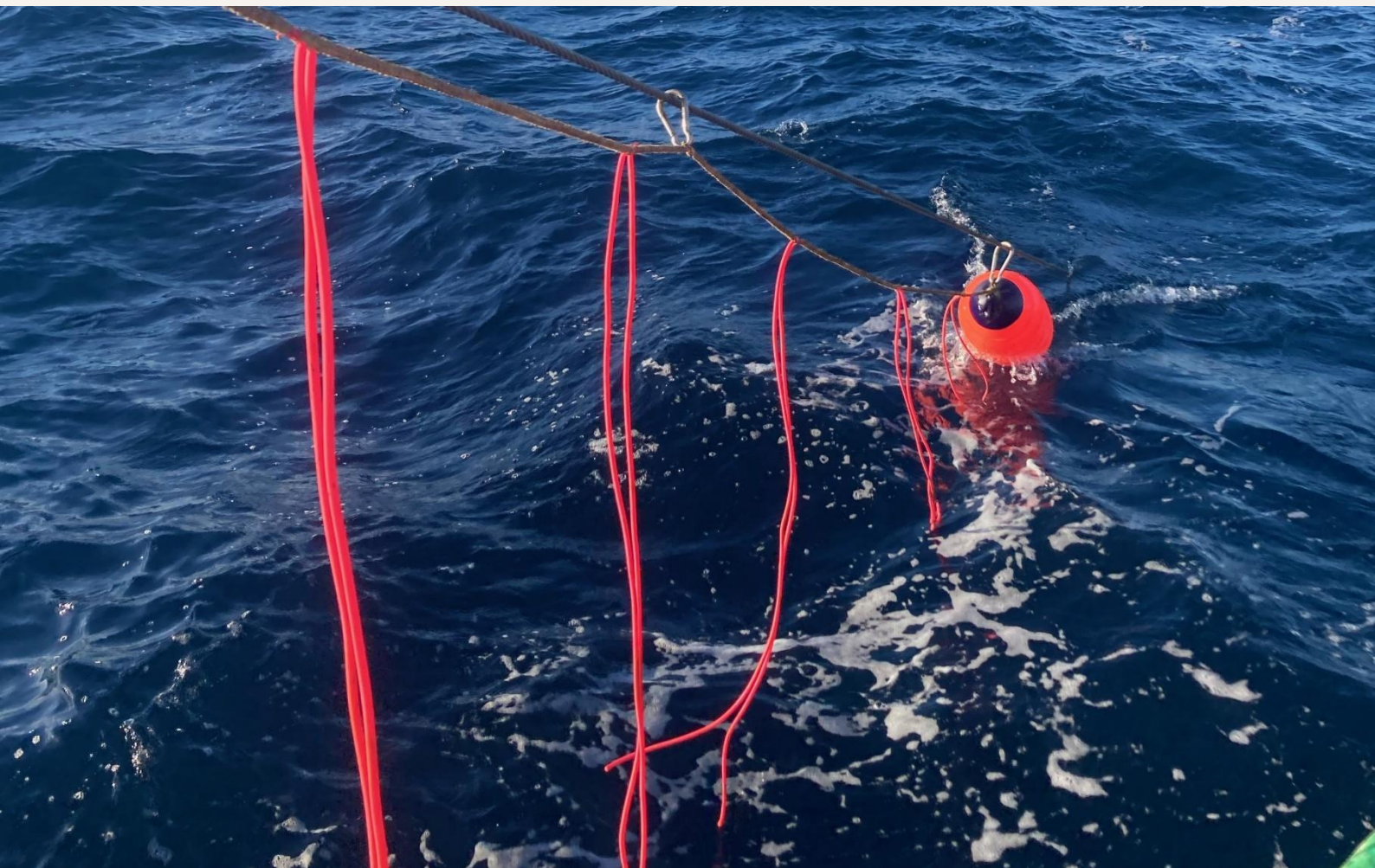


Liaison Programme Annual Report

MIT2021-01 (2023-24 Fishing Year)

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Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

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Purpose

This Liaison Programme Annual Report describes the progress that has been made towards delivering actions set out in the [2023-24 CSP Annual Plan](#) project MIT2021-01 Protected Species Liaison Project (Liaison Programme) during the 2023-24 fishing year¹. It serves to summarise Liaison Programme engagement with the Inshore and Highly Migratory Species and Pacific Fisheries (HMS) fleets and to identify adherence to Protected Species Risk Management Plans (PSRMPs) and alignment with current best-practice mitigation advice as per the National Plan of Action (NPOA) Seabirds. For further detail on the strategic direction of the project please see Appendix 1.

Executive Summary

The 2023-24 fishing year was marked by some major operational changes for the Liaison Programme and increasingly targeted mitigation efforts across inshore and HMS fleets. The rollout of electronic monitoring (EM) substantially increased visibility of protected species captures, which resulted in more trigger responses and more focused engagement with vessels operating in higher-risk areas or times. At the same time, reduced observer coverage created challenges for verifying mitigation use, which highlighted the need for further work to develop EM-based audit processes.

Liaison activity remained strong, with 146 PSRMPs reviewed, 11 new PSRMPs developed, 27 observer audits followed-up, and 214 trigger events followed-up from 73 different vessels, which is almost a 40% increase from number of triggers followed-up last year (i.e. 88 triggers from 44 vessels). Engagement was stable across the fleets and a new Liaison Officer was brought onboard in the lower South Island region. Across all methods, alignment with seabird mitigation standards continued to improve, particularly in surface longline where uptake of hook-shielding devices and the use of 'three out of three' increased ahead of new regulatory requirements which came into effect in October 2024.

Mitigation priorities vary by fishing method but consistently focus on reducing protected species interactions through practical changes. Surface longline advice emphasised hook weighting, hook-shielding device use, tori lines, and managing high-risk periods (e.g. full moons), while improving reporting and species identification. Bottom longline advice focused on effective haul mitigation, tori line deployment, and resolving practical challenges in meeting regulatory standards. Inshore trawl advice prioritised reducing seabird warp strikes, improving offal management, and addressing marine mammal risk (notably Hector's dolphin), though mitigation options were notably limited in some cases. Set net advice targeted reductions in dolphin, hoiho, and seabird bycatch through area avoidance, dolphin pingers, and improved reporting to better understand interactions. Purse and Danish seine methods have lower risk, so advice emphasised maintaining existing good practices. Across all methods, key themes are strengthening PSRMPs, improving reporting (supported by cameras), and targeting high-risk vessels and events.

A coordinated cross-agency response to the East Coast South Island southern bluefin tuna surface longline (SLL) season demonstrated the value of real-time monitoring and rapid mitigation adjustments, helping to keep seabird captures within expected levels and work towards reduced capture rates. The liaison programme's first annual workshop reinforced the need for a more risk-based, output-focused model, improved data access, and clearer cross-agency roles. Unfortunately, the development of a shared platform liaison database was delayed again, and the business case was due to be reconsidered at the end of the 2023-24 fishing year. Overall, efforts throughout the year strengthened targeted mitigation, improved fleet-specific risk management, and advanced the programme toward a more responsive, data-driven approach as EM becomes fully established.

¹ The 2023-24 fishing year ran from 1 October 2023 until 30 September 2024.

Introduction

1. Liaison Programme Overview

In order to effectively reduce the risk of interactions with protected species, it is important for vessels to use best practice mitigation advice and to follow standards laid out by both regulatory and non-regulatory measures. With the support of Seafood New Zealand (SNZ), the Conservation Services Programme (CSP) Liaison Programme aims to increase uptake of best practice mitigation for inshore and HMS commercial fishing vessels. This is achieved by building one-on-one relationships, providing advice, and educating fishers on protected species information (e.g. risk, mitigation, life histories, etc.).

The inshore Liaison Programme began in 2014-15 (MIT2014-03) with a focus on surface and bottom longliners. Over the years the programme has expanded to include inshore trawl, set net and purse seine fleets, with opportunistic engagement in dredging, jig and Danish seine. The Liaison Programme functions through a three-prong approach with collaboration between the Department of Conservation (DOC), Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ), and Seafood New Zealand (SNZ).

Within this programme, DOC fulfils an operational function with the deployment of Liaison Officers (LOs). They are the boots on the ground and are the face of the Liaison Programme with a role to support and educate fishers on recommended mitigation strategies and to develop vessel-specific PSRMPs. LOs also provide a vital interface between skippers, government, and researchers, communicating information in a way that is easy to understand and apply to individual fishing operations. The programme also maintains a Liaison Coordinator role which is responsible for managing and prioritising liaison activities, organising and providing materials, managing data from LO-fisher engagement, and ensuring follow-up with vessel operators (especially in regard to trigger point events and observer audits).

FNZ fulfils a monitoring and fisheries data management function. Auditing of PSRMPs by Fisheries Observers verify the steps that the vessel is taking to apply mitigation measures and serves to highlight areas for improvement. Note the 2023-24 fishing year was still early in the transition towards electronic monitoring for the inshore fleet, and the approach to auditing PSRMPs will have to adjust moving forward. FNZ also aids in notifying the Liaison Programme of triggers (notable protected species captures) that are reported by fishers through their electronic reporting system, which are then followed up by LOs to work through potential improvements in fishing practices. The Liaison Coordinator also uses this fisher reported information to assess progress within the fleet and help further prioritise Liaison Officer activities.

As a representative of the inshore commercial fishing sector, Seafood New Zealand (SNZ) plays a key role in supporting and promoting engagement with the Liaison Programme among inshore operators and Licensed Fish Receivers (LFRs). Where emerging issues arise within specific fleets, or where additional momentum is needed to address capture risks, SNZ can leverage its industry networks to provide targeted support and reinforce uptake of mitigation initiatives.

Since 2019, DOC has held fortnightly meetings with FNZ and SNZ to facilitate collaboration and effectiveness in the Liaison Programme. In recent years, these meetings have expanded to also include a protected species representative from each of the fisheries management teams at FNZ (i.e. Inshore North, Inshore Central, Inshore South and HMS) on a monthly basis.

The Liaison Programme also feeds into cross-agency strategic documents like the National Plan of Action – Seabirds 2020 (NPOA Seabirds; Fisheries New Zealand 2020). The programme is particularly significant for meeting the objective to “Ensure all New Zealand commercial fishers are using practices that best avoid the risk of seabird bycatch, enabled by appropriate regulations” (Table 1). The Liaison Programme plays a central role in the implementation of best-practice standards through the development of PSRMPs on each vessel. PSRMPs reflect how vessels implement the use of best-practice mitigation and includes actions to reduce or

eliminate captures as relevant to the fishery. Progress on all the NPOA Seabirds 2020 performance measures is detailed in the Seabird Annual Report. The NPOA implementation plan and organisational roles can be found in supporting documents on the [FNZ Seabirds webpage](#).

Table 1: The NPOA Seabirds 2020 performance measures, which are directly linked to Liaison Programme activities. These fall under Goal 1, Objective 1: Ensure all New Zealand commercial fishers are using practices that best avoid the risk of seabird bycatch, enabled by appropriate regulations.

	Performance measure	Target
1	Proportion of each relevant fishing fleet with vessel-specific protected species risk management plans for seabird capture mitigation	100%
2	Proportion of vessel-specific protected species risk management plans that meet the Mitigation Standards and regulations for the relevant fishery	100%
3	Rate of adherence to vessel-specific protected species risk management plans (based on available monitoring data)	100%

2. Operational Landscape in the 2023-24 Fishing Year

There have been a few changes in the Liaison Programme during this reporting period, including the change of a Liaison Officer in the Lower South Island and the addition of a Bycatch Response Coordinator. There were four to five Liaison Officers (LOs) active at any given time, as listed below, and fortnightly online team meetings continued to be hosted to keep on top of developing issues and operational needs.

1. Nigel Hollands - East and West coast (minus Raglan) from Leigh to the top of the North Island, Whitianga, Coromandel and South Coast (e.g. Wellington, Castlepoint & Wairarapa),
2. Ben Leslie - Tauranga, Napier, Auckland, Gisborne, Whakatane, Raglan and New Plymouth,
3. John Cleal - Nelson, Picton, Motueka, Tarakohe, Westport and Greymouth,
4. Brendan McCambridge - Timaru, Lyttleton and Kaikoura,
5. Graham Parker/Mike Black - lower South Island from Dunedin down to Bluff. Mike Black took over as the lower South Island Liaison Officer in August 2024.
6. Erin Hewetson – Bycatch Response Coordinator starting from September 2024.

Vessels were considered in-scope for the DOC Liaison Programme if they fell within at least one of the following categories: (1) had surface longline fishing effort; (2) had bottom longline fishing effort, excluding autoliners and those targeting ling in FMA 2-8; (3) had trawl fishing effort if 28m and under in length, and excluding those targeting scampi or hoki; (4) had set net fishing effort; and/or (5) had purse seine fishing effort. Danish Seine vessels are only contacted opportunistically at this stage. For the 2023-24 fishing year, this meant a total of 352 active vessels, some of which fish multiple methods: 20 surface longline, 66 bottom longline, 94 inshore trawl, 124 harbour net (defined as less than 7 metres in length), 49 set net (defined as greater than 7 metres in length), 5 purse seine, and 15 Danish Seine.

The 2023-24 fishing year was the start of a transition between observers and electronic monitoring (EM). This has meant a significant shift for the Liaison Programme in terms of the approach to verifying and understanding protected species captures in inshore and HMS fisheries. Operationally, camera rollout has led to an increase in reported captures, which has also meant an increase in the amount of trigger responses where Liaison Officers are following up with fishers about their mitigation practices. This is fantastic for increasing outreach where we previously didn't know it was needed. However, this transition into EM has also resulted in a reduction of observer coverage and therefore a reduction in the observer PSRMP audits that are used to inform what mitigation practices are actually occurring out on the water. Work is underway to develop an analogous process and review fields (where possible) so EM can be utilised to support the

Liaison Programme moving forward. Despite the ongoing uncertainty in verified mitigation use, due to the increased confidence in protected species captures, when EM rollout is complete the Liaison Programme will be in a position to start shifting away from input reporting (e.g. documented best practice mitigation in PSRMPs) and instead start focusing on output reporting (e.g. verified protected species captures) and prioritised engagement.

This sentiment was particularly highlighted in the Liaison Programme's first annual workshop in February 2024. The one-day workshop hosted in Wellington, brought together DOC, SNZ, FNZ and Liaison Officers to reflect on the current state of the inshore Liaison Programme and identify key areas for improvement. Overall, participants agreed the programme is now well established, with strong relationships across the fishing industry and increasing verification of protected species interactions through electronic monitoring. It was thought that the future direction should shift toward a more targeted, risk-based approach, focusing on outputs rather than inputs, improving real-time data access, and strengthening technical support. Aspirations were vocalised to also align the inshore programme more closely with the Deepwater model, improving data systems and transparent information sharing, while potentially redistributing some programme responsibilities across agencies and industry over time.

