



Ongoing seabird work to support updates at the IATTC

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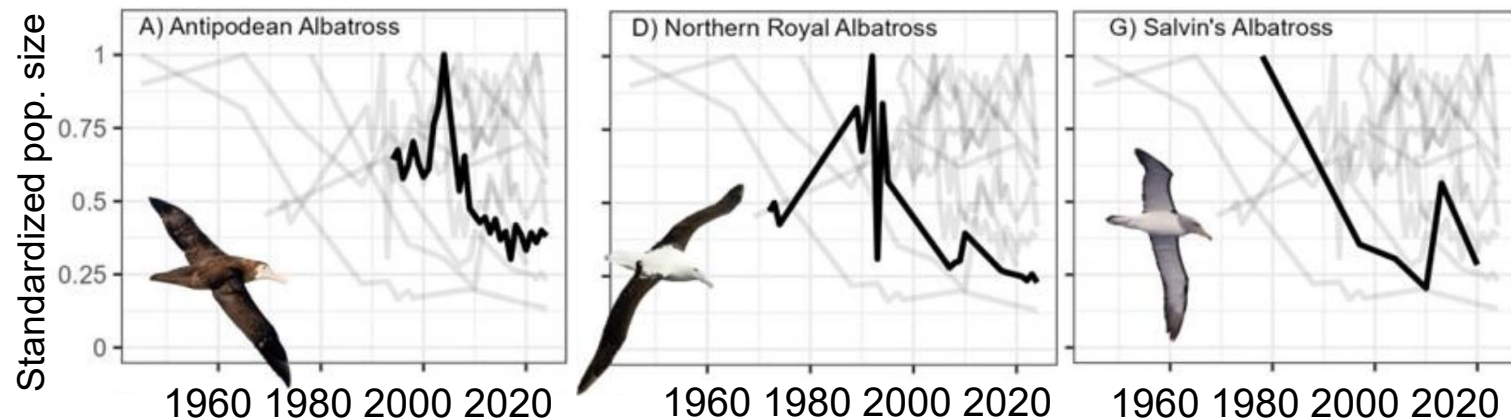
4th Permanent Working Group on Ecosystems and Bycatch, June 2026



Background



- Albatrosses and petrels are among the most threatened taxa globally and many populations are in rapid decline due to bycatch in PLL fisheries.
- Bycatch rates are often low compared to other taxa, but population-level impacts are significant, due to their low fecundity and delayed reproduction.
- Antigua Convention (Article VII, 2010): to “*adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by this Convention, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened*”.



Seabird Action Plan



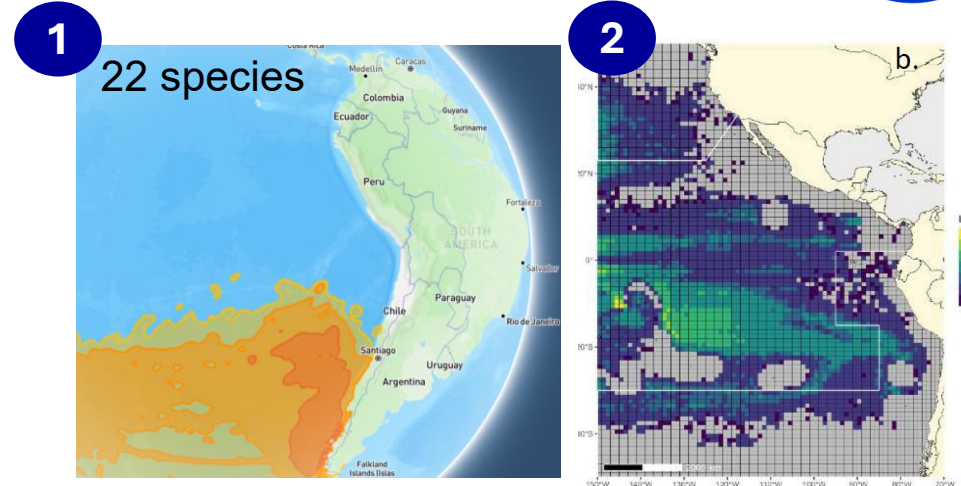
- Seabird Action Plan (2024-) conducted by IATTC staff to (1) review mitigation options, (2) update analyses of spatial overlap between bird distributions and fishing effort and (3) provide summary of seabird bycatch rates in IATTC Convention Area.
- Review (1) presented to EBWG3 recommended updates to mitigation options in Resolution C-11-02, as well as scope of covered species and spatial management zones (EB-03-03).
- Low observer coverage insufficient to accurately monitor bycatch rates (BYC-10 INF-D), so there is a need for alternate quantitative approaches.
- Goal ECO-1 in EB-04-01: “*conduct an external review of the EASI-Fish methodology and, following any recommended improvements, apply it to prioritized shark species and other vulnerable taxa (e.g., rays, seabirds, sea turtles, and marine mammals).*”

