



MINISTRY OF FISHERIES  
Te Tautiaki i nga tini a Tangaroa

**Meeting:** Conservation Services Programme Technical Working Group  
National Plan of Action – Seabirds Technical Working Group

**Date:** 29 October 2010

**Time:** 9.30 am – 4:45 pm

**Place:** Department of Conservation, 18-32 Manners Street, Wellington

**Chair:** Russell Harding (ph: 04-471-3204; email: rharding@doc.govt.nz)

**Present:** Kris Ramm (DOC), Igor Debski (DOC), Richard Wells (DWG), David Middleton (SeaFIC), David Goad (Vita Maris), Bob Zuur (WWF), Pat Reid (Area 2), Ian West, Darryl MacKenzie (Proteus), Craig Loveridge (MFish), Wendi Roe (Massey University), Laurline Meynier (Massey University), Paul Breen (SeaFIC), Martin Cawthorn (Cawthorn & Associates), Mike Legg (Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust), Martin Cryer (MFish), Finlay Thompson (Dragonfly), Tom Clark (SeaFIC), Vicky Reeve (MFish), Nathan Walker (MFish), Di Tracey (NIWA), Tiffany Bock (MFish), Suze Baird (NIWA), Ian Angus (DOC).

**Apologies:** Rebecca Bird (WWF), Barry Weeber (ECO), Kristie Knowles (Forest & Bird), Carol Scott (SE Finfish)

RH opened the session and underlined the purpose of the meeting was to provide technical review of the projects presented

- PB enquired whether review by this working group constituted the peer review required by the proposed MFish research standard.
- RH noted that MFish were still working on developing a research standard, and expressed the view that this working group filled a similar role in review of projects to that of the MFish Aquatic Environment Working Group.

The presentation and background report for each project are available for download from <http://www.doc.govt.nz/cspmeetings>

**POP2007-01 Final Report on New Zealand sea lion data collection from the Auckland Islands and at-sea distribution of juvenile sea lions 2007/08-2009/1. Presentation by Louise Chilvers (DOC)**

- RW enquired about the reporting of field necropsy results
- LC noted that this work fell outside the CSP objectives and was not being reported here

- PB requested that the raw data used to calculate M-R estimates be provided to allow others to replicate the calculations
- LC/ID noted that data was available on request, and had been provided to SeaFIC
- PB claimed that he could not replicate the 2010 Sandy Bay M-R estimates
- DMac/BZ requested details of PB's calculations
- PB refused to provide details to the meeting and agreed to meet with LC and ID
- BZ requested details of the meeting be circulated afterwards
- PB was not clear on methods used to calculate standard error on total estimates
- RH suggested this be covered off in meeting with LC and ID
- DMid requested full details of visits to other sites visited around the Auckland Islands be included in the report, including date, length of time search and sea lion sighted
- RW supported good documentation of opportunistic sightings
- DMid requested more details on the calculation of the interaction scale used in the spatial analyses
- PB noted that the interaction scale was relative but there was reference to probability
- LC will provide details of the calculation and agreed there may need to be some wording changes to more accurately reflect the nature of the scale
- PB noted fishing effort did not match that reported elsewhere
- LC explained effort was for Jul-Jun years and RW agreed this could account for the differences
- RW asked if there was any intention of pulling together a summary of all sea lion tracking work completed to date
- LC noted that all adult foraging (both male and female sea lion tracking work) has been published in peer reviewed science journals and is therefore already freely available
- ID – no plan to, though this would be a useful reference
- PB noted a lack of database meta data in the report
- ID suggested this could be appended to the report
- PB requested more details be provided on the data verification process
- BZ suggested that if extra data etc be provided, that it form a separate document
- MCaw asked if landings on Dundas had been made as per previous years
- LC – yes
- DMid requested further clarification on what tasks were CSP-related and which were wider DOC work
- BZ supported reporting of all DOC Auckland Islands sea lion work
- PB noted the report contained some advocacy, in regard to wording in the discussion on pup production and at sea distribution, as well as comments related to the threat classification status
- BZ disagreed and noted the comments in the report were all relevant
- DMid/RW/LC discussed further whether daily counts of adults were CSP-related
- RW suggested the figures in section 3.2 be presented as a table

**POP2010-01 New Zealand sea lion data collection from the Auckland Islands - proposed plans for 2010/11. Presentation by Louise Chilvers (DOC)**

- DMid enquired why PIT tag application had stopped, and was now being started again
- LC – decision to stop was prior to LC involvement in project, due to expense, consideration of other methods such as branding and there was thought to be high loss rates. Now being restarted due to importance in analysis of demographic resighting data.
- DMid requested full recording of resighting effort and ancillary environmental data, e.g. weather conditions

**POP2007-01 Analyses of New Zealand sea lion demographic parameters 1997/98-2009/10. Presentation by Darryl McKenzie (Proteus)**

- MCry enquired whether average pupping and mortality rates were different than those calculated last year
- DMac – have not yet had a chance to investigate
- DMid noted that while the new parameterisation was appropriate for survival, earlier work by Dave Gilbert found a domed response for pupping rate over age, rather than linear
- DMac noted that previous models he presented with more age classes did not show such a response (refer to Year 1 report of this project)
- DMid noted that the age class structure of the marked population had changed over the course of the study
- PB asked whether survival of over 95% was credible given previous advice of LC to the Aquatic Environment Working Group
- LC noted survival was related to age
- PB noted there were differences in the breeding rate and survival curves produced by PB's modelling, Dave Gilbert's work and DMac. The differences are related to assumptions and these must be related to the utility of the work. What use is planned for this work?
- ID – this work is to enable an understanding of the key underlying parameters of this population. The current focus of modelling parameters over time was related to interest in understanding causes in recent pup production declines.
- PB suggested that reality lay in considering different modelling results in aggregate
- MCry enquired whether parameters could be added to allow for a domed relationship of pupping rate over age
- DMac – could do, but had to be careful not to over-parameterise as data was scarce for some age-classes
- FT requested that more information on model choice, and diagnostics, be included in the report
- PB requested enough information be included in order to be able to re-run the analyses
- DMac – full code will be appended as in previous year.