Key challenges included limited access to real-time vessel and catch data, high administrative burden (particularly database management), and the need to prioritise LO time toward higher-risk activities and face-to-face engagement with fishers. Participants emphasised improving clarity of roles and responsibilities across DOC, FNZ, and SNZ, strengthening engagement with Licensed Fish Receivers (LFRs), and refining tools and resources to better support mitigation uptake. Opportunities for improvement included defining high-risk periods and areas, expanding the programme to additional fleets (e.g. trot line), leveraging EM data to guide engagement, and enhancing communication pathways and trigger reporting. Overall, the workshop highlighted the good progress that has been made, but also the need for a more streamlined, responsive, and collaborative programme that is better integrated across agencies in order to enable effective reductions in protected species bycatch.

For the 2023-24 fishing year, the Liaison Programme also participated in a targeted response to the re-expansion of fishing effort and associated bycatch risk in the southern bluefin SLL fleet off the ECSI. This involved DOC, FNZ and SNZ hosting a joint collaborative approach to monitor and respond to seabird capture risk. The purpose was to test real-time, cross-agency, responsive management to reduce seabird interactions and to document lessons learned. This work (1) utilised the Liaison Programme (particularly for pre-season engagement and capture response), (2) supported the widespread uptake of hook-shielding devices, (3) included an updated industry Code of Practice (CoP), which was initially implemented by industry in 2023, and (4) enabled near-real-time monitoring of captures and agreement of management actions through weekly inter-agency meetings. It is important to note that this was the fleet's first season with cameras, with rollout occurring in January 2024. Overall, seabird captures for this fleet in the 2024 season remained within or below historic estimates, apart from a short-lived February spike, which then returned to expected levels following responsive interventions. Key lessons included the need for clearly defined roles and responsibilities, sufficient resourcing and relationship investment, early and robust pre-season engagement, and improved data-sharing tools to support replication of this approach in other fisheries.

Unfortunately, during the 2023-24 fishing year, work was still delayed in developing an improved long-term shared platform database for the Liaison Programme. The completion of the liaison database was intended to enable detailed and automated reporting, allow for more efficient data processing, and would create the ability to measure the overall success of the Liaison Programme on a finer scale. The shared platform database was also intended to improve cross-agency transparency and allow for better collaborative management. At the time of publishing this report however, the circumstances surrounding this business case for the Liaison Programme database have changed. Further details on the new direction for the database will be provided in the 2024-25 Liaison Programme Annual Report.

In terms of the regulatory landscape during this fishing season, towards the end of the fishing year and after a prolonged consultation, FNZ issued an update to the Fisheries (Seabird Mitigation Measures – Surface Longline) Circular (Ministry for Primary Industries, 2024). This essentially requires that, from October 2024, all surface longliners operating in New Zealand waters deploy either hook-shielding devices or a combined use of a tori line, night setting, and line weighting that meets ACAP standards, which is also referred to as ‘three out of three’. As discussed in the cross-agency initiative above, in the ECSI, these seabird mitigation measures were largely adopted voluntarily ahead of the surface longline regulations coming into force.

Liaison activity during the 2023-24 Fishing Year

1. Protected Species Risk Management Plans (PSRMPs)

Ahead of each fishing year, Liaison Officers develop a prioritised work plan for their region, which considers activities to support new operators/vessels and those with historically high protected species interactions. In the 2023-24 fishing year, the Liaison Programme reviewed 146 PSRMPs and developed a total of 11 new PSRMPs for inshore/HMS vessels (Table 2).

*Table 2: Number of Protected Species Risk Management Plans (PSRMPs) by fishing method developed between 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024. Only in-scope active vessels were included and only if ≥50% of their fishing effort was inshore or HMS (per fishing method). *Danish Seine vessels are only contacted opportunistically.*

	Vessels with PSRMPs Reviewed	Vessels with PSRMPs Updated	Vessels with PSRMPs New	Vessels with PSRMPs	Vessels in fleet	Percentage of fleet with PSRMPs
SLL	16	16	0	20	20	100%
BLL	15	8	4	54	66	82%
Trawl	40	29	1	91	94	97%
Set Net (<7 m)	1	0	2	21	124	17%
Set Net (>7 m)	10	6	3	35	49	71%
Purse Seine	4	1	1	5	5	100%
Danish Seine*	0	0	0	5	15	33%

This year, the Liaison Programme has maintained previous years’ coverage in the inshore and HMS surface longline, trawl, and purse seine fleets, has increased coverage in bottom longline, and decreased in set net (Figure 1). Engagement with set net vessels was less than usual due to the replacement of the Lower South Island LO and shift away from harbour net fleets. Work is currently underway to bring the remainder of in-scope vessels into the programme. It is worth noting that occasionally there are some vessels that have inshore effort but tend to carry out the majority of their effort in deepwater. These vessels are covered by the SNZ Deepwater Liaison Programme (Figure 1).

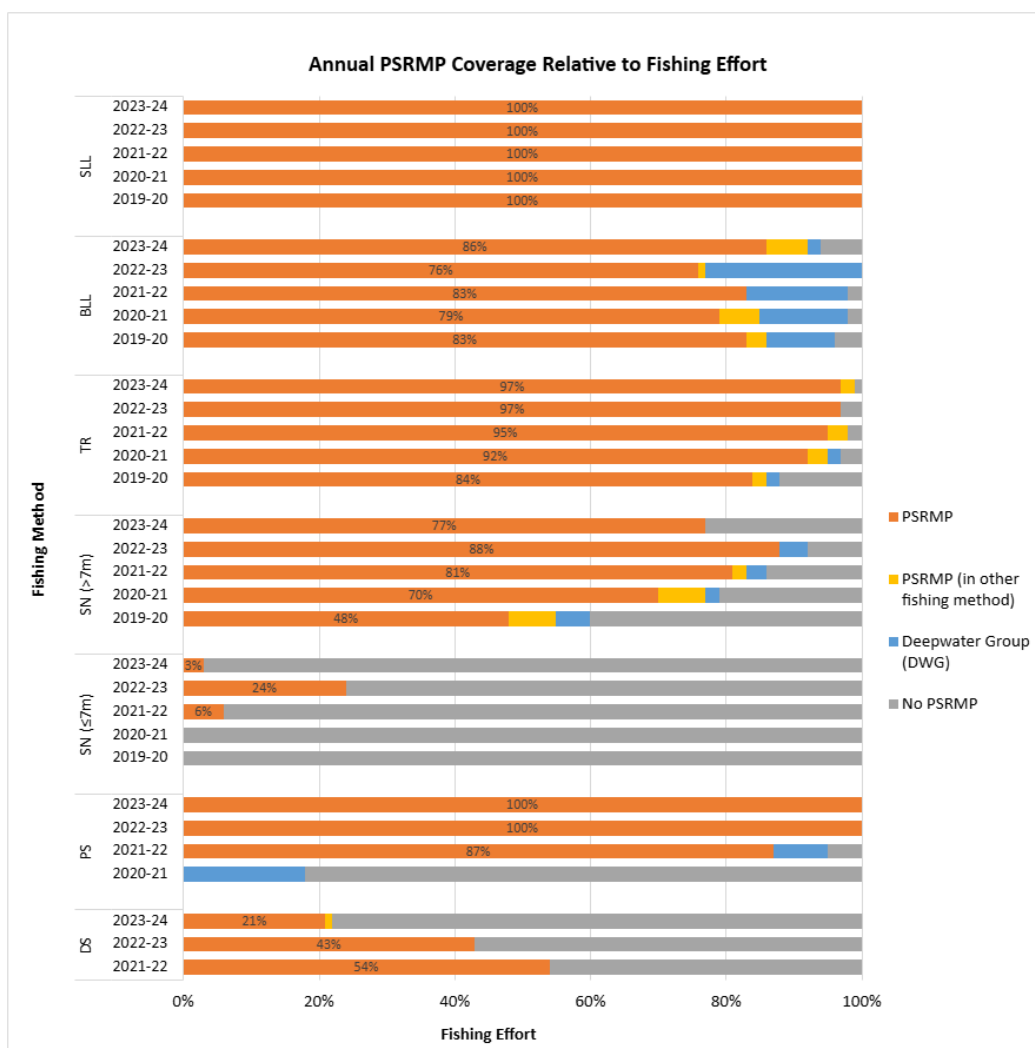


Figure 1: PSRMP coverage for inshore and HMS fishing effort between 1 October 2019 - 30 September 2024. Fishing effort is measured by net length for set net, and by fishing event for all other fishing methods. Data supplied by FNZ RDM.

2. Alignment with Seabird Mitigation Standards

All PSRMPs are developed to align with regulations, but the Mitigation Standards, which were developed under the NPOA Seabirds, go beyond the minimum regulatory requirements for seabird bycatch mitigation. At the end of each fishing year, the most recent PSRMPs for all active vessels are assessed for alignment against the Mitigation Standards. As described in the introduction, there were updates to the surface longline Circular that came into effect in October 2024 (Ministry for Primary Industries, 2024). As such, the mitigation standards for surface longline were also updated and published in December 2024 to clarify the new regulations.

In the 2023-24 fishing year, the Liaison Programme largely increased alignment of PSRMPs to best practice outlined in the NPOA Seabirds Mitigation Standards (Table 3). As with last year, most PSRMPs across all fishing methods could be further improved by clarifying procedures to minimise the presence of fish waste on deck (Mitigation Standard 4.2). Even though fish waste management is clearly explained in the plans, procedures to keep the decks clear of fish waste (to reduce the risk of deck landings or impacts) are not always addressed. LOs are working on addressing this Mitigation Standard in future iterations of respective PSRMPs and templates were updated to support this in the 2023-24 fishing year (Appendix 4).

Table 3: Alignment of PSRMPs with the Mitigation Standards in the 2023-24 fishing year. Alignment trend shows the level of change since the previous fishing year. Some Mitigation Standards in the table have had their wording paraphrased for simplicity.

		Yes (%)	No (%)	Unclear (%)	Alignment Trend (%)
<i>Surface Longline Mitigation Standards</i>		(n= 20)			
MS 1.1	Fish waste is not discharged from the vessel immediately before or during setting	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 1.2	Bait and fish waste is held on board during hauling, when possible; any discharge must be batched and meet mandatory requirements	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.1	Effective tori line throughout setting (unless hook-shielding devices used)	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.2	Either hook-shielding devices used OR hooks set at night and weighted in accordance with ACAP minimum standards	65.0	35.0	0.0	(↑30)
MS 2.3	Bait is sufficiently thawed	100.0	0.0	0.0	(↑15)
MS 3.1	Hook surface time is minimised	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 3.2	Seabirds are actively deterred from approaching hooks during hauling	100.0	0.0	0.0	(↑5)
MS 3.3	Seabirds caught and released alive are handled to maximise their chance of survival	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 4.1	Deck lighting does not unnecessarily attract or disorientate seabirds	95.0	5.0	0.0	(↓5)
MS 4.2	Seabirds are not induced to land on the deck due to the presence of fish waste	50.0	0.0	50.0	(↑10)
MS 4.3	Live birds that land on deck or impact with the vessel are handled in ways to maximise survival	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
<i>Bottom Longline Mitigation Standards (hand-baiting)</i>		(n= 45)			
MS 1.1	Fish waste is not discharged from the vessel immediately before or during setting	100	0.0	0.0	–
MS 1.2	Bait and fish waste is held on board during hauling, when possible; any discharge must be batched and meet mandatory requirements	100	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.1	A tori line effective at deterring birds from hooks is deployed throughout setting	97.8	0.0	2.2	–
MS 2.2	Hooks set during high-risk periods protected by the tori line until hooks 10m deep. Sink rate test records kept.	0.0	0.0	100.0	–
MS 2.3	Hooks set outside of high-risk periods protected by the tori line until hooks 5m deep. Sink rate test records kept.	0.0	0.0	100.0	–
MS 2.4	Bait is sufficiently thawed	97.8	0.0	2.2	(↑4)
MS 3.1	Hook surface time is minimised	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 3.2	Seabirds are actively deterred from hooks during hauling	100.0	0.0	0.0	(↑2)
MS 3.3	Seabirds caught and released alive are handled to maximise their chance of survival	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 4.1	Deck lighting does not unnecessarily attract or disorientate seabirds	100.0	0.0	0.0	–

MS 4.2	Seabirds are not induced to land on the deck due to the presence of fish waste	57.8	0.0	42.2	(↑17)
MS 4.3	Live birds that land on deck or impact with the vessel are handled in ways to maximise survival	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
<i>Under 28m Trawl Mitigation Standards</i>		(n= 92)			
MS 1.1	Fish waste is not discharged from the vessel immediately before or during shooting or hauling	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 1.2	Fish waste discharged whilst the net is being towed is batch discharged	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.1	Warp protection is located at the warp on the discharge side	73.9	26.1	0.0	(↓3)
MS 2.2	Condition of trawl warps does not increase the risk of seabird captures	79.3	19.6	1.1	(↓1)
MS 3.1	All practicable stickers are removed from the net before each shot	97.8	2.2	0.0	(↓2)
MS 3.2	Time gear is at the surface is minimised	98.9	0.0	1.1	–
MS 3.3	Gear maintenance and repairs is conducted in a way to minimise risk to seabirds	80.4	17.4	2.2	(↑8)
MS 3.4	Live birds caught in the net are handled in ways to maximise survival	97.8	1.1	1.1	–
MS 4.1	Deck lighting does not unnecessarily attract or disorientate seabirds	97.8	0.0	2.2	(↑5)
MS 4.2	Seabirds are not induced to land on the deck due to the presence of fish waste	45.7	0.0	54.3	(↑23)
MS 4.3	Live birds that land on deck or impact with the vessel are handled in ways to maximise survival	97.8	1.1	1.1	–
<i>Set Net Mitigation Standards</i>		(n= 57)			
MS 1.1	Fish waste is not discharged from the vessel immediately before or during setting	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 1.2	Any fish waste discharged during hauling must be batch discharged	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.1	Nets are not set in the vicinity of known or observed bird colonies or known foraging areas	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 2.2	Nets are not set in an area when there is active bird activity, such as feeding/diving	80.7	17.5	1.8	(↑1)
MS 3.1	All practicable stickers are removed from the net before each shot	98.2	1.8	0.0	–
MS 3.2	Time gear is at the surface is minimised	100.0	0.0	0.0	–
MS 3.3	Nets are not stalled	98.2	1.8	0.0	(↑3)
MS 3.4	Gear maintenance and repairs is conducted in a way to minimise risk to seabirds	98.2	1.8	0.0	(↑2)
MS 3.5	Live birds caught in the net are handled in ways to maximise survival	70.2	29.8	0.0	(↑4)
MS 4.1	Deck lighting does not unnecessarily attract or disorientate seabirds	98.2	1.8	0.0	–
MS 4.2	Seabirds are not induced to land on the deck due to the presence of fish waste	35.1	0.0	64.9	(↑8)
MS 4.3	Live birds that land on deck or impact with the vessel are handled in ways to maximise survival	70.2	29.8	0.0	(↑4)

2.1 Surface Longline Alignment to Mitigation Standards

For surface longliners, an assessment of PSRMPs showed an increase in alignment for most Mitigation Standards not already at 100%. All plans are now aligned with standards relating to the sufficient thawing of bait (15% increase) and active deterrent of seabirds from approaching hooks during hauling (5% increase).