Ecological risk assessment to inform updated mitigation scenarios

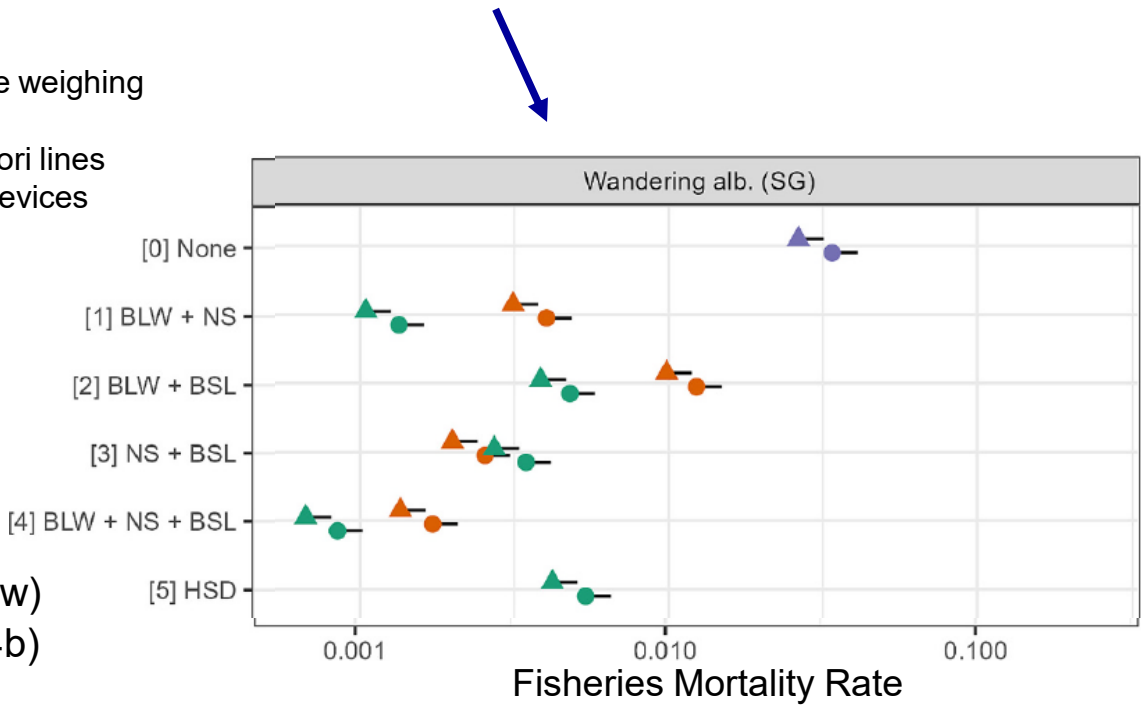


Incorporate information on:

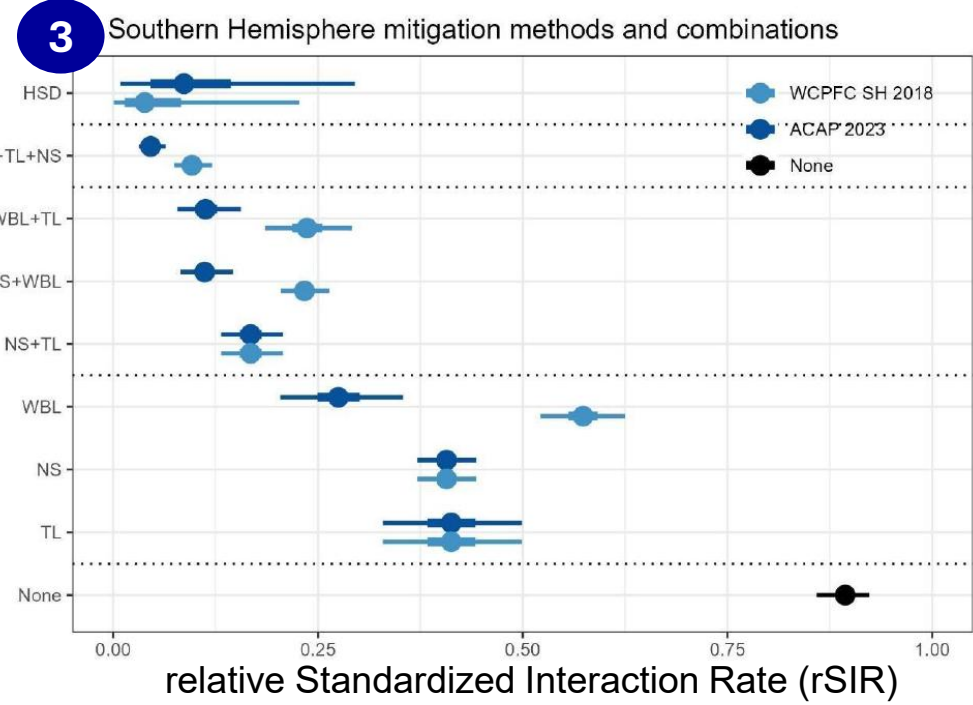
1. Seabird distributions.
2. Fishing effort per flag state.
3. Relative effectiveness of mitigation methods.
4. Species life-history and vulnerability (EASI-Fish).



WBL/BLW = branch-line weighing
NS = night setting
BSL/TL = bird-scaring/tori lines
HSD = hook-shielding devices



Crear et al. (in review)
 Fischer et al. (2024b)
 Bell et al. (2025)



Mitigation scenarios can inform an updated Resolution



- Present science-based scenarios at EBWG5 (2027) that will:
 - 1) Review list of mitigation options (Table 1).
 - 2) Review specifications of mitigation options.
 - 3) Review geographic boundaries of bycatch mitigation areas based on regions of elevated bycatch risk.

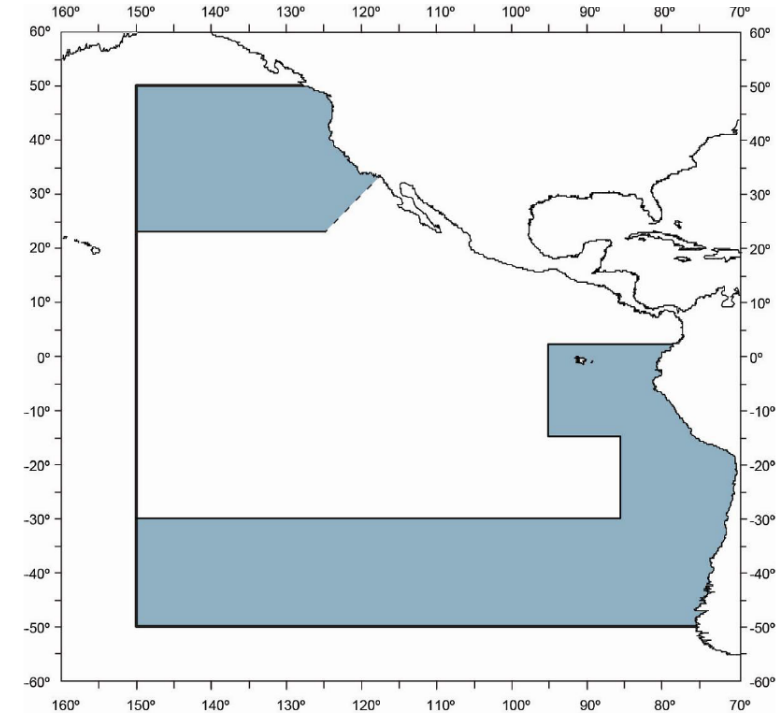


TABLE 1. IATTC Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Options. Options in grey are those shown to be ineffective (see section 4) and are no longer recommended by ACAP or the other tRFMOs.

Column A	Column B
Side setting with a bird curtain and weighted branch lines ¹	Tori line ²
Night setting with minimum deck lighting	Weighted branch lines
Tori line	Blue-dyed bait
Weighted branch lines	Deep setting line shooter
	Underwater setting chute
	Management of offal discharge

1. Only north of 23°N

Thank you!



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