

**SOUTHERN  
SEABIRDS**

The Nature  
Conservancy 

  
**Sustainable Fisheries™**  
PARTNERSHIP

## Join us to become a Seabird-Safe Fishing Champion

The Southern Seabirds Trust, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and The Nature Conservancy are seeking a tuna longline fishing company that would like the benefits of using seabird-safe fishing practices but needs practical and material support to make the transition.

### Benefits of working with us to be seabird-safe

What is good for the birds is good for business! Shifting to seabird-safe measures will not only help prevent threatened seabirds like the Antipodean albatross from becoming extinct, it will also help your company retain market access and be profitable.

Seafood consumers increasingly want to know that threatened species are not harmed by fishing activities. Adopting seabird-safe measures is one way to help provide this reassurance to your customers. In addition, adding seabird-safe measures to your overall sustainability strategy can help your company be in compliance with regulations and policies set by governments and other international groups (like RFMOs), and meet the supply chain requirements of your buyers (i.e., achieve MSC certification).

### What we offer

- Funding to assist vessels with adhering to specifications that would result in 'best' seabird-safety rating<sup>1</sup>. This will depend on what measures the fishery decides to use to improve seabird-safety rating. It will not include funding for materials the vessel should already be using (e.g. tori lines) but instead focus on materials that would increase the effectiveness of measures. It could include funding for e.g.:
  - o installing a tori pole
  - o switching to more effective branch-line weights or weighted hooks
  - o Hookpods
  - o other measures or enhancements to be discussed on a case-by-case basis
- Fund review of 20% of trips for electronic monitoring (EM) data collected for a six-month period. This would include EM review, reporting, problem solving and Starlink Wi-Fi packages.
  - o In addition to supporting the vessel's typical review requirements, this review will also focus on identifying if/how seabird-safe measures are being effectively implemented. This will help us understand EM's role in identifying the use of best handling and release practices and the implementation of appropriate bycatch mitigation measures. It will also allow us to help the vessels troubleshoot any issues that arise around the use of seabird safe measures if needed.

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<sup>1</sup> Using seabird-safe fishing toolkit <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/international-agreements/species/seabird-safe-fishing-toolkit/>

- A liaison officer to meet with the vessel in port to help install seabird-safe measures and train the crew on their use, as well as provide advice and trouble-shooting once the vessel is at sea for a 12 month period
- Positive publicity for the company about participation in this project (if desired, and **noting that we will agree on any confidentiality terms**)

### **What we ask of your company**

- Be open to working with us to implement seabird-safe measures for the duration of the project (up to 12 months) and maintain an open mind about continuing to use the measures there-after
- Either already have EM systems on board your vessels (or are soon to be installed) so the seabird-safe practices can be monitored
- Provide details on EM system (e.g. number of cameras and locations, screenshots of what cameras can capture) so the project team can work out what seabird-safe measures are visible on the footage
- Agree to our staff reviewing EM footage in a timely manner to help problem solve and ensure the seabird-safe measures are being used correctly (we may be able to assist with costs)
- Be open to sharing your views with the project team about the practical challenges involved in implementing seabird-safe measures, and how the champion fleet initiative can be improved to support vessels.

### **How many vessels are we seeking and what type?**

At this stage, we are seeking at least three pelagic longline vessels  $\geq 24\text{m}$  in length. We hope that other companies will want to join the programme once they see the benefits.

### **Which vessels are eligible to be part of the champion fleet?**

We would like to work with companies fishing in high-risk areas for seabirds. The southwest Pacific would be ideal, as this is where a range of threatened albatross species live, including the endangered Antipodean albatross. The [Seabird Risk Mapping Tool](#) shows the different risk zones.

### **Are there any further reporting obligations or extra paperwork required of participants?**

We would like to work with the EM service provider to ensure they are correctly identifying the seabird safe measures during footage review as they may need some general guidance on this. In terms of feedback from the vessel captain on the mitigation gear, this can be done verbally directly to the liaison officer. If the captain wished to keep any notes on implementation that would be an added bonus, but not expected.

### **What experience do we have working with tuna fishing companies?**

We have experience working with tuna fishing fleets in based out of Africa, Asia, and the broader Pacific region. Several of the countries that we've worked with include: Kenya, Seychelles, Palau, FSM, French Polynesia, Chile, New Zealand, Fiji, Chinese Taipei, South Africa, and more. Experts working with the champion fleet will have a depth of first-hand knowledge about how to smoothly introduce seabird-safe fishing practices and support captains and crew.

### **When do we want to start, and how long would the support be provided?**

We would like to start as soon as possible. The first step would be to agree a Memorandum of Understanding and project plan with the fishing company. The project will start when the vessel comes into port for the first meeting with our port liaison officer. We can then provide up to 12

months of support in implementing these measures and assisting with troubleshooting. During this time, we can support at least 6 months of EM footage review of 20% of trips (as described above).

NOTE: This support will be dependent on the number of vessels engaged and the resources required by each vessel.

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