**MIT2009-01 Development of mitigation strategies: Inshore fisheries – draft final report. Presentation by Dave Goad (Vita Maris)**

- RW – what were the skippers' views on setting speed and other variables
- DG – generally skippers do what they know catches fish, not always linked to theory
- MCaw – any integrated weight lines used?
- DG – no
- FT – did skippers report captures?
- DG – some did, but we didn't specifically question on this matter
- PR – what further work do you recommend be done regarding tori lines?
- DG – wider use, vessel specific modification, material, use of towed objects, communication between skippers on what works
- RW noted some offshore vessels were trialling material from wind surf sails and survival bags
- DG added that items making noise, such as towed boards, may also be effective
- PR – what percent of setting was at night
- DG – no precise quantification attempted due to the nature of the information, but most sets were reported to be at night
- NW noted this was a good piece of work, and requested further details on the sink rate trials
- DMid noted an error on Fig 26/27 axis labels, and suggested reporting sinking distance for trials where extra weight was added
- RH called for assistance in communicating the results of this project to BLL inshore fishers
- DMid asked whether the types of mitigation reported had been linked to types of seabirds being encountered?
- DG – not specifically, and many fishers regarded petrels generally as "mutton ducks"

**INT2008/02 Identification of protected corals – draft final report. Presentation by Di Tracey (NIWA)**

- PR - how deep are these deepwater corals found
- DT – mainly below 400m, but in some areas in the north as shallow as 50-60m
- DMid – what samples were returned?
- DT/ID – observers were requested to send back sub-samples of all coral or possible coral
- SB – were photographs used?
- DT not in this project
- PB – were all samples treated equally
- DT – yes
- DMid – has a comparison of observer and confirmed identifications been made?
- DT/ID – forms part of MCSINT2010/03
- RW enquired about the collection of material

- DT – stored at NIWA, material owned by DOC/MFish
- ML noted the need for IP protection if samples were provided overseas for analyses
- PB – has an analysis of distribution been completed
- DT/ID – forms part of MCSINT2010/03
- CL enquired as to the rationale for the recommendation for more input into observer briefings
- DT – experience from CCAMLR briefings showed this increased observers understanding of similar taxa
- CL are the main identification difficulties between protected and non-protected corals?
- DT – no, distinguishing non-protected corals is more straight forward
- SB added reporting back to observers was also important.

**MCSINT2010/03 Coral spatial analysis and review - proposed project plan.  
Presentation by Di Tracey (NIWA)**

- PB requested clarification of catch weights recorded by observers
- DT/CL – observers record an estimate of catch for each taxon identified for each tow, as per protocols
- DMid – will the distribution of coral in non-fished areas be considered?
- DT/SB – this is a small project focussed on material collected by previous CSP projects, some predictive modelling is being conducted at NIWA under another project
- DMid requested the analysis show where there were observed tows with no captures
- DT/SB – will be covered
- CL noted there was material available from briefings to clarify what sampling duties were requested for each trip

**INT2008/01 Observing commercial fisheries – 2008/09 draft final report.  
Presentation by Kris Ramm (DOC)**

- RW proposed annual reporting be completed by December of the year in question
- RH noted circumstances causing the current delay, and agreed this would be aimed for in future years
- DMid requested the summary table presented be included in the report
- RW noted the increased proportion of live fur seal captures in mid-depth trawl
- RW – are corals to be included?
- KR – plan to include in future years
- RW/KR discussed differences in warps between inshore and offshore vessels and resulting differences in captures
- DMid advised a characterisation of South Island inshore fisheries had recently been completed and was available from SeaFIC
- RW asked how many snapper BLL vessels there were in FMA1
- DG – about 70

- SB asked if there were comments relating to black petrel captures
- KR – yes, main reason for high levels of captures seem to be fishing in areas of high bird abundance
- RW suggested any information that could be gleaned from observer comments on the way birds are hooked could be useful in understanding and addressing problems
- RW asked if any FUR seals were recaught in charter SLL
- KR – no evidence to suggest this, no animals observed with old fishing gear
- RW noted that for deep sea ling the main risk was new entrants with less mitigation
- SB asked if comments on bird abundance etc were made on inshore trips
- KR – yes, plenty of information collected via the NOMAD devices, but not yet analysed.

**INT2009-02 Photo-identification of live seabirds captured in New Zealand fisheries. Presentation by Igor Debski (DOC)**

- CL enquired as to the totals in the tables of the results section
- ID stated that both tables together make up the whole total and this is clear in the report
- CL suggested that all figures be summarised in one table
- RW suggested that it would be interesting to analyse transposing errors
- DM asked if there is a distinction in the database between photographic identification and those made at autopsy
- CL explained this would be incorporated
- DM enquired as to whether there was a process for confirming that corrections are valid and not the result of photo-matching errors
- SW asked about whether this project includes the identification of birds on deck as opposed to captures
- CL & ID clarify that the definition of a capture is where the bird cannot leave the vessel by it's own means
- DT drew analogies between this work and the photographic identification of corals and the associated pitfalls. Warned about the risk of applying this techniques to corals.
- ID acknowledged the differences between using this approach for seabirds/marine mammals, and corals
- RW raised how this can apply to the future increased observer coverage in order to reduce the number of physical specimens being returned

RH closed the meeting, and called for further written feedback within two weeks of these minutes and all other material from the meeting becoming available on the MCS web pages.