

Summary of feedback following CSP RAG March 2019

This document provides a summary of the written feedback received after the CSP Research Advisory Group held on the 8 March 2019, as well as DOC's responses to the feedback received. This feedback supplements the discussions and feedback received during the meeting, which are summarised in the meeting minutes document.

Points of clarification

The purpose of the RAG meeting was to identify and discuss priority work for possible inclusion in the CSP Annual Plan 2019/20. Attribution of cost was out of scope for the RAG meeting and will be consulted on through the Draft Annual Plan. Hence feedback received on cost attribution following the RAG meeting has not been summarised here.

The CSP research planning process aims to identify priority work which meets the definition of a Conservation Service (as described in the CSP Strategic Statement 2015). This process does not seek to identify or assign work to individual research providers. Procurement of research contracts or arrangements is undertaken in accordance to DOC's procurement rules following the approval of the annual plan. Hence feedback received identifying providers has not been summarised here.

List of feedback received

Feedback	Shown in Comment Summary as:
Northern NZ Seabirds Trust	NNZST
Te Ohu Kaimoana	TOKM
Cawthron Institute	CI
Fisheries Inshore New Zealand & Deepwater Group	FINZ & DWG
Fisheries New Zealand	FNZ

PART A: Comments on interaction project proposals

Submitter	Feedback	DOC response
INT-2 Identification of seabirds captured in New Zealand Fisheries		
FNZ	Feather samples yet to be used as a viable source of DNA identification in seabirds.	The proposed project is the first time DOC has planned for genetic determination of identification from samples of bycaught birds. Future reporting will determine the viability of samples collected.
INT-3 Identification and storage of cold-water coral bycatch specimens		
FINZ & DWG	<p>Support this ongoing work and the recommendations from the previous final report (INT2015-03) should be adopted. Request that updated IDs be provided to FNZ at the end of each calendar year, not the end of the 3-year project term.</p> <p>DWG request discussion about the specific service requirements contracted before tendering contracts.</p>	Noted.
INT-4 Characterisation of marine mammal interactions		
TOKM	<p>Expresses caution around the paucity of information of interactions that will not produce valuable results and the potential for the study to characterise fisheries wide interactions through past interaction rates. Request that data not be extrapolated but presented as is.</p> <p>Support identification of mitigation techniques.</p>	Noted.
FNZ	If this is just Maui dolphins this would be work that FNZ has already undertaken.	This project is to cover all marine mammal interactions with NZ commercial fisheries.
INT-5 Coral biodiversity in deepwater fisheries bycatch		
TOKM	Suggests this project is more relevant to CSP objective B	Noted. This objective will be added.

FINZ & DWG	Does not support. Knowing the fine taxa (species) interaction will not inform the scale of fishery impact while the background distribution and abundance of those taxa remain unknown. Project does not seem worthwhile. If identification to this fine scale is always going to require DNA sequencing (i.e. if they can't be identified by the naked eye) then this will not be feasible on an ongoing basis because of the significant costs to undertake this.	DOC considers it important to understand the true extent of adverse effects of fishing on protected species, which includes an understanding of the range of species being affected. Any future project proposals will consider cost implications.
INT-6 Characterising net captures of seabirds in deepwater trawl fleet		
TOKM	Support project but believe it is premature to the MPI and SSST project planning in June. Suggest waiting for the other processes and planning to be done first, might be a 2020 project.	Noted and agreed. Project proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.
INT-7 Estimating cryptic mortality rates of warp strikes		
TOKM	Do not support, duplicate project to MPI. Would support a mitigation project for inshore warp strike.	Noted and this project will not be progressed further to avoid duplication.
INT-8 Post release survival of seabirds		
TOKM	Would prefer a project over the desktop study proposal as is. Agreed that we need more information to inform cryptic mortality estimates but this project does not achieve it.	This is a preliminary project to ascertain the best method for assessing post release survival. If an adequate method is recommended, a research project would then be put forward for CSP stakeholder consultation.

