

Draft Conservation Services Programme Annual Plan 2016/17

Conservation Services Programme
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Statement on Conservation Services

Conservation services are defined in section 2 of the Fisheries Act 1996 as follows:

“Conservation services means outputs produced in relation to the adverse effects of commercial fishing on protected species, as agreed between the Minister responsible for the administration of the Conservation Act 1987 and the Director-General of the Department of Conservation, including—

- (a) Research relating to those effects on protected species:*
- (b) Research on measures to mitigate the adverse effects of commercial fishing on protected species:*
- (c) The development of population management plans under the Wildlife Act 1953 and the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978.”*

We agree that the outputs described in the following pages, to be delivered in 2016/17, are “conservation services” in accordance with this definition. Cost recovery principles have been applied in accordance with section 262 of the Fisheries Act 1996.

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Minister of Conservation

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1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

The Conservation Service Programme (“CSP”) has operated, under the administration of DOC, since 1996 with the ultimate aim of avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of commercial fisheries on protected species. The Conservation Services Programme Annual Plan 2016/17 (“Annual Plan”) includes the conservation services to be delivered as the CSP, and subject to cost recovery from the commercial fishing industry. As such, this Annual Plan forms the basis for levying the commercial fishing industry under the Fisheries Act 1996. For a summary of the legal basis of levied work described in this Annual Plan, refer to the Conservation Services Programme Strategic Statement¹ (“Strategic Statement”).

The CSP vision is that *“commercial fishing is undertaken in a manner that does not compromise the protection and recovery of protected species in New Zealand fisheries waters”*. In order to meet this vision, the following CSP Objectives, as described in the CSP Strategic Statement, have been identified:

- Objective A: Proven mitigation strategies are in place to avoid or minimise the effects of commercial fishing on protected species across the range of fisheries with known interactions.
- Objective B: The nature of direct effects of commercial fishing on protected species is described.
- Objective C: The extent of known direct adverse effects of commercial fishing on protected species is adequately understood.
- Objective D: The nature and extent of indirect adverse effects of commercial fishing are identified and described for protected species that are at particular risk to such effects.
- Objective E: Adequate information on population level and susceptibility to fisheries effects exists for protected species populations identified as at medium or higher risk from fisheries.

1.2 Format

The format used to specify the conservation services in this Annual Plan includes an outline of the objectives and rationale for each project, and the outputs that are anticipated to be produced. Guiding objectives, both CSP Objectives (described in the CSP Strategic Statement) and relevant management plans, are identified for each project. The project specifications also indicate cost recovery information, i.e. indicative project costs (excluding administration costs), relevant provisions within the Fisheries (Cost Recovery) Rules 2001 that determine cost allocation, and relevant fish stocks. Costs are summarised in Appendix 1. All financial amounts appearing in this document are exclusive of GST.

1.3 Guiding frameworks, research planning and prioritisation

The CSP Strategic Statement 2015, outlines the objectives of CSP and describes the process through which each annual plan of services will be developed and delivered. It provides detail on the wider management context (for example, how CSP delivers on whole of government plans

¹ Available to download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/conservation-services-programme/csp-plans/csp-strategic-statement-2015/>

such as the National Plans of Action for seabirds and sharks), the research planning and prioritisation processes used by CSP, and the way CSP is implemented by working with others.

The CSP Research Advisory Group (CSP RAG), was established in December 2013 following finalisation of the CSP Strategic Statement, and provided guidance for the development of this Annual Plan. Two medium term research plans have also been developed as part of the work of the CSP RAG; the CSP seabird population medium term research plan 2016 (“CSP seabird plan 2016”) and the CSP protected fish medium term research plan (“CSP fish plan”)². These plans have been used to inform relevant sections of this Annual Plan. In time, medium term research plans for the remaining protected species groups (marine mammal, marine reptiles, and corals) will be developed.

A summary of the planning and prioritisation milestones, in accordance with the CSP Strategic Statement, undertaken in developing the CSP Annual Plan 2016/17 are as follows:

1. CSP RAG meeting to review relevant research output and gap analysis (December 2015). This was held in conjunction with a research planning meeting for MPI Aquatic Environment research.
2. Annual research summary report finalised, CSP medium term research plans updated and an initial list of research proposals for 2016/17 drafted and circulated to CSP RAG (Feb 2016). Feedback sought on initial research proposals.
3. CSP RAG meeting, with open invitation to all CSP stakeholders, to discuss and prioritise research proposals for 2016/17 (February 2016). Additional written feedback also sought from CSP RAG.
4. Draft Annual Plan developed based on this feedback, and provided for formal consultation (March 2016).
5. Analysis of submissions and development of final Annual Plan.

Inshore observer coverage was planned using a process developed jointly by CSP and the Inshore Fisheries team at MPI. The programme progresses delivery of objectives identified by a process conducted in preparation for the CSP Annual Plan 2011/12. Deepwater and Highly Migratory Species (HMS) observer coverage was developed jointly by the CSP and the Deepwater Fisheries and HMS team respectively at MPI.

1.4 Consultation

Key stages for stakeholder input, including formal consultation on this plan, were as follows:

2 December 2015	Initial CSP RAG meeting – review and gap analysis.
12 February 2016	Updated medium term research plans, initial list of research proposals and draft CSP RAG prioritisation framework circulated to CSP RAG.
25 February 2016	Second CSP RAG meeting to discuss and prioritise initial research proposals. Note: there was disagreement between RAG members on implementation of the prioritisation framework, but feedback on relative priority between proposals was recorded.
4 March 2016	Additional feedback received from CSP RAG on research proposals and their prioritisation.

² Both available to download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/csp-rag>

30 March 2016	Draft Conservation Services Programme Annual Plan 2016/17 released for public consultation
27 April 2016	Public consultation period closes
May 2016	Summary of public submissions and response to comments completed
June 2016	Director-General of Conservation conveys the Conservation Services Programme Annual Plan 2016/17, amended in accordance with public submissions, to the Minister of Conservation for agreement

1.5 Administrative costs

Administration costs have always been a contentious matter relating to the delivery of conservation services. Administration requirements of each project differ, as does the time required to address these. Currently, administration charges are distributed in a pro-rated fashion across projects, in accordance with the cost of the project. This approach is broadly appropriate, for example, the most costly project (INT2016/01 Observing commercial fisheries in 2016/17) incurs the majority of administration expenses. For that project, administration includes observer training programmes and training materials, data management, briefing and debriefing, liaison at sea and with other agencies when necessary, and reporting. For other projects, the administration burden may be significantly less. Administration also includes charges for the use of Departmental facilities and services.

DOC is continually striving to maximise efficiencies, and the administration costs for delivering conservation services dropped by \$15,000 between 2008/09 and 2009/10, and subsequently dropped again by \$13,000 for 2011/12 and has been maintained at this level. We welcome stakeholder views on different ways to attribute administration costs across projects.

2. Interaction Projects

2.1 Observing commercial fisheries

Project code: INT2016-01

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives A, B, C; National Plan of Action – Seabirds, National Plan of Action – Sharks; Hector’s and Māui dolphin Threat Management Plan.

Project Objective

To understand the nature and extent of protected species interactions with New Zealand commercial fishing activities.

Specific Objectives

1. To identify, describe and, where possible, quantify protected species interactions with commercial fisheries;
2. To identify, describe and, where possible, quantify measures for mitigating protected species interactions;
3. To collect information relevant to identifying levels of cryptic mortality of protected species resulting from interactions with commercial fisheries;
4. To collect other relevant information on protected species interactions that will assist in assessing, developing and improving mitigation measures.

Rationale

The management approach

Understanding the nature and extent of interactions between commercial fisheries and protected species can identify where the most significant interactions are occurring and can be used to inform development of ways to mitigate those interactions and adverse effects. Such data contribute to assessments of the risks posed to protected species by commercial fishing and whether mitigation strategies employed by fishing fleets are effective at reducing protected species captures.

The CSP Observer Programme will continue to purchase baseline services for “offshore” fisheries from MPI Observer Services, given the scale of their operation, this allows observers to be placed strategically across New Zealand Fisheries. Inshore fisheries observer coverage will also be delivered by MPI Observer Services, according to a joint planning process (described in Section 2.1.1). Where data collection involves using techniques beyond observation and recording, providers with specific expertise and/or equipment will be considered. For the purposes of providing costings, the rate provided by MPI Observer Services has been used. As such, for the purposes of planning, costings for observer coverage are based on those provided by the MPI Observer Services to provide a best estimate.

Research Approach

To date, the bulk of publicly available information on at-sea interactions between fishing vessels and protected species in New Zealand waters has been collected by Government (DOC/MPI) observers.

The allocation of observer coverage across fisheries will be made in relation to:

- Historic mortality of protected species.
- Fishing effort.
- Past observer coverage.
- The status of particular threatened protected species.
- Current level of information.
- Risk assessment work which has been undertaken (e.g. Rowe 2010a, Richard & Abraham. 2015).
- Requirements under the National Plans of Action (NPOAs) for seabirds³ and sharks⁴ and any relevant Threat Management Plans (TMPs).
- Information needs identified for newly introduced protected species.

Coverage levels are driven by a number of factors including data needs for protected species and fisheries management, compliance, international obligations and Ministerial directives. These ministerial directives include Foreign Charter Vessel coverage, trawl and setnet vessel coverage on the West coast of the North Island to address the Māui dolphin Threat Management Plan and coverage of snapper trawl and Danish seine vessels in the Hauraki Gulf to address concerns around snapper stocks. Where coverage driven by Ministerial direction also provides a platform for delivery of the CSP Observer Programme, CSP will continue to purchase a relevant portion of that coverage.

The duties of an observer in respect of the CSP Observer Programme can be summarised as:

- Monitoring and recording the interactions of protected species with fishing operations.
- Reporting on the efforts made to mitigate the adverse effects of commercial fishing on protected species.
- Recording, photographing and tagging all protected species bycatch.
- Recovering and returning the bodies or samples of dead protected species for identification and autopsy.
- Recording at least on a daily basis the numbers, and the behaviour of, marine mammal and seabird species seen around the fishing vessel.
- Collecting information to better understand cryptic mortality of protected species (e.g. following data collection protocols developed from CSP project INT2013-05).
- Monitoring vessel activities against any relevant operational plans such as Seabird Management Plans (SMPs) or Vessel Management Plans (VMPs).
- Carrying out other tasks (e.g. making observations on discard and offal discharge) as required.

³ NPOA-Seabirds available at <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/Default.aspx?TabId=126&id=1760>

⁴ NPOA-Sharks available at <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/Default.aspx?TabId=126&id=2126>

In addition to the duties discussed above, CSP will occasionally use observers to collect data for specific mitigation or information acquisition projects. Examples of past projects include fish waste trials, observations of warp interactions on inshore trawl vessels and blue-dyed bait trials.

Information collected includes:

- Environmental conditions (e.g. sea state).
- Fishing methods (including a description of gear employed) and operations.
- Processing waste management practices.
- Abundance and behaviour of protected species in vicinity of vessel.
- Mitigation practices adopted.
- Knowledge and approach of crew.
- Interactions between protected species and fishing gear.

It is important to note that observer programmes typically have high spatial and temporal variation, as well as multiple priorities for information collection, which can make the data challenging to interpret and extrapolate to estimate actual bycatch rates by fishery, location, or other desired variables. Data accuracy and relevance can be affected by inter-observer variability, weather conditions and access to vessels, while precision is affected by the observer sampling design. Data quality may also be biased by the opportunistic allocation of observers to vessels, as it is not always possible to place observers on vessels randomly or representatively. Nevertheless, the use of fisheries observers is currently considered to be the most reliable and flexible means of acquiring data on protected species interactions.

Application of observer coverage by fishery in 2016/17:

For the purposes of planning observer coverage, fisheries are divided into two broad categories.

Firstly, those fisheries that are poorly known and generally characterised by small vessel, owner operated fleets (see 2.1.1). The majority of these vessels operate in the inshore area (i.e. to around 200 m depth), some small vessels, particularly bottom longline vessels under 36 m, will operate in deeper waters such as the Chatham Rise (and are observed as part of deepwater longline coverage). Details of the approach used to set days in these fisheries are described in the Joint Department of Conservation/Ministry for Primary Industries Inshore Observer Programme 2016/17 plan (included as Section 2.1.1 of this plan). In general, coverage in these fisheries was aimed at reducing uncertainty around the risk to particular protected species which was identified in level 1 and level 2 risk assessments (Rowe 2010a, Richard & Abraham 2015, Ford et.al. 2015), and assessing mitigation options for interactions identified, as well as delivering on Threat Management Plan objectives for Hector's and Māui dolphins. The NPOA-Seabirds 2013 highlights the importance of observer data in meeting the objectives of the plan, and the CSP Seabird Plan 2015 outlines fishery specific priorities to reduce uncertainty in current risk scores. The NPOA-Sharks 2013 gives guidance on data collection priorities to inform protection and management of sharks, in the first instance dealing with improved data for the development of a quantitative risk assessment similar to that produced for seabirds.

The second group of fisheries can be considered 'better known' and have generally had some level of ongoing observer coverage over the last ten years or more (see 2.1.2). Most of these fisheries are characterised by large vessels operating further offshore and are termed 'offshore' fisheries. Observers working in these fisheries generally have multiple priorities including stock assessment, compliance and protected species interactions. DOC contributes to a portion of observer time in these fisheries and, as such, days are planned differently to the poorly known fisheries. In order to set observer days for the period 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017, effort data from

previous years was examined, in conjunction with MPI, to ensure that desired coverage levels are achievable with the days planned and that these coverage levels would meet the data requirements of both agencies. All time periods are based on 1 July - 30 June in line with the period that observer coverage runs (i.e. not the fishing year). Following Ministerial decisions in 2012, there is a substantial increase in foreign charter vessel coverage. This has resulted in a proportionally greater volume of coverage going on to these vessels.

Protected species interaction data for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2011 are reported by Rowe (2009, 2010b) and Ramm (2010, 2012, 2013). Summary information for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2013 are reported by Clemens-Seely et al. (2014a, b). Download links are provided in the References section.

