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(Seabird) bycatch mitigation

Jonathan Hall, RSPB



Global bycatch

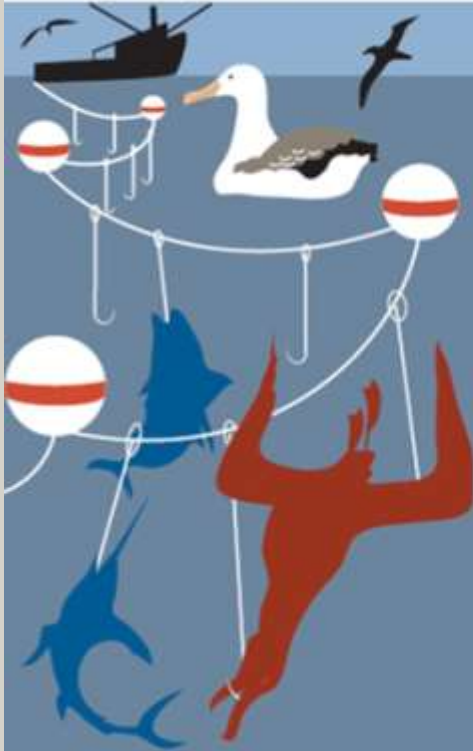
300,000 seabirds killed each year
by trawl and longline fisheries



How are birds caught?

Longline Fisheries

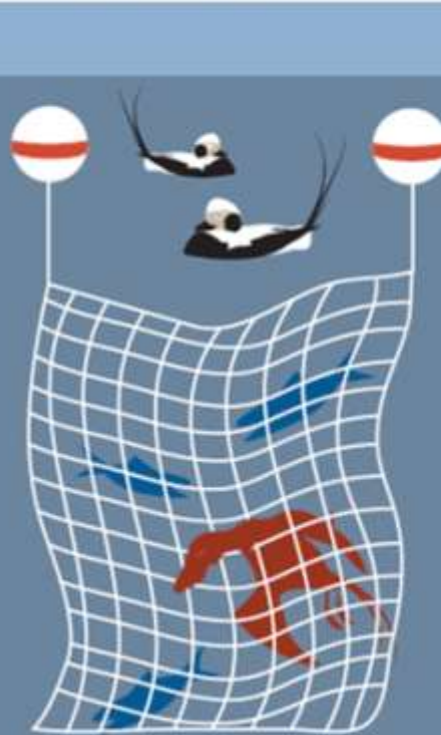
tinyurl.com/casestudy166



A single tuna longline boat sets up to 2,500 hooks at a time, stretching for many kilometres. Birds get caught on the hooks and drown. This causes over 160,000 seabird deaths each year affecting 70 albatross and petrel species.

Gillnet Fisheries

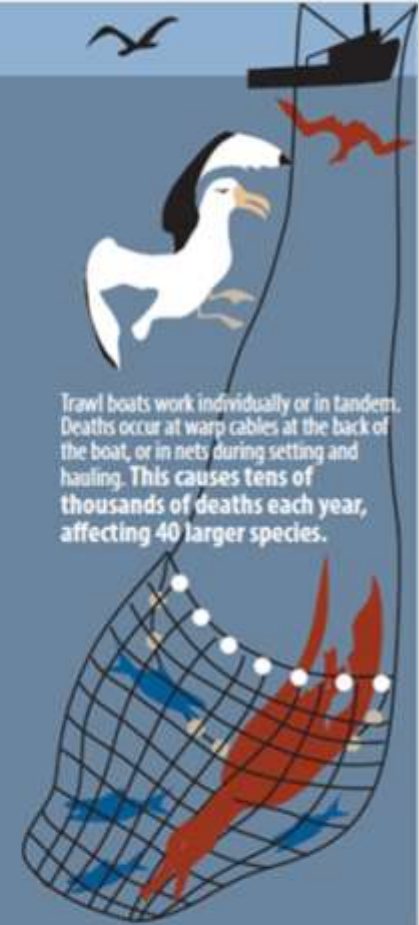
tinyurl.com/casestudy215



Gillnets are set at many different depths and can be static or drift. Birds get entangled and drown. This causes over 400,000 deaths each year, affecting 150 coastal and diving species.