PART B: Comments on population project proposals

Submitter	Submission	DOC response
POP-2 Antipodes Island seabird research		
TOKM	This project does not meet objective E as the Northern giant petrel is not at risk.	Northern giant petrel is assessed at moderate risk in the Seabird Level 2 Risk Assessment, for which routine population monitoring is identified as an appropriate

	<p>Support extending use of funds by additional projects while conducting Antipodean Albatross work however, these projects are out of CSP scope.</p> <p>Antipodean albatross is a high priority species and TOKM support using the proposed CSP funds to conduct a census. Last census was pre-decline and currently the study plot is a proxy for the entire population (14%). Considering the extent and rate of the decline, it is important to have an accurate and updated population count and study plot proxy.</p>	<p>response in the CSP Seabird Plan. White-chinned petrel has a lower risk score, but the potential for cryptic taxon between island groups exists which may elevate risk scores if treated separately in future assessments.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
POP-3 Campbell Island Seabird Research		
TOKM	<p>Does not support the project as Northern giant petrel is not an at-risk species.</p> <p>As with POP-2, support the best use of funds on subantarctic islands, however these species are not priority.</p> <p>Hoiho on the mainland face multiple stressors including fisheries impacts, while the sub-Antarctic populations are not at risk from fisheries, we consider that a study of the Campbell Island population would be greatly beneficial to understanding the species overall.</p>	<p>Northern giant petrel is assessed at moderate risk in the seabird risk assessment, for which species routine population monitoring is identified as an appropriate response in the CSP Seabird Plan. Whilst Campbell Island albatross is assessed as at low risk, data is insufficient currently to determine population trend. Campbell Island albatross nest in mixed colonies with grey-headed albatross, hence surveys need to count both species.</p> <p>DOC is planning to conduct monitoring work on hoiho at Campbell Island outside of CSP.</p>
POP-4 New Zealand fur seal: Cook Strait habitat use assessment		
TOKM	<p>West Coast Hoki does not have high FUR bycatch</p> <p>Need to include Kaikoura in this study.</p>	<p>Noted. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.</p>

POP-5 Spotted shag population review		
TOKM	<p>Do not support, low risk. Project is interesting and see the conservation value, however it is out of CSP scope. CSP need to provide rationale around how this is associated with fisheries risk.</p> <p>Understand that the northern populations are declining, however, this desktop study needs to be core funded. If relevant information from this project determines a fisheries risk to northern populations then support funding a field study.</p>	Noted.
POP-6 The relative abundance and distribution of data-deficient Odontocete species in the Cook Strait region from passive acoustic data		
TOKM	<p>Do not support. Objective E not relevant to beaked whales</p> <p>Understand the study focusses on beaked whales. Not at risk.</p> <p>Consider that the time period is not representative to characterise distribution of a mobile species. Only can tell you the relative abundance and distribution of that species for that time, not a tool of conservation value.</p>	Noted. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.
POP-7 Leopard seal: New Zealand distribution and occurrence assessment		
TOKM	<p>Do not support, low risk/not included in risk assessment due to low captures.</p> <p>Report already being undertaken by NZLSD.</p>	Noted. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.
POP-8 Protected coral reproduction study		
FINZ & DWG	Laboratory studies may not represent real world outcomes, so this is looking expensive for highly uncertain outcomes.	Noted. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.
POP-9 Investigation of electronic device options to assess distribution, diving and foraging behaviour of Hector's dolphins		