Fisheries Management Areas are referred to by three letter codes as follows:

AKE	FMA 1	East North Island from North Cape to Bay of Plenty
CEE	FMA 2	East North Island from south of Bay of Plenty to Wellington
SEC	FMA 3	East coast South Island from Pegasus Bay to Catlins
SOE	FMA 4	Chatham Rise
SOU	FMA 5	South Island from Foveaux Strait to Fiordland
SUB	FMA 6	Subantarctic including Bounty Island and Pukaki Rise
SOI	FMA6A	Southern offshore islands – Auckland and Campbell Islands
CHA	FMA 7	West Coast South Island to Fiordland including Kaikoura
CEW	FMA 8	West North Island from South Taranaki Bight to Wellington
AKW	FMA 9	West North Island from North Cape to North Taranaki Bight
KER	FMA 10	Kermadec

2.1.1 “Inshore” Fisheries: Joint DOC-MPI Inshore Observer Programme

Introduction

During the planning round for the 2011/12 observer programme a tiered approach was developed to prioritising areas of observer coverage. This planning process was described in detail in the Marine Conservation Services Programme Annual Plan 2011/12⁵. This tiered process has endured into the planning for the 2016/17 year and decisions on the levels and placement of this observer coverage were undertaken jointly between DOC and MPI. These decisions were informed by risk assessments (levels 1, 2 and 3 where applicable), the National Plans of Action for Seabirds and Sharks, relevant Threat Management Plan priorities, and previous observer data and fish-stock related data collection.

For 2016/17 the cost of observer coverage is being jointly recovered by both DOC and MPI similar to the way in which offshore observer coverage is cost recovered. Broadly, for coverage driven by protected species interactions each cost will be recovered evenly by each agency. For coverage driven by fisheries needs but also collecting protected species information the observer’s time will be prorated to reflect the time spent on each set of tasks generally 85% Fisheries, 15% Conservation Services.

The goals of the Inshore Observer Programme are to:

- *inform management of impacts from fishing on protected species by identifying and quantifying interactions between inshore fisheries and protected species, and assessing the effectiveness of mitigation measures, where appropriate;*
- *minimise adverse effects of fishing on the aquatic environment, including on biological diversity; and*
- *inform management of fish stocks by gathering biological and other information on board fishing vessels.*

⁵ Available for download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/publications/conservation/marine-and-coastal/marine-conservation-services/csp-plans/mcs-annual-plan-2011-12/>

Inshore Observer Projects 2016/17

The table below summarises the proposed observer projects for 2016/17

Method	Area	Statistical Area	Percentage of effort	Season	Total number of days	Objective
Setnet	East Coast South Island Otago	024, 026	65%	Oct -Mar	310	Dolphins, Yellow Eyed Penguins, Shags
	South Coast South Island	025, 027, 029, 030, 031	65%	Oct-Apr	320	White Sharks, Dolphins, Shags, Penguins
	West Coast North Island	040-046	100%	All year	200	Dolphins
Small inshore trawl	West Coast North Island	041-046	75%	All year	350	Dolphins, seabirds
	West Coast South Island	030-036		All year	100	Seabird mitigation
	East / South Coast South Island	020, 022, 024, 026, 027, 029, 030, 031		All year	200	Seabird mitigation
	North-east North Island (Snapper target)	003-009		All year	150	SNA Catch, Seabirds, Offal Management
Danish Seine	North-east North Island	003-009	TBD	Jul-Nov	100	SNA Catch, Seabirds, Offal Management
Bottom Longline	North-east North Island (Bluenose target)	003-009	50%	Oct-Mar	205	Seabirds
	North-east North Island (Snapper target)	003-009		Oct-Mar	300	Seabirds
Total					2235	

SETNET

East Coast South Island / Otago

Overall project objectives/information needs

1. Estimate the capture rate of Hector's dolphins South Island populations in **setnet fisheries**.

Start Date	1 October 2016
Completion Date	31 March 2017
Targeted Statistical Area	024, 026

Project Objectives

1. Gather information to estimate the number of captures and the capture rate of Hector's dolphins in setnet fisheries on the East Coast of the South Island Otago.
2. Gather information to identify the nature and extent of interactions with yellow-eyed penguins, NZ Fur seals and shags by setnet fisheries on the East Coast of the South Island.

Information Needs

An overall capture rate for the East Coast of the South Island Hector population needs to be estimated as the East Coast has the highest levels of setnet activity. Observer coverage is targeted in a statistical area where there are high levels of setnet fishing occurring. In 20014/15 with enhanced levels of coverage in this area ongoing delivery issues in relation to Safe Ship Management (SSM) requirements around crew numbers and ability to safely carry observers has continued to impact upon coverage rates so more data is needed to ensure a robust estimate of captures and capture rates.

Robust estimation of total Hector's dolphin captures requires that the fishing behaviour observed is representative of normal situations (i.e. if we can assume that observer placement is not changing behaviour). To minimise any potential bias, relatively high coverage as a percentage of effort by area/month is proposed, across the entire fleet operating in these statistical areas.

Yellow-eyed penguins have been identified by the Level-2 risk assessment as being at risk from setnet fisheries from Otago south. Due to the decrease in their mainland population their susceptibility to fishing increases.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical area 024, 026.
- The planning optimisation process identified 65% coverage required to gain sufficient data.
- 310 observer days are required.

Secondary information to be collected

To make the best use of Observers' time, secondary information can sometimes be collected, which will then inform other priorities. Secondary information collected will include:

- Biological sampling of fish to help inform stock assessments.
- Information on the nature and extent of setnet interactions with other seabirds, marine mammals and protected fish.
- Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals.
- Total catch verification in line with providing better information about the specific target fisheries

Related Research

- An East Coast South Island aerial survey has obtained robust estimates of Hector's dolphin abundance and distribution, which when combined with up to date reliable capture observations will allow estimation of the risk posed by setnet fisheries in this area.
- Observer coverage on East Coast South Island trawl vessels is also proposed (refer to Seabird mitigation project section), primarily to investigate the capture rate of at-risk seabirds. Secondary information on incidental capture rates of protected species will also be collected.
- An ongoing autopsy programme for Hector's and Māui dolphins aims to identify sub-species, cause of death, body condition, parasitism for any beach-cast or captured dolphins. This allows better understanding of the health and condition of the various Hector's and Māui dolphins.

South Coast South Island

Overall project objectives/information needs

Estimate the capture rate of Hector's dolphins South Island populations in **setnet fisheries**.

Start Date	1 October 2016
Completion Date	31 March 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	025, 027, 029, 030, 031

Project Objectives

1. Gather information to estimate the number of captures and the capture rate of Hector's dolphins and white pointer sharks.
2. Gather information to identify the nature and extent of interactions with white pointer shark yellow-eyed penguins, Fiordland crested penguins, Fiordland bottlenose dolphins and by setnet fisheries on the South Coast of the South Island.
3. Additionally, spatial distribution data will be obtained for seabirds and marine mammals.

Information Needs

Observer coverage is targeted in a statistical area where there are high levels of setnet fishing occurring, to allow estimation of the capture rate for the South Coast population. More data is needed in this area to ensure a robust estimate of captures and capture rate of the South Coast dolphin population.

Robust estimation of total Hector's dolphin captures requires that the fishing behaviour observed is representative of normal situations (i.e. if we can assume that observer placement is not changing behaviour). To minimise any potential bias, relatively high coverage as a percentage of effort by area/month is proposed.

The National Plan of Action-Sharks (NPOA-Sharks) sets goals and objective for better understanding and ultimately reducing the incidence of protected shark species. Historically captures of white pointer sharks have been reported by both fishers and observers around Stewart Island and Fiordland. Identifying the factors which lead to captures will assist in the development of effective mitigation. Additionally a number of white pointer sharks are alive (though with injuries) at time of release therefore further information on the factors which contribute to safe and successful release of animals is important to developing adequate guidelines for fishers.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical areas 025, 027, 029, 030, 031
- The planning optimisation process identified 65% coverage required to gain sufficient data.
- 320 observer days are required.

Secondary information to be collected

To make the best use of Observers' time, secondary information can sometimes be collected, which will then inform other priorities. Secondary information collected will include:

- Biological sampling of fish to help inform stock assessments.
- Information on the nature and extent of setnet interactions with seabirds, in particular yellow-eyed penguins.
- Sea lion interaction.
- White pointer sharks interactions.
- Total catch verification in line with providing better information about the specific target fisheries.

Related Research

- An East Coast South Island aerial survey has obtained estimates of Hector's dolphin abundance and distribution, which when combined with up to date reliable capture observations will allow estimation of the risk posed by setnet fisheries in this area.
- An ongoing autopsy programme for Hector's and Māui dolphins aims to identify sub-species, cause of death, body condition, parasitism for any beach-cast or captured dolphins. This allows better understanding of the health and condition of the various Hector's and Māui dolphins.

DRAFT

West Coast North Island

Overall project objectives/information needs

1. Estimate the capture rate of Māui dolphins in **setnet fisheries** on the West Coast of the North Island.

Start Date	1 July 2016
Completion Date	30 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	040-046

Project Objectives

1. Gather information to estimate the number of captures and the capture rate of Māui dolphins in setnet fisheries on the West Coast of the North Island.
2. Observational survey to gather spatial distribution data for Māui dolphin.
3. Gather information on the nature and extent of interactions with other protected species in the area.

Information Needs

An overall capture rate for Māui dolphins needs to be estimated. Observer coverage is targeted to reflect the Ministerial decisions made in response to the Review of the Māui dolphin Threat Management Plan (TMP).

Setnet effort in this fishery has significantly decreased in the last two years.

Robust estimation of total Māui dolphin captures requires that the fishing behaviour observed is representative of normal situations (i.e. if we can assume that observer placement is not changing behaviour). To minimise any potential bias, relatively high coverage as a percentage of effort by area/month will be proposed.

Previous observer coverage in the area has identified interactions with other protected species including common dolphins, fur seals and white pointer sharks. Improved information on the nature and extent of these interactions is important in the development of effective management and mitigation strategies.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical areas 040-046
- 100% coverage of setnet effort within restricted 2nm-7nm zone (Ministerial directive).
- 200 observer days are required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals.

Related Research

- Ongoing aerial and boat based surveys of the West Coast North Island supported by biopsy sampling where possible.
- An ongoing autopsy programme for Hector's and Māui dolphins aims to identify sub-species, cause of death, body condition, parasitism for any beach-cast or captured dolphins. This allows better understanding of the health and condition of the various Hector's and Māui dolphins.

INSHORE TRAWL

West Coast North Island

Overall project objectives/information needs

1. Estimate the capture rate of Māui dolphins in **trawl fisheries** on the West Coast of the North Island.

Start Date	1 July 2016
Completion Date	30 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	040-046

Project Objectives

1. Gather information to estimate the number of captures and the capture rate of Māui dolphins in trawl fisheries on the West Coast of the North Island.
2. Observational survey to gather spatial distribution data for Māui dolphins.
3. Gather information on the nature and extent of interactions with other protected species in the area.

Information Needs

An overall capture rate for Māui dolphins needs to be estimated. Observer coverage will be targeted to reflect Ministerial direction made in response to the review of the Māui dolphin TMP. Robust estimation of total Māui dolphin captures requires that the fishing behaviour observed is representative of normal situations (i.e. if we can assume that observer placement is not changing behaviour). To minimise any potential bias, relatively high coverage as a percentage of effort by area/month will be proposed.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical areas 040-046
- 75% of effort from 1 March 2015 (Ministerial directive).
- 350 observer days are required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Biological sampling of fish will help inform stock assessments.
- Information on total commercial catch.
- Observations on the nature of warp interactions will inform improvements to estimates of cryptic mortality which feed in to the level 2 risk assessment.
- Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals.

Related Research

- Ongoing aerial and boat based surveys of the West Coast North Island supported by biopsy sampling where possible.
- An ongoing autopsy programme for Hector's and Māui dolphins aims to identify sub-species, cause of death, body condition, parasitism for any beach-cast or captured dolphins. This allows better understanding of the health and condition of the various Hector's and Māui dolphins.

West Coast South Island

Overall project objectives/information needs

1. Estimate the capture rate of seabirds in **trawl fisheries** on the West Coast of the South Island.
2. Characterise and assess mitigation use in **trawl fisheries** on the West Coast of the South Island

Start Date	1 July 2016
Completion Date	30 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	030-036

Background Information

Information on total mortality is important to ensure good fisheries management decision making and that best use is made of New Zealand's fisheries resources. There is uncertainty surrounding the level of total mortality in some inshore fisheries.

The level 2 seabird risk assessment identifies inshore trawl as posing a risk to several albatross species. Observer coverage in stat areas 030-036 have identified captures of Salvin's and white-capped albatross on trawl warps in particular. In response to this Industry (Southern Inshore Fisheries Management Company Ltd) is in the process of deploying seabird mitigation plans on trawl vessels operating in this area.

Project Objectives/ Information needs

1. Test the deployment of individual seabird mitigation plans on trawl vessels with vessel specific seabird mitigation plans.
2. Collection information on the nature and extent of interactions with protected species, in particular white-capped and Salvin's albatrosses, and Hector's dolphins and NZ fur seals.

Proposed Coverage

- West Coast South Island 030-036
- 100 observer days required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Observations on the nature of warp interactions will inform improvements to estimates of cryptic mortality which feed in to the level 2 risk assessment.
- Information on any mitigation techniques used in the fleet including possible assessment of their efficacy.
- Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals.

East / South Coast South Island

Overall project objectives/information needs

1. Estimate the capture rate of seabirds in **trawl fisheries** on the East / South Coast of the South Island.
2. Characterise and assess mitigation use in **trawl fisheries** on the East / South Coast of the South Island

Start Date	July 2016
Completion Date	June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	020, 022, 024, 026, 027, 029, 030, 031

Background Information

Information on total mortality is important to ensure good fisheries management decision making and that best use is made of New Zealand's fisheries resources. There is uncertainty surrounding the level of total mortality in some inshore fisheries.

The level 2 seabird risk assessment identifies inshore trawl as posing a risk to several albatross species. Observer coverage in stat areas 020, 022, 024, 025, 026 have identified captures of Salvin's and white-capped albatross on trawl warps in particular. In response to this Industry (Southern Inshore Fisheries Management Company Ltd) is in the process of deploying seabird mitigation plans on trawl vessels operating in this area.

Project Objectives/ Information needs

1. Test the deployment of individual seabird mitigation plans on trawl vessels with vessel specific seabird mitigation plans.
2. Collection information on the nature and extent of interactions with protected species, in particular white-capped and Salvin's albatrosses, and Hector's dolphins and NZ fur seals.

Proposed Coverage

- East Coast South Island 020, 022, 024, 025, 026. Possible extend to 027, 029, 030, 031.
- Targeted coverage on vessels with seabird mitigation plans
- 200 observer days required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Observations on the nature of warp interactions will inform improvements to estimates of cryptic mortality which feed in to the level 2 risk assessment.
- Information on any mitigation techniques used in the fleet including possible assessment of their efficacy.
- Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals.