Trawl Fisheries

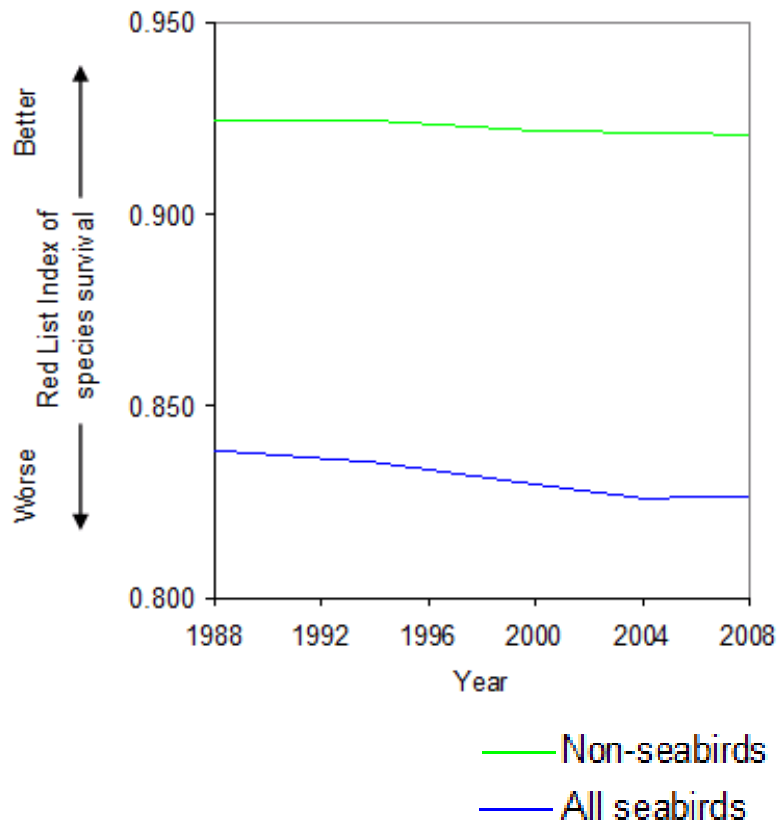
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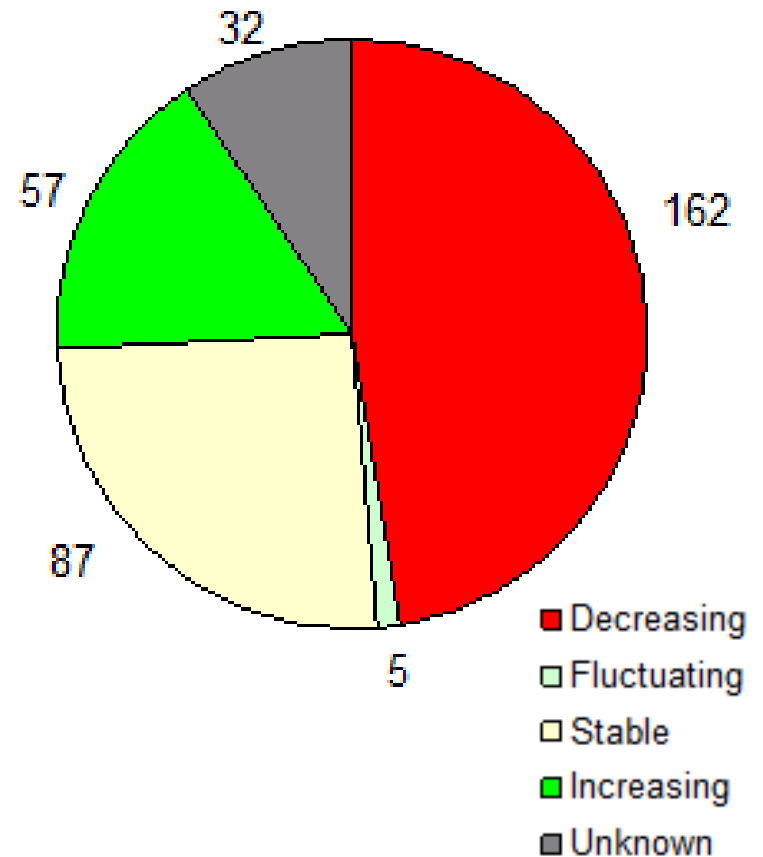
Trawl boats work individually or in tandem. Deaths occur at warp cables at the back of the boat, or in nets during setting and hauling. This causes tens of thousands of deaths each year, affecting 40 larger species.

