 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p><b>First Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group</b></p> <p><i>La Rochelle, France, 29 – 30 April 2013</i></p> <p><b>ACAP Guidelines on hook removal from seabirds</b></p> <p><b><i>PCSWG and SBWG Convenors, Secretariat</i></b></p>
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Working Groups review the draft guidelines presented and propose amendments as appropriate.

## 1. BACKGROUND

At the ninth meeting of CCSBT's Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG9) in 2012, the CCSBT Secretariat presented an updated "Guide to Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries". However, some meeting attendees expressed concern that the advice presented was not best practice. Although a number of existing publications aim to provide advice on handling hooked birds and hook removal, the level of detail and the techniques recommended vary between publications.

The ACAP draft guidelines (**Annex 1**) aim to collate and update existing information to provide standard best-practice advice that can be readily used on its own by a wide audience or adapted for more targeted projects.

Apart from providing technical advice on this draft, the Working Groups might also wish to consider

1. Availability and dissemination – languages, electronic version only or print also
2. The format of this product – poster, flyer

## ANNEX 1

The draft guidelines in Annex 1 are based on information and images from:

- BirdLife South Africa. *How to Handle a live bird that has been hooked*.  
<http://www.birdlife.org.za/images/stories/conservation/Seabirds/for%20the%20birds.jpg>
- BirdLife South Africa and WWF. 2005. *Keeping our endangered marine life off the hook*.
- Brothers, N. 1996. *Catching Fish not Birds: a guide to improving your longline fishing efficiency*. Department of Environment and Land Management, Tasmania, Australia 74pp.
- CCSBT Ecologically Related Species Working Group. 2012. *A Guide to Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries*. 2nd Edition.  
[http://www.ccsbt.org/site/related\\_species.php](http://www.ccsbt.org/site/related_species.php)
- National Audubon Society, Hawaii Longline Association and BirdLife South Africa: *Safely releasing seabirds & Avoiding Bird Capture*. [http://w.bird-rescue.org/safe\\_seabirds.html](http://w.bird-rescue.org/safe_seabirds.html)
- NOAA Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Region. 2010. *Identification, Handling, and Release of Protected Species – rev. 09/2010*.  
<http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/SFD/pdfs/Placards%20English%20Sept%202010%20FNL.pdf>
- NOAA, Pacific Islands Region, Sustainable fisheries Division. *A fisherman's guide to Hawaii Seabirds*. <http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/SFD/pdfs/NOAA%20Seabird%20Brochure.pdf>
- Southern Seabirds Solutions. *Safe Seabird Release*.  
[http://www.southernseabirds.org/f2139,115103/115103\\_Rec\\_anglers\\_card\\_website\\_version\\_updated\\_credits.pdf](http://www.southernseabirds.org/f2139,115103/115103_Rec_anglers_card_website_version_updated_credits.pdf)

# HOOK REMOVAL FROM SEABIRDS

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

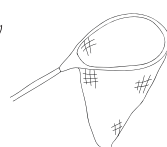
## Release Kit



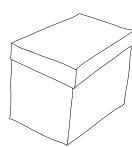
towel



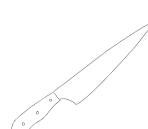
pliers



net



box



knife



gloves

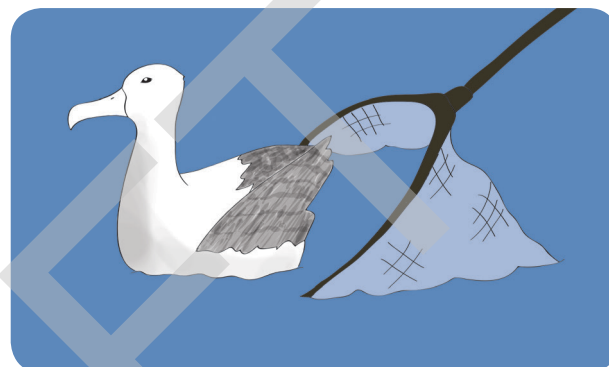
protective  
eyewear

A C A P

1.

### Bring bird aboard.

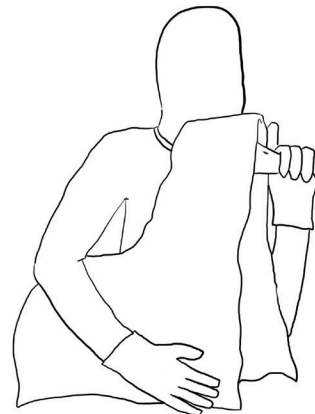
Slow or stop hauling and slow or stop vessel to release line tension. Use a landing net to lift the bird on board.