There was a significant increase (30%) in alignment with MS 2.2: Use of hook-shielding devices, setting at night or using line weighting in accordance with ACAP minimum standards. This increase is influenced by the targeted work between DOC, FNZ and SNZ regarding the east coast South Island fleet, particularly with pre-season engagement, widespread uptake of hook-shielding devices, and an updated industry Code of Practice (CoP). Although it was finalised relatively late in the fishing year, PSRMPs may have also been influenced by the consultation and subsequent update of the Surface Longline Circular issued in September 2024, which requires the use of hook-shielding devices or three out of three mitigation (simultaneous use of line weighting that meets ACAP standards, tori line and night setting).

2.2 Bottom Longline Alignment to Mitigation Standards

For bottom longliners, an assessment of PSRMPs showed an increase in alignment for three Mitigation Standards (MS 2.4, MS 3.2 and MS 4.2), with the remaining Standards not changing from the already high alignment last year. Vessel alignment to Mitigation Standards 2.2 and 2.3, which describe the depth of the hook at the end of the tori line inside and outside high-risk periods, are more appropriately assessed through sink rate test record sheets.

Currently, BLL PSRMPs are well aligned with the Mitigation Standards in terms of fish waste management during hauling and setting, effective tori line usage, use of sufficiently thawed bait, keeping hooks at the surface for the least amount of time possible, hauling mitigation (device or behaviour), light management, and appropriate protected species handling and release procedures. Alignment to MS 4.2 (Seabirds are not induced to land on the deck due to the presence of fish waste) increased by 17% but remains relatively low (58%). In general, some improvements to BLL plans could include: (1) explicit mention of clean gear and deck procedures, and (2) explicit ways for *how* a vessel plans to keep hooks below the surface during a haul break.

In addition to line weighting, set mainline tension, which can be reduced by decreasing setting speed, can influence hook depth at the end of a tori line during setting. Some plans describe reducing setting speed in high-risk periods, but it is not something that is currently captured by the Mitigation Standards.

2.3 Trawl Alignment to Mitigation Standards

For <28m trawlers, an assessment of PSRMPs showed an increase in alignment or no change for most Mitigation Standards. There were slight decreases (1-3%) in alignment with MS 2.1, 2.2, and 3.1. These decreases are mostly attributable to wording within the PSRMP not explicitly stating that all practicable stickers are removed or mentioning warp condition. In addition, fewer vessels (3%) appear to be using seabird scaring devices for the warp closest to the discharge side of the vessel when compared to the previous fishing year.

Currently, trawl PSRMPs are well aligned with Mitigation Standards in terms of fish waste management during hauling/setting and whilst the net is being towed, keeping gear at the surface for the least amount of time possible, appropriate protected species handling/release procedures, and light management.

In general, some improvements to trawl plans could include: (1) clarification that the seabird scaring devices for the warps are deployed in a way that does not increase the risk to seabirds and that spare parts are onboard; and (2) clarification on circumstances if there is a time and place that LOs agree there is no risk to seabirds for MS 2.1. Further plan updates should be made against the most recent PSRMP template so that lingering Standards are addressed.

2.4 Set net Alignment to Mitigation Standards

For set netters, PSRMPs increased in alignment for most Mitigation Standards with the remaining Standards not changing from already high alignment last year.

Currently, set net PSRMPs are well aligned with the Mitigation Standards in terms of fish waste management before/during setting and hauling, nets not being set in the vicinity of known or observed bird colonies or foraging areas, sticker removal before shooting, keeping gear at the surface for the least amount of time possible, not stalling nets, ensuring gear maintenance and repairs are conducted in a way to minimise risk to seabirds, and light management. The majority of set net plans address not setting in an area where there is active bird activity, such as feeding/diving (80%), as well as appropriate protected species handling and release procedures (70%).

The only improvement noted for set net plans was clarification around the areas/times identified to be high risk. Supporting resources referenced in MS 2.2 still need to be developed under the NPOA Seabirds and provided to LOs.

2.5 Alignment to Light Mitigation Standards

The Mitigation Standards to Reduce Light-induced Vessel Strikes of Seabirds (Ministry for Primary Industries, 2023) were published in March 2023, making this the first fishing year in which vessels' alignment with these standards can be formally assessed. Initial reviews show that PSRMP alignment with the light-mitigation standards is relatively low, with a high proportion of unknown assessments (Table 4). This is largely because many PSRMPs were reviewed but not updated in the 2023–24 fishing year and therefore contain no reference to the new standards. As a result, not all vessels finished the season with updated plans that reflect the required mitigation measures. Given the level of detail and specificity within the light-mitigation standards, we intend to develop a supporting document to accompany each vessel's PSRMP. There is a deliberate effort to keep PSRMPs in a concise, one-page format to prioritise the most operationally relevant information for active risk management, so additional risk advice, particularly content not directly tied to at-sea decision-making, may be better placed in a complementary guidance resource.

Table 4: Alignment of PSRMPs with the Light Mitigation Standards in the 2023-24 fishing year. Some Mitigation Standards in the table have had their wording paraphrased for simplicity.

		Surface Longline (n= 20)			Bottom Longline (n= 45)			Under 28m Trawl (n= 92)			Set net (n= 57)		
		Yes (%)	No (%)	Unclear (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unclear (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unclear (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unclear (%)
MS 1.1	Lights not essential for operations and/or vessel/crew safety are eliminated.	35.0	0.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	28.3	12.0	59.8	14.0	8.8	77.2
MS 1.2	Activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided whenever possible.	35.0	0.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	28.3	15.2	59.8	14.0	8.8	77.2
MS 1.3	High-risk areas are avoided at high-risk times when using external lighting at night.	35.0	0.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	20.7	19.6	59.8	14.0	8.8	77.2
MS 1.4	All essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light areas required for operations and safety and minimise light spill.	30.0	5.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	26.1	14.1	59.8	8.8	14.0	77.2
MS 1.5	All essential lights use the lowest intensity as appropriate for operations and vessel/crew safety.	30.0	5.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	23.9	16.3	59.8	12.3	10.5	77.2
MS 1.6	Windows are blacked out wherever and whenever practical (e.g., while at anchor).	0.0	35.0	65.0	0.0	24.4	75.6	3.3	37.0	59.8	0.0	22.8	77.2
MS 1.7	All essential lights filter light spectra as appropriate for operations and vessel/crew safety.	30.0	5.0	65.0	24.4	0.0	75.6	23.9	16.3	59.8	12.3	10.5	77.2
MS 2.1	Seabirds are handled and released in ways that maximise their chance of survival (whilst managing the risk to the crew)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	40.2	0.0	59.8	22.8	0.0	77.2

3. Fisheries Observer Audits

Fisheries Observer audits of vessel practices are essential in monitoring a vessel's progress and determining adherence to their non-regulatory Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP). Note that as electronic monitoring is rolled out, there is expected to be a decline in observer placement and therefore the observer audits of PSRMPs. Work is underway to find an alternative solution to inform the Liaison Programme through EM review processes. For context, when interpreting the figures below, onboard camera rollout has followed the following schedule as per the MPI website², noting the scope of this report is the 2023-24 fishing year (i.e. between 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024):

1. **From 1 August 2023** – WCNI trawl and set net (and proof of concept) – trawl vessels less or equal to 32 metres in overall length (except those targeting scampi) and set net vessels greater than or equal to 8 metres in overall length, who fish off the west coast of the North Island. This also includes the proof of concept vessels that expanded from WCNI to include the North, East and South coast of the South Island from 14 June 2023.
2. **From 31 October 2023** – North, East and South coast SI trawl and set net – set net vessels greater than or equal to 8 metres in overall length fishing off the north, east, and south coasts of the South

² [On-board cameras for commercial fishing vessels | NZ Government](#)

Island. Trawl vessels less than or equal to 32 metres in overall length fishing off the north, east, and south coasts of the South Island (except those targeting scampi).

3. **From 16 January 2024** – Surface longline
4. **From 26 June 2024** – Bottom longline FMA1 – bottom longline vessels fishing in northern New Zealand in the fishery management area 1 – Auckland (East).
5. **From 3 March 2025** – Remaining bottom longline and trawl – all remaining bottom longline vessels and trawl vessels less than or equal to 32 metres in overall length (except those targeting scampi), fishing in any area.
6. **From 28 May 2025** – Remaining set net, all purse seine and Danish seine – all remaining set net vessels 8 metres or longer, fishing in any area. All purse seine vessels fishing in any area. All Danish seine vessels fishing in any area. This also marks the conclusion of the rollout.

In the 2023-24 fishing year, a total of 27 PSRMP audits were completed by Observer Services and forwarded on to the Liaison Programme. This is down from the 31 audits completed in the previous year. Of the audits completed, there were 8 bottom longline audits, 12 trawl audits, 4 set net audits and 3 purse seine audits. Although 30 of the 215 planned observer days were delivered³ for surface longline, no surface longline observer audits were received.

Areas of PSRMP adherence have been broken down into six categories:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Documentation | Includes keeping a copy of their PSRMP, Operational Procedures, or 10 Golden Rules on board and being familiar with their contents. Also includes keeping sink rate tests and information on exclusion areas is on hand, where applicable. |
| 2. Offal management | Includes used bait and fish waste discharge procedures. Also includes clearing the net of 'stickers', where applicable. |
| 3. Bycatch mitigation devices | Includes proper management/maintenance of protected species bycatch mitigation devices (e.g. tori line, warp deflector, etc.) so they are fit for purpose |
| 4. Bycatch mitigation procedures | Includes action-based protected species bycatch mitigation procedures (e.g. light management, time net is at surface, avoiding areas/times with high protected species activity, etc.). |
| 5. Reporting | Includes proper reporting of protected species captures to FNZ and the Liaison Programme. |
| 6. Handling or release | Includes safe handling and release of live protected species captures. |

Overall, only 67% (n=18) of observed vessels were confirmed to be following every aspect of their PSRMP, which is a slight decrease from the 2022-23 fishing year (71%, n=22). Purse seine has been excluded from this summary figure as audit forms for this fishing method were largely incomplete.

Historically, prominent adherence issues across the different fishing methods have revolved around offal management and bycatch mitigation devices (Table 4). Adherence trends in individual fishing methods have been variable due to low observer coverage/completed audits, and more time is needed to identify a clear pattern.

³ [2023-2024 observer seadays plans](#)

Table 4: Summary of non-adherence to PSRMPs assessed via FNZ observer audits by fishing method over time. Dashes (-) indicate where information is not available. Note: Non-adherence may be detected across multiple categories, or not at all, therefore the sum of non-adherence across categories may not be equal to the number of audits received.

	PSRMP Audits Received	Non-adherence					
		Documen- tation	Discharge management	Bycatch mitigation devices	Bycatch mitigation procedures	Reporting	Handling or release
SLL							
2019-20	13		5 (38%)	4 (31%)	2 (15%)		2 (15%)
2020-21	14		8 (57%)	4 (29%)			
2021-22	3	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	3 (100%)		2 (67%)	1 (33%)
2022-23	5		2 (40%)	1 (20%)		1 (20%)	
2023-24	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
BLL							
2019-20	27	4 (15%)	5 (19%)	9 (33%)	7 (26%)		
2020-21	19		2 (11%)	3 (16%)			
2021-22	8	1 (13%)	1 (13%)	5 (63%)	1 (13%)		
2022-23	3	1 (33%)		1 (33%)			1 (33%)
2023-24	8	1 (13%)	3 (38%)	4 (50%)	1 (13%)		
Trawl							
2019-20	38	10 (26%)	7 (18%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)
2020-21	46	1 (2%)	4 (9%)	7 (15%)	3 (7%)		
2021-22	38	1 (3%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	5 (13%)		
2022-23	12		3 (25%)		1 (8%)		
2023-24	12		2 (17%)	2 (17%)			
SN (>7m)							
2019-20	6			-			
2020-21	21	2 (10%)		-	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	
2021-22	11		4 (36%)	-			
2022-23	11		2 (18%)	-			
2023-24	4			-			
Purse Seine							
2023-24	3						

In the 2023-24 fishing year there were various forms of non-adherence across the fishing methods (Figure 2). The following is a breakdown of successful adherence as well as issues of non-adherence within each fleet. Additionally, there are some areas that were not able to be fully assessed due to observer uncertainty. This is fed back to Observer Services to improve observer training and ensure that forms are filled out completely in future.

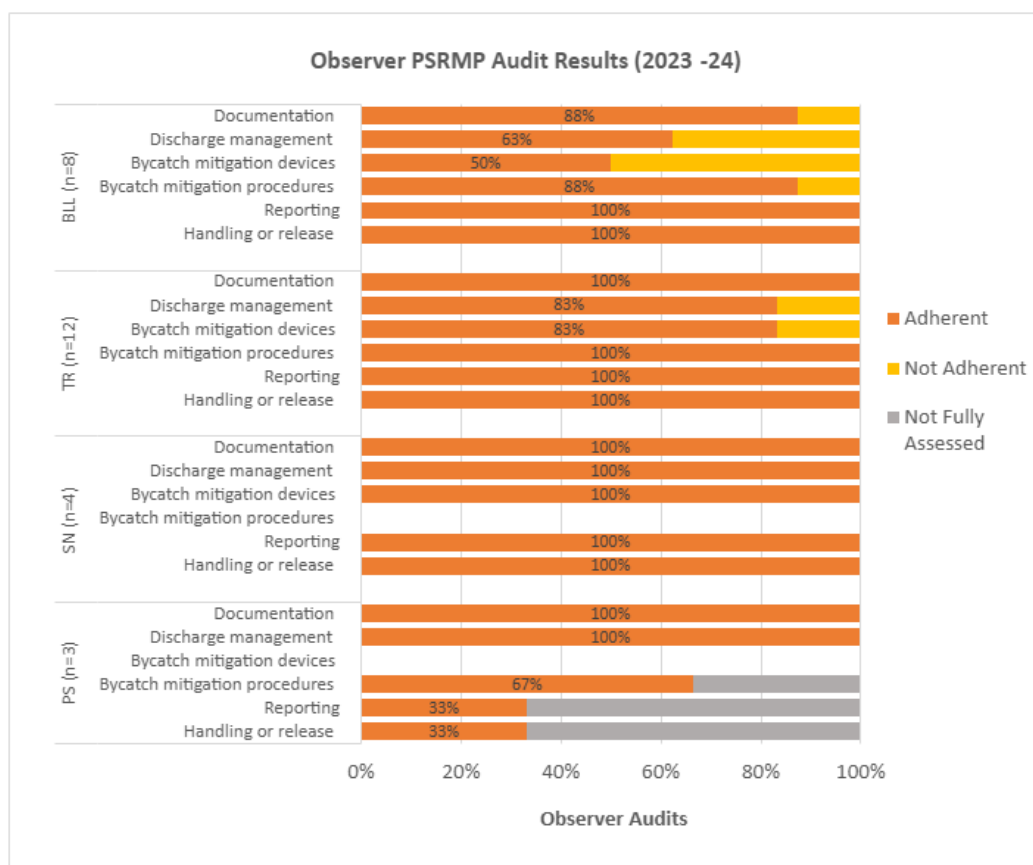


Figure 2: Results of Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP) observer audits in the 2023-24 fishing year. Caution should be expressed when drawing conclusions across the fleet where sample sizes are low. No observer audits were received for the surface longline fleet.