North-East North Island – Snapper target

Start Date 1 July 2016
Completion Date 30 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas 003-009

Background Information

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) proposes to continue a monitoring programme in the SNA 1 trawl fishery in order to achieve improved information gathering and verification of reported catch within the commercial SNA1 fishery. Black petrel is identified by the L2 risk assessment as the single most at-risk seabird species from commercial fisheries interactions, flesh-footed shearwaters are also in the very high risk category. The Level-2 risk assessment has highlighted snapper trawl as posing a risk to black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters. In order to gain accurate information on the nature and extent of interactions ongoing coverage is necessary.

Project Objectives/ Information needs

1. Support the development of standards for implementation of the ongoing monitoring programme in SNA 1.
2. Collect information to reduce uncertainty associated with the estimated capture rate of at-risk seabird species (primarily black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters) in inshore
3. Collection information on the nature of interactions with protected species, in particular black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters which will assist in informing mitigation strategies.

Proposed Coverage

- North East North Island 003-009
- 150 observer days required.

Secondary information to be collected

Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds, marine mammals and turtles.

DANISH SEINE

North-East North Island

Start Date	1 July 2016
Completion Date	30 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008 and 009

Background Information

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) proposes to continue a monitoring programme in the SNA 1 Danish Seine fishery in order to achieve improved information gathering and verification of reported catch within the commercial SNA1 fishery.

The purpose of the monitoring programme is to:

- Verify overall commercial catch.
- Monitor the number and size of sub-minimum legal size (MLS) fish returned to the water.
- Ensure compliance with spatial and other regulations.

Project Objectives/ Information needs

1. Support the development of standards for implementation of the ongoing monitoring programme in SNA 1.
2. Support the efficacy of voluntary initiatives and associated systems (e.g. the move on rule, Industry VMS systems).
3. Assess the catch composition of SNA 1 caught by Danish Seine Collection information on the nature and extent of interactions with protected species.
4. Observer counts to provide spatial distribution data for seabirds and marine mammals

Proposed Coverage

- North East North Island 003-009
- 100 observer days required.

BOTTOM LONGLINE**North-East North Island – Bluenose target**

Start Date	1 October 2016
Completion Date	31 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	003-009

Project Objectives

1. Collect information to reduce uncertainty associated with the estimated capture rate of at-risk seabird species (primarily black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters) in inshore bottom longline fisheries targeting bluenose.
2. Collect information to improve current estimates of cryptic mortality/ live-release survival in inshore bottom-longline fisheries.
3. Collect information to evaluate the efficacy of inshore bottom longline mitigation efforts.

Information Needs

Black petrel is identified by the L2 risk assessment as the single most at-risk seabird species from commercial fisheries interactions. Current capture estimates are unrealistically high (mean risk ratio = 19.4) and improved observer coverage is likely to result in a more realistic estimate. In the meantime however, MPI and DOC are confident that current impacts are unsustainable, and management action is needed. The primary objective of observer coverage focused on black petrels is to better understand what factors most strongly determine variable capture rates, in order to support development of mitigation options.

Risk to black petrels derives primarily from inshore bottom long-line fisheries, spread approximately equally between the three defined fishery groups (i.e. small bottom longline targeting bluenose; small bottom longline targeting snapper; and small bottom longline targeting other inshore species). A second at-risk species from inshore bottom longline fisheries, flesh-footed shearwater (mean risk ratio = 1.32) Risk to this species arises primarily from bottom longline vessels targeting snapper. Due to low historical observer coverage in all inshore bottom longline fishery groups, these risk estimates are subject to considerable uncertainty. Capture rates recorded by fishery observers can be expected to substantially improve these estimates.

A related research project is currently planned to model black petrel (and flesh-footed shearwater) capture rates as a function of multiple variables potentially affecting interactions with fisheries, including analysis of higher resolution spatial and temporal distributions (of both birds and vessels), and fleet variables such as vessel experience and mitigation. *It will be important that new observer coverage is spread across the range of spatial and temporal variables where captures are thought to occur* (i.e. in all months and all statistical areas) and if possible across the full range of fleet or behavioural variables examined (i.e. on different types of vessels). If new coverage is unrepresentative (i.e. because vessels of a particular class resist accepting observers, or the presence of an observer biases fisher behaviour), capture rate estimation arising from the new model will be poorly informed, and associated risk estimates are likely to remain uncertain (or possibly biased).

Current estimates of cryptic mortality in inshore bottom longline fisheries rely on observations elsewhere and do not include consideration of post-release survivability for live-captured birds. Fishery-specific observations can be expected to yield substantial improvements. Observer coverage tasked to collect data to characterise interactions and to evaluate the likely fate of birds released alive is a high priority.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical areas 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008 and 009.
- The planning optimisation process identified 50% coverage required, spread to the extent practical across the range of vessels and in space and time, to gain sufficient data.
- Summer coverage is required (black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters are absent in winter).
- 205 observer days required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Information on BNS and HAP 1 catch.

North-East North Island – Snapper target

Start Date	1 October 2016
Completion Date	31 June 2017
Targeted Statistical Areas	003-009

Project Objectives

1. Collect information to reduce uncertainty associated with the estimated capture rate of at-risk seabird species (primarily black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters) in inshore bottom longline fisheries targeting snapper.
2. Collect information to improve current estimates of cryptic mortality/ live-release survival in inshore bottom-longline fisheries.
3. Collect information to evaluate the efficacy of inshore bottom longline mitigation efforts.

Information Needs

Black petrel is identified by the L2 risk assessment as the single most at-risk seabird species from commercial fisheries interactions. Current capture estimates are unrealistically high (mean risk ratio = 19.4) and improved observer coverage is likely to result in a more realistic estimate. In the meantime however, MPI and DOC are confident that current impacts are unsustainable, and management action is needed. The primary objective of observer coverage focused on black petrels is to better understand what factors most strongly determine variable capture rates, in order to support development of mitigation options.

Risk to black petrels derives primarily from inshore bottom long-line fisheries, spread approximately equally between the three defined fishery groups (i.e. small bottom longline targeting bluenose; small bottom longline targeting snapper; and small bottom longline targeting other inshore species). A second at-risk species from inshore bottom longline fisheries, flesh-footed shearwater (mean risk ratio = 1.32) Risk to this species arises primarily from bottom longline vessels targeting snapper. Due to low historical observer coverage in all inshore bottom longline fishery groups, these risk estimates are subject to considerable uncertainty. Capture rates recorded by fishery observers can be expected to substantially improve these estimates.

A related research project is currently planned to model black petrel (and flesh-footed shearwater) capture rates as a function of multiple variables potentially affecting interactions with fisheries, including analysis of higher resolution spatial and temporal distributions (of both birds and vessels), and fleet variables such as vessel experience and mitigation. *It will be important that new observer coverage is spread across the range of spatial and temporal variables*

where captures are thought to occur (i.e. in all months and all statistical areas) and if possible across the full range of fleet or behavioural variables examined (i.e. on different types of vessels). If new coverage is unrepresentative (i.e. because vessels of a particular class resist accepting observers, or the presence of an observer biases fisher behaviour), capture rate estimation arising from the new model will be poorly informed, and associated risk estimates are likely to remain uncertain (or possibly biased).

Current estimates of cryptic mortality in inshore bottom longline fisheries rely on observations elsewhere and do not include consideration of post-release survivability for live-captured birds. Fishery-specific observations can be expected to yield substantial improvements. Observer coverage tasked to collect data to characterise interactions and to evaluate the likely fate of birds released alive is a high priority.

Proposed Coverage

- Statistical areas 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008 and 009
- Summer coverage is required (black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters are absent in winter).
- 300 observer days required.

Secondary information to be collected

- Information on SNA 1 catch.

2.1.2 “Offshore” Fisheries

As for previous years, planning of observer days was conducted jointly with MPI in order to identify an overall amount of observer coverage which will meet both agencies goals. Costs were then apportioned to each agency on the basis of how much of the observers’ work in each fishery will be focused on Conservation Services. Typically the CSP component is 15% of the total days, which reflects the time that observers are likely to spend on protected species tasks. For specific fisheries such as scampi, Southern blue whiting and squid trawl this apportioning is increased to 20% to reflect an increased focus on protected species data collection due to specifically identified risks.

These fisheries have generally received higher levels of observer coverage compared to the fisheries discussed in 2.1.1, with coverage levels being dictated by a number of objectives from fisheries management requirements, protected species research and benthic interaction monitoring. Domestic surface longline and scampi fisheries have relatively lower levels of coverage below 10% in recent years. For middle depth trawl fisheries, in order to better reflect the fact that vessels will target multiple species over a single trip, they have been divided on an area basis to both assist in addressing information needs and observer planning.

Planned days for 2016/17 are summarised in the table below. These fisheries are monitored to track changes in protected species interactions and mitigation efficacy over time. Data is collected to allow estimation of capture levels and to better understand the nature of protected species interactions in order to develop mitigation solutions.

Summary of 2016/17 observer days planned in better known fisheries

Fishery	Stocks	Total Days	MPI %	MPI days	CSP %	CSP days
Deepwater trawl fisheries:						
North Island Deepwater	ORH1, ORH2A, ORH2B, ORH3A, BYX2, CDL2	170	90	153	10	17
Chatham Rise Deepwater	ORH3B, OEO3A, OEO4, BYX3	270	90	243	10	27
Sub-Antarctic Deepwater	ORH3B, OEO1, OEO6	60	90	54	10	6
West Coast Deepwater	ORH7A	70	90	63	10	7
Pelagic trawl fisheries:						
West Coast North Island	JMA7, EMA7	735	85	624.75	15	110.25
Middle Depth trawl fisheries:						
West Coast South Island	HOK1, HAK7, LIN7, SWA1	1200	85	1020	15	180
Chatham Rise Middle depth	HOK1, HAK1, HAK4, LIN3, LIN4, SWA3, SWA4, JMA3, BAR1, BAR4	750	85	637.5	15	112.5
Sub-Antarctic Middle Depth	HOK1, SWA4, WWA5B, BAR5, JMA3	890	85	756.5	15	133.5
Southern blue whiting	SBW all	510	80	408	20	102
Squid	SQU1T, SQU6T	1030	80	824	20	206
Hoki Cook Strait	HOK1	100	80	80	20	20
WCSI Hoki- (smaller vessel)	HOK1	100	85	85	15	15
Scampi	SCI all	450	80	360	20	90
Deepwater bottom longline fisheries:						
Ling Bottom Longline	LIN3, LIN4, LIN5, LIN6, LIN7	450	85	382.5	15	67.5
Surface longline fisheries:						
Domestic SLL - east coast BIG/SWO	BIG1, SWO1	225	85	191.25	15	33.75
Domestic SLL - west coast BIG/SWO	BIG1, SWO1	45	85	38.25	15	6.75
STN FCV longliners	STN1	260	85	221	15	39
Domestic tuna longline - east coast STN	STN1	180	85	153	15	27
Domestic tuna longline - west coast STN	STN1	120	85	102	15	18
Purse Seine fisheries:						
Purse seine - SKJ (non super seiner)	SKJ1	70	85	59.5	15	10.5
Purse seine - SKJ (super seiner)	SKJ1	30	85	25.5	15	4.5

Further background to fisheries groupings and the allocation of observer days is provided below.

PELAGIC AND MIDDLE DEPTH TRAWL FISHERIES

Finfish

Pelagic and middle depth trawl fisheries primarily target hoki, hake, ling, warehou, jack mackerel and southern blue whiting. A large proportion of observer coverage in these fisheries will be targeted at Foreign Charter Vessels, and vessels may often target multiple species in the same trip. The rationale provided here is divided on a geographic and fishery basis in order to best identify CSP information needs.

West Coast South Island

Coverage will largely be targeted at the 'Hoki season' from July to September. Observers record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery. Mitigation techniques employed include offal and discard management, and the use of bird scaring devices (legally required for larger vessels). This fleet has had observed interactions with a wide range of seabirds and, historically, has had high levels of fur seal interactions. The fleet can be broadly divided by size, with larger vessels (both domestic and foreign charter vessels) operating outside of the 25nm offshore management area and the smaller fleet operating within 25nm of the coast.

Due to the differences in fleet dynamic and bycatch profiles between the smaller and larger vessel fleets coverage levels have been specified separately for each.

Cook Strait

This fishery operates distinctly from other hoki fisheries, in that vessel size is limited to less than 46m. A large number of vessels shift to this fishery from other areas with a short but intense period of fishing taking place. Trips are generally overnight with catch rates of hoki being high. This fishery has also been the site of some of the highest numbers of fur seal captures therefore observer coverage in this fishery has been increased. Observers record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery. Mitigation techniques employed include offal and discard management, and the use of bird scaring devices (legally required for larger vessels). The fishery typically spans over observer years therefore coverage in the Cook Strait will be targeted at July and August 2016 and May and June 2017.

Chatham Rise

The Chatham Rise middle depth trawl fishery operates in a spatially distinct area to the other middle depth trawl fisheries, and so encounters a different assemblage of protected species. This fishery is operated exclusively by larger vessels. Observers record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery. Mitigation techniques employed include offal and discard management, and the use of bird scaring devices (legally required for larger vessels). Observer coverage for the period October to May will be spread across SEC and SOE.

This coverage will be achieved under a combination of 'Foreign Charter Vessel' and 'Domestic Middle Depth trawl' lines identified in the preceding table.

Sub-Antarctic

The Sub-Antarctic middle depth trawl fishery is largely dominated by tows targeting southern blue whiting around the Bounty Islands and Campbell Island where significant captures of both New Zealand sea lions and fur seals have taken place. Observer time will be focussed on monitoring and recording behaviour of and interactions with fur seals and sea lions. Data is also collected on seabird interactions and behaviour due to the location of this fishery and its close vicinity to many seabird breeding islands. The landing of protected coral will also be recorded and sub-samples will be taken for identification.

Observers are tasked with recording information on which mitigation techniques are employed on vessels to better understand interactions between fishing gear and captures of protected species. Mitigation techniques employed in this fishery include offal and discard management and the use of bird scaring devices.

Due to increased interactions with New Zealand sea lions around Campbell Island CSP will fund 20% of the observer days in this fishery, reflecting an increasing focus of observers' time being on protected species observation, particularly marine mammal abundance and behaviour. Overall it is intended that all vessels operating in the southern blue whiting fishery will be observed.

West Coast North Island

This fishery group is dominated by the jack mackerel trawl fishery. Observer time will be focussed on recording protected species interactions and the behaviour of cetaceans, pinnipeds and seabirds around the vessel. Observers will also record information on which mitigation and avoidance techniques are employed in this fishery. Vessels can employ several techniques aimed at reducing the likelihood of interacting with dolphins, including not fishing during hours of the day when dolphin interactions are more likely, not shooting nets when dolphins are sighted and avoiding a shallow headline depth. During the 2016/17 observer year coverage is planned to target the period October to December and April to June to coincide with key jack mackerel fishing periods.

