



**Meeting:** Conservation Services Programme Technical Working Group

**Date:** 15 May 2020

**Time:** 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

**Place:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Chair:** Ian Angus ([iangus@doc.govt.nz](mailto:iangus@doc.govt.nz))

**Attendance:** Igor Debski, Karen Middlemiss, Graeme Taylor, Clinton Duffy, Anton van Helden, Katie Clemens-Seely, Shannon Weaver, Tiffany Plencner, Kirsten Rodgers (DOC), David Thompson (NIWA), Richard Wells (DWG), Dave Goad (Vita Maris), Tamar Wells (TOKM), Janice Molloy (SSST), Lyndsey Holland, William Gibson, Marco Milardi, Jo Lambie, Karen Tunley (MPI), Katherine Short, Stephen Eayrs, Tony Craig (Terra Moana), Brianna King (FINZ), Paul Taylor (Statfishtics), Graham Parker (Parker Conservation), Carol Scott (SIFM), David Melville, Rob Shuckard (Birds New Zealand)

#### **POP2019-04: Snares Southern Buller's Albatross population study - NIWA**

Discussion around survival estimate plot

**DT** More un-banded birds breeding this year that we had to band, so a lot more recruitment.

Agree that reductions can't all be fishing related

**GP** Buller's can be caught by recreational fishers so that could be contributing to reductions

**TW** Do recreational fishers report band numbers?

**GP** I doubt it as the ones I speak to feel pretty guilty about it

**GT** The banding office does receive recoveries from recreational fishers but I think albatross are rarely caught by this group

**RW** The bulk of recreational fishing effort is in North Island so more likely to be northern buller's than southern

**GP** The reports I have heard of are around the South Island

**JM** Is there a male/female bias in survival?

**DT** Not something we have looked at but we can do

**JM** Is it worth doing some modelling on this work?

**DT** Yes given it's a long dataset so this is possible to do

**RW** We have the model it just needs updating

#### **INT2019-06: Post release survival of seabirds - WMIL**

Discussion around seabird survival from rehabilitation centres

**RW** Birds at the Wellington Zoo will be birds that have been returned by people so will be in a very bad way so very unlikely to survive

**MB** can be a wide range of injuries, severely emaciated, broken bones, oiled etc. Usually the emaciated ones are the most likely to survive

**RW** What fraction of the 'B' category birds are in the total live captures?

**MB** 90% observers classify as no physical injuries but when we look at these photos that's not entirely correct. Need more observer training if this was to go ahead. Only around 50 in the past 3 years that would be in category B

**DG** Has just marking the birds been considered? Simpler and cheaper way to collect data

**GP** Would end up with a small sample size so not robust enough

**MB** How much time do observers have to be observing seabirds amongst all the other tasks, may limit the ability to record marked birds

**GP** MPI have put up a similar report on post release survival previously

Discussion around impact injuries- may look fine on the outside but will be damaged internally

Discussion around incorrect handling of seabirds and how this could be adding to injuries and reducing post-release survival

Discussion around amount of observers that would need training, assistance required from crew

**RW** Why do you think we need to do multiple years?

**MB** Just to increase sample size, wouldn't get enough in a single year. Would need greater than 30 birds

**RW** With groupings, in the southern ocean part, would this be combination of species?

**MB** Yes and different species would have different survival

**RW** How would people catch birds that are unharmed? (Control aspect of study)

**MB** A charter boat separate to main vessel, burley to bring them close

**GT** Net gun used in other CSP work is a good way to capture healthy birds

**RW** is the proposition of having a control of having 30 birds just to make sure the tag has no impact?

**MB** Haven't attached trackers off the back of the boat so unsure of the impact of this

**ID** Control could also be a training opportunity

**GP** Can catch healthy seabirds from a fishing vessel using a cast net

**GT** Control provides info on handling stress

**RW** Uncertain about the value this work brings to risk assessment.

**ID** This preliminary study does provide the information needed to inform whether this is a project that should proceed

