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**PROPOSAL A: ON REDUCING INCIDENTAL CATCH OF SEABIRDS**

**SUBMITTED BY AUSTRALIA**

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**The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),**

RECALLING *Recommendation 05/09 On Incidental Mortality of Seabirds*:

RECOGNISING the need to strengthen mechanisms to protect seabirds in the Indian Ocean;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds);

NOTING the recommendations of the IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch on measures to mitigate seabird interactions as outlined in their 2007 Report;

ACKNOWLEDGING that to date some Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (hereinafter referred to as "CPCs") have identified the need for, and have either completed or are near finalizing, their National Plan of Action on Seabirds;

RECOGNISING the concern that some species of seabirds, notably albatross and petrels, are threatened with global extinction;

NOTING that the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, which opened for signatures at Canberra on 19 June 2001, has entered into force;

NOTING that the ultimate aim of the IOTC and the CPCs is to achieve a zero bycatch of seabirds for fisheries under the purview of the IOTC, especially threatened albatrosses and petrel species in longline fisheries;

ADOPTS in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article IX of the IOTC Agreement, that:

1. CPCs shall implement the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds).
2. CPCs shall report to the Commission, as part of their annual reports, on their implementation of the IPOA-Seabirds, including the status of their National Plans of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries.
3. CPCs shall seek to achieve reductions in levels of seabird bycatch across all fishing areas, seasons, and fisheries through the use of effective mitigation measures.
4. CPCs shall ensure that all longline vessels fishing south of 30°S use at least two of the mitigation measures in Table 1 below, including at least one from Column A. Vessels shall not use the same measure from Column A and Column B.

Table 1: Seabird mitigation measures

Column A	Column B
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	Night setting with minimum deck lighting
Bird-scaring lines (Tori Lines)	Bird-scaring lines (Tori Lines)
Weighted branch lines	Weighted branch lines
	Blue-dyed squid bait
	Offal discharge control

5. In all other areas, CPCs shall ensure that longline vessels use at least one of the measures in Table 1, including one measure from Column A.
6. Mitigation measures used shall conform to the minimum technical standards for the measures as shown in Annex 1.
7. The design and deployment for bird scaring lines shall meet the specifications provided in Annex 2.
8. For research and reporting purposes, CPCs with longline vessels that fish in the IOTC area of competence shall submit to the Commission, as part of their annual report, information describing which of the mitigation measures in Table 1 they require their longline vessels to implement, as well as the details of how they have met the minimum technical specifications (Annex 1 and 2) for each of the implemented mitigation measures. CPCs shall also include in their annual reports for subsequent years any changes made to required mitigation measures or technical specifications for those measures.
9. CPCs shall provide to the Commission, as part of their annual reports, all available information on interactions with seabirds, including bycatch by fishing vessels carrying their flag or authorised to fish by them and details of species, to enable the Scientific Committee to annually estimate seabird mortality in all fisheries within the IOTC area of competence.
10. The Commission shall, upon receipt of information or advice from the Scientific Committee, consider alternate or additional mitigation measures, and if necessary, refine the area of application of the mitigation measures.
11. *Resolution 06/04 On Reducing Incidental Bycatch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries* is superseded by this Resolution.

## ANNEX 1

<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Specification</b>
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	No setting between nautical dawn and before nautical dusk. Deck lighting to be kept to a minimum	Nautical dusk and nautical dawn are defined as set out in the Nautical Almanac tables for relevant latitude, local time and date. Minimum deck lighting should not breach minimum standards for safety and navigation.
Bird-scaring lines (tori lines)	A bird-scaring line shall be deployed during longline setting to deter birds from approaching the branch line.	Design and deployment for bird-scaring lines are provided in Annex 2 of this Resolution.
Weighted branch lines	Weights must be attached to all branch lines in accordance with specifications provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– minimum of 45 grams weight attached to all branch lines;</li> <li>– less than 60 grams weight must be within 1 metre of the hook;</li> <li>– 60 grams or greater and less than 98 grams must be within 3.5 metres of the hook; and</li> <li>– 98 grams or greater must be within 4 metres of the hook</li> </ul>
Blue-dyed squid bait	All bait must be dyed to the colour and shade shown in the placard provided by the IOTC Secretariat.	The standardized colour shall be equivalent to bait dyed using “Brilliant Blue” food dye (Colour Index 42090, also known as Food Additive Number E133) mixed at 0.5% for a minimum of 20 minutes.
Management of offal discharge	No offal discharge during setting. Strategic offal discharge may occur during hauling.	Offal discharge during hauling should be avoided if possible. If offal discharge is essential during hauling, it must be from the opposite side of the boat to hauling activity.

## ANNEX 2

### DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT OF BIRD SCARING LINES (TORI LINES)

#### Bird-Scaring Line Design

1. The bird-scaring line shall be a minimum of 150 m in length and include an object towed at the seaward end to create tension to maximise aerial coverage. The section above water shall be a strong fine line of a conspicuous colour such as red or orange.
2. The above water section of the line shall be sufficiently light that its movement is unpredictable to avoid habituation by birds and sufficiently heavy to avoid deflection of the line by wind.
3. Streamers for the bird-scaring line shall be made of material that is conspicuous and produces an unpredictable lively action (e.g. strong fine line sheathed in red polyurethane tubing) and shall be suspended in pairs from a robust three-way swivel attached to the bird scaring line and shall hang just clear of the water.
4. There shall be a maximum of 5 m between each streamer pair.
5. The number of streamers shall be adjusted for the setting speed of the vessel, with more streamers necessary at slower setting speeds.

#### Deployment of Bird scaring Lines

1. The line shall be deployed before longlines enter into the water.
2. The line shall have an aerial coverage of at least 100 metres. To achieve this coverage the line shall be suspended from a point a minimum of 7 metres above the water at the stern on the windward side of the point where the branch line enters the water.
3. The bird scaring line shall be set so that streamers pass over baited hooks in the water. The position of the object towed shall be maintained so as to ensure, even during crosswinds, that the aerial extent of the bird-scaring line is over the branch line as far astern of the vessel as possible.
4. Because there is the potential for line breakage and tangling, spare bird scaring lines shall be carried onboard to replace damaged lines and to ensure fishing operations can continue uninterrupted.

**Diagram of Bird-scaring Streamer Line.**