Impact on seabird populations

Red List Index of Species Survival

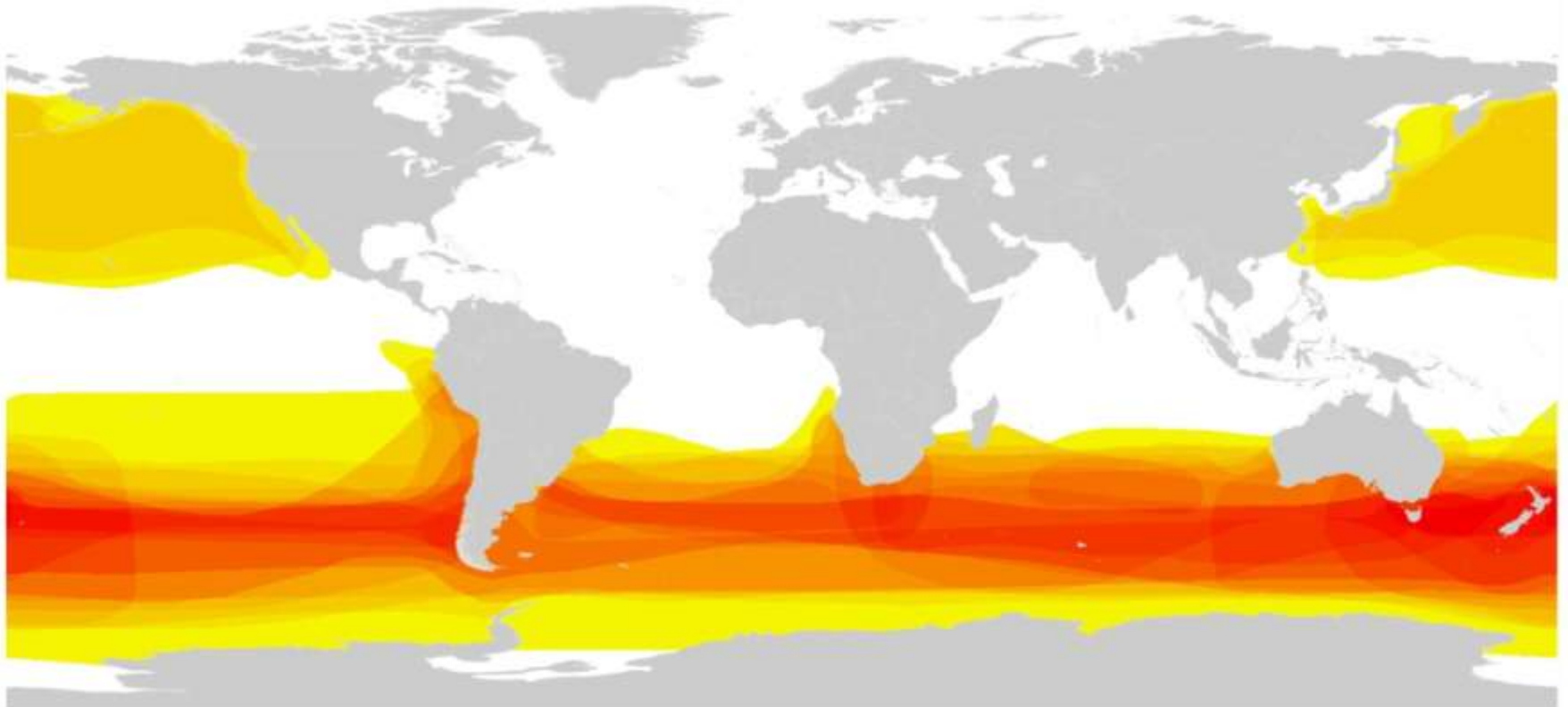


Population status of 346 seabird species



Albatross distribution

