTÍCULO IV YA CONCLUIDOS

1. La Secretaría adjunta, para información de los participantes a la Octava Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención sobre Especies Migratorias, el informe completo presentado por la Secretaría del Acuerdo sobre medidas de Conservación en favor de Albatros y Petreles (ACAP), en complemento en el documento UNEP/CMS/Conf. 8.10.
2. El informe se presenta sin modificaciones editoriales, bajo la forma y en el idioma originales.

**Review of Article IV Agreements already concluded:
Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)**

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Abstract

There has been substantial progress with the implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) since the 7th CMS Conference of Parties. There are now 11 signatories to the Agreement, eight of which have ratified it. The Agreement entered into force on 1 February 2004.

The First Meeting of the Parties was held in Hobart, Australia in November 2004. At that meeting Parties agreed to the establishment of an Agreement Secretariat and an Advisory Committee. Priorities were also determined for the implementation of the action plan. Two working groups were also established; the Status and Trends Working Group, to carry out a review of the status and trends of albatrosses and petrels covered by the Agreement; and the Taxonomy Working Group, to consider issues related to the taxonomy of albatrosses.

The First Meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Hobart in July 2005. The meeting discussed strategies for engagement with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), and agreed a set of priorities for future remote tracking studies of ACAP species. The meeting also agreed to establish a working group to review the protection and management status of albatross and petrel breeding sites.

The meeting noted that excellent progress had been made by the Status and Trends Working Group towards the goal of collecting and collating existing population count data for ACAP listed species. The Committee endorsed a proposal from the Taxonomy Working Group to develop guidelines for the identification of species boundaries among ACAP taxa.

PROGRESS WITH AGREEMENT

The Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) entered into force on 1 February 2004. There are currently eleven signatories to the Agreement. Eight Parties have ratified the Agreement: Australia, Ecuador, France, New Zealand, Peru, the Republic of South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom. Three Signatory States: Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have announced that ratification of the Agreement is currently being considered by their respective Parliaments.

FIRST MEETING OF PARTIES

The First Meeting of the Parties (MOP1) to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) was held in Hobart, Australia, from 10-12 November 2004. It was preceded by an informal scientific meeting from 8-9 November 2004.

MOP 1 was attended by five Parties: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom; three Signatory States: Argentina, Brazil and France; and three Range States: Namibia, Norway and the United States of America (USA); and a number of observers, including representatives of RFMOs and conservation NGOs.

At MOP1 Australia presented an offer to host the Secretariat permanently in Hobart. There was unanimous support for this proposal from the Parties present. A process for the establishment of the Secretariat was agreed, with Australia to continue to provide the interim Secretariat until the permanent Secretariat is established.

An Advisory Committee was established to provide scientific, technical and other advice to the Meeting of Parties; and a work programme for this Committee was endorsed. Two working groups were also established, to carry out a review of the status and trends of albatrosses and petrels covered by the Agreement; and to consider issues related to the taxonomy of albatrosses.

The meeting agreed that the priority areas of the ACAP Action Plan which require immediate attention are fisheries bycatch of albatrosses and petrels; and the management and protection of breeding sites, including in particular any adverse effects of introduced species, parasites or diseases. Mortality from interactions with fishing vessels represents the most serious threat to most species of albatrosses and petrels covered by the ACAP Agreement. Much work has been done or is ongoing with respect to the mitigation of adverse effects of fisheries on albatrosses and petrels. The Advisory Committee was tasked with recommending the best way to integrate the work of ACAP with existing initiatives, with the aim of enhancing and advancing current initiatives, not duplicating them.

FIRST MEETING OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC1) to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) was held in Hobart, from 20 to 22 July 2005.

The meeting was attended by representatives of four Parties: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom; two Signatory States: Argentina and France; and three range States: Norway, Ukraine and the United States of America. Observers, including representatives of RFMOs and conservation NGOs also attended.

Birdlife International tabled two important papers to the meeting. The first of these identified Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) of particular relevance to the Agreement. The meeting noted that engagement with RFMOs was fundamental to improving the conservation status of many albatross and petrel populations. As a first step, ACAP will seek observer status at future meetings of relevant RFMOs as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization's Committee on Fisheries.

Birdlife International also tabled a paper on the remote tracking of albatrosses and petrels. This provided valuable information on the overlap between foraging ranges and fisheries, highlighting areas where birds are at greatest risk of harmful interaction with fishing gear. AC1 agreed a set of priorities for future remote tracking studies of ACAP species and for the analysis of this data.

The Chair of the Status and Trends Working Group, Rosemary Gales (Australia), reported that excellent progress has been made towards the goal of collecting and collating existing population count data for ACAP listed species. These data will be used to identify the population trend for each species (ie whether it is declining, stable or increasing) and also to highlight the species for which further population data are required before population trends can be reliably estimated. This work is essential to identify those species most in need of conservation action. It will also serve to measure progress against the objectives of the

Agreement to secure a favourable conservation status for listed species of albatrosses and petrels.

The Committee also discussed an ongoing review of the protection and management status of the breeding sites of albatrosses and petrels, with particular reference to the presence at some sites of introduced species of animals that cause harm to nesting birds. A Working Group, chaired by Susan Waugh (New Zealand), was established to take forward this review. The aims are to establish a breeding sites database, prioritise sites for eradication of non-native species and identify sites which may benefit from additional protection.

The Chair of the Taxonomy Group, Mike Double (Australia) provided a report on proposals to address current uncertainties in the taxonomy of albatrosses and petrels. The Committee endorsed a proposal to develop guidelines for the identification of species boundaries among ACAP taxa. The Working Group will then review ACAP taxa against the guidelines and report to the second meeting of the Advisory Committee on the taxonomic status of currently listed ACAP species.

The Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee is provisionally scheduled for June 2006. The meeting will be preceded by meetings of Advisory Committee Working Groups.

A formal offer has yet to be received to host the second session of the Meeting of Parties to ACAP, due to take place late in 2006.