3.1 Surface Longline Audits

No surface longline observer audits were received for the 2023-24 fishing year.

As the entire surface longline fleet is now equipped with onboard cameras, work is underway with MPI to develop a process for producing audits utilising Electronic Monitoring (EM) footage. There were 35 EM audits received from 18 surface longline vessels this fishing year. EM audits are in a different format and provide different content to the observer audit forms, which were not particularly quantifiable. Adherence to PSRMPs is not specifically measurable and is therefore not reported here.

Refinement to the format and content of EM audits is ongoing as we gain a better understanding of what onboard cameras can capture in relation to bycatch mitigation and offal management procedures. Particular attention is also being given to commercial information and data sensitivities. EM footage is unable to gather some information, such as documentation, risk awareness and mitigation specifications, though this detail can potentially be obtained through increased vessel visits if resourcing and capacity allows. EM audits will be particularly important as vessels in other fleets start to be equipped with cameras.

3.2 Bottom Longline Audits

Overall, bottom longline observer audits (n=8) were found to have 100% adherence in reporting, and handling or release. This means that all vessels were confirmed to be reporting protected species captures electronically to MPI and, where relevant, any live-caught protected species were handled and released according to DOC guidelines.

Non-adherence was detected regarding documentation, offal management, mitigation devices and mitigation procedures and one audit found that sink rate test records were not kept onboard. Non-adherence regarding offal management was mostly related to used bait and offal occasionally being discarded from both sides of the vessel during hauling. Two audits indicated that tori lines were not deployed for the entirety of all sets, though one was due to the tori line becoming tangled with mainline towards the end of the set and needing to be cut free. One audit indicated non-adherence to mitigation procedures as light practices were not managed in a way that avoids attracting or disorienting seabirds.

3.3 Trawl Audits

Overall, trawl observer audits (n=12) were found to have 100% adherence in documentation, bycatch mitigation devices, mitigation procedures, reporting and handling or release. This means that all vessels were confirmed to be carrying PSRMPs and were familiar with their contents, using a warp strike mitigation device in accordance with the PSRMP, electronically reporting all protected species captures, and handling any live-caught protected species in accordance with DOC guidelines.

Non-adherence was detected regarding offal management with one audit indicating that offal was not discarded as per the vessel's PSRMP and another audit indicating that all practicable stickers were not cleared from the net.

3.4 Set net Audits

With a sample size of four observer audits, it is important to express caution when trying to draw any conclusions. Overall, set net observer audits (n=4) were found to have 100% adherence to all components of their PSRMP (documentation, offal management, mitigation procedures, reporting and handling or release). This means that all vessels were confirmed to be carrying PSRMPs and were familiar with their contents, not keeping the net at the surface for an unexpected or unnecessary amount of time, managing lighting in a way that avoided attracting or disorienting seabirds, electronically reporting all protected species captures to MPI, and handling any live protected species captures according to the DOC Handling and Release Guide.

3.5 Purse Seine Audits

The Purse Seine observer audit form was developed and made available for use in June 2023. Again, with a sample size of three observer audits it is important to express caution when trying to draw any conclusions. Overall, purse seine observer audits (n=3) were found to have 100% adherence in terms of documentation and offal management. For two of the audits, it was unknown as to whether the vessel adhered to reporting or handling and release protocols as no protected species interactions occurred.

4. Trigger Point Events (Triggers)

Triggers have been developed as a risk management tool to prompt vessel operators to reevaluate their mitigation strategies when catching high-risk protected species. Specifics on what constitutes a trigger are discussed and agreed to by government and stakeholder groups. The trigger points followed up by Liaison Officers in the 2023-24 fishing year were updated in October 2023 and are as listed below. In summary, turtles were shifted from only including the first of the fishing year to any turtle live or dead. Any live or dead whale was also added to the 24-hour trigger. The 24-hour trigger of any three large seabirds (e.g. albatross/mollymawk, giant petrel, gannet) was changed to any two albatrosses/mollymawks in 24 hours. Fur seals were removed from 24-hour triggers as there is minimal mitigation advice that can currently be provided.

Any 24-hr period:

(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle, or basking shark

(Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small seabirds (e.g. petrel/shearwater)

(Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark

Any 7-day period:

(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals

The Liaison Programme is notified of trigger events by a combination of fisher self-reports via MPI, observer notifications via Observer Services, and fishers directly contacting a LO. Of the approximately 352 vessels active and within scope of the Liaison Programme in the 2023-24 fishing year, 21% (n=73) submitted electronic Non-fish or protected fish species (NFPS) Catch Reports, which is consistent with the 21% (n=81) last year. Of the 1,402 non-benthic electronic NFPS Capture Reports by these vessels, 611 (which equates to 44% of individuals), were logged and responded to by LOs (Table 7).

This translates to 214 trigger events from 73 different vessels in the 2023-24 fishing year (Table 8). This is almost a 60% increase of from the 88 trigger events from 44 different vessels last year. Overall, only 33% of observed triggers were proactively reported to their LO (down from 50% last year), and 30% of unobserved triggers were proactively reported to their LO (up from 24% last year).

Table 7: Number of protected species reported through inshore fisher electronic reporting and followed up by Liaison Officers from 1 October 2023- 30 September 2024. Captures followed up by Liaison Officers are outside of brackets and total capture numbers are in brackets. Data supplied by FNZ RDM.

	Alive	Dead	Total	Total Response (%)
Surface longline	62 (197)	131 (287)	193 (484)	40%
Birds	21 (58)	127 (256)	148 (314)	47%
Albatrosses (Unidentified)	0 (1)	13 (14)	13 (15)	87%
Great albatrosses	12 (12)	42 (42)	54 (54)	100%
Smaller albatrosses	5 (17)	64 (114)	69 (131)	53%
Other seabirds	4 (29)	8 (86)	12 (114)	11%
Other	41 (139)	4 (31)	45 (170)	26%
Pinnipeds	27 (124)	4 (30)	31 (154)	20%
Cetaceans	4 (4)	0 (1)	4 (5)	80%
Sharks and rays	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0%
Turtles	10 (10)	0 (0)	10 (10)	100%
Bottom longline	7 (54)	36 (79)	43 (133)	32%
Birds	6 (44)	36 (75)	42 (119)	35%
Albatrosses (Unidentified)	3 (4)	2 (3)	5 (7)	71%
Great albatrosses	3 (3)	0 (1)	3 (4)	75%
Smaller albatrosses	0 (4)	5 (6)	5 (10)	50%
Other seabirds	0 (33)	29 (65)	29 (98)	30%
Other	1 (10)	0 (4)	1 (14)	7%
Pinnipeds	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0%
Sharks and rays	1 (10)	0 (3)	1 (13)	8%

Trawl	32 (91)	292 (525)	324 (616)	53%
Birds	31 (85)	271 (470)	302 (555)	54%
Albatrosses (Unidentified)	3 (4)	11 (14)	14 (18)	78%
Great albatrosses	1 (1)	1 (2)	2 (3)	67%
Smaller albatrosses	2 (9)	12 (102)	14 (111)	13%
Other seabirds	25 (71)	81 (136)	106 (207)	51%
Shags and penguins	0 (0)	166 (216)	166 (216)	77%
Other	1 (6)	21 (55)	22 (61)	36%
Pinnipeds	0 (5)	3 (37)	3 (42)	7%
Cetaceans	1 (1)	18 (18)	19 (19)	100%
Set Net	6 (36)	14 (83)	20 (119)	17%
Birds	6 (26)	5 (27)	11 (53)	21%
Albatrosses (Unidentified)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)	100%
Great albatrosses	2 (2)	0 (0)	2 (2)	100%
Smaller albatrosses	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0%
Other seabirds	0 (16)	0 (3)	0 (19)	0%
Shags and penguins	3 (6)	5 (24)	8 (30)	27%
Other	0 (10)	9 (56)	9 (66)	14%
Pinnipeds	0 (2)	0 (46)	0 (48)	0%
Cetaceans	0 (0)	9 (9)	9 (9)	100%
Sharks and rays	0 (8)	0 (1)	0 (9)	0%
Purse Seine	2 (2)	4 (5)	6 (7)	86%
Birds	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0%
Other seabirds	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0%
Other	2 (2)	4 (4)	6 (6)	100%
Sharks and rays	2 (2)	4 (4)	6 (6)	100%
Non-fishing Deck Strike	25 (42)	0 (1)	25 (43)	58%
Birds	25 (42)	0 (1)	25 (43)	58%
Albatrosses (Unidentified)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)	100%
Other seabirds	24 (41)	0 (1)	24 (42)	57%
Grand Total	134 (422)	477 (980)	611 (1402)	44%

Table 8: Number of trigger events by fishing method from 1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024. Triggers can include seabirds, reptiles, mammals, and some protected fish species.

	Observed		Unobserved		Totals	
	Electronically reported	Fisher proactively reported to LO	Electronically reported	Fisher proactively reported to LO	Trigger events	Vessels with trigger events
SLL	3	67%	93	56%	96	16
BLL	1	100%	36	31%	37	16
TR	2	0%	60	25%	62	31
SN	0	-	19	42%	19	10
PS	1	0%	0	-	1	1
Total	7	43%	208	41%	215	74

When discussing trigger events with vessel operators, LOs advise potential ways bycatch mitigation could be improved. Suggested changes can include a range of things depending on the situation and the ability of

the vessel to undertake those improvements, including improving the quality and functionality of the tori line, adding additional weighting, shifting to night-setting, improving hauling mitigation and/or changing fishing locations.

For each Hector's dolphin capture event, as per the South Island Hector's Dolphin Bycatch Reduction Plan, the LO was notified, the operator and LO discussed the event and an amendment to the vessel's PSRMP was made if appropriate. Capture questionnaires were also filled out by the operator and LO to gain insight into each Hector's dolphin capture event and to contribute towards our knowledge of risk factors moving forward.

In August 2023, the Liaison Programme also began collecting more information on turtle bycatch during trigger follow-ups to get a clearer idea about post-release survival of turtles in New Zealand fisheries. This came in the form of an in-depth questionnaire that LOs fill out with skippers following a turtle bycatch event. This questionnaire was reviewed and updated in September 2024 (see Appendix 7) and information was also used to inform the FNZ project PRO2023-15: Post-release survivability, cryptic mortality, and catchability for leatherback turtles caught in New Zealand waters (Finucci and Dunn 2024).

5. Bycatch Mitigation Resources

5.1 Tori line materials

Over the past year, we have ordered and distributed a large amount of quality tori line materials (Figure 3) to support commercial fishers in ensuring vessel tori lines are properly maintained and remain effective for deterring seabirds. These contribute towards each component of a tori line, including the backbone, the streamers (with different weights for different methods and streamer length requirements), and the drag.

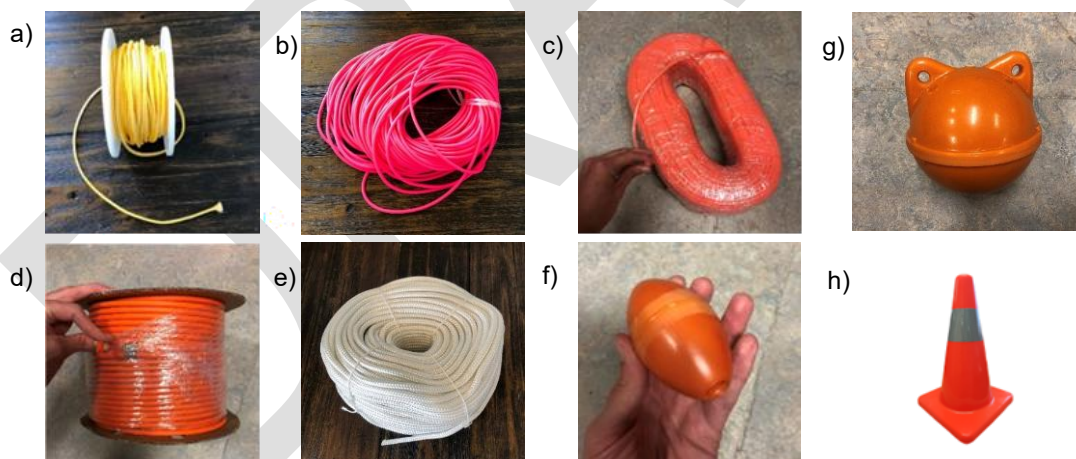


Figure 3: Tori line materials provided including **backbone**: (a) 3mm single braid yellow Dyneema, **streamers**: (b) 3.18mm Pink Kraton Tubing, (c) 3mm Pink Fluorescent Snood Tubing, (d) 6mm x 4mm Orange Beaufort Tubing, and **drag**: (e) 9mm Trawl Braid (500L), (f) Egg floats (@10mm hole diameter), (g) Egg floats (@ 150mm hole diameter), (h) 450mm Reflective traffic cones.

5.2 Turtle release kits

Liaison Officers also check that all surface longliners operating in the North Island are equipped with a turtle release kit (Figure 4) before the start of the high-risk summer season. This kit includes a de-hooker, a line-cutter and some bolt cutters.