Scampi

The priority for observers in southern areas will be to monitor interactions with seabirds and New Zealand sea lions. Priority for observations in northern waters will be monitoring of interactions with very high risk seabirds such as black petrels and flesh-footed shearwaters. In southern waters monitoring of interactions with sea lions and albatross is prioritised. The landing of protected coral will also be recorded and sub-samples will be taken for identification if required. Data is also collected on seabird interactions and behaviour around vessels. Observers record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery, including offal and discard retention and the use of bird scaring devices and net restrictors as well a specific gear configurations used. CSP will fund 20% of observer days in this fishery due to the significant protected species focus of the coverage.

Squid6T

Particular areas of CSP interest in this fishery include offal and discard management and captures of sea lions and seabirds in trawl nets. Observer placement in 2016/17 will be focussed to monitor interactions from January to May. The CSP Observer Programme will form 20% of days planned for the squid 6T fishery to monitor interactions with protected species and measures to reduce those interactions.

DEEP WATER BOTTOM TRAWL FISHERIES

Orange Roughy and Oreo

Observer time will be focussed on assessing the extent of protected coral landed on vessels as well as monitoring and recording interactions with, and behaviours of, seabirds. Sub-samples of corals will be taken for identification when required. Mitigation techniques employed in this fishery include offal and discard management, the use of bird scaring devices and trawling known tracks to avoid catching deep sea invertebrates. CSP will fund only 10% of observer days in this fishery due to the relatively low work load relating to protected species interactions.

SURFACE LONGLINE FISHERIES

Domestic surface longline

Monitoring priorities for 2016/17 will include collecting information on protected species interactions, mitigation techniques and offal/discard management practices employed in the fishery. Coverage targets in this fishery are laid out in the NPOA-Seabirds 2013. Coverage may also be utilised in relation to CSP mitigation projects relating to seabird bycatch mitigation including tori line development (see CSP Project MIT2015-02). Observer coverage will be in AKE, CEE, CHA and KER to monitor interactions with seabirds and turtles. Coverage will be throughout the year.

Charter surface longline

Observer time will be focussed on monitoring and recording interactions with seabirds and sea turtles, including captures and behaviour of protected species around the vessel. Observers will record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery which can include the use of tori lines, night setting, weighted lines and offal and discard management. Observer coverage in 2016/17 will be dependent on where charter tuna vessels focus fishing effort though is targeted at 100% of effort.

BOTTOM LONGLINE FISHERIES

Deep-sea ling

Observer time will be focussed on monitoring and recording interactions with seabirds including captures and behaviour around the vessel. Observers record information on which mitigation techniques are employed in this fishery, including the use of tori lines and line weighting regimes. Observer coverage in 2016/17 will be focussed on smaller bottom longline vessels operating on the Chatham Rise to monitor seabird interactions during September, October, May and June, though some coverage will be spread over all areas.

PURSE SEINE FISHERIES

Skipjack tuna

Observer coverage has historically taken place in this fishery, though not for the purposes of protected species monitoring. Two ray species (*Manta birostris* and *Mobula japonica*) have historically been reported as bycatch in this fishery and therefore for the 2016/17 year CSP will be funding coverage in this fishery in order to assess the nature and extent of protected fish captures in this fishery as well as undertaking specific work to assess the survival probability of live released animals. Observer coverage is planned for AKE and AKW in both the domestic purse seine and super seine fisheries.

CSP OBSERVER PROGRAMME OUTPUTS

1. A descriptive report summarising observer data relating to protected species collected in offshore fisheries and inshore fisheries will be provided to stakeholders as part of the Annual Research Summary (ARS) Reports.
2. Specific information can be requested from CSP at any time and will be delivered within a reasonable timeframe (usually within 10 working days).
3. All seabirds are returned and/or photographed, where possible, for identification and autopsy (see project INT 2016-02: Identification of seabirds captured in NZ fisheries).
4. Data will be available for other DOC and MPI projects including mitigation development/testing, bycatch estimation, risk management and other modelling projects.

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Indicative Research Cost: See Appendix 1 for details

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 8 (100% Industry) This project is observer coverage.

Fish Stocks: See Appendix 1 for details

NOTE: This multi-year project (INT2015-03) was consulted on in 2015/16 and is included here for completeness.

2.2 Identification of marine mammals, turtles and protected fish captured in New Zealand fisheries

Project Code: INT 2015-02

Start Date: 1 July 2015

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives B, C; NPOA – Sharks.

Project Objective

To determine, primarily through examination of photographs, the taxon and, where possible, sex, age-class and provenance of marine mammals, turtles and protected fish observed captured in New Zealand fisheries (for live captures and dead specimens discarded at sea).

Rationale

The accurate determination of the taxon of marine mammals, turtles and protected fish captured in New Zealand fisheries is vital for examining the potential threat to population viability posed by incidental fisheries captures. Observers on commercial vessels are not always able to identify marine mammals, turtles and protected fish at sea with high precision, and the assessment of the age-class may require expert knowledge. Information gained through this project will link to Ministry for Primary Industry databases and will inform ongoing bycatch estimation, risk assessment, research and modelling of the effects of fisheries bycatch on marine mammals, turtles and protected fish populations.

This is a new project and is designed to complement the existing seabird identification project. Observers routinely collect samples of genetic material from these taxa, and these can be used to resolve uncertain identification determinations from photographs.

Research approach

Where government observers recorded an incidental capture of a marine mammal, turtle or protected fish generally no specimen is retained, instead photographic records are taken and a genetic sample taken. Live interactions are photographed where possible. All photographs obtained, by specimen, will be delivered to a suitable expert for that taxonomic group in electronic format on a quarterly basis. Details on the date, time, location and fishery of capture will also be provided. Photographs will be examined to determine the following:

- Identification, to the lowest taxonomic level possible;
- Sex (where possible);
- Age (where possible); and
- Provenance (origin) (where possible).

These data will be reported by taxon and fishery stratum (fishing method, fishery area and target species). When a specimen is identified, the identification features used shall be fully described.

Genetic samples of all bycaught marine mammals, turtles and protected fish are routinely collected by observers and where photographic analysis cannot adequately determine taxa, genetic analysis may be undertaken.

Outputs

1. A summary of results will be reported, reviewed by the CSP Technical Working Group, and published on an annual basis.
2. Information requested by CSP will be provided within a reasonable timeframe (usually 10 working days).
3. Provision of all data collected in electronic format, suitable for updating Ministry for Primary Industries databases and/or other relevant databases.

Note: A two year term is proposed.

Indicative Research Cost: \$15,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish stocks: BAR 1, 7, BCO 4, BIG 1, BNS1, 2, 3, 7, BUT5, 7, BWS 1, ELE3, 5, 7, EMA 1, 3, 7, FLA1, 2, 3, 7, GMU1, GSH 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, GSP 1, 7, GUR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, HAK 1, 4, 7, HOK 1, HPB 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, JDO 1, 2, 3, 7, JMA 1, 3, 7, KIN 1, 7, 8, LEA 1, 2, 3, LIN 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, MAK 1, MOK 1, 3, 5, MOO 1, ORH 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, OEO 1, 3A, 4, 6, PAR 1, 9, POR 1, POS 1, RBM 1, RSN 1, 2, RIB 1, 2, RCO 1, 3, 7, RSK 1, 3, 7, 8, SBW 6A, 6R, 6I, 6B, SCH1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, SCI 1, 2, 4A, 6A, 6B, SKI 1, 3, 7, SNA 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, SPD 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, SPE 1, 3, 4, 7, SPO1, 3, 7, 8, SQU1T, 6T, SSK 1, 3, 7, 8, STA 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, STN 1, SWA 1, 3, 4, SWO 1, TAR 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, TOR 1, TRE 1, 2, 7, TRU 3, 4, WAR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, WWA 2, 3, 4, 5B, 7, YEM 1, 8, 9

NOTE: This multi-year project (INT2015-03) was consulted on in 2015/16 and is included here for completeness.

2.3 Identification and storage of cold-water coral bycatch specimens

Project Code: INT 2015-03

Start Date: 1 July 2015

Completion Date: 30 June 2018

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives B, C, & E.

Project Objective

Identify coral bycatch that cannot be identified by Government fisheries observers to the finest taxonomic level (assign codes to coral specimens to the species level wherever possible, when this is not possible; identify specimens to genus or family level).

Specific Objectives

1. To determine through expert examination the taxa of unidentified cold water corals returned by fisheries observers.
2. Record all identified coral specimens make them available for appropriate taxonomic collections
3. Ensure preparation of genetic samples of select octocoral specimens (*Thouarella* sp. specifically *Thouarella crenolata*) is undertaken by taxonomic collection technicians during identification, in order to feed into planned coral connectivity work.
4. Formalise Fisheries Observer briefings with updated coral identification information.

Rationale

The 2010 amendment of Schedule 7A of the Wildlife Act 1953 protects all hard corals, including: black corals (all species in the order Antipatharia); gorgonian corals (all species in the order Alcyonacea (previously known as Order Gorgonacea)); stony corals (all species in the order Scleractinia); and hydrocorals (all species in the family Stylasteridae). Identifying coral bycatch that is unable to be identified by Government fisheries observers to the finest taxonomic level provides vital baseline information that can help to better inform research and marine protection such as predictive modelling, benthic risk assessments and management of benthic marine protected species.

The aim of this project is to improve the quality of data collection and protected coral identifications. Observer briefings can continue and be formalised, and Observers can be informed about how the research data are used. This will improve their skills at identifying and collecting samples and bycatch data. Specialists can then confirm identifications to help understand distributions at a more detailed taxonomic level. This work will also feed into planned coral connectivity research, which will enable more robust assessment of areas at risk from fisheries impacts.

Research Approach

A catalogue of observer collected coral samples will be created and maintained. This will be assessed and samples verified by domestic experts at regular intervals additional to this verification will be undertaken by visiting international coral experts; allowing this work to update observer records in the COD database. Observer briefings manuals and trainings will be revised based on outputs of this project in order to progressively improve the accuracy of at sea identification.

Outputs

1. Records and imagery of previously unidentified cold-water coral bycatch obtained by Government funded fisheries observers within the New Zealand EEZ.
2. Robust high quality baseline data of coral bycatch.
3. Taxonomic samples of deep sea coral species made available for appropriate collections..
4. Genetic samples of select octocoral specimens for cold-water coral connectivity work planned in future.

Note: A three year term is proposed.

Indicative Research Cost: \$40,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4B (100% Industry)

Fish stocks: HOK 1, ORH 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, OEO 1, 3A, 4, 6, SBW 6A, 6R, 6I, 6B, SQU1T, 6T.

2.4 Identification of seabirds captured in New Zealand fisheries

Project Code: INT 2016-02

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2019

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives B, C; National Plan of Action – Seabirds.

Project Objective

To determine which seabird species are captured in fisheries and the mode of their capture.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine, through examination of returned seabird specimens, the taxon, sex, and where possible age-class and provenance of seabirds killed in New Zealand fisheries (for returned dead specimens).
2. To detail the injuries, body condition and stomach contents and, where possible, the likely cause of mortality (for returned dead specimens).
3. To report any changes in the protocol used for the necropsy of seabirds (for returned dead specimens).
4. To determine, through examination of photographs, the taxon and, where possible, sex, age-class and provenance of seabirds captured in New Zealand fisheries (for live captures or dead specimens discarded at sea).

Rationale

Large numbers of seabirds frequent New Zealand commercial fishing waters. Birds with significant differences in conservation status can appear morphologically similar. The accurate determination of the taxon of seabirds captured in New Zealand fisheries is vital for examining the potential threat to population viability posed by incidental fisheries captures. Observers on commercial vessels are not always able to identify seabirds at sea with high precision and the assessment of the age-class, sex and provenance of captured individuals requires autopsy in the majority of cases. Historically all dead seabird specimens collected by observers have been returned for necropsy where possible. However, in many cases, the taxon can be confirmed through expert examination of photographs taken by observers, and this can be achieved at lower cost than returning carcasses and performing necropsy. In order to maximise cost efficiencies, and in recognition of increased observer coverage levels in some fleets, a new protocol has been developed to determine which specimens are returned for full necropsy. This protocol aims to strike a balance between returning birds for full necropsy (for rarer species and in less observed fisheries) and photographing birds for determination of taxon (for commonly caught species in well observed fisheries).

Examining the causes of mortality and types of injuries incurred by individual seabirds returned from fisheries is necessary to help reduce future seabird captures in New Zealand fisheries by identifying gear risks. Linking this information to species, age- and sex-class, and breeding status, helps identify if different groups of seabirds are vulnerable to different risks in fishing interactions.

Information gained through this project will link to Ministry for Primary Industries databases, seabird bycatch estimates, and will inform ongoing risk assessment, research and modelling of the effects of fisheries bycatch on seabird populations. Further, the mode of capture and associated information will enable robust analyses to be made of the factors contributing to seabird capture events and inform the development of appropriate mitigation strategies.

Research approach

Specific objectives 1-3

Dead birds returned by government observers will be delivered, suitably packaged and labelled, to the contractor. Observers make note of the circumstances of capture and provide a tentative identification. Seabirds returned will be examined to determine the following:

- Species identification and classification;
- Sex;
- Moults and brood patch development as a partial indicator of breeding status;
- Age;
- Provenance (origin) (where possible);
- Subcutaneous fat score as an index of body condition;
- Stomach and gizzard contents; and
- General body condition including any signs of injury and cause of death (where possible).

These data will be reported by species and fishery stratum (fishing method, fishery area and target species). The methodologies used in examining the specimens and categorising them into different groups shall be fully described. Differences in research protocols compared to previous necropsy research on New Zealand seabirds returned from fisheries shall be fully detailed and the implications of any differences discussed.

Specific objective 4

Where government observers recorded an incidental bird capture and no specimen is retained (either live captures or discarded dead birds), all photographs obtained, by specimen, will be delivered to the contractor in electronic format. Details of the date, time, location and fishery of capture will also be provided. Photographs will be examined to determine the following:

- Identification and classification, to the lowest taxonomic level possible;
- Sex (where possible);
- Age (where possible); and
- Provenance (origin) (where possible).

These data will be reported by taxon and fishery stratum (fishing method, fishery area and target species). When a specimen is identified and separated from similar species, the identification features used shall be fully described.