Global wanderers need an international conservation effort

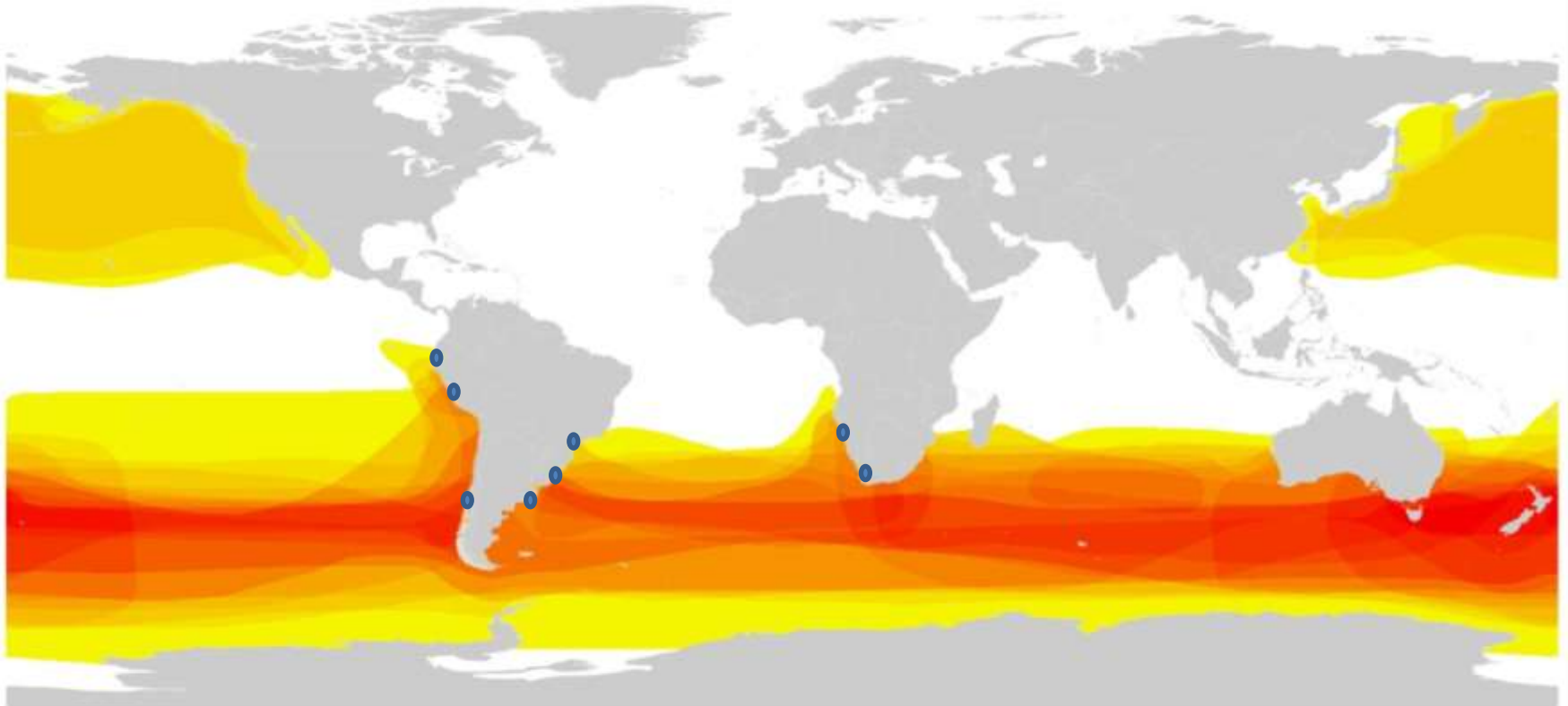


Number of Albatross Species

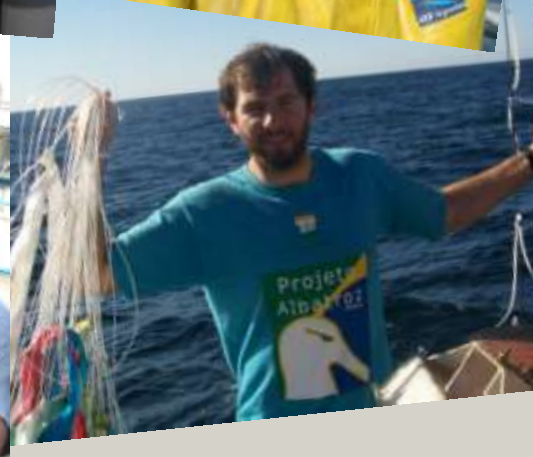
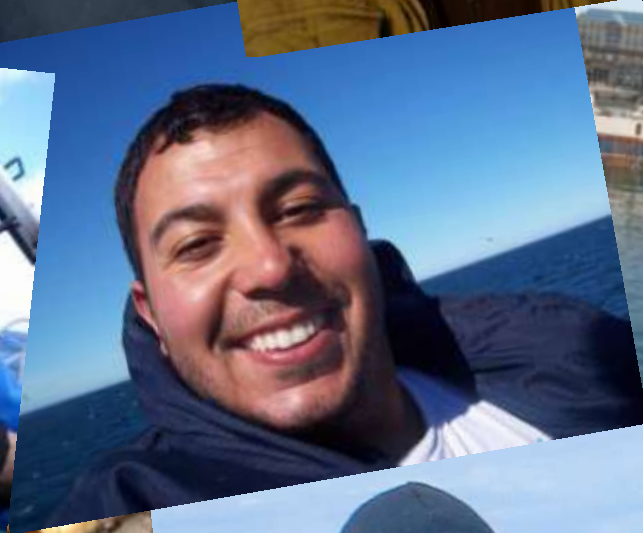