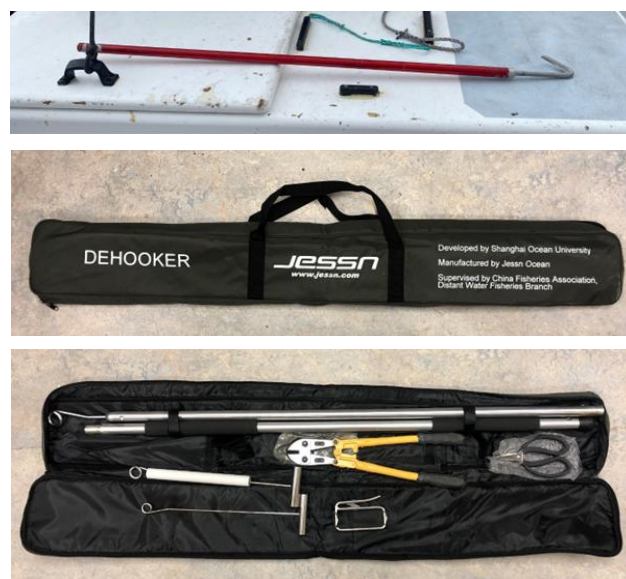


Figure 4: Turtle release kit

5.3 Rollout of hook-shielding devices

The uptake of Hookpods in New Zealand has involved a phased rollout across the surface longline fleet, combining Crown and industry funding (Table 9), with uptake only starting to pick up in recent years. Hookpod trials in New Zealand fisheries date back to 2013, with more extensive trials occurring in 2016. With international work showing promising results (Sullivan et al 2017) and with an industry request for funding, DOC and MPI proceeded to support early purchases and trials. These trials, carried out under MIT2015-02, demonstrated the devices' effectiveness in reducing seabird bycatch within New Zealand waters (Goad and Sullivan 2017). Hookpods are approved by ACAP as a recognised standalone bycatch mitigation approach and have been included in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's (WCPFC) Seabird Conservation and Management Measure (CMM 2018-03; WCPFC, 2018). Following this, FNZ approved use of hook-shielding devices as a stand-alone seabird bycatch mitigation measure in pelagic longline (Ministry for Primary Industries, 2019).

Table 9: Hookpod orders for deployment to the surface longline fleet. The CSP levy has included projects like MIT2020-01 Hook-shielding use in the surface longline fishery, MIT2023-05 Enabling uptake of best practice seabird bycatch mitigation in the surface longline fishery, and some support through the Liaison Programme.

Order	Funding source	Type	Units
Dec 2019	Crown (DOC)	20m release Hookpod	4000
Feb 2020	Crown (DOC/MPI)	20m release Hookpod	10,000
Jun 2020	Crown (DOC)	20m release Hookpod	10,000
Mar & Jun 2021	CSP levy	10m release Hookpod	10,000
Dec 2023 & Jan 2024	CSP levy	10m release Hookpod	4000
May 2024	Crown (DOC) and CSP levy	10m release Hookpod	3000
Sept 2024	Crown (DOC/MPI) and CSP levy	10m release Hookpod	4500
Total to date			45,500

Uptake was a bit patchy in the early days of distribution to the fleet. Interest among fishers started out relatively strong, but this did not consistently translate into sustained or widespread use. Some vessels tended to trial the devices and either discontinue use or pass them on, and only a small subset of vessels continued using them regularly. Where Hookpods were consistently used, anecdotal evidence indicates they performed reliably. The limited Hookpod logbook data collected in 2020 and 2021 shows that they were generally used correctly and had low rates of malfunction or failure. However, the dataset was incomplete and inconsistent across vessels and fishing years, meaning it was not possible to draw robust conclusions about comparative fish capture rates and their effectiveness in reducing seabird bycatch at a fleet-wide level (Wilson, 2022, MIT2020-01). Fisher uptake seemed to be strongly influenced by practical, operational, and behavioural factors rather than purely technical performance, with a preference for cost-effective tools and the absence of clear guidance and consistent support also contributing to hesitation in consistent use.

Since then, multiple procurement rounds have progressively increased uptake within the fleet resulting in approximately 14 of the 20 active vessels being equipped in the 2023-24 fishing year. As discussed in the introduction, this is partially because of the joint collaborative approach to reducing seabird capture risk in the ECSI southern bluefin tuna fishery, which supported the use of hook-shielding devices. This effort has been underpinned by collaboration between DOC, FNZ, SNZ and the Liaison Officers who facilitate the rollout.

In 2024, the Liaison Programme facilitated the order of 11,500 10m-release hook-shielding devices. Since 2019, a total of 24,000 20m-release Hookpods and 21,500 10m-release Hookpods have been ordered to enable mitigation use within the NZ domestic surface longline fleet. There is ongoing demand for additional units to cover remaining vessels and replace losses. To date, government funding has been relatively 50:50 with industry funding through the conservation services levy.

6. Fleet priorities and insights by region

A large amount of work goes into lining up face to face vessel visits, the development of PSRMPs and follow-up on trigger events (Table 10). The following sections outline Liaison Officer activities and the priority focus areas for the work in each region.

Table 10: Summary of vessel visits, PSRMP progress (new/updated/reviewed), and trigger or audit follow ups by Liaison Officer region. Note these are indicative numbers and not necessarily an exhaustive list. Harbour net and Danish Seine have been excluded as they are not a primary focus of the programme.

	Upper & Central NI	Coromandel, Northland & Lower NI	South Island SLL	Upper SI	Central SI	Lower SI
Number of in-scope vessels	67	58	10	46	24	34
Vessel visits:	49	55	10	78	69	11
New PSRMPs:	5	7	-	4	25	7
PSRMPs updated:	31	40	10	28	22	9
PSRMPs reviewed (with no updates):	16	-	-	15	2	-
Trigger follow-ups:	38	46	53	71	30	14
Audit follow-ups:	11	10	-	12	2	4

6.1 Upper and Central North Island

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 67 fishing vessels were active in this region across all in-scope methods, including BLL, SLL, trawl, set net, purse seine, and Danish seine. Vessel home ports included Auckland (Onehunga/Viaduct), Gisborne, Ruawai, Kawhia, Leigh, Napier, New Plymouth, Raglan, Tauranga, Te Kaha and Whakatane.

Fishing ports on both the East and West coast of the North Island were visited throughout the season. DOC species ID guides were disseminated to each fleet when requested or when new versions became available, and vessel resources were checked to ensure skippers have all relevant information. In general, tori line materials were supplied to all SLL and BLL vessels during port visits and posted for one-off requests if high priority. Longline haul droppers were also distributed to the BLL fleet. Liaison Officers checked with SLL vessels to ensure turtle de-hookers kits and line cutters were onboard ahead of the summer season.

In this region, there was continued work with BLL vessels, which focussed on establishing haul mitigation during the fishing season to assist with aligning to current regulations and minimise hauling impacts on seabird populations. It has been raised that there are some technical nuances with stern haul vessels complying with the wording of regulations, particularly when an operator must discharge live whole fish on the opposite side of the vessel to which it is hauling with haul mitigation deployed. This requires the crew to discharge whole fish from the bow of the vessel which is not practical and often has an increased safety risk element.

For trawl vessels, there has been a focus on warp mitigation and discharge management. Established baffler systems make the trawl vessels relatively lower risk, but for some vessels, there is a challenge in maintaining continuity of fish waste discharge management due to the various crew and skippers that operate each vessel. Other vessels are pretty good at maintaining the same skippers from previous seasons so there is more of a focus on small improvements to equipment/systems for warp mitigation to reduce risk to seabirds. Overall, there has been some positive improvement across the local bottom trawl fleet with regards to trawl warp mitigation effort and systems. This has been detailed in vessel PSRMPs during routine annual updates. There was a notable cetacean capture in May 2024. LO support included a review of the event and an update of the vessel's PSRMP was completed with the skipper in the days following. A cetacean capture questionnaire with event and gear details was filled out and passed onto DOC and FNZ as requested.

For the SLL vessels operating out of Tauranga and Whakatane/Te Kaha, there is a visit at the start of their season for reviewing/updating PSRMPs and confirming skippers that will be running each vessel. The visit also allows for the provision of tori lines, updated resources, turtle kits and Hookpod/Procella hook support as required. For those intending to fish off the ECSI, there is a pre-season briefing. Both tori line and haul mitigation support are on hand when requested, although there has been relatively low seabird impact with minimal trigger responses required through the season.

Purse Seine vessels out of Tauranga receive an annual visit, however there are minimal changes to practices due to the same skippers and crew. There were minimal triggers reported for 2023-24 fishing season.

6.2 Coromandel, Northland and Lower North Island

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 58 fishing vessels were active in this region across all in-scope methods including BLL, SLL, trawl, set net, purse seine, and Danish seine. Vessel home ports included Auckland, Castlepoint, Houhora, Kaipara, Mangonui, Onerahi, Raupo, Ruakaka, Tora, Totara North, Tutukaka, Wellington, Whangarei, Whangaroa and Whitianga.

The 2023-24 fishing season was busy and relationships between Liaison Officers and fishers/Licensed Fish Receivers (LFRs) and the fishing industry continue to grow. With skippers and LFRs becoming more comfortable reaching out to LOs, the role is becoming busier and more productive.

Over the course of the year, timely and detailed information on fisher engagement was fed through the programme and documented in the liaison database. Any trigger/audit responses were acted on in a timely manner and documented when required. Over the year, 46 triggers were responded to with nearly all having positive engagement from the skipper or vessel operator. Vessel visits around the fleet were carried out over most of the allocated vessels with 55 vessel visits undertaken throughout the region. Some transient fishers rely more on phone calls and emails to engage with them, and this side of the programme is growing and works well when the vessel has already been visited and there is already an established relationship. All new vessels received visits as well as follow up communications once fishing had started, in order to fine tune seabird plans and vessel operations. A total of seven new vessels started fishing this year and all received PSRMPs.

Nearly all vessels agreed to meet the majority of mitigation standards. Some bluenose/hapuka BLL vessels struggle to meet the standards relating to tori line aerial extent and sink rates, but they are open and honest about this and actively looking for solutions. The BLL fishers have come a long way with haul mitigation devices but are still a little frustrated with lack of definition in the regulations.

The supply of tori line equipment has been both a great relationship builder and improvement in the quality of materials used, which has hopefully been reflected in bycatch outcomes. All new BLL vessels receive a tori line mitigation package as part of the seabird plan set up. All vessel visits included the offer of mitigation equipment, and almost all active BLL/SLL vessels received mitigation equipment over the course of the season, some multiple times. Moving forward it is suspected that there will be increasing engagement from fishers, LFRs and industry outside of the traditional vessel visits.

6.3 South Island SLL

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 10 surface longline vessels were active in this region. Vessel home ports included Greymouth, Mangonui, Nelson, Tauranga and Westport.

The southern bluefin tuna (STN) surface longline fishing season off the east coast of the South Island (ECSI) operated from February to early/mid-June 2024 with most fishing occurring in Stat Areas 024, 301, and 302. In general, this fishery usually starts in the south and moves northwards with seabird captures more prominent in February/March and fur seal captures more prominent in May/June. Protected species captures consisted predominantly of smaller albatrosses/mollymawks (n=51, 92% dead), New Zealand fur seal (n=46, 22% dead), unidentified petrel prion or shearwater (n=46, 80% dead), great albatrosses (n=25, 88% dead), white-chinned petrel (n=15, 100% dead) and unidentified albatrosses (n=11, 91% dead).

This season saw several notable operational changes that materially affected protected species interactions. For the first time, the entire SLL fleet was fitted with FNZ camera systems and, also a first, almost all vessels deployed Hookpods alongside a variety of line-weighting arrangements. The fleet also arrived earlier than usual, and more vessels fished for longer periods than in past years. These two shifts, comprehensive camera coverage and widespread, largely new use of Hookpods, improved reporting consistency and revealed how different weighting and pod configurations can influence capture risk. Furthermore, the industry Code of Practice, which was initially implemented by industry in 2023, was reviewed and updated for the 2024 season.

The presence of cameras contributed towards consistently higher levels of capture reports. This increased confidence in reported numbers revealed that a small number of vessels accounted for a disproportionate

share of captures and that many large capture events clustered around full-moon periods. Risk was particularly high on the February moon (22-28 February) when bird abundance and clear and calm conditions combined with inexperienced Hookpod use and insufficient weighting and set depth increased vulnerability. Many vessels within the fleet were also fishing further to the South, which is known for higher levels of seabird abundance.

Lessons were learned on this initial moon phase. In combination with a higher awareness of risk areas to avoid, once crews moved weights nearer to the hook and added extra weight, capture rates fell on subsequent moon phases. Five vessels arrived into the fishery with weighted hooks, while many others had weights fitted further up the snood. It wasn't until the first full moon when vessels realised moving the weight closer the hook was necessary to minimise seabird interactions.

Key takeaways include the following:

- Everyone needs to be signed up to the industry Code of Practice well in advance of entering the fishery. This ensures everyone is on the same page and allows the LO to ensure the vessels' mitigation devices and procedures meet the Code of Practice during a 'pre-departure check'.
- Full moon periods are particularly high risk, and more consideration needs to go into how we deal with these periods when we have the most seabird captures but also the most fish catch. Discussions could include management options like fleet or per-moon bird limits, temporary effort reductions, or rapid closures.
- On average, vessels with weighted hooks and Hookpods took far less birds. Weighting improves sink rate and it appears the use of Hookpods without a weight near the hook could have a higher risk of entanglement in the snood loop.
- There needs to be a plan for the possibility that Hookpods may not be freely available next season. Cost remains a large barrier and most operators have said they won't buy them. Setting captures are likely to increase if Hookpods are not in use for this fleet.
- Hauling devices could use some standardisation and we need to ensure all vessels have one that is effective and in use when required.
- In general, skippers could also still improve on code use for protected species ID as XAL (unidentified albatross) is still being used as a fallback. Messaging is to try and at least report down to XGA (great albatrosses) and XMA (smaller albatrosses).
- There could be improvements in the consistency of fishers reporting triggers directly to the LO as this seemed to drop off later in the season.

6.4 Upper South Island (West Coast and Tasman Bay)

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 46 fishing vessels were active in this region across BLL, SLL, trawl, set net and Danish seine methods. Vessel home ports included Anakiwa, Greymouth, Motueka, Havelock, Nelson, Picton, Tarakohe, Waikawa and Westport.

Liaison activity centered on regular engagement with vessel operators across bottom longline, trawl, and inshore fleets, supported by ongoing development, review, and maintenance of PSRMPs. This included vessel visits, phone briefings, follow-up on trigger and observer audit events, distribution of mitigation materials and consistent database management to ensure accurate recording of vessel information and risk responses. All of the ports in this region were visited. The general attitudes of vessel operators/skippers are improving and those who are left in the industry are managing things much better and seem to be taking Liaison Officers and protected species work much more seriously.

There is a focus on bringing a few remaining vessels into the programme. A few very small vessels (often part-timers) come and go within each area, which makes these vessels hard to find and more difficult to

manage as they are often tucked away and fish only occasionally. Even though they are low risk, more time is needed to brief and draft up PSRMPs for these few operators. While vessel numbers seem to be reducing, potentially as much as 20% in the last four years, increasing work is required as mitigation standards and expectations develop. It can be difficult to find time to work with low-risk vessels, so efforts are predominantly focused on high-risk fisheries and vessel operators.

