

Minimisation of the Incidental Mortality of Seabirds in the Course of Longline Fishing or Longline Fishing Research in the Convention Area

The Commission,

Noting the need to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds during longline fishing by minimising their attraction to fishing vessels and by preventing them from attempting to seize baited hooks, particularly during the period when the lines are set,

Adopts the following measures to reduce the possibility of incidental mortality of seabirds during longline fishing.

1. Fishing operations shall be conducted in such a way that the baited hooks sink as soon as possible after they are put in the water. Only thawed bait shall be used.
2. For vessels using the Spanish method of longline fishing, weights should be released before line tension occurs; weights of at least 6 kg mass should be used, spaced at intervals of no more than 20 m.
3. Longlines shall be set at night only (i.e. during the hours of darkness between the times of nautical twilight³)⁴. During longline fishing at night, only the minimum ship's lights necessary for safety shall be used.
4. The dumping of offal is prohibited while longlines are being set. The dumping of offal during the haul shall be avoided as far as possible; if discharge of offal during the haul is unavoidable, this discharge shall take place on the opposite side of the vessel to that where longlines are hauled.
5. Every effort should be made to ensure that birds captured alive during longlining are released alive and that wherever possible hooks are removed without jeopardising the life of the bird concerned.
6. A streamer line designed to discourage birds from settling on baits during deployment of longlines shall be towed. Specification of the streamer line and its method of deployment is given in the Appendix to this Measure. Details of the construction relating to the number and placement of swivels may be varied so long as the effective sea surface covered by the streamers is no less than that covered by the currently specified design. Details of the device dragged in the water in order to create tension in the line may also be varied.
7. Other variations in the design of streamer lines may be tested on vessels carrying two observers, at least one appointed in accordance with the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation, providing that all other elements of this Conservation Measure are complied with⁵.

¹ Except for waters adjacent to the Kerguelen and Crozet Islands.

² Except for waters adjacent to the Prince Edward Islands.

³ The exact times of nautical twilight are set forth in the Nautical Almanac tables for the relevant latitude, local time and date. All times, whether for ship operations or observer reporting, shall be referenced to GMT.

⁴ Wherever possible, setting of lines should be completed at least three hours before sunrise (to reduce loss of bait to/catches of white-chinned petrels).

⁵ The streamer lines under test should be constructed and operated taking full account of the principles set out in WG-IMALF-94/19 (available from the CCAMLR Secretariat); testing should be carried out independently of actual commercial fishing and in a manner consistent with the spirit of Conservation Measure 65/XII.

1. The streamer line is to be suspended at the stern from a point approximately 4.5 m above the water and such that the line is directly above the point where the baits hit the water.
2. The streamer line is to be approximately 3 mm diameter, have a minimum length of 150 m and have a device at the end to create tension so that the main line streams directly behind the ship even in cross winds.
3. At 5 m intervals commencing from the point of attachment to the ship five branch streamers each comprising two strands of approximately 3 mm diameter cord should be attached. The length of the streamer should range between approximately 3.5 m nearest the ship to approximately 1.25 m for the fifth streamer. When the streamer line is deployed the branch streamers should reach the sea surface and periodically dip into it as the ship heaves. Swivels should be placed in the streamer line at the towing point, before and after the point of attachment of each branch streamer and immediately before any weight placed on the end of the streamer line. Each branch streamer should also have a swivel at its attachment to the streamer line.