**TW** If we don't need to capture healthy seabirds can we avoid

**MB** Should be a way to design at sea capture to minimise impact to healthy birds

**DG** Looks like there could be good value in improving observer classification of injuries

### **BCBC2019-05: Understanding potential interactions and indirect effects between commercial fishing and NZ king shag populations- Statfishtics**

**CS** If measuring the catch of prey species why did this work not get expanded to include recreational catch?

**PT** A lot less data on recreational fishing effort in comparison to commercial fishing data. Because of the scope of the project I couldn't really include that in this project

**KM** I agree it would be important to include that information alongside this and we can look to include this in the future

**CS** Fine-scale reporting gathering lats and longs did not come in until about 2008, how did you plot catch/effort prior to that over that period when it was by statistical area 017 which extends beyond your study area?

**KM** I will take this question to FNZ re the data

Discussion around dataset

Discussion around set net restrictions in the study area from 2008 onwards

**MM** I must have missed the slides where the significant impact on shags was shown, could you please go back to it?

**PT** The impact is shown in the major increase in the catch taken out of the local area, which are prey species/food source of king shags. And as the amount of effort isn't matching up with harvest, this suggests prey quantities are reduced

**MM** Did you observe a corresponding collapse in king shag population or is this just an inference due to prey reduction?

**GT** We are seeing fluctuation in the population. The outer sounds colonies have either gone or decreased in numbers and ones inside the sounds have been increasing in

recent years

**KM** This presentation is just one element of the study on king shags and we will be looking at overlaying population over this data

### **BCBC2018-01: Underwater line setter trials for small vessels - Vita Maris**

**RW** Where has this work all got to and what is likelihood of success, is development nearly done or not?

**DG** It's never going to be all things to all people, but in certain situations for certain fishers it could be a really useful solution

**RW** Vessels deliberately lift the line on the boat for ease of attaching baits

**DG** If you were building a longline vessel from scratch you could implement a lot of things but the attraction of measures like this is that it is a bolt on to any vessel. Side setting also a promising option

**JM** Wayne Dreadon has suggested a footwell

**DG** It's a boat by boat thing with a lot of cost associated with modifications

**JM** How does the non-wheeled option compare to the line depressor Adam Clow has funding for through SIL (Seafood Innovations Ltd)?

**DG** I haven't seen that design so I am not sure but I will get in touch

**JM** Could be some learnings from what you've done that could be passed on to Adam's project

**DG** Yes I agree particularly with line tension findings

**JM** Line tension findings could be very helpful to feed into the mitigation standards

### **MIT2019-02: Review of mitigation techniques to reduce benthic impacts of trawling - Terra Moana**

**RW** Contacting the seabed does damage gear so there is an incentive to reduce contact for fishers... abrasion of gear, mud etc. If we want industry uptake that's the value proposition we need to make

**RW** Have to address multiple elements of the gear touching the seafloor, as lifting the doors is just one element

Discussion around where benthic impact needs to be reduced, e.g. areas that have been trawled for a very long time will have limited capacity to regenerate

**MM** Two take home points- fishery, location and gear specific work. Agree that a stocktake of what gear is used where currently and a spatial exercise to determine areas of focus

**SE** Gear uptake is obviously very challenging, see 'the myth of voluntary uptake' paper. We could not find a case of industry picking up gear modifications voluntarily. Outreach to fishers not so well covered when it comes to mitigation. One successful trial we undertook overseas was to make gear available for loan, we would deliver and then they can test it. If they liked it, they could then purchase it. This makes it as painless as possible to take up new gear

**MM** Agree there has to be some form of incentive

**CS** There is some uptake of gear but it may just not be so public

**BK** I have spoken to a few inshore people that are using doors to get them off the bottom and discs to raise the sweeps. This is on an individual basis. I think having some more direct conversations with fishers will be beneficial. A gear database project is really important and this will be coming out from NIWA shortly

**End of meeting**