Stakeholder engagement involved regular participation in industry and Fisheries New Zealand meetings, workshops, and committee discussions, with a focus on improving mitigation practices, and providing practical advice to fishers. This included contributing to mitigation initiatives such as a CSP project looking at the effects of hook and bait type on commercial longline fisheries bycatch (MIT2023-01), distributing mitigation gear (e.g. Hookpods and tori line materials), and supporting fishers to implement effective risk reduction measures. Engagement remained closely aligned with industry needs, combining technical guidance with on-the-ground support and post-capture event follow-up.

Mitigation efforts were primarily focused on reducing warp strike risk in trawl fisheries, improving offal management to limit seabird attraction, strengthening capture response and PSRMP implementation, and providing practical mitigation tools and advice to vessels. These were supported by targeted engagement with higher-risk vessels. While cameras are showing more captures, we expect to see improvements next year.

6.5 Central South Island

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 24 fishing vessels were active in this region across BLL, trawl, set net and Danish seine methods. Vessel home ports included Akaroa, Kaikoura, Lyttelton and Timaru.

There was good progress in the central South Island this year, with multiple face-to-face visits to each fisher based in Timaru and Lyttelton. Kaikoura received only one physical visit, which was supplemented by phone calls, emails, and mail, to maintain contact. With few exceptions, these interactions were cordial and essential for maintaining working relationships. The reporting of triggers was also very good overall. Occasional missed reports occurred due to vessels being split between different LOs, leading to confusion over who should be notified.

This was the first full fishing year where the South Island Hector's Dolphin Bycatch Reduction Plan (BRP) was implemented. According to the BRP Annual Report, although reported captures increased to 15, this likely reflects improved monitoring from onboard cameras rather than a clear increase in risk (Fisheries New Zealand, 2025). No Fishing-Related Mortality Limits were exceeded, indicating the BRP seems to be broadly meeting its objectives. Most captures occurred in bottom trawl fisheries, highlighting a key concern that trawl risk may be higher than previously assumed and should be reassessed. The Liaison Programme played a large role in follow-up responses, with all captures triggering management actions and industry-led mitigation measures.

All Lyttelton vessels and one Timaru based vessel now have access to acoustic dolphin deterrent devices (DDD), which is hoped to reduce capture numbers. By the end of next fishing year, we should have a better understanding of whether capture numbers represent a new trend. One operator has implemented their own mitigation plan, voluntarily excluding certain areas and two additional vessels have also adopted this plan.

Anecdotally, the common denominators for Hector's dolphin captures appear to be vessels fishing close to the coast, offshore near larger rivers, or in murky water. The importance of retaining dead Hector's dolphins is continuing to be emphasized, even when necropsies might not occur. Toward the end of the fishing year, one vessel caught multiple common dolphins, and it was recommended that the vessel move from the area where the event occurred.

Seabird captures were also higher than usual. Two significant incidents involving multiple net captures of shags occurred with two trawl vessels. It appeared that these were accidental and largely unavoidable, except for one vessel that fished too close to a known shag breeding area.

Seabird identification remains a common problem in this region as well. Vessel owners have been asked to encourage skippers to take photos of any seabirds caught and show them a profile diagram, which should assist in species identification.

6.6 Lower South Island

During the 2023-24 fishing season, 34 fishing vessels were active in this region across BLL, SLL, trawl and set net methods. Vessel home ports included Bluff, Carey's Bay, Dunedin, Invercargill, Moeraki, Port Chalmers, Riverton and Taieri Mouth.

Liaison Officer activity in the Lower South Island was characterised by relatively low levels of reported trigger events but included high-profile species with peak activity in early 2024. Liaison Officer activity included targeted responses to protected species bycatch events, ongoing administration of PSRMPs, and continued engagement with fishers and stakeholders.

Seabird captures were a recurring problem across the season, particularly in inshore trawl fisheries where mitigation options remain limited. Notable events included a high-volume capture of 69 tītī (sooty shearwaters) in a single trawl, as well as repeated incidents involving mollymawks, albatross, petrels, and gulls through warp strikes, deckstrikes, and net captures. This resulted in a focus on risks associated with vessel lighting near sensitive seabird areas and further support on species identification. Fishers reported that some seabird captures, particularly bulk tītī events, may be more common than previously understood, suggesting historical underreporting prior to increased monitoring. Vessel engagement focused on improving reporting, reinforcing crew awareness, and promoting mitigation practices such as offal management and the use of tori lines. However, the lack of proven solutions for some trawl interactions remains a key challenge.

Dolphin captures, including a reported Hector's dolphin mortality, were a key focus due to their conservation significance and management implications. Follow-up engagement highlighted the adoption of mitigation measures such as dolphin deterrent devices (DDD) or pingers, as well as industry-led initiatives including voluntary closures. However, observations from fishers indicated that dolphins were still present and in close proximity to vessels during gear hauling, raising concerns about the real-world effectiveness of these devices. The events also exposed gaps in awareness of the Liaison Programme among some operators and reinforced the need for continued outreach and stakeholder coordination.

There were five hoiho (yellow-eyed penguin) captures in set net this season and were treated as high-priority events. Engagement with fishers focused on understanding the circumstances of captures, particularly where no obvious mitigation actions were identified, highlighting the difficulty in preventing interactions in certain areas and conditions. These events prompted coordination with DOC and external partners such as the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust to support response and information sharing. Repeated captures emphasised the ongoing risk to hoiho in inshore set net fisheries and the need for continued effort to identify and implement effective mitigation approaches.

Mitigation efforts over the reporting period focused primarily on reducing seabird, hoiho, and marine mammal bycatch, alongside improving reporting and mitigation practice uptake. Repeated seabird interactions, such as large captures of tītī in trawl nets and warp strike mortality of mollymawks and albatross, drove emphasis on operational practices, crew awareness, and tools like tori lines. Hoiho captures in set nets were another key concern, with multiple incidents prompting engagement with skippers, although fishers often identified limited practical mitigation options. Marine mammal risk, particularly Hector's dolphin captures, led to uptake

of measures like pingers, however, as discussed above, their effectiveness was questioned after observations of dolphins remaining close to vessels during hauling. Across all areas, improving accurate reporting and ensuring vessels had active PSRMPs were central priorities to support better mitigation outcomes.

For this region, the tail end of the season was focused on bringing our new Liaison Officer, Mike Black, onboard.

Plans for the 2024-25 Fishing Year

Project MIT2024-01 was confirmed as part of the 2024-25 CSP Annual Plan to maintain liaison capacity across inshore fleets. Building on the work of the previous liaison project, MIT2021-01, the Liaison Programme will continue to work on encouraging vessel operators to meet best-practice bycatch mitigation. The programme is now reaching a stage in which the majority of the priority fleets have been visited and brought into the programme by Liaison Officers. The review and development of PSRMPs as well as following up on protected species trigger events will continue to be a core function, however the programme will stop focussing on expansion and refocus efforts on developing more efficient and effective risk prioritisation.

As discussed above, improved protected species capture verification with the rollout of Electronic Monitoring means that Liaison Officer engagement will soon be able to focus less on inputs (e.g. PSRMP development) and more on vessel-specific outputs (e.g. capture rates). Based on capture levels to date, there will continue to be a large focus on the surface longline fleet. In general, as with previous years, work between agencies is needed to allow for effective Liaison Programme operations and to overcome constraints in reporting capability, efficient responses, and feedback loops. It is envisaged that this will be addressed through the database development currently underway.

Work over the next three years is expected to establish a more effective database for management, utilise and feed back into electronic monitoring data collection, create improved risk response protocols, increase programme visibility with quota holders and ensure finer-scale operational oversight of the programme through the support of a dedicated Bycatch Response Coordinator.

In order to keep costs down, the project will look to pass lower-risk harbour net vessels onto Seafood New Zealand as well as start to reduce the level of bycatch mitigation materials supplied to the fleets. There will be an annual review of the Liaison Programme to assess project delivery, priorities, scope, and costs.

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Appendix 1: Liaison Programme Plan and Objectives

Vision

Support fishers to work towards zero threatened and protected species bycatch by 2050 (thereby aligning with Te Mana o te Taiao– the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020).

Overarching Objective

To connect fishers to the right tools in order to deliver on the vision and outcomes of departmental strategies and relevant cross-government plans.

5-year Objective

By 2025, the inshore & HMS core fleet at high risk of protected species captures use best available mitigation methods relevant to their operations.

**Live document subject to review*

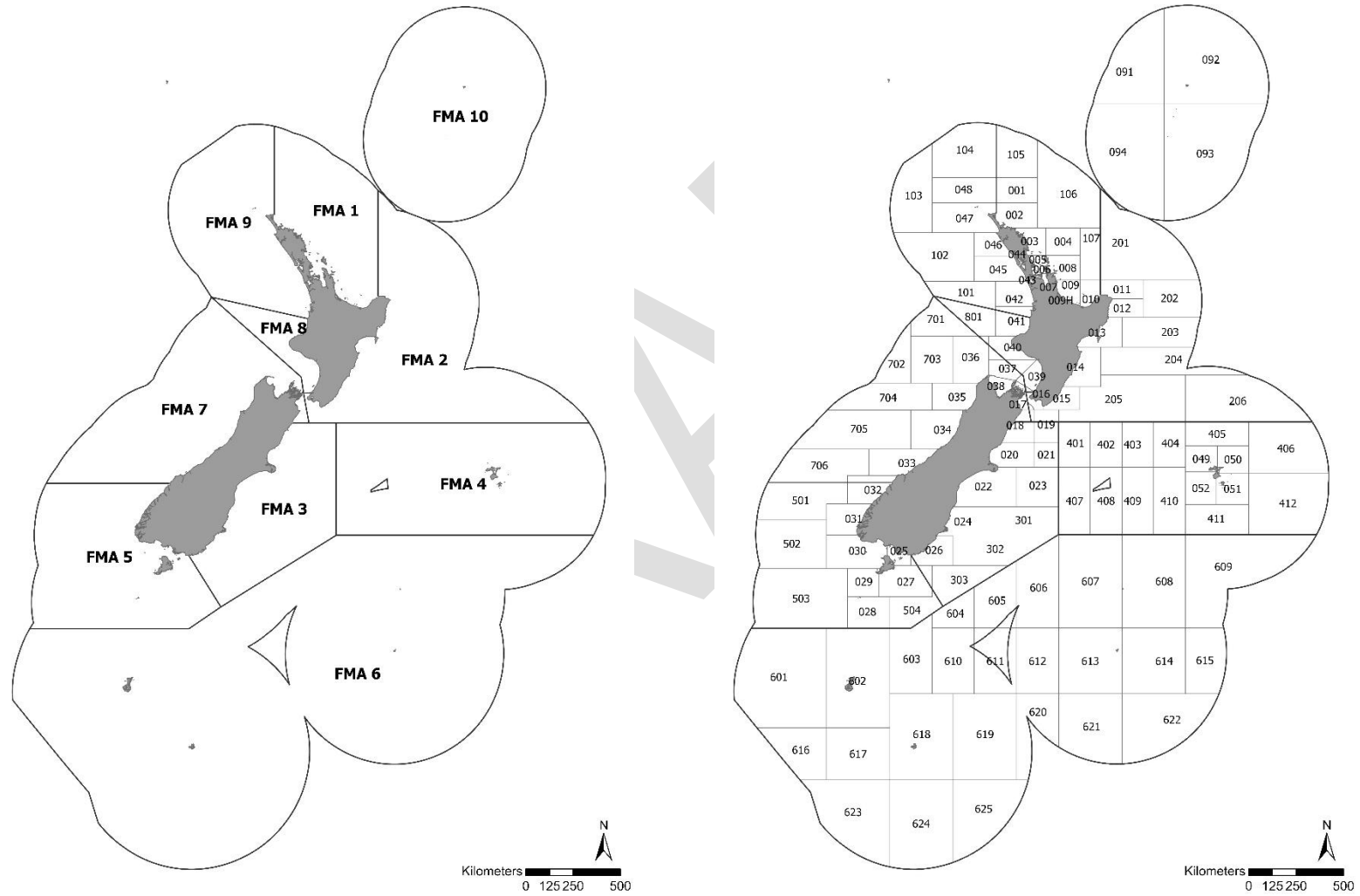
Programme Performance Measures (Metrics to determine success against 5-year objective):

- Proportion of active vessels in each fleet that have PSRMPs
- Proportion of PSRMPs that meet Mitigation Standards in each fleet
- Percentage of fishing vessel adherence to their PSRMPs
- Number of threatened and protected species captured
- Proportion of the fleet with a high rating for LO confidence in the operator's ability to implement the toolbox (1 - not interested, 5 – really engaged)
- Proportion of templates reviewed annually (i.e. PSRMP templates, etc.)
- Proportion of fleet with good quality mitigation
- Proportion/number of vessels visited

Programme Objectives				
Year 1- 2020/21 Fishing Year	Year 2- 2021/22 Fishing Year	Year 3- 2022/23 Fishing Year	Year 4- 2023/24 Fishing Year	Year 5- 2024/25 Fishing Year
- 100% of SLL vessels have PSRMPs - 100% of BLL FMA1 vessels have PSRMPs - 60% of BLL vessels (outside FMA1) have PSRMPs - 90% of Inshore Trawl vessels have PSRMPs - 15% of SN vessels have PSRMPs (focus on FMAs 2,3,5&7) - All relevant vessels visited at least once and PSRMPs and Mitigation folders are updated as needed - Provision of mitigation materials - All data is entered and checked - Develop Liaison Programme Plan and Objectives	- Maintain PSRMP coverage for: - o 100% of SLL vessels - o 100% of BLL FMA1 - 100% of BLL vessels have PSRMPs - 100% of Inshore Trawl vessels have PSRMPs - 30% of SN vessels have PSRMPs - All relevant vessels visited at least once and PSRMPs and Mitigation folders are updated as needed - Provision of mitigation materials - All data is entered and checked - Liaison effort is prioritised - Review of performance measures to make sure they are fit for purpose	- Maintain PSRMP coverage for: - o 100% of SLL vessels - o 100% of BLL vessels - o 100% of Inshore Trawl vessels - 60% of SN vessels have PSRMPs - All relevant vessels visited at least once and PSRMPs and Mitigation folders are updated as needed - Provision of mitigation materials - All data is entered and checked - Liaison effort is prioritised with risk-based system - Review PSRMP templates (considering needs of NPOA-Sharks, the Hector's Māui TMP and BRP)	- Maintain PSRMP coverage for: - o 100% of SLL vessels - o 100% of BLL vessels - o 100% of Inshore Trawl vessels - 80% of SN vessels have PSRMPs - All relevant vessels visited at least once and PSRMPs and Mitigation folders are updated as needed - Provision of mitigation materials - All data is entered and checked - Liaison effort continues to be prioritised with risk-based system - Liaison Officers trained in the use of the <u>new</u> Liaison Database - Review of performance measures to make sure they are fit for purpose	- Maintain PSRMP coverage for: - o 100% of SLL vessels - o 100% of BLL vessels - o 100% of Inshore Trawl vessels - 100% of SN vessels have PSRMPs - All relevant vessels visited at least once and PSRMPs and Mitigation folders are updated as needed - Provision of mitigation materials - All data is entered and checked - Liaison effort continues to be prioritised with risk-based system - Review PSRMP templates

Appendix 2: FMAs and Statistical Areas

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Appendix 4: PSRMP Templates for the 2023-24 Fishing Year

DRAFT

SLL - Protected Species Risk Management Plan

FV		Vessel ID		Home Port	
Owner		Skipper/s		Date	

Purpose of this RMP

This PSRMP documents agreed procedures that skippers of this vessel will follow to reduce risk of protected species captures and includes implementation of best practice as outlined by the Mitigation Standards. **This document is to be prominently displayed onboard.** Skipper(s) and crew must also read and understand the supporting 10 Golden Rules & Operational Procedures. Information in this plan will be provided to MPI and SNZ Inshore for reporting and management.

