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**OBSERVATION OF SEA BIRD BYCATCH IN THE CHINESE  
LONGLINE FISHERY IN THE IATTC WATERS**

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**Abstract**

*This document provide some information of sea bird bycatch in the tropical longline fishery targeting bigeye tunas. At least, there are three species of sea bird in the tropical eastern Pacific Ocean. The death of sea birds are caused either by eating bait in the hooks when longline fishing gear was cast or by vessel reason*

**Introduction**

At its 73rd meeting, the IATTC adopted Resolution C-05-01, requesting an assessment of the impact of incidental catch of seabirds in IATTC fisheries. China tuna fleet have targeted bigeye tuna in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean since 1999. China began to conduct scientific observer program in 2003. Scientific observers collected pelagic fishes in the longline fishery as well as some sea birds bycatch information. This document presents some observations of sea bird in the Chinese longline fishery in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

**Materials and Methods**

Observer surveyed period: July 13 – November 30, 2003

Surveyed areas: 03°S~17 °S, 96°W ~146°W (Fig. 1).

The sea bird status is recorded if the sea bird is caught by hooks

**Results and discussion**

Species of sea bird

Based on preliminary identification, there are three species of sea birds which appeared in the surveyed areas: blue-footed booby (*Sula nebouxi*) (Fig. 2) and two species of storm petrels (Fig. 3 and Fig 4)

Death of sea birds

Totally 6 sea bird individuals were caused to death either by eating fish bait in the hooks or by vessel reason. When longliner operated in the morning, bait in the hooks was cast to the sea and many sea birds followed the vessel for food. Sea birds saw the bait float at sea surface, and few birds swallow the bait and hooks, which can cause bird death. The bird can sank to the sea. Fig. 4 showed

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the death bird when hooks were recovered. The situation is occasionally. The sea bird death by vessel reason occurred in the rain days. Small bird cannot fly (Fig. 3).

Tab. 1 Total hooks and sea birds bycatch during survey

Fishing days	Total hooks	No. of sea bird death	Species
110	304390	6	2

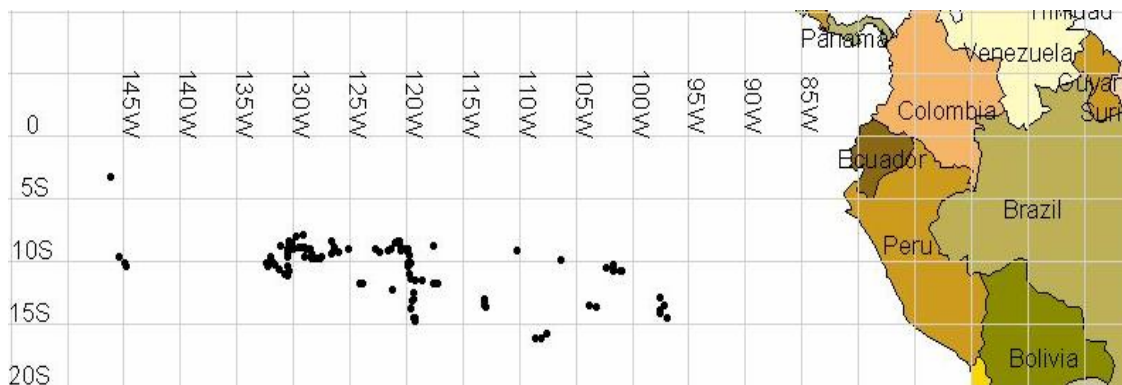


Fig. 1 Surveyed stations of scientific observer



Fig. 2. blue-footed booby



Fig 3 a species of storm petrel death by vessel



Fig 4 a species of storm petrel death by eating bait in the hook