2.

### Restrain bird.

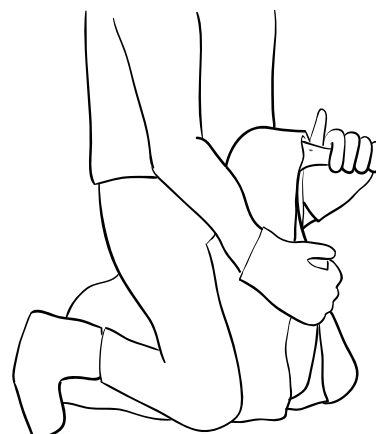
Carefully fold the wings into the body. Wrap the bird in towels/blanket (not too tightly) and cover the eyes if possible. Make sure the bird doesn't come into contact with oil on deck.



3.

### Hold the bird securely.

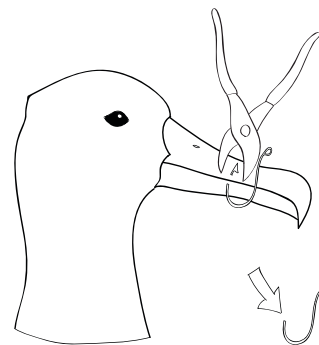
Hold the beak shut but do not cover the nostrils. Make sure the bills are not twisted when you hold the beak. The bird may vomit, release bill or the bird may suffocate. Restrain the bird securely between your legs without squeezing.



4.

**If the hook is visible.**

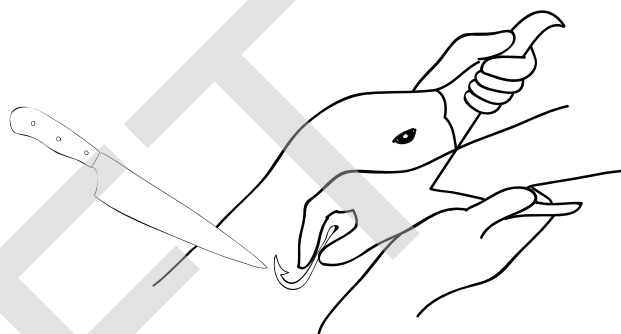
Use pliers to cut off the hook or to flatten the barb. Pull the hook back out of the bird.



5.

**If the hook is swallowed or embedded internally.**

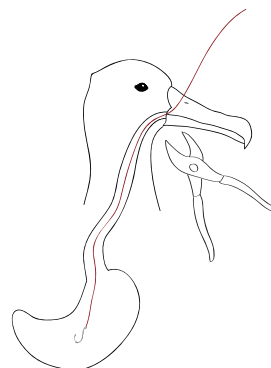
A second person can find the hook position externally by feeling along the neck or internally by following the line to the hook. Reach down the bird's throat and hold the hook. Gently force the tip of the hook so that it buldges under the skin of the bird. Then, use a clean knife to make a small cut externally to allow the hook to pass through the skin and be removed. (If no knife is available, and you can get a good grip on the hook, push the tip of the hook through the skin and remove). **Never try to extract the hook backwards.**



6.

**If hook removal is not possible.**

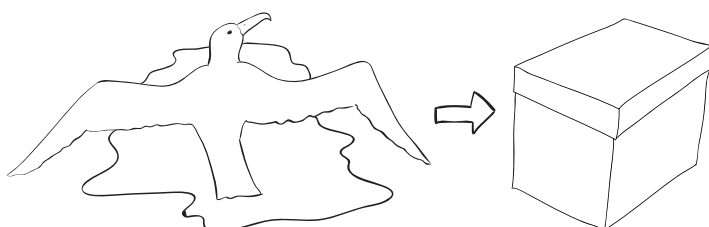
Either because removing the hook will cause further damage to the bird or the hook is too deeply ingested, just cut the line as close to entry as possible and leave the hook in place.



7.

**If the bird is exhausted or waterlogged.**

Place in a loosely covered box in a quiet, dry, shaded place to recover for an hour or two. Release the bird only if it appears healthy. Feathers should be dry and the bird should hold its head erect and stand with wings in a normal folded position and react to sound.



8.

**Release the bird.**

Slowly lower the bird by hand onto the water, do not throw the bird in the air. Allow it to move away from the vessel before proceeding with fishing operations.

