

Conservation Measure 25-03 (2023)¹
Minimisation of the incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals in the course of trawl fishing in the Convention Area

Species	seabirds, marine mammals
Area	all
Season	all
Gear	trawl

The Commission,

Noting the need to reduce the incidental mortality of, or injury to, seabirds and marine mammals from fishing operations,

Adopts the following measures to reduce the incidental mortality of, or injury to, seabirds and marine mammals during trawl fishing.

1. The use of net monitor cables on vessels in the CAMLR Convention Area is prohibited².
2. Vessels operating within the Convention Area should at all times arrange the location and level of lighting so as to minimise illumination directed out from the vessel, consistent with the safe operation of the vessel.
3. The discharge of offal^{3,4} and discards⁵ shall be prohibited during the shooting and hauling of trawl gear.
4. Nets shall be cleaned prior to shooting to remove items that might attract birds.
5. Vessels should adopt shooting and hauling procedures that minimise the time that the net is lying on the surface of the water with the meshes slack. Net maintenance should, to the extent possible, not be carried out with the net in the water.
6. Vessels should be encouraged to develop gear configurations that will minimise the chance of birds encountering the parts of the net to which they are most vulnerable. This could include increasing the weighting or decreasing the buoyancy of the net so that it sinks faster, or placing coloured streamers or other devices over particular areas of the net where the mesh sizes create a particular danger to birds.

¹ Except for waters adjacent to the Kerguelen and Crozet Islands

² Net monitoring cables may be used on vessels using continuous trawling methods during the 2023/24 fishing season if the following conditions are met:

(i) The three vessels (*Antarctic Endurance*, *Saga Sea* and *Antarctic Sea*) which use a net monitoring cable and have provided a detailed report of trials of mitigation devices as specified in Conservation Measure 25-03, Annex 25-03/A, continue to utilise and refine current mitigation measures in use and achieve on-vessel observation coverage of at least 5% of total active fishing time. Such vessels shall provide a report on the development and use of mitigation measures to the joint meeting of WG-FSA and WG-IMAF in 2024.

(ii) For vessels which use a net monitoring cable and have not undergone trials of mitigation devices specified in Conservation Measure 25-03, Annex 25-03/A, they must undertake a trial following these specifications, and report the results of this trial to the joint meeting of WG-FSA and WG-IMAF in 2024. These vessels shall additionally provide advance notice to the Secretariat about any net monitoring mitigation technology or technique to be employed to reduce the risk of bird strikes, drawing upon the approaches identified from existing trials for reducing the risk of bird strikes, and outlining how it will respond to any operational difficulties arising during their use.

This exemption will be reviewed at CCAMLR-43 following further advice from the Scientific Committee.

³ 'Offal' is defined as bait and by-products from the processing of fish and other organisms, including parts or sections of fish or organisms which are by-products of processing.

- ⁴ 'Stick water' is a liquid discharge produced as a by-product of processing of krill and fish. As stick water does not contain a source of food for birds, it is not considered as offal (see footnote 3).
- ⁵ For the purpose of this conservation measure, 'discards' are defined as whole fish or other organisms, except elasmobranchs and invertebrates where the vessel is fishing north of 60°S, returned to the sea dead or with low expectation of survival, as described in the Observer Longline Logbook 'Observed Haul Catch' form instructions.

Annex 25-03/A

Specifications for the trial of mitigation devices

Specifications for the trial of mitigation devices required for all vessels using net monitoring cables are as follows:

- (i) the observer(s) shall conduct observations on incidental mortality on the net monitoring cable, trawl warp and mitigation device(s) at least twice daily while fishing, following the current standard warp strike observer protocols outlined in the Scheme of International Scientific Observation (SISO) krill logbook instructions (SC-CAMLR-38, paragraph 5.14) and methods outlined in WG-FSA-2021/14;
- (ii) the use of a camera or video monitoring system (able to operate in low light conditions) that continuously records the full aerial length of the net monitoring cable and the seaward entry point during fishing operations (SC-CAMLR-38, paragraph 5.14);
- (iii) all camera or video footage shall be retained for two years unless otherwise directed by the Scientific Committee;
- (iv) observation rates of strikes on the net monitoring cables and warps must reach equivalent levels to those achieved in 2021 (SC-CAMLR-40, paragraph 3.143):
 - (a) with every vessel participating in the trial achieving on-vessel observation coverage of at least 5% of total active fishing time;
 - (b) with, when a Member has one vessel participating in the trial for the first time, on-vessel observation coverage of at least 10% of the total active fishing time for a two-month period between April and June 2024;
 - (c) with, when a Member has two or more vessels participating in the trial, onshore observation of camera or video footage to increase observation coverage to at least 20% of the total active fishing time for a two-month period between April and June 2024 on two vessels, and, if possible, with one vessel representing stern trawlers and one vessel representing side trawlers for any Member including two vessels in the trial. Additionally, each additional vessel shall achieve on-vessel observation coverage of at least 10% for a two-month period between April and June 2024;
- (v) mandatory mitigation limiting seabird access to the area where warp cables and net monitoring cables are deployed (i.e., the mitigation device(s) should surround the

area containing the warp and net monitoring cables) to enable the evaluation of further improvements to seabird strike mitigation options and consideration by the Working Group on Incidental Mortality Associated with Fishing (WG-IMAF) (SC-CAMLR-40, paragraphs 3.130 and 3.143).

Reporting requirements for all vessels using net monitoring cables are as follows:

- (i) all Members with vessels using net monitoring cables shall provide a detailed preliminary report of the 2024 trial to joint meeting of WG-FSA and WG-IMAF in 2024, and a complete report to the meeting of WG-FSA or WG-IMAF in 2025 which should include findings from both the on-vessel and onshore observers;
- (ii) final reports from trials conducted in the 2022/23 fishing season should be submitted to the joint meeting of WG-FSA and WG-IMAF in 2024;
- (iii) this trial should compare different mitigation options for practicality and effectiveness in mitigating bird strikes on warps and net monitoring cables in continuous trawling operations.