Regulations

Regulatory requirements can be found in the SLL circular (2023), which are included in your mitigation folder. All protected species captures must be reported using the electronic NFPS Catch Report.

Remember it is not illegal to catch a protected species, however it is illegal to not report it!

Vessel's Practices	
Discharge management <i>Describe how used bait and fish waste is contained; location of discharge; contingency plan</i>	- No discharge immediately before or during setting. - While hauling, all used bait is retained. Fish waste is held or batched at 30min intervals (select one or indicate if both are used). - Storage & discharge point: Example – used bait and fish waste are held in fish bins and discarded off the opposite side to the hauling station - Gear and deck are kept clean of any remaining fish waste
Tori line	- Tori line meets regulations, can be adjusted over hook-bearing line, and used duration of all sets - Attachment height and location: x metres above waterline at stern - Spare materials and/or second tori line are carried on board
Hook-shielding device	- x% gear coverage (or No)
Weighting regime	- 100% weighted snoods - High risk: Weight and distance from hook (g/ m) - Outside high risk: Weight and distance from hook (g/ m) - Bait is sufficiently thawed (i.e. not fully frozen)
Night-setting	- Always/Sometimes/Never (if not 'Always' explain when night-setting may not occur)
High-risk periods/areas <i>Describe areas and times discussed with LOs</i>	- Some high-risk periods/areas include: (include areas and times discussed with LO) - Examples – Stop fishing, increase setting sink rate, avoid fishing near seabird colonies? - Vessel follows the industry COP for ECSI STN1 fishery (delete if vessel doesn't fish this fishery)
Hauling protocols <i>Describe how seabirds are actively deterred</i>	- If break during hauling, hooks are ensured to remain 10m below the surface (how?) - Hauling mitigation behaviour: Examples - hose, low pressure water sprayers, sound (such as banging a gaff against the superstructure) and/or vessel manoeuvres - Hauling mitigation device: Example – hauling curtain
Light management <i>Describe agreed daily practices</i>	- All/No/Some - Lighting reduced to minimum requirements and intensity for operations and safety - All/No/Some - Non-essential activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided - All/No/Some - High-risk areas (as discussed with LO) are avoided when using external lights - All/No/Some - Black-out blinds and amber (blue and violet-filtered) lights are used as appropriate - All/No/Some - Essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light required areas
Handling and Release	- Skipper and crew know and follow safe protected species handling and release procedures - Live fish (meeting legal requirements) are returned to the sea as soon as practicable - Turtle release kit is kept onboard and accessible
Other (gear/mitigation)	- Example - 100% use of large 16/0 circle hooks and fish bait are used to reduce risk to turtles

Contact your Liaison Officer when a TRIGGER POINT (below) is reached

24 hr period	(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle or basking shark (Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small (e.g. petrel/shearwater) seabirds (Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark		
7 day period	(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals		
Contact:	Ph:	Email:	

BLL - Protected Species Risk Management Plan

FV		Vessel ID		Home Port	
Owner		Skipper/s		Date	

Purpose of this PSRMP

This PSRMP documents agreed procedures that skippers of this vessel will follow to reduce risk of protected species captures and includes implementation of best practice as outlined by the Mitigation Standards. **This document is to be prominently displayed onboard.** Skipper(s) and crew must also read and understand the supporting 10 Golden Rules & Operational Procedures. Information in this plan will be provided to MPI and SNZ Inshore for reporting and management.

Regulations

Regulatory requirements can be found in the BLL circular (2021), which are included in your mitigation folder. All protected species captures must be reported using the electronic NFPS Catch Report.

Remember it is not illegal to catch a protected species however it is illegal to not report it!

Vessel's Practices				
Discharge management <i>Describe how used bait and fish waste is contained; location of discharge; contingency plan</i>	- No discharge immediately before or during setting. - While hauling, all used bait is retained. Fish waste is held or batched at ≥30 minute intervals (select one or indicate if both are used). - Storage, batching procedures & discharge point: <i>Example – used bait and fish waste are held in fish bins and discarded off the opposite side to the hauling station. Check open scuppers near processing.</i> - Gear and deck are kept clean of any remaining fish waste			
Tori line	- Tori line meets regulations, can be adjusted over hook-bearing line, and used duration of all sets - Attachment height and location: x metres above waterline at stern - Spare materials and/or second tori line is carried on board			
Weighting regime	Regime 1 (target)	Regime 2 (target)	Regime 3 (target)	Comments
Backbone diameter				
Setting Speed	(Range)	(Range)	(Range)	
Low Risk weighting (Night)	kg/m (Hooks)	kg/m (Hooks)	kg/m (Hooks)	(material)
High Risk weighting (i.e. Day or moonlit night)	kg/m (Hooks)	kg/m (Hooks)	kg/m (Hooks)	(remove floats/change speed)
Float size and placement	m (Hooks)	m (Hooks)	m (Hooks)	(Flag variable configurations)
Rope length: wt to mainline				
High-risk periods/areas	- Some high-risk periods/areas include: (include areas and times discussed with LO) - Examples – Stop fishing, increase setting sink rate, avoid fishing near seabird colonies?			
Sink rate/Hook depth <i>Records kept onboard per regs</i>	- Bottle or TDR tests will be conducted (when/how often?) on slowest sinking hook for each setup - Bait is sufficiently thawed (i.e. not fully frozen)			
Hauling protocols <i>Describe how seabirds are actively deterred</i>	- If break during hauling, hooks are ensured to remain 10m below the surface (how?) - Hauling mitigation behaviour: <i>Examples – hose, low pressure water sprayers, sound (such as banging a gaff against the superstructure) and/or vessel manoeuvres</i> - Hauling mitigation device: <i>Example – baffler</i>			
Light management <i>Describe agreed daily practices</i>	All/No/Some - Lighting reduced to minimum requirements and intensity for operations and safety All/No/Some - Non-essential activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided All/No/Some - High-risk areas (as discussed with LO) are avoided when using external lights All/No/Some - Black-out blinds and amber (blue and violet-filtered) lights are used as appropriate All/No/Some - Essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light required areas			
Handling and Release	- Skipper and crew know and follow safe protected species handling and release procedures - Live fish (meeting legal requirements) are returned to the sea as soon as practicable			
Other (gear/mitigation)				

Contact your Liaison Officer when a TRIGGER POINT (below) is reached

24 hr period	(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle or basking shark (Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small (e.g. petrel/shearwater) seabirds (Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark		
7 day period	(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals		
Contact:		Ph:	Email:

Set net - Protected Species Risk Management Plan

FV		Vessel ID		Port	
Owner		Skipper/s		Date	
Vessel photo		Mitigation photo		Mitigation photo	

Purpose of this RMP

This PSRMP documents agreed procedures and actions that skippers of this vessel will follow to reduce risk of protected species captures and includes implementation of best practice as outlined by the Mitigation Standards. **This document is to be prominently displayed onboard.** Skipper(s) and crew must also read and understand the supporting 10 Golden Rules & Operational Procedures. Information in this plan will be provided to MPI and SNZ Inshore for reporting and management.

Regulations

All protected species captures should be reported using the electronic NFPS Catch Report.

Remember it is not illegal to catch a protected species however it is illegal not to report it!

Vessel's Practices	
Discharge management <i>Describe equipment and procedures to hold or batch fish waste; contingency plan where required</i>	- No discharge immediately before or during setting. - While hauling, fish waste is held or batched at ≥30 minute intervals opposite side to the hauling station <i>(select one or indicate if both)</i>. - All practicable stickers are removed from the net before each shot. - Gear and deck are kept clean of any remaining fish waste <u>Cut & offal discards:</u> <u>Whole fish discards:</u> <u>Storage & discharge point:</u> <i>Example: Stored in fish bins and dumped from stern while steaming</i>
Net interaction	- Haul as quickly as practicable to minimise time net is at/near surface - Gear maintenance and repairs are conducted while net is onboard or during low risk periods - Fishing gear/equipment is regularly inspected and maintained (e.g. winches) - Nets are not stalled
High-risk periods/areas	- Spatial placement of nets don't pose unnecessary risk (i.e. near seabird colonies/foraging grounds) - Some high-risk periods/areas include: <i>(include areas and times discussed with LO)</i> - <i>Examples – Stop fishing, increase setting sink rate, avoid fishing near seabird colonies?</i>
Light management <i>Describe agreed daily practices</i>	- All/No/Some - Lighting reduced to minimum requirements and intensity for operations and safety - All/No/Some - Non-essential activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided - All/No/Some - High-risk areas (as discussed with LO) are avoided when using external lights - All/No/Some - Black-out blinds and amber (blue and violet-filtered) lights are used as appropriate - All/No/Some - Essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light required areas
Handling and Release	- Skipper and crew know and follow safe protected species handling and release procedures - Return live fish (meeting legal requirements) to the sea as soon as practicable
Other (gear/mitigation)	

Contact your Liaison Officer when a TRIGGER POINT (below) is reached

24 hr period	(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle or basking shark (Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small (e.g. petrel/shearwater) seabirds (Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark
7 day period	(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals
Contact:	Ph: Email:

Trawl - Protected Species Risk Management Plan

FV		Vessel ID		Home Port	
Owner		Skipper/s		Date	
Vessel photo		Mitigation photo- offal control equipment		Mitigation photo- warp device	

Purpose of this PSRMP

This PSRMP documents agreed procedures and actions that skippers of this vessel will follow to reduce risk of protected species captures and includes implementation of best practice as outlined by the Mitigation Standards. **This document is to be prominently displayed onboard.** Skipper(s) and crew must also read and understand the supporting 10 Golden Rules & Operational Procedures. Information in this plan will be provided to MPI and SNZ Inshore for reporting and management.

Regulations

All protected species captures should be reported using the electronic NFPS Catch Report.

Remember it is not illegal to catch a protected species however it is illegal not to report it!

Vessel's Practices	
Fish waste management <i>Describe equipment and procedures to hold or batch fish waste; contingency plan where required</i>	- No discharge immediately before/during setting or hauling. - No continuous discharge when towing; Fish waste is held or batched at ≥30 minute intervals (select one or indicate if both) - All practicable stickers are removed from the net before each shot. - Deck kept clean and scuppers controlled to contain any fish waste/offal during processing catch <u>Cut & offal discards:</u> <u>Whole fish discards:</u> <u>Storage & discharge point:</u> Example: Stored in fish bins and dumped from stern while steaming
Warp <i>Describe equipment and procedures, type of device.</i>	- <u>Warp mitigation device:</u> Example: baffle, warp-deflector, tori line, etc (and includes spare parts to maintain and effect repairs) - Warp mitigation device protects the warp (located closest to side where fish waste is discharged) - Warp mitigation device deployed (choose: at all times or when there is any potential risk to seabirds) and in a way to not increase the risk to seabirds (i.e. excessive trailing streamers) - Warps are not overly greased; warp splices are wrapped; sprags are removed; warp splices are not near water's surface when towing
Net interaction	- Haul as quickly as practicable to minimise time net is at/near surface - Gear maintenance and repairs are conducted while net is onboard or during low risk periods - Fishing gear/equipment is regularly inspected and maintained (e.g. winches)
High-risk periods/areas	- Some high-risk periods/areas include: (include areas and times discussed with LO) - Examples – Stop fishing, increase setting sink rate, avoid fishing near seabird colonies?
Light management <i>Describe agreed daily practices</i>	All/No/Some - Lighting reduced to minimum requirements and intensity for operations and safety All/No/Some - Non-essential activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided All/No/Some - High-risk areas (as discussed with LO) are avoided when using external lights All/No/Some - Black-out blinds and amber (blue and violet-filtered) lights are used as appropriate All/No/Some - Essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light required areas
Handling and Release	- Skipper and crew know and follow safe protected species handling and release procedures - Return live fish (meeting legal requirements) to the sea as soon as practicable
Other (gear/mitigation)	

Contact your Liaison Officer when a TRIGGER POINT (below) is reached

24 hr period	(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle or basking shark (Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small (e.g. petrel/shearwater) seabirds (Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark	
7 day period	(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals	
Contact:	Ph:	Email:

Harbour net - Protected Species Risk Management Plan

Gear type/ Fishing Method					
FV		Vessel ID		Home Port	
Owner		Skipper/s		Date	
Vessel photo		Mitigation photo		Mitigation photo	

Purpose of this RMP

This PSRMP documents agreed procedures and actions that skippers of this vessel will follow to reduce risk of protected species captures and includes implementation of best practice as outlined by the Mitigation Standards. **This document is to be prominently displayed onboard.** Skipper(s) and crew must also read and understand the supporting 10 Golden Rules & Operational Procedures. Information in this plan will be provided to MPI and SNZ Inshore for reporting and management.

Regulations

All protected species captures should be reported using the electronic NFPS Catch Report.

Remember it is not illegal to catch a protected species however it is illegal not to report it!