TOKM	<p>Support. High risk species.</p> <p>This project will inform key gaps in the knowledge of Hector's and Māui dolphins and improve the TMP.</p> <p>TOKM fully support projects that are complementary to an overarching strategy and management objective.</p>	Noted.
POP-14 Fish shoal dynamics in North-eastern New Zealand		
TOKM	<p>Interesting however, not sure if CSP. Seems fisheries management outcomes rather than conservation.</p> <p>Knowledge around inshore productivity and connections between shoaling and protected species would be helpful.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
NNZST	As discussed at the meeting the two project objectives should be put into two separate projects.	Noted. Though this proposal is presented cohesively, components can be separately contracted.
FNZ	Looking into work done by Paul Taylor at NIWA in the late 90's and early 00's. Apparently some work may have already been done on the utility of this dataset and how it could not be used for stock assessment. From what I have found so far, the data is not to do with Pilchards or Sardines.	Noted.
POP-15 North-eastern New Zealand seabird tracking and dietary analyses		
NNZST	There is possibly a third objective with this project which relates back to one of the objectives for POP2017-06 (populations). Record the breeding sites and their populations for red-billed gulls and white-fronted terns across four years within a designated area (e.g. Hauraki Gulf). Work under POP2017-06 has seen considerable shifts in both colony locations and size for these species, particularly with white-fronted terns. The ephemeral nature of these species breeding may give clues to what is happening with food sources.	Noted.
POP-17 Black petrel population project		

TOKM	<p>Acknowledge risk of black petrels.</p> <p>Currently populations models conflicting with the field work. Need for a plan to fix these problems before doing more fieldwork. Support a project, however, consider it a requirement for all parties to align and agree on priorities to understand the juvenile recruitment issue and to best inform the model.</p>	<p>A black petrel population project will be undertaken by FNZ in 2019-20, hence this proposal will not be advanced. DOC remains focussed on understanding juvenile recruitment and will liaise with FNZ in the implementation of their project.</p>
POP-18 King shag project		
TOKM	<p>While the king shag is of conservation concern, not sure where the connection to fisheries risk is.</p> <p>Support development of a TMP to address all risks to king shags, include fisheries projects as a part of this. King shags are facing numerous pressures, concern that one project trying to identify potential fisheries effects will not answer much as we cannot tease out other effects. i.e., if fishing is affecting prey availability what else is affecting it? Sedimentation/environmental effects etc.</p>	<p>Noted. This project will be progressed via 100% crown funding.</p>
POP-19 Hector's dolphins - local sub-population size and spatial distribution		
CI	<p>Would like to raise that project POP-19 seems like an excellent idea.</p> <p>Would like to propose a new project for consideration for the 2019/20 CSP white paper, consistent with the brief details provided for POP-19. It was noted at the meeting that while POP-19 had been discussed and scored during the priority setting process, it had been removed as no project description had been received.</p>	<p>Noted. Unfortunately, the original idea for this project was scored yet was then never captured in enough detail and the decision was made to not progress the project prior to the prioritisation meeting that took place in February. A draft version of the list of projects was erroneously uploaded despite their being no intention to continue with POP-19 for the coming year. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.</p>

PART C: Comments on mitigation project proposals

Submitter	Submission	DOC response
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MIT-1 Review of mitigation techniques to reduce benthic impacts of trawling		
TOKM	Support project.	Noted.
FNZ	This looks like work FNZ would have already undertaken. Will continue to look for further information on this.	Noted. This proposal will not be progressed in this round, it will be reconsidered in the 2020/21 CSP planning.
MIT-5 Lighting adjustments to mitigate against vessel impacts		
NNZST	<p>Agree with the suggestion that experiments undertaken should be on vessels for it to be relevant to attraction to fishing vessels.</p> <p>The second paragraph of the project proposal could be changed to accommodate additional experimentation around <i>Procellariiformes</i> response to lights.</p>	Noted. Based on stakeholder feedback this project has now been expanded to include a 2 nd year of vessel-based trials.
MIT-6 Optimum batching interval for discharge management in inshore fisheries		
TOKM	<p>Caution over trying to prescribe considering the variability across fleets regarding the amount of offal fishing methods.</p> <p>Would support addressing priority fisheries and investigating best practice offal management for a fishery e.g. scampi.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted, this study will focus on the scampi fishery.</p>
FNZ	Proposed that this be focused on the SCI fleet as a proxy for the inshore fleet. Better coverage relative to inshore fleet. Less variable to contend with, good data on whether the vessels have batch or continuous discard mechanisms via trawl deck diagrams.	Noted, this study will focus on the scampi fishery.