Outputs

1. A summary of results will be reported, for circulation to stakeholders, on a quarterly basis.
2. Information requested by CSP will be provided within a reasonable timeframe (usually 10 working days).
3. Annual report(s) of confirmed identification, sex, age, provenance and all other data collected, of all specimens examined. To the extent possible, the final report will also identify potential interactions between seabirds and fishing gear, and identify factors that

may have contributed to seabird mortality. Data will be reported by fishery stratum (fishing method, fishery area and where possible target species).

4. Presentation of six monthly and annual reports to the CSP Technical Working Group.
5. Provision of all data collected in electronic format, suitable for updating Ministry for Primary Industries databases and/or other relevant databases.

Indicative Research Cost: \$80,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish stocks: BAR 1, 7, BCO 4, BIG 1, BNS1, 2, 3, 7, BUT5, 7, BWS 1, ELE3, 5, 7, EMA 1, 3, 7, FLA1, 2, 3, 7, GMU1, GSH 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, GSP 1, 7, GUR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, HAK 1, 4, 7, HOK 1, HPB 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, JDO 1, 2, 3, 7, JMA 1, 3, 7, KIN 1, 7, 8, LEA 1, 2, 3, LIN 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, MAK 1, MOK 1, 3, 5, MOO 1, ORH 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, OEO 1, 3A, 4, 6, PAR 1, 9, POR 1, POS 1, RBM 1, RSN 1, 2, RIB 1, 2, RCO 1, 3, 7, RSK 1, 3, 7, 8, SBW 6A, 6R, 6I, 6B, SCH1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, SCI 1, 2, 4A, 6A, 6B, SKI 1, 3, 7, SNA 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, SPD 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, SPE 1, 3, 4, 7, SPO1, 3, 7, 8, SQU1T, 6T, SSK 1, 3, 7, 8, STA 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, STN 1, SWA 1, 3, 4, SWO 1, TAR 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, TOR 1, TRE 1, 2, 7, TRU 3, 4, WAR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, WWA 2, 3, 4, 5B, 7, YEM 1, 8, 9

2.5 Post release survival of white pointer sharks in New Zealand setnet fisheries

Project Code: INT 2016-03

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives A, B and C; CSP Protected Fish Plan; National Plan of Action - Sharks.

Project Objective

1. To better characterise bycatch events of white sharks caught in commercial setnets.
2. To identify the operational and biological factors that affect post-release mortality of white sharks.
3. To identify methods of improving post release survival.

Rationale

White pointer sharks have been observed caught throughout the New Zealand EEZ and in a wide range of fisheries (Frances & Lyon 2012). As with other shark species there is a general paucity of information on the life history characteristics of white pointer sharks. However, indications are that they are generally slow growing and late maturing (Francis & Lyon 2012), making them susceptible to fishing impacts at a population level. While those animals caught in deeper water offshore trawls are generally identified as dead, those caught in coastal setnet fisheries, particularly on the South Coast South Island and West Coast North Island are often reported as being released alive, though with various injuries. In order to adequately assess fishery impact and develop mitigation solutions to maximise the likelihood of survival it is important to understand the post release survival of these animals. Studies on other elasmobranchs, bycaught in New Zealand fisheries have identified low survival rates of animals which were assessed as alive and in good condition at time of release (Francis 2014). Identifying factors which affect post release survival allows mitigation practices to be developed to reduce fisheries impacts.

Research Approach

A review and characterisation of bycatch events will be undertaken in the first instance with fine scale operational analysis of the factors surrounding the events. In order to adequately assess survival it is necessary to continue to collect data on the animals' behaviour once released. This has successfully been conducted on spine tailed devil rays using sPAT (miniPAT survival) tags (Frances 2014). Following the initial characterisation, recommendations will be made on the feasibility of using such tags on white pointer sharks caught in relevant setnet fisheries. It is proposed that in the second year of the project a deployment of sPAT tags will be used to further characterise the factors effecting post release survival.

Outputs

1. A written report characterising interactions and describing the factor's effecting post release survival of white pointer sharks and providing recommendations on the most effective ways of maximising post release survival.

Note: Subject to development of an adequate tagging methodology it is envisaged that an extended project will be proposed for 2017/18 to quantify survival rates of live released white pointer sharks.

References:

Frances, M. P., Lyon, W. S 2012: Review of commercial fishery interactions and population information for eight New Zealand protected fish species. Report prepared by NIWA for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington.

Frances, M. P. 2014: Survival and depth distribution of spinetail devilrays (*Mobula japanica*) released from purse seine catches. Report prepared by NIWA for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington.

Indicative Research Cost: \$20,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish stocks: SCH1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, SPO1, 3, 7, 8, WAR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8

2.6 Indirect effects of commercial fishing on Buller's shearwater and red-billed gulls

Project Code: INT 2016-04

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective D

Project Objective

1. Identify potential indirect effects of commercial fishing on red billed gulls and Buller's shearwater.

Rationale

Commercial fishing, including purse seine capture methods, may be driving changes in fish populations in the Hauraki Gulf area leading to reduced availability of suitable prey for Buller's shearwater and red-billed gulls in surface waters. As poor divers, Buller's shearwater specialise in foraging in association with fish work-ups. This may be contributing to reduced breeding success of this species, which breeds only at the Poor Knights Islands. Recent tracking studies have shown that Buller's shearwaters now travel to the eastern South Island to gather food and incubation shift lengths have increased markedly since the 1970's (from 4 days per shift to 14 days). Red-billed gull colonies in the Hauraki Gulf have declined substantially from the 1960s. For example less than 100 pairs nested on Mokohinau Island group in 2015 whereas this colony had >20,000 birds in the early 1960's. Red-billed gulls on the outer island colonies depend on krill and small fish brought to the sea surface by large schools of fish. This project will assess available information on seabird interactions with fish shoals and analyse the fish stock capture data from purse seine fleets in Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Plenty since the 1960s. This will be used to describe mechanisms for potential indirect effects of commercial fishing, and provide recommendations to better understand the mechanisms identified.

Research Approach

Carry out a desk-top based exercise to gather information on the development of the purse seine fishing industry in northern New Zealand. Summarise information on which fish stocks are captured, size of fishing fleets, quantities of fish harvested, annual timing of fishing activities, and trends in fish stock harvest rates over time. Gather information about which northern New Zealand seabird species depend on surface shoals of fish for associated feeding opportunities. Gather any population numbers and trend data available for these bird species since the 1960s. Compare fishing effort with population changes in the seabird populations to see if there are any patterns to indicate that indirect effects of fishing might be causing any population changes (population size, breeding biology or location of foraging areas) in these northern seabird species, especially Buller's shearwaters and red-billed gulls.

Outputs

1. A written report describing the assessment of purse-seine fishing activities in northern New Zealand and a comparison with local seabird population trends.

References

<http://www.osnz.org.nz/National-Red-billed-Gull-Survey-2014-2015>

<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/species/factsheet/22698182>

Indicative Research Cost: \$15,000

Cost Recovery: 100% Crown funded

DRAFT

3. Population Projects

NOTE: This multi-year project (POP2015-02) was consulted on in 2015/16 and is included here for completeness.

3.1 Flesh-footed shearwater: Various locations population project

Project code: POP2015-02

Start Date: 1 July 2015

Completion Date: 30 June 2018

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E; CSP seabird plan 2015; National Plan of Action - Seabirds

Term: Three years. Note: Objectives 1 and 3 may be completed in the first two years.

Project Objectives

1. To estimate the population size of flesh-footed shearwater at Middle Island (Mercury Islands).
2. To estimate key demographic parameters of flesh-footed shearwater at Lady Alice Island/Mauimua and Ohinau Islands.
3. To describe the at-sea distribution of flesh-footed shearwater breeding at Northland breeding sites.

Rationale

The Conservation Services Programme Seabird medium term research plan 2015 (CSP seabird plan 2015) outlines a five year research programme to deliver on the seabird population research component of CSP. It is targeted at addressing relevant CSP Objectives (as described in the CSP Strategic Statement) and National Plan of Action – Seabirds⁶ Objectives. It was developed as part of the work of the CSP Research Advisory Group. Key components of research described in the CSP seabird plan 2015 for delivery in 2015/16 were identified and prioritised by the CSP RAG. This proposal covers prioritised components involving field work on flesh-footed shearwater, classified as at very high risk from commercial fisheries. Supporting rationale for all the components is summarised in the CSP seabird plan 2015.

Research Approach

Baker et al. (2010) reported on the last species-wide population estimate, although one key breeding site, Middle Island (Mercury Islands) was not surveyed. Updating the population estimate by obtaining a robust estimate for this site will be a key priority.

Waugh et al. (2014; reporting on CSP Project POP2011-02) provided advice on population monitoring required to estimate adult survival, juvenile survival, fecundity and age of first reproduction of flesh-footed shearwaters. Objective 2 of this project will build on these recommendations, conducting further demographic mark-recapture field work at the established study sites at Lady Alice/Mauimua and Ohinau Island, and report on updated estimates of key demographic parameters including adult survival.

Waugh et al. (2014) also reported detailed data on the at-sea distribution and foraging behaviour of flesh-footed shearwaters, primarily from Ohinau Island. Objective 3 of this project would expand this knowledge to include Northland populations as well, as recommended by Waugh et al. (2014).

⁶ National Plan of Action – 2013 to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in New Zealand Fisheries. Available for download at: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>

Outputs

1. A technical report (or reports) detailing methods used and results found, including an updated population estimate, updated estimates of key demographic parameters, and the foraging distribution of Northland breeding flesh-footed shearwaters.
2. Data obtained, including spatial distribution data suitable for use in fisheries risk assessment.

Note: A three year term is proposed. Objectives 1 and 3 may be completed in the first two years.

References:

- Baker, B., Hedley, G., Cunningham, R. 2010 Data collection of demographic, distributional and trophic information on the flesh-footed shearwater to allow estimation of effects of fishing on population viability: 2009-10 field season. Research Report for Ministry of Fisheries project PRO2006/01. Ministry of Fisheries, Wellington. 62 p
- Richard, Y., Abraham, E.R.. 2013. Risk of commercial fisheries to New Zealand seabird populations. New Zealand Aquatic Environment and Biodiversity Report No. 109. Ministry for Primary Industries, Wellington.
- Waugh, S.M., Jamieson, S.E., Stahl, J.C., Filippi, D.P., Taylor, G.A., and Booth, A. 2014. Final Report on Project POP2011-02 Flesh-footed Shearwaters-population study and foraging areas. Report prepared by the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington, 68 p.

Indicative Research Cost: \$80,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry)

Fish stocks: BIG1, BNS 1, SNA 1

3.2 Seabird population research: Chatham Islands 2016-17

Project code: POP2016-01

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E; CSP seabird plan 2016; National Plan of Action – Seabirds

Project Objective: To collect information on key aspects of the biology of selected at-risk seabird species in order to reduce uncertainty or bias in estimates of risk from commercial fishing.

Objective	Species	Target biological information
1	Chatham Island albatross	A - Population size B - Adult survival and other demographic parameters
2	Northern Buller's albatross	A - Population size B - Investigate the feasibility of collecting data on adult survival and other demographic parameters
3	Northern giant petrel	A - Population size
4	Northern royal albatross	A - Population size B - Compare ground-based population counts with those obtained by aerial census techniques and satellite imagery.
5	Pitt Island shag	A - Population size
6	Chatham Island shag	A - Population size

Rationale

The Conservation Services Programme Seabird medium term research plan 2016 (CSP seabird plan 2016) outlines a five year research programme to deliver on the seabird population research component of CSP. It is targeted at addressing relevant CSP Objectives (as described in the CSP Strategic Statement) and National Plan of Action – Seabirds Objectives. It was developed as part of the work of the CSP Research Advisory Group. Key components of research described in the CSP seabird plan 2016 for delivery in 2016/17 were identified and prioritised by the CSP RAG. This proposal delivers priority research components of the CSP seabird plan 2016 involving field work at the Chatham Islands. The proposal has been developed to maximise cost and logistical efficiencies between components. Supporting rationale for all the components is summarised in the CSP seabird plan 2016. It is envisaged that a variety of methods will be used, including ground-based counts, aerial survey, boat-based survey and satellite imagery derived counts. Methods will be developed and tailored to each species and site

Species specific objectives and research approach

Chatham Island albatross – the primary objective (Objective 1A) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs nesting on The Pyramid in the early-mid incubation period. This will use the same shore-based ground count of nests methodology that was conducted in 1999-2003, and again in 2007 and 2010. The secondary objective (Objective 1B) is to continue the mark-recapture study on The Pyramid to collect information on key demographic parameters, particularly adult survival and longevity of known aged birds. A large cohort of chicks was banded in 1993-1995 and further banding of adults at a study colony was carried out between 1999 and 2010. Recoveries of any banded birds will help improve estimates of survival rates in this species to improve those available for the risk assessment process. The Pyramid is a privately owned island so agreement to access and camp on this site will need to be obtained from the island owners.

Outputs – a report describing research undertaken to census the breeding population of Chatham albatross on the The Pyramid. Also a report describing the mark-recapture research completed using the stay on the island and an analysis of adult survival rates. Copies of all data collected in these projects.

Northern Buller's albatross – The primary objective (Objective 2A) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs on the Forty Fours and The Sisters during the early-mid incubation period. This will use the same shore-based census techniques as was used in the 1990s and 2000's. The secondary objective (Objective 2B) will be to carry out a feasibility assessment of collecting demographic data on this species. Both island groups are privately owned and require the agreement of the land owners to access and stay on these islands. The feasibility assessment will entail establishing agreements to carry out a longer term study at one of these sites and assessing the suitability of the selected site for camping and marking study birds.

Outputs – a report describing research undertaken to estimate the size of the breeding population of Northern Buller's albatross on the Forty-Fours and The Sisters. A report describing a feasibility assessment for starting a medium or long-term mark-recapture study of this species, and what agreements and conditions would be required to get land-owner approval. Copies of all data collected in these projects.

Northern giant petrel – The key objective (Objective 3A) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs on the Forty Fours and The Sisters during the early-mid incubation period. This will require a ground-based census technique as was used in the 2000's. Also assess the feasibility of using an aerial census technique as a method for on-going monitoring of this species. The Forty Fours and The Sisters are privately owned islands and require the agreement of the land owners to access and stay on these islands.

Outputs – a report describing research undertaken to estimate the size of the breeding population of northern giant petrels on the Forty-Fours and The Sisters and a comparison with aerial census techniques. Copies of all data collected in these projects.

Northern royal albatross – The primary objective (Objective 4A) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs on the Forty Fours and The Sisters during the early-mid incubation period. This will require a ground-based census technique as used previous surveys in the 2000's. The secondary objective (4B) is to assess the feasibility of using aerial census techniques and satellite imagery as a method for on-going remote monitoring of this species. The Forty Fours and The Sisters are privately owned and require the agreement of the land owners to access and stay on these islands.