Albatross Task Force

20 ATF instructors across 8 countries



Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Namibia,
Peru, South Africa & Uruguay



Collaborating organisations





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Albatross Task Force

Main objective:

To reduce by-catch of albatross and petrels in targeted fisheries, and ultimately to improve the conservation status of threatened seabirds

- Target global bycatch 'hotspots'
- Create links with industry and government;
- Incorporate **mitigation measures** into fisheries;
- Halt population declines in the long term





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Mitigation measures

Simple and economical measures that rapidly mitigate seabird bycatch





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Mitigation measures



ATF approach

At-sea **investigation**



At-sea **demonstration**
&

Outreach and **education**



Industry incentives



Support **implementation**



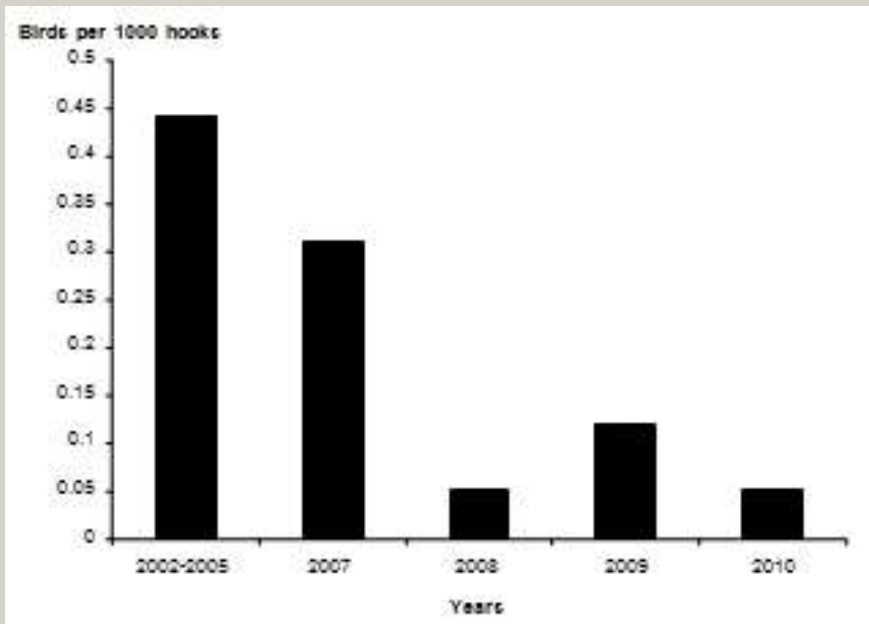


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Results

South Africa



18,000 birds killed each year

> 85 % reduction of bycatch

Sustained reduction

No negative impact on fishery

Challenges ahead

- Fleet-wide implementation
- 400,000 seabirds killed each year by gillnet fisheries
- Purse-seine fisheries?





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GEF ABNJ tuna project

“Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction”

- Administered by FAO
- \$27 million, 5 years
- Partners: BirdLife, ISSF, the tuna commissions (CCSBT, IOTC, ICCAT, WCPFC, IATTC), NOAA, WWF, Fiji, Ghana....

Goal

To achieve sustainable and profitable tuna fisheries while conserving biodiversity by:

- (i) improving fisheries management through the application of an ecosystem approach to fishing, establishment of harvest control rules that take account of reference points;
- (ii) reducing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; and
- (iii) mitigating adverse impacts of tuna fisheries on biodiversity.

BirdLife Part

- \$1.5 million over 5 years
- Engaging longline fleets in Atlantic & Indian Ocean to reduce bycatch of albatrosses and turtles (i.e. implementing IOTC & ICCAT bycatch mitigation requirements)
- 3 new posts at BirdLife South Africa to engage high seas fleets

BirdLife Part

- ATF-type approach:
 - port engagement & outreach
 - workshops
 - Educational materials on bycatch
 - At-sea trials & demo's of mitigation measures
- Focus: Fleets with albatross bycatch
(i.e. South of 20-25S)

BirdLife Part

- But, also engaging on best practice to reduce turtle bycatch
 - Training / skilling on turtle handling and release
 - Potentially could also involve testing mitigation devices which have potential to reduce turtle bycatch



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Thank you