Outputs - a report describing research undertaken to estimate the size of the breeding population of northern royal albatrosses on the Forty Fours and The Sisters, and a comparison with aerial and satellite census techniques. Copies of all data collected in these projects.

Pitt Island shag - The main objective (Objective 5) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs and colonies of Pitt Island shags on all islands in Chatham Island group using methods comparable with Debski et al (2012). This survey can be done concurrently with the Chatham Island shag census to make savings on contractor travel and boat hire costs. This will require a mix of ground-based census techniques, boat-based surveys and possibly some aerial photography of nesting colonies. Many of the nesting colonies are on privately owned sites and will require the agreement of the land owners to visit these sites.

Outputs - a report describing research undertaken to estimate the size of the breeding population of Pitt Island shags. Copies of all data collected in this project.

Previous CSP projects on Pitt Island shag have included: INT2011-02 & MCSPOP2010-02.

Chatham Island shag - The main objective (Objective 6) is to carry out a census of breeding pairs and colonies of Chatham Island shags on all islands in Chatham Island group using methods comparable with Debski et al (2012). This survey can be done concurrently with the Pitt Island shag census to make savings on contractor travel and boat hire costs. This project will require a mix of ground-based census techniques, boat-based surveys and some aerial photography of nesting colonies. Many of the nesting colonies are on privately owned sites and will require the agreement of the land owners to visit these sites.

Outputs - a report describing research undertaken to estimate the size of the breeding population of Chatham Island shags. Copies of all data collected in this project.

Previous CSP projects on Chatham Island shag have included: INT2011-02 & MCSPOP2010-02.

References

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Indicative Research Cost: \$120,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry 50% Crown)

Fish Stocks:

Objective/Species	Indicative Cost	Fish Stocks
1 Chatham Island albatross	\$30,000	BAR1, 4, BIG1, HOK1E, LIN4, ORH3B, OEO4, SQU1J
2 Northern Buller's albatross	\$40,000	BAR1, 4, 5, BIG1, HOK1E, 1W, JMA3, LIN3, 4, 5, 6, 7, OEO4, ORH3B, SCI4A, 6B, STN1, SQU1J, 6T, SWA3, 4, WAR3, WWA5B
3 Northern giant petrel	\$10,000	HAK7, HOK1E, 1W, JMA3, LIN5, SNA1, SQU1J, 6T, SWA3
4 Northern royal albatross	\$25,000	LIN5, SWA1, STN1, ORH3B
5 Pitt Island shag	\$7,500	CRA6
6 Chatham Island shag	\$7,500	CRA6

3.3 Seabird population research: Auckland Islands 2016-17

Project code: POP2016-02

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E; CSP seabird plan 2016; National Plan of Action – Seabirds.

Project Objective

To collect information on key aspects of the biology of selected at-risk seabird species in order to reduce uncertainty or bias in estimates of risk from commercial fishing.

Specific Objectives

Objective	Species	Target biological information
1	Gibson's albatross	A - Adult survival and other demographic parameters (Adams Island) B - Population size
2	White-capped albatross	A - Adult survival and other demographic parameters (Disappointment Island) B - Population size
3	White-chinned petrel	A - Adult survival and other demographic parameters (Adams Island)

Rationale

The Conservation Services Programme Seabird medium term research plan 2016 (CSP seabird plan 2016) outlines a five year research programme to deliver on the seabird population research component of CSP. It is targeted at addressing relevant CSP Objectives (as described in the CSP Strategic Statement) and National Plan of Action – Seabirds⁷ Objectives. It was developed as part of the work of the CSP Research Advisory Group. Key components of research described in the CSP seabird plan 2016 for delivery in 2016/17 were identified and prioritised by the CSP RAG. This proposal covers prioritised components involving field work at the Auckland Islands, which have been developed to maximise cost and logistical efficiencies between components. Supporting rationale for all the components is summarised in the CSP seabird plan 2016

Species specific objectives and research approach

Gibson's albatross – the first objective (Objective 1A) is to continue the mark-recapture study on Adams Island (Auckland Islands) to collect information on key demographic parameters, particularly adult survival, a key parameter of uncertainty (CSP seabird plan 2016). This will follow established methods (Walker & Elliot 1999, 2005). The second objective (Objective 1B) is to estimate the total population size at the Auckland Islands. The research approach will be based on exploratory work undertaken in 2014/15 and 2015/16 as part of projects POP2014-02 and POP2015-03, to be reviewed by the CSP Technical Working Group in the second quarter of 2016.

Outputs - a report describing the mark-recapture research completed; a report describing research undertaken to estimate the population size for the Auckland Islands; data collected.

⁷ National Plan of Action – 2013 to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in New Zealand Fisheries. Available for download at: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>

Previous CSP population projects on Gibson's albatross include POP2015-03, POP2014-02, POP2013-03, POP2012-07, POP2004-02 and BRD2001-01.

Note: Gibson's albatross has been identified as a potential indicator species by DOC (Monks et al. 2013), and data collected by this study may be used as part of DOC's reporting on indicator species.

White-capped albatross –adult survival is a key area of uncertainty for this species (CSP seabird plan 2016) and therefore the key focus will be to build on the work conducted in 2014/15 and 2015/16, undertaking mark recapture work at the study colony established on Disappointment Island to collect data suitable for estimating key demographic parameters such as adult survival (Objective 2A). A secondary objective involves estimating the population size at the Auckland Islands (Objective 2B).

Outputs – a report describing the mark-recapture research completed; a report describing research undertaken to estimate the population size for the Auckland Islands; data collected

Previous CSP population projects on white-capped albatross include POP2015-03, POP2014-02, POP2013-02, POP2012-05 and POP2005-02.

White-chinned petrel – this component aims to build on a research programme that was undertaken by Otago University and NIWA (with support from CSP), to deliver on relevant CSP research objectives. The primary objective is to extend the collection of resight data from study colonies established to estimate key demographic parameters. This will also allow the retrieval of additional tracking devices to collect further spatial foraging data which can be used to describe the spatial overlap with commercial fishing effort.

Outputs – a report describing the mark-recapture research completed on Adams Island (Auckland Islands); data collected.

Previous CSP population projects on white-capped albatross include POP2015-03 and POP2014-02.

References

- Baker, B. Jenz, K., Cunningham, R. 2013. White-capped albatross population estimate - 2011/12 and 2012/13. Research report for Department of Conservation, Wellington. Available for download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/conservation-services-programme/csp-reports/2012-13/white-capped-albatross-population-estimate-2013/>
- Monks, J.M.; O'Donnell, C.F.J.; Wright, E.F. 2013: Selection of potential indicator species for measuring and reporting on trends in widespread native taxa in New Zealand. DOC Research and Development Series 338. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 18 p.
- Patterson, D. L., Woehler, E. J., Croxall, J. P., Cooper, J., Poncet, S., Fraser, W. R. 2008. Breeding distribution and population status of the northern giant petrel *Macronectes halli* and the southern giant petrel *M. giganteus*. Marine Ornithology, 36(2), 115-124
- Walker, K.; Elliott, G. 1999: Population changes and biology of the wandering albatross *Diomedea exulans gibsoni* at the Auckland Islands. Emu 99: 239-247
- Walker, K.; Elliott, G. 2006: At-sea distribution of Gibson's and Antipodean wandering albatrosses, and relationships with long-line fisheries. Notornis 53 (3): 265-290

Indicative Research Cost: \$120,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry 50% Crown)

Fish Stocks:

Objective/Species	Indicative Cost	Fish Stocks
1 Gibson's albatross	\$50,000	ALB, BIG1, STN1, SWO1
2 White-capped albatross	\$50,000	BAR5, BIG1, HOK1, SCI6A, SQU1T, 6T, STN1, SWA4
3 White-chinned petrel	\$20,000	BAR1, 5, 7, BIG1, HAK1, 7, HOK1 JMA3, 7, LIN, 3, 5, 6, 7, SBW6A, 6I, 6R, SCI1, 2, 3, 6A, STN1, SWA1, 3, 4, , SQU6T, WWA5B

3.4 Updated basking shark bycatch review

Project code: POP2016-03

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective B; CSP Protected fish Plan; National Plan of Action – Sharks

Project Objectives

1. To update the 2012 review of basking shark bycatch with information from the most recent fishing years.
2. To reassess the efficacy of management measures.
3. To update the review of relevant research on basking shark population parameters.
4. To explore potential future work to better understand basking shark populations and biology around New Zealand.

Rationale

Since the review of Francis & Sutton (2012; output of CSP POP2011-04) a series of bycatch events and industry management interventions have occurred. The National Plan of Action-Sharks has also been developed which has specific objectives related to increasing understanding and improving management of shark populations. Advances have also been made in the understanding of basking shark biology. It is therefore timely to update the review of Francis & Sutton (2012), to ensure the most recent available information is readily available to inform management of fisheries bycatch of this species.

Research approach

A desktop study updating Francis & Sutton (2012) with the most up to date bycatch data will be combined with a review and assessment of management measures introduced since 2012. Patterns in bycatch will be explored in order to provide any relevant recommendation for improvement to management and mitigation approaches. A literature review of all recent international literature on basking shark biology population dynamics will be conducted to assist in informing management recommendations.

Outputs

1. A written report detailing updates to basking shark bycatch information, evaluation of management measures and review of recent research on population parameters.
2. Recommendations on potential future work to better understand basking shark populations and biology.

References

Francis, M., Sutton, P. 2012. Basking Shark Bycatch Review. Report prepared by National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington, 38p.

Indicative Research Cost: \$15,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry)

Fish stocks: CDL6, HAK1, 4, 7, HOK1, JMA7, LIN5, 6, OEO 6, ORH 1, 2A, 2B, 3B, RCO3, SCI6A, 6B, SKI2, SKJ1, SPD3, 5, SQU1T, 6T, SWA3, 4, WWA5B

3.5 Cetacean habitat suitability modelling

Project code: POP 2016-09

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E.

Project Objectives

1. To provide spatial distribution information for cetacean species to inform fisheries risk assessment.

Rationale

There are 47 cetacean species known to occur in New Zealand waters, three of which are listed as Nationally Critical, and another three as Nationally Endangered (Baker et al. 2010) under the New Zealand threat classification system. All cetaceans in New Zealand's territorial seas and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are protected under national law by the Marine Mammal Protection Act (1978), which mandates that all physical or habitat disturbances to the animals must be avoided or mitigated. However, the knowledge about distribution and habitat use patterns of cetaceans in New Zealand waters is limited, especially for those that inhabit offshore waters. This lack of information limits the attempts by government, conservation and industry stakeholders to consider risks and minimize impacts on cetaceans. Compiling existing cetacean sightings datasets and modelling cetacean habitat use will provide improved understanding of the environmental drivers of cetacean habitat use and generate reliable predictions of species habitat suitability patterns. All outputs from this research project will be made available to all stakeholders through a web-based portal, which will enable quick and dynamic access to the best available information of the habitat suitability of various cetacean species in New Zealand. The results from this project will feed in to the longer term Marine Mammal Risk Assessment in New Zealand waters, and to CSPs five year marine mammal medium term research plan (Goetz, pers comm).

Research approach

Spatial distribution models of cetaceans in New Zealand EEZ will be generated by using opportunistically collected cetacean sightings data, combined with environmental data at each sightings location, in lieu of survey data across the entire Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in order to produce predictive maps of habitat suitability for each species. Currently, NIWA has access to four substantial cetacean sighting databases that will be utilized to generate the habitat use models. These datasets amount to over 12,000 sightings that span over 30 years, with enough data to generate seasonal or annual habitat suitability models of 13 species and three species complexes (beaked whales, blue whales and pilot whales). By increasing the database of the model it will provide greater coverage across the large extent of the New Zealand EEZ and improve models predictive capacity (Goetz, pers comm).

Outputs

1. A web-based portal to allow stakeholders easy access to cetacean species predicted distribution maps derived from model results.
2. A report to all funders detailing the approach, methods, and results, and discussing the applications and management implications.

Note: This project is intended to provide part funding to the NIWA cetacean habitat suitability modelling project.

References:

Baker, C.S.; Chilvers, B.L.; Constantine, R.; DuFresne, S.; Mattlin, R.H.; van Helden, A.; Hitchmough, R. (2010). Conservation status of New Zealand marine mammals (suborders Cetacea and Pinnipedia), 2009. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research* 44(2): 101-115.
<<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00288330.2010.482970>>

Indicative Research Cost: \$30,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry)

Fish stocks: BAR1, 4, 5, 7, BIG1, OEO6, BYX2, ELE3, HAK1, 7, HOK1E, 1W, JMA3, 7, LIN4, 5, 6, 7, ORH3B, RBT3, SBW6I, SC12, 2A, 6B, SNA1, SPE4, SQU1T, 1J, STN1, SWA3, 4, SWO1, TAR1, TRE1, 7, WAR3, WWA5B

3.6 Yellow-eyed penguin foraging and indirect effects

Project code: POP2016-05

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2018

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective D, E.

Project Objectives

1. To describe the at-sea foraging distribution of adult and juvenile yellow-eyed penguins breeding in Otago and Southland.
2. To collate and synthesise existing information relevant to the indirect effect of commercial fishing induced benthic habitat modification on the mainland population of yellow-eyed penguins.
3. To identify mechanisms through which commercial fishing induced benthic habitat modification may effect the mainland population of yellow-eyed penguins, and provide recommendations for future research to better understand these indirect effects.

Rationale

Ellenberg and Mattern (2012; output of CSP project POP2011-08) provided research recommendations to understand the impact of fishing induced benthic habitat modification on yellow-eyed penguins in the Otago and Foveaux Strait regions. The recommendations include data collection on yellow-eyed penguins using GPS devices, and sea floor surveys.

This project aims to build on a proposed research programme at Otago University to investigate the diet, dispersal and foraging strategies of yellow-eyed penguins. Such information will form a key component of further investigation of mechanisms of potential indirect effects of commercial fishing on this species. This project will also assess available information to describe mechanisms for potential indirect effects of commercial fishing, and provide recommendations to better understand mechanisms identified. A thorough collation and synthesis of existing information will ensure cost effectiveness and synergies with other research programmes are maximised in progressing our understanding in this area.

Research approach

This project will be delivered in a staged approach. In year one the focus will be on collecting tracking data from foraging yellow-eyed penguins (which will also continue in year 2). The main focus in year 2 will be the collation of information relevant to fisheries indirect effects.

Objective 1 will be met by extending the proposed Otago University research programme to collect foraging data from Otago and Southland breeding sites using retrievable GPS/TDR devices for adults, and GSM non-retrievable devices for fledglings.

Objectives 2 and 3 will consist of a desk-based exercise to collate existing information, identify mechanisms of indirect effects, and make recommendations for future research, both in terms of analysis of existing data and/or collection of new data that would inform such analyses.

Reference

Ellenberg, U.; Mattern, T. 2012. Yellow-eyed penguins - A review of population information. Research report prepared by Eudyptes EcoConsulting Ltd for the Department of Conservation.

Outputs

1. At-sea foraging distribution data from adult and juvenile yellow-eyed penguins breeding in Otago and Southland.
2. Collated information relevant to the indirect effects of commercial fishing on yellow-eyed penguins.
3. A report describing mechanisms of indirect effects of commercial fishing on yellow-eyed penguins and recommendations for future research.

Indicative Research Cost: \$25,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry)

Fish stocks: BAR_{1,5}, BCO_{3,5}, BNS₃, BUT₅, ELE_{3,5}, FLA₃, GUR₃, MOK_{3,5}, PAD_{3,5}, SCA_{3,5}, STA_{3,5}, TAR₃, 5, WAR₃

3.7 Salvin's albatross Bounty Islands: methodology development

Project code: POP2016-06

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E; CSP seabird plan 2016; National Plan of Action - Seabirds

Project Objectives

1. Develop a methodology to estimate the population size of Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands, and collect of at-sea distributional information.

Rationale

Recent population estimates of Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands (part of CSP project POP2012-06) using ground and aerial methods have found contrasting evidence in regards population trend (Amey & Sagar 2013; Baker et al 2014). The at-sea foraging distribution of this population is described from only a small sample size of individuals due to device failure in a recent study (Thompson et al 2014; part of POP2012-06).

This project will develop a methodology for a project to estimate an updated population estimate of Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands, a comparison of the updated estimate to previous estimates to determine population trend, and collect a representative sample of at-sea foraging distributional information. Completing all these components in one project will maximise cost-effectiveness at this remote site.

It is envisaged that the research plan developed will be proposed for delivery as part of CSP in 2017/18.

Research approach

It is envisaged this project will include a meeting of relevant technical experts to advise on suitable methods, considering matters including:

- survey methods (e.g. ground and/or aerial methods);
- sample sizes/survey effort;
- survey timing;
- tracking options (e.g. geolocators and/or transmitting GPS devices).

The advice will be collated, methods costed, and recommendations formed on suitable cost-effective protocols.

Outputs

1. A research plan, including indicative costings, to estimate the population size of Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands, and collect of at-sea distributional information.

Previous CSP population projects on Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands include POP2012-06.

References

Amey, J., Sagar, P. 2013. Salvin's albatross population trend at the Bounty Islands, 1997-2011. Report prepared by the National Institute for Water and Atmosphere for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington. 31p.

Baker, G.B., Jensz, K., Sagar, P. 2014. 2013 Aerial survey of Salvin's albatross at the Bounty Islands. Report prepared by Latitude 42 Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington. 10p.

Thompson, D., Sagar, P., Torres, L., and Charteris, M. 2014. Salvin's albatrosses at the Bounty Islands: at-sea distribution. Report prepared by NIWA for the New Zealand Department of Conservation, Wellington. 15p.

Indicative Research Cost: \$10,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 3 (50% Industry)

Fish stocks: BAR_{1,4}, BIG₁, GUR₃, HOK₁, JMA₃, LIN₄, OEO_{3A}, OEO₄, ORH_{3B}, SBW_{6A}, SCI_{3A}, SCI_{4A}, SQU_{1J}, SWA_{3, 4}

3.8 New Zealand Sea Lion: Auckland Islands pup count

Project code: POP2016-07

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective E.

Project Objectives

1. To estimate New Zealand sea lion pup production at Enderby, Figure of 8 and Dundas Islands.
2. To update the New Zealand sea lion database.

Rationale

New Zealand sea lions are classified as Nationally Critical (Baker et al. 2010), and are incidentally killed each year in southern commercial trawl fishing operations targeting species including squid, scampi and southern blue whiting. The foraging areas of New Zealand sea lions at the Auckland Islands have been shown to overlap with commercial trawl fishing activity, particularly SQU6T and SCI6A. Approximately 70% of New Zealand sea lions breed at the Auckland Islands, where population data have been collected since the mid-1990s, including estimates of pup production and resighting of marked animals. Since 2001 there has been a considerable decline in pup production at the Auckland Islands. A literature review to identify potential indirect effects of commercial fishing on the Auckland Islands population as part of CSP project POP2010-01 (Bowen 2012) highlighted a number of key information gaps that currently prevent a full understanding of any such potential indirect effects, including time series data of population dynamics as collected in this project. CSP project POP2012-02 analysed population data collected during previous years in order to determine the key demographic factors driving the observed population decline of New Zealand sea lions at the Auckland Islands. It found that low pupping rates, a declining trend in cohort survival to age 2 and low adult survival may explain declining pup counts in one studied population (Roberts et al. 2014).

In response to the continued decline at the Auckland Islands, the Ministers of Conservation and Primary Industries announced that a Threat Management Plan (TMP) for New Zealand sea lions would be developed. This is currently underway and full public consultation will occur in the second quarter of 2016. This research project is scoped to collect pup count information required to manage the impact of commercial fishing on the Auckland Islands population, in line with CSP Objective E. It is envisaged that other research, and/or management actions, will be progressed as part of the TMP, and may be delivered alongside the research programme proposed here to provide logistical synergies.

Research Approach

Pup production at Dundas and Enderby Island has historically been estimated using a range of methods including aerial (Baker et al. 2013) and ground based mark-recapture methods (Chilvers 2012; Childerhouse et al. 2013). For the purposes of the CSP in 2016/17 it is proposed that a ground based pup count only be conducted, over a shorter field season than previously undertaken. Depending on logistical constraints, a pup production at Figure of 8 Island will be by direct count following established methods (Chilvers 2012; Childerhouse et al. 2013).

It is intended that other objectives such as disease monitoring and pup survival estimations will be considered and potentially undertaken as part of the outputs of the New Zealand sea lion Threat Management Plan.

Outputs

1. Data collected, in an electronic format suitable for upload into the New Zealand sea lion database.
2. New Zealand sea lion database updated and made available to relevant investigators. Any changes to the structure of the database must be fully documented.
3. A technical report (or reports) detailing the methods used, a summary of data collected and estimates of New Zealand sea lion pup production at the Auckland Islands.

Note: Maximum cost efficiencies will be achieved through aligned delivery with Subantarctic projects, particularly in relation to transport logistics. Previous CSP projects on New Zealand sea lion population data collection include: POP2015-05, POP2014-01, POP2013-01, POP2012-01, POP2012-02, POP2011-01, POP2010-01, POP2007-01, POP2006-01, POP2005-01, POP2004-01, MAM2002-1, MAM2001-1 and MAM2000-1. See also POP2012-02.

References

- Baker C.S., Chilvers B.L., Constantine R., DuFresne S., Mattlin R., van Helden A., Hitchmough R. 2010. Conservation status of New Zealand Marine Mammals (suborders Cetacea and Pinnipedia), 2009. *New Zealand Journal of Marine & Freshwater Research* 44:101-115.
- Baker, B., Jenz, K., Chilvers, L. 2013. Aerial survey of New Zealand sea lions – Auckland Islands 2011/12. Report prepared Department of Conservation. Available for download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/conservation-services-programme/csp-reports/2012-13/new-zealand-sea-lion-aerial-survey-2013/>
- Bowen, W.D. 2012. A review of evidence for indirect effects of commercial fishing on New Zealand sea lions (*Phocarctos hookeri*) breeding on the Auckland Islands. Report of Department of Conservation, Wellington. 41 p. Available for download at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/conservation-services-programme/csp-reports/2010-11/review-of-indirect-effects-of-fishing-on-new-zealand-sea-lions/>
- Childerhouse SJ, Amey J, Hamer D, McCrone A 2013. Final report for CSP Project 4426 New Zealand sea lion ground component 2012/13. Report to the Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand. Version 1.2. 26 p. Available to download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/conservation-services-programme/csp-reports/2012-13/new-zealand-sea-lion-ground-survey-2013/>
- Chilvers, B.L. 2012. Research to assess the demographic parameters of New Zealand sea lions, Auckland Islands 2011/12. Final Research Report, November 2012. Department of Conservation, Wellington. Available for download <http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/conservation-services-programme/csp-reports/2011-12/new-zealand-sea-lion-research-auckland-islands-2011-12/>
- Roberts, J., Fu, D., Doonan, I., & Francis, C. 2014. New Zealand sea lion: demographic assessment of the causes of decline at the Auckland Islands. Demographic model options: demographic assessment. Report prepared by NIWA for the Department of Conservation, Wellington. 142p.

Indicative Research Cost: \$100,000

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 2 (90% Industry 10% Crown)

Fish Stocks: SQU6T, SCI6A

4. Mitigation Projects

NOTE: This multi-year project (MIT2015-01) was consulted on in 2014/15 and is included here for completeness.

4.1 Seabird bycatch reduction (small vessel longline fisheries)

Project code: MIT2015-01

Start Date: 1 July 2015

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective A; National Plan of Action – Seabirds.

Project Objectives

1. To provide one or more liaison officers to the inshore bottom longline and small vessel surface longline fishing fleets, with a focus on northern North Island, to assist those fleets reduce their seabird bycatch.
2. To coordinate the seabird liaison officer roles with wider efforts targeted at seabird bycatch reduction in relevant fisheries to achieve the greatest reduction in bycatch possible.

Rationale

To effectively reduce the risk of interactions with seabirds it is important for vessels to take the latest developments in mitigation technology and be able to adapt them to their specific operations. Translating the latest scientific research and fishing regulations into operational parameters is not always a straight forward process. To reduce that risk at a species level it is necessary for there to be consistency of application of mitigation across all fleets interacting with the species. Seabird liaison officers have formed a vital interface between skippers, government and researchers. Other projects and processes are also underway, which aim to reduce seabird bycatch, including the work of collaborative groups involving industry, Government and eNGOs, and process driven by the Ministry for Primary Industries. Coordinating liaison officers with these other processes to maximise reduction results is important.

Liaison officers were trialled in the snapper longline fleet around the Hauraki Gulf in 2013/14 and its initial positive results led to an expanded project being jointly resourced between DOC and MPI in 2014/15. This project expanded to a wider area and over a broader range of seasons, in particular to a larger portion of the Snapper longline fleet whilst also moving into the bluenose/hapuku fleet to develop vessel specific Seabird Management Plans (SMPs) along with liaison with the domestic surface longline fleet. Based the outcomes of two years of this work the ongoing need for the liaison role has been demonstrated to allow review, refinement and expansion of SMPs or equivalent on inshore vessels interacting with seabird species.

Implementation approach

Liaison officers:

An adequate working understanding of seabird biology, taxonomy and behaviour assist in understanding the risk posed in each area and season. By employing liaison officers who have operational experience in fishing fleets along with an understanding of best practice mitigation and seabird characteristics it is possible to spread information over the fishing fleet in a collaborative and practical manner. These officers will also be equipped with fact sheets/resources and mitigation materials to assist in the dissemination of this knowledge.

The approach of this project will be to employ one or more liaison officers to travel to key ports before, during and immediately after high risk months in order to share information on seabird behaviour and mitigation options. Officers should actively encourage development of vessel specific mitigation practices and where appropriate vessel management plans. Liaison officers will operate closely with Observer Services to ensure mutual gains with part of the role including sea time on vessels to help understand individual vessels' operations and therefore tailor the most appropriate mitigation solutions. The officers should also operate as a conduit for communication between fishers and government by directing fishers concerns or questions to the right people.

Coordination:

A coordination officer will be appointed to actively liaise with all interested parties and coordinate the work of the liaison officers with other projects and processes relevant to the target fisheries. The officer will be tasked with identifying and prioritising actions that will make the highest contribution to reducing seabird bycatch in the target fisheries.

Outputs

1. Regular communication and meetings, as appropriate, with relevant agencies, industry bodies and other parties to coordinate bycatch reduction activities and report progress.
2. Monthly short form reports back to relevant advisory groups detailing progress and any developments which have come from the fleet
3. Annual written report detailing interactions with fishers and steps taken to enhance mitigation.

Note: A 2 year term is proposed for this project

Indicative Research Cost: \$150,000 per annum (excludes potential extension to recreational/charter sector)

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish Stocks: BIG1, BNS1, HPB1, SNA1, STN1, SWO1

NOTE: This multi-year project (MIT2015-02) was consulted on in 2014/15 and is included here for completeness.

4.2 Small vessel seabird mitigation project

Project code: MIT2015-02

Start Date: 1 July 2015

Completion Date: 30 June 2017

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective A; National Plan of Action – Seabirds.

Project Objectives

1. To test the efficacy of mitigation strategies or devices identified by the work of the seabird liaison officers operating in the small vessel bottom longline fleets.
2. To support efficacy testing of the improved tori line designs produced as an output of project MIT2014-02.

Rationale

The small vessel surface longline fishery poses substantial risk to most high and very high risk seabirds (see Table 7 of the CSP seabird plan 2015) despite current mitigation requirements and use. Implementation of proven mitigation strategies is known to be variable both within and between these fleets. Seabird Liaison officers have been deployed in the northern inshore bottom longline fleets for the past two years, also moving into the surface longline fleet during 2014/15, and further work is proposed in project MIT2015-01. In order to provide robust advice on best practice to fishers it is important that new or adapted mitigation options are backed up with adequate testing of efficacy. Recent work has included testing of new weighting options, setting practices and novel devices such as the hook pod (including CSP projects MIT 2011-03, MIT 2012-01 and MIT2013-02). Research is underway to develop improved tori line designs (CSP project MIT2014-02).

Research Approach

Quantitative testing will be undertaken of the mitigation strategies or devices identified by seabird liaison officers. Devices will be assessed using non-lethal metrics, to describe the deterrence of seabirds from high risk areas around the vessel. Performance will be assessed in a range of weather conditions and varying fishing operations. Measures identified by the seabird liaison officers will be considered by a technical working group including industry participants and relevant experts to recommend practices that have not been adequately proven. Appropriate testing metrics will be developed for subsequent at-sea testing, which may be in conjunction with observer deployment, liaison officer placement or utilisation of specialist researchers.

In year 1 this project will include the efficacy of improved tori line design(s) developed under project MIT2014-02 will be undertaken in comparison to current tori line designs.

Note: A 2 Year Term is proposed for this work, \$150,000 in the first year and \$100,000 in the second

Indicative Research Cost: \$150,000 in 2015/16

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish Stocks: BIG1, BNS1,2, HPB1, 2, SNA1, 2, STN1, SWO1

4.3 Protected species bycatch media

Project code: MIT2016-01

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2018

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objective A, B and C; CSP Seabird Plan; CSP Protected Fish Plan; National Plan of Action – Seabirds; National Plan of Action – Sharks.

Project Objective

1. To produce a newsletter to communicate protected species-related information to commercial fishermen;
2. To produce media suitable for incorporation into third party publications in order to maximise audience exposure.
3. To develop and produce identification tools targeted at commercial fishermen to improve their understanding of protected species interacting with their fishing operations

Rationale

Reducing the impacts of commercial fishing on protected species relies on individual fishermen actively applying best practice mitigation methods to their fishing activity. Applying and developing mitigation methods in specific circumstances requires an understanding of the protected species that may be impacted, and the nature with which they interact with fishing activity. A range of relevant information exists, often the result of research projects, however, appropriate communication of this generally involves interpretation of research outputs to cater to specific audiences. Project MIT2014-01 used a hard copy and web based newsletter to provide a medium for this communication (Pierre 2016). Project MIT 2016-01 will build on this by not only producing a quarterly newsletter, to be distributed in both hard copy and electronic, but also a range of media articles which can be directly incorporated into other relevant publications such as industry magazines and port newsletters. This expansion of scope will allow increase in target audience exposure and uptake.

Previously the Department has produced identification guides for seabirds and sharks (e.g. CSP 2007, 2010). Having up-to-date identification tools will improve the ability of fishermen to accurately understand which species are interacting with their fishing operations, so that they can ensure adequate measures are being taken to avoid or minimise bycatch. The guides also provide distribution and behavioural information which help inform mitigation strategies. These tools will also help improve the quality of data reported on captured protected species, thus contributing to a better understanding of the nature and extent of interactions. Such data contributes to risk assessments used in fisheries management, and enables the development of appropriate mitigation options where required. This project will allow the production (e.g. printing costs) of education resources across a variety of media using data from existing sources such as observer records, tracking studies and the protected species identification projects (e.g. INT2016-02 and INT2015-02). Resources will be targeted at commercial fishers, preferably in a region and fishery specific manner to provide information on species of concern which will assist in development and refinement of effective mitigation strategies.

Outputs

1. A quarterly newsletter covering best practice mitigation methods, current relevant events, updates on novel methods or new mitigation trials and information on protected species and the nature of their interaction with commercial fishing.
2. Contributions to third party publications.
3. Educational resources targeted at commercial fishermen across a range of media.

Previous CSP projects include MIT 2014-01, MIT2012-05 and MIT2011-05.

References:

Conservation Services Programme, 2007: A fisher's guide to New Zealand seabirds available at <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/conservation-services-programme/csp-identification-guides/a-fishers-guide-to-new-zealand-seabirds/>

Conservation Services Programme, 2010: A fisher's guide: New Zealand coastal seabirds. Available at: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/conservation-services-programme/csp-identification-guides/a-fishers-guide-new-zealand-coastal-seabirds/>

Pierre, J. 2016. MIT2014-01 Protected Species Bycatch Newsletter Report to the CSP TWG 21 January 2016. Available for download at: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/pagefiles/74833/bycatch-bylines-21-january-2016.pdf>

Indicative Research Cost: \$30,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish Stocks: BAR 1, 7, BCO 4, BIG 1, BNS1, 2, 3, 7, BUT5, 7, BWS 1, CRA4, 5, 7, ELE3, 5, 7, EMA 1, 3, 7, FLA1, 2, 3, 7, GMU1, GSH 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, GSP 1, 7, GUR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, HAK 1, 4, 7, HOK 1, HPB 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, JDO 1, 2, 3, 7, JMA 1, 3, 7, KIN 1, 7, 8, LEA 1, 2, 3, LIN 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, MAK 1, MOK 1, 3, 5, MOO 1, ORH 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, OEO 1, 3A, 4, 6, PAR 1, 9, POR 1, POS 1, RBM 1, RSN 1, 2, RIB 1, 2, RCO 1, 3, 7, RSK 1, 3, 7, 8, SBW 6A, 6R, 6I, 6B, SCH1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, SCI 1, 2, 4A, 6A, 6B, SKI 1, 3, 7, SNA 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, SPD 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, SPE 1, 3, 4, 7, SPO1, 3, 7, 8, SQU1T, 6T, SSK 1, 3, 7, 8, STA 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, STN 1, SWA 1, 3, 4, SWO 1, TAR 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, TOR 1, TRE 1, 2, 7, TRU 3, 4, WAR 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, WWA 2, 3, 4, 5B, 7, YEM 1, 8, 9.

4.4 Entanglement of cetaceans in pot/trap lines and setnets and a review of potential mitigation methods

Project code: MIT2016-02

Start Date: 1 July 2016

Completion Date: 30 June 2018

Guiding Objectives: CSP Objectives A and B.

Project Objectives

1. To characterise the nature and extent of entanglement of whale species in pot/trap lines and setnets in New Zealand and make recommendations on whether or not the current levels of risk warrant development or implementation of improved mitigation.
2. To identify and assess the current mitigation techniques for cetacean capture in the pot/trap lines and setnets both domestically and internationally and make recommendations as to their applicability in the New Zealand market.

Rationale

Cetaceans (primarily humpbacks, though also southern right whales and orca) can become entangled fish pot/trap lines or setnets (including down-lines). Within New Zealand this has most commonly been documented in Kaikoura, during winter, where the humpback whale northern migration comes close to shore and overlaps with the rock lobster fishing activity. In recent years there have also been increasing reports on the North Island, including Orca. The occasional Southern right whale has also been reported as entangled. DOC has a response team which will attempt a release a cetacean if conditions allow.

The number of reported incidents annually is low in New Zealand in comparison with some other countries; however, in recent years there has been a notable increase in occurrence outside of Kaikoura, and including other species. The frequency of humpback whale entanglements will also be related to the status of the humpback whale population as the risk of entanglement will increase with increasing numbers of cetaceans passing through the inshore waters of the East Coast of the South Island. DOC coordinates an annual survey of the humpback whale migration each winter, and the most recent season (2015) observed the highest count of whales coming through the Cook Strait (137) since the survey commenced in 2004.

It is timely to assess the level of risk posed to cetaceans from commercial pot/trap and setnet fishing activity, and determine whether or not the current level of risk warrants development or implementation of improved mitigation measures.

Research Approach

This project will aim to compile data from all available sources to characterise the nature and extent of cetacean interactions with commercial pot/trap lines and setnets. There are a number of sources of data on the occurrence of these entanglement events, including regional DOC records, Industry databases (such as the Ocean Snap database), and MPI databases.

In other countries where there is considerable risk to whales from pot line entanglement, a range of mitigation methods have been employed, including seasonal closures and gear modifications, some of which may or may not be applicable in the New Zealand scenario. An assessment of the current mitigation options available and their relevance to the New Zealand scenario would be beneficial if the risk to whales was deemed significant.

Outputs

1. A written report characterising the nature and extent of interactions between cetacean species and setnet and cray or trap lines and any domestic or international practices to mitigate these interactions
2. Recommendations on potential developments and improvements to mitigation practices.

Indicative Research Cost: \$15,000 per annum

Cost Recovery: F(CR) Item 4 (100% Industry)

Fish Stocks: CRA_{4, 5, 7}, HPB₃, SPO₃.

Appendix 1: Cost Allocation Tables

A: CSP 2016/17 Projects

Code	Project	Research	Admin	Total	CR Item	Industry %	Industry	Crown
Interaction Projects								
INT2015-02	Identification of marine mammals, turtles and protected fish captured in New Zealand fisheries	\$15,000	\$1,712	\$16,712	8	100	\$16,712	\$0
INT2015-03	Identification and storage of cold-water coral bycatch specimens	\$40,000	\$4,566	\$44,566	8	100	\$44,566	\$0
INT2016-01	Observing commercial fisheries	\$1,192,418	\$136,120	\$1,328,537	8	100	\$1,328,537	\$0
INT2016-02	Identification of seabirds captured in New Zealand fisheries	\$80,000	\$9,132	\$89,132	4	100	\$89,132	\$0
INT2016-03	Post release survival of white pointer sharks in New Zealand setnet fisheries	\$20,000	\$2,283	\$22,283	4	100	\$22,283	\$0
INT2016-04	Indirect effects of commercial fishing on Buller's shearwater and red-billed gulls	\$15,000	\$1,712	\$16,712	-	0	\$0	\$16,712
Population Projects								
POP2015-02	Flesh-footed shearwater: Various locations population project	\$80,000	\$9,132	\$89,132	3	50	\$44,566	\$44,566
POP2016-01	Seabird population research: Chatham Islands 2016-2017	\$120,000	\$13,699	\$133,699	3	50	\$66,849	\$66,849
POP2016-02	Seabird population research: Auckland Islands 2016-2017	\$120,000	\$13,699	\$133,699	3	50	\$66,849	\$66,849
POP2016-03	Updated basking shark bycatch review	\$15,000	\$1,712	\$16,712	3	50	\$8,356	\$8,356
POP2016-04	Cetacean habitat suitability modelling project	\$30,000	\$3,425	\$33,425	3	50	\$16,712	\$16,712
POP2016-05	Yellow-eyed penguin foraging and indirect effects	\$25,000	\$2,854	\$27,854	3	50	\$13,927	\$13,927
POP2016-06	Salvin's albatross: Bounty Islands population project	\$10,000	\$1,142	\$11,142	3	50	\$5,571	\$5,571
POP2016-07	New Zealand sea lion: Auckland Islands	\$100,000	\$11,415	\$111,415	2	90	\$100,274	\$11,142
Mitigation Projects								
MIT2015-01	Seabird bycatch reduction (small vessel longline fisheries)	\$150,000	\$17,123	\$167,123	4	100	\$167,123	\$0
MIT2015-02	Small vessel seabird mitigation project	\$100,000	\$11,415	\$111,415	4	100	\$111,415	\$0
MIT2016-01	Protected species bycatch media	\$30,000	\$3,425	\$33,425	4	100	\$33,425	\$0
MIT2016-02	Entanglement of whales in pot/trap lines and setnets and a review of potential mitigation methods	\$15,000	\$1,712	\$16,712	4	100	\$16,712	\$0
TOTAL		\$2,157,418	\$240,000	\$2,397,418			\$2,147,388	\$250,030

B:CSPObserverAllocation

Fishery	Stocks	Total Days	MPI %	MPI days	CSP %	CSP days	Cost Per day	CSP Research Cost
Deepwater trawl fisheries:								
North Island Deepwater	ORH1, ORH2A, ORH2B, ORH3A, BYX2, CDL2	170	90	153	10	17	450	\$7,650
Chatham Rise Deepwater	ORH3B, OEO3A, OEO4, BYX3	270	90	243	10	27	450	\$12,150
Sub-Antarctic Deepwater	ORH3B, OEO1, OEO6	60	90	54	10	6	450	\$2,700
West Coast Deepwater	ORH7A	70	90	63	10	7	450	\$3,150
Pelagic trawl fisheries:								
West Coast North Island	JMA7, EMA7	735	85	624.75	15	110.25	450	\$49,613
Middle Depth trawl fisheries:								
West Coast South Island	HOK1, HAK7, LIN7, SWA1	1200	85	1020	15	180	450	\$81,000
Chatham Rise Middle Depth	HOK1, HAK1, HAK4, LIN3, LIN4, SWA3, SWA4, JMA3, BAR1, BAR4	750	85	637.5	15	112.5	450	\$50,625
Sub-Antarctic Middle Depth	HOK1, SWA4, WWA5B, BAR5, JMA3	890	85	756.5	15	133.5	450	\$60,075
Southern blue whiting	SBW all	510	80	408	20	102	450	\$45,900
Squid	SQU1T, SQU6T	1030	80	824	20	206	450	\$92,700
Hoki Cook Strait	HOK1	100	80	80	20	20	450	\$9,000
WCSI Hoki-Inside the line	HOK1	100	85	85	15	15	450	\$6,750
Scampi	SCI all	450	80	360	20	90	450	\$40,500
Deepwater bottom longline fisheries:								
Ling Bottom Longline	LIN3, LIN4, LIN5, LIN6, LIN7	450	85	382.5	15	67.5	450	\$30,375
Surface longline fisheries:								
Domestic SLL - east coast BIG/SWO	BIG1, SWO1	225	85	191.25	15	33.75	585	\$19,744
Domestic SLL - west coast BIG/SWO	BIG1, SWO1	45	85	38.25	15	6.75	585	\$3,949
STN FCV longliners	STN1	260	85	221	15	39	450	\$17,550
Domestic tuna longline - east coast STN	STN1	180	85	153	15	27	585	\$15,795
Domestic tuna longline - west coast STN	STN1	120	85	102	15	18	585	\$10,530

Continued over leaf

B:CSPObserverAllocation(Continued)

Fishery	Stocks	Total Days	MPI %	MPI days	CSP %	CSP days	Cost Per day	CSP Research Cost
Purse Seine fisheries:								
Purse seine - SKJ (non super seiner)	SKJ1	70	85	59.5	15	10.5	585	\$6,143
Purse seine - SKJ (super seiner)	SKJ1	30	85	25.5	15	4.5	585	\$2,633
Inshore Fisheries								
WCNI setnet	Crown funded	200	-	-	-	-	-	-
WCNI inshore trawl	FLA1, JDO1, SCH1, TRE7, SNA8, KAH8, TAR1, GUR1	350	50	175	50	175	635	\$111,125
SNA1 trawl	SNA1	150	50	75	50	75	635	\$47,625
Bottom longline - North east NI (SNA)	SNA1	300	50	150	50	150	635	\$95,250
Set net -east coast SI	SCH3, SPO3, ELE3, MOK3	310	50	155	50	155	635	\$98,425
Set net - south coast SI	SCH5, SPO3, ELE5, SPD5	320	50	160	50	160	635	\$101,600
Bottom longline - BNS target (FMA1)	BNS1, HPB1	205	50	102.5	50	102.5	635	\$65,088
Danish seine - SNA1	SNA1	100	85	85	15	15	635	\$9,525
Bottom trawl - east coast SI	BAR1, RCO3, TAR3	200	50	100	50	100	635	\$63,500
Bottom trawl - west coast SI	BAR7, RCO, 7 TAR7	100	50	50	50	50	635	\$31,750
Total								\$1,192,418

EC=EastCoast

WC=WestCoast

ECSI=EastCoastSouthIsland

WCSI=WestCoastSouthIsland