Vessel's Practices	
Fish waste management <i>Describe equipment and procedures to hold or batch fish waste; contingency plan where required</i>	- No discharge immediately before or during setting. - While hauling, fish waste is held or batched at ≥30 minute intervals opposite side to the hauling station <i>(select one or indicate if both)</i>. - All practicable stickers are removed from the net before each shot. - Gear and deck are kept clean of any remaining fish waste <u>Cut & offal discards:</u> <u>Whole fish discards:</u> <u>Storage & discharge point:</u> <i>Example: Stored in fish bins and dumped from stern while steaming</i>
Net interaction	- Haul as quickly as practicable to minimise time net is at/near surface - Gear maintenance and repairs are conducted while net is onboard or during low risk periods - Fishing gear/equipment is regularly inspected and maintained (e.g. winches) - Nets are not stalled
High-risk periods/areas	- Spatial placement of nets don't pose unnecessary risk (i.e. near seabird colonies/foraging grounds) - Some high-risk periods/areas include: <i>(include areas and times discussed with LO)</i> - <i>Examples – Stop fishing, increase setting sink rate, avoid fishing near seabird colonies?</i>
Light management <i>Describe agreed daily practices</i>	<i>All/No/Some</i> - Lighting reduced to minimum requirements and intensity for operations and safety <i>All/No/Some</i> - Non-essential activities requiring external lighting at night are avoided <i>All/No/Some</i> - High-risk areas (as discussed with LO) are avoided when using external lights <i>All/No/Some</i> - Black-out blinds and amber (blue and violet-filtered) lights are used as appropriate <i>All/No/Some</i> - Essential lights are shielded, angled, and/or positioned to only light required areas
Handling and Release	- Skipper and crew know and follow safe protected species handling and release procedures - Return live fish (meeting legal requirements) to the sea as soon as practicable
Other (gear/mitigation)	

Contact your Liaison Officer when a TRIGGER POINT (below) is reached

24 hr period	(Alive or Dead) Any great albatross, penguin, dolphin, whale, sea lion, turtle or basking shark (Alive or Dead) 2 albatrosses/mollymawks, or 5 small (e.g. petrel/shearwater) seabirds (Dead) Any black petrel, flesh-footed shearwater or white pointer shark
7 day period	(Alive or Dead) 10 protected seabirds of any type or 5 fur seals
Contact:	Ph: Email:

Appendix 5: Observer Audit Templates for the 2023-24 Fishing Year

All PSRMP Observer Audit templates were unchanged from the 2021 versions, with the exception of the purse seine audit form that was established in June 2023.

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Inshore Bottom Longline Vessel: Observer PSRMP Audit

Trip Number	Observer Code	Vessel Name		Trip start date	Trip end date
Target Species		FMA's fished		Number of sets	
Name of Skipper(s)					

Record Yes (Y), No (N), Not Applicable (N/A) or Unknown (U) in the boxes provided. If you answer N or U to any questions, please make detailed comments on the reverse.

Item 1	Did the vessel carry a copy of the appropriate Operational Procedures and 10 Golden Rules on board that was made available upon request?	N/A
Item 2	Was a copy of the vessel's Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP) readily available and in a place accessible to all crew?	N/A
Item 3	Were the skipper and crew familiar with the contents of the:	
	(a) Operational Procedures?	N/A
	(b) 10 Golden Rules?	N/A
	(c) Protected Species Risk Management Plan?	N/A
Item 4	Were any protected species capture trigger points reached during the trip? <i>(If yes, please describe in the comments)</i>	N/A
Item 5	After a trigger point was reached, did the crew: <i>(If yes, please describe in the comments)</i>	
	(a) Make changes to fishing operations?	N/A
	(b) Change the mitigation measures they implemented?	N/A
Item 6	Did a gear or equipment failure contribute to the risk of protected species captures during the trip? <i>(If yes, please describe in the comments)</i>	N/A
Item 7	Were all protected species captures reported on the Non-Fish Protected Species Catch Return as required by fisheries reporting regulations?	N/A
Item 8	Were protected species that were caught alive, handled and released according to the DOC Handling and Release Guide?	N/A

Fish waste and bait management

Item 9	Was all fish waste/offal discharge managed as per the vessel's PSRMP?	N/A
Item 10	Was all fish waste held on board immediately before and during setting?	N/A
Item 11	During hauling, were used baits and fish waste/offal held or batch discharged at intervals opposite to the side the vessel was hauling?	N/A

Mitigation

Item 12	Was a tori line deployed for the entirety of all sets?	N/A
Item 13	When deployed, did the tori line aerial extent* appear to be at least 50m? <i>(Please specify aerial extent in comments)</i>	N/A
Item 14	Were streamers brightly coloured and appear to be spaced at a maximum distance of 5 m apart along the entire aerial extent of the tori line?	N/A
Item 15	Could the tori line be adjusted or repositioned over the setting line to suit varying conditions?	N/A
Item 16	Did the vessel carry a spare tori line or parts to construct a second tori line if required?	N/A
Item 17	Did the vessel set exclusively at night**?	N/A
Item 18	Were any sink rate tests conducted while onboard? (i.e. bottle tests or TDR)	N/A
Item 19	Did the vessel keep records of any sink rate tests conducted? (i.e. bottle tests or TDR)	N/A
Item 20	Was the use of totally frozen bait avoided?	N/A

Hauling Protocols

Item 22 Were hooks kept below the surface during any breaks in hauling?

N/A

Item 23 Was there any mitigation used during hauling? (If yes, please describe in the comments)

N/A

Deck landing/impact

Item 24 Were lighting practices managed in a way that avoids attracting or disorienting seabirds?

N/A

** 'Aerial extent' is the distance from the stern to the place where the streamer line backbone enters the water.*

*** 'Night' is defined as between 0.5 hours after nautical dusk until 0.5 hours before nautical dawn.*

Please make a detailed comment for each item when required.

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Any further comments/observations:

Set Net Vessel: Observer PSRMP Audit



Fisheries New Zealand
Tini a Tangaroa

Trip Number	Observer Code	Vessel Name		Trip start date	Trip end date
Target Species		FMA's fished		Number of sets	
Name of Skipper(s)					

Record Yes (Y), No (N), Not Applicable (N/A) or Unknown (U) in the boxes provided. If you answer N or U to any questions, please make detailed comments on the reverse.

- Item 1 Did the vessel carry a copy of the appropriate Operational Procedures and 10 Golden Rules on board that was made available upon request? N/A
- Item 2 Was a copy of the vessel's Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP) readily available and in a place accessible to all crew? N/A
- Item 3 Were the skipper and crew familiar with the contents of the:
- (a) Operational Procedures? N/A
 - (b) 10 Golden Rules? N/A
 - (c) Protected Species Risk Management Plan? N/A
- Item 4 Were any protected species capture trigger points reached during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)* N/A
- Item 5 After a trigger point was reached, did the crew: *(If yes, please describe in the comments)*
- (a) Make changes to fishing operations? N/A
 - (b) Change the mitigation measures they implemented? N/A
- Item 6 Did a gear or equipment failure contribute to the risk of protected species captures during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)* N/A
- Item 7 Were all protected species captures reported on the Non-Fish Protected Species Catch Return as required by fisheries reporting regulations? N/A
- Item 8 Were protected species that were caught alive, handled and released according to the DOC Handling and Release Guide? N/A

Fish waste management

- Item 9 Was all fish waste/offal discharge managed as per the vessel's PSRMP? N/A
- Item 10 Was all fish waste held on board immediately before and during setting? N/A
- Item 11 During hauling, was fish waste/offal held or batch discharged at intervals opposite to the side the vessel was hauling? N/A

Placement

- Item 12 Did the skipper demonstrate awareness of high-risk areas in deciding where to fish? (i.e; away from seabird colonies and foraging grounds) *(If yes, please describe in the comments)* N/A

Net interaction

- Item 13 Was the net kept at the surface for an unexpected or unnecessary amount of time? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)* N/A
- Item 14 Was the net cleared of all practicable stickers prior to shooting? N/A

Deck landing/impact

- Item 15 Were all lighting practices managed in a way that avoids attracting or disorienting seabirds? N/A

Please make a detailed comment for each item when required.

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Any further comments/observations:

Inshore Surface Longline Vessel: Observer PSRMP Audit



Fisheries New Zealand
Tini a Tangaroa

Trip Number	Observer Code	Vessel Name		Trip start date	Trip end date
Target Species		FMA's fished		Number of sets	
Name of Skipper(s)					

Record Yes (Y), No (N), Not Applicable (N/A) or Unknown (U) in the boxes provided. If you answer N or U to any questions, please make detailed comments.

Item 1 Did the vessel carry a copy of the appropriate Operational Procedures and 10 Golden Rules on board that was made available upon request?

N/A

Item 2 Was a copy of the vessel's Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP) readily available and in a place accessible to all crew?

N/A

Item 3 Were the skipper and crew familiar with the contents of the:

(a) Operational Procedures?

N/A

(b) 10 Golden Rules?

N/A

(c) Protected Species Risk Management Plan?

N/A

Item 4 Were any protected species capture trigger points reached during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)*

Item 5 If a trigger point was reached, did the crew: *(If yes, please describe in the comments)*

(a) Make changes to fishing operations (e.g. move to a different fishing area)?

N/A

(b) Change the mitigation measures they implemented?

N/A

Item 6 Did a gear or equipment failure contribute to the risk of protected species captures during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)*

N/A

Item 7 Were all protected species captures reported on the Non-Fish Protected Species Catch Return, as required by fisheries reporting regulations?

N/A

Item 8 Were protected species that were caught alive, handled and released according to the DOC Handling and Release Guide?

N/A

Fish waste and bait management

Item 9 Was all fish waste/offal discharge managed as per the vessel's PSRMP?

N/A

Item 10 Was all fish waste held on board immediately before and during setting?

N/A

Item 11 During hauling, were used baits and fish waste/offal held or batch discharged at intervals opposite to the side the vessel was hauling?

N/A

Mitigation

Item 12 Which of the following mitigation methods were in place?

(a) Hook-shielding devices

N/A

(b) A tori line deployed for the entirety of all sets?

N/A

(c) Setting exclusively at night**?

N/A

(d) Line weighting as per their PSRMP?

N/A

(Please describe weight and distance from hook in the comments)

N/A

Item 13 If hook-shielding devices were in use, were they used on every hook?

N/A

Item 14 When deployed, did the aerial extent** of the tori line appear to be at least 75m?

N/A

Item 15 Were streamers brightly coloured and appear to be spaced at a maximum distance of 1 m apart and a minimum of 1 m in length, along the entire aerial extent of the tori line?

N/A

Item 16 Did the tori line attachment point appear higher than 6 m above the water?

N/A

Item 17 Could the tori line be adjusted or repositioned over the setting line to suit varying conditions?

N/A 

Item 18 Did the vessel carry a spare tori line or parts to construct a second tori line if required?

N/A 

Item 19 Was the use of totally frozen bait avoided?

N/A 

Item 20 Were any other mitigation methods or deterrents used? (If yes, please describe in the comments)

N/A 

Hauling protocols

Item 21 Were hooks kept below the surface during any breaks in hauling? Deck landing/impact

N/A 

Deck landing/impact

Item 22 Were lighting practices managed in a way that avoids attracting or disorienting seabirds?

N/A 

* 'Night' is defined as between 0.5 hours after nautical dusk until 0.5 hours before nautical dawn.

** 'Aerial extent' is the distance from the stern to the place where the streamer line backbone enters the water.

Please make a detailed comment for each item when required.

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Any further comments/observations:

Purse Seine Vessel: Observer PSRMP Audit



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

Trip number	Observer code	Vessel name		Trip start date	Trip end date
□ □ □ □	□ . □ □ □			□ □ / □ □ / □ □	□ □ / □ □ / □ □
Target species		FMA(s) fished		Number of sets observed	
Name of skipper(s)					

Record Yes (Y), No (N), Not Applicable (N/A) or Unknown (U) in the boxes provided. If you answer N or U to any questions, please make detailed comments on the reverse.

Documentation

- Item 1 Was a copy of the vessel's Protected Species Risk Management Plan (PSRMP) readily available and in a place accessible to all crew and observer? ☐
- Item 2 Did the vessel carry a copy of the appropriate 10 Golden Rules and Operational Procedures on board that was made available upon request? ☐
- Item 3 Were the skipper and crew familiar with the contents of the:
- (a) Protected Species Risk Management Plan? ☐
 - (b) 10 Golden Rules? ☐
 - (c) Operational Procedures? ☐

Protected Species Interactions

- Item 4 Were any protected species capture trigger points reached during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments.)* ☐
- Item 5 After a trigger point was reached, did the crew alter any fishing practices or operations (e.g. move to a different fishing area)? *(If yes, please describe in the comments.)* ☐
- Item 6 Did a gear or equipment failure contribute to the risk of protected species captures during the trip? *(If yes, please describe in the comments.)* ☐
- Item 7 Were all protected species captures reported on the Non-Fish Protected Species Catch Return as required by fisheries reporting regulations? ☐
- Item 8 Were protected species caught alive, handled and released according to the DOC Handling and Release Guide? ☐
- Item 9 Where applicable, was a sling or brailer used for large bycaught protected species (e.g. spine-tailed devil rays)? ☐

Fish waste management

- Item 10 Was all fish waste/offal discharge managed as per the vessel's PSRMP? ☐

Placement

- Item 11 Was a crew member made responsible for determining the presence/absence of protected species throughout fishing operations and reporting that information to the skipper? ☐
- Item 12 Did the vessel avoid setting gear on any observed protected species (i.e. marine mammals, or protected sharks and rays)? ☐

Other Mitigation

- Item 13 Were any other mitigation methods or deterrents used? *(If yes, please describe in the comments)* ☐

Deck landing/impact

- Item 14 Were lighting practices managed in a way that avoids attracting or disorienting seabirds? ☐

Please make a detailed comment for each item when required.

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Item No:

Any further comments/observations:

Appendix 6: Turtle Questionnaire to Inform Post-release Survival (2024)

Turtle Questionnaire

Vessel:

Capture Date:

Questionnaire Date:

General

1. What species of turtle? (leatherback or hard shell if species uncertain)

2. How big was the turtle? Carapace (top shell) length?

3. How the turtle was caught? (tick where applicable)

☐ Just holding the bait/hook in its mouth

☐ Hooked

☐ Externally or on the hard beak

☐ In the upper or lower jaw or corner of mouth

☐ Hook visible inside the mouth attached to soft tissue/jaw joint

☐ Suspected to be swallowed (hook not visible)

☐ Entangled

☐ In the main line

☐ In a branch line

☐ Other: _____

4. What was the animal's behaviour when caught?

☐ Dead/unconscious

☐ Alive – occasional voluntary movement of limbs

☐ Alive - lethargic

☐ Alive – active (rapid/strong swimming or movement on the deck)

5. What injuries were observed?

☐ No injuries

☐ Superficial abrasions/scratches/ligature/line marks – what part of the body? _____

☐ Bruising – what part of the body? _____

☐ Deep cuts, fractures to shell, fractured limbs

☐ Damage to eyes

☐ Partial or complete amputation of limb

☐ Water or froth discharging from mouth or nose

☐ Bleeding – from where? _____

6. Was the animal comatose/resuscitated? (Y/N)

7. If comatose or lethargic, was turtle allowed to recover on deck before being released? (Y/N/NA)

Release condition

8. How was the turtle released? (choose one):

☐ With all gear removed

☐ With hook and trailing line $\geq$ half the length of the carapace but not entangled

☐ With hook and trailing line $<$ half the length of the carapace but not entangled

☐ Entangled in line

9. What was the animal's behaviour upon release?

☐ Sunk without moving

☐ Remained at the surface without moving

☐ Did not deliberately swim away from the vessel for more than 1 minute

☐ Swam/dived deliberately away from the vessel

☐ Other, e.g., swam in circles, did not use both front flippers, could not right itself.

10. What tools were used for release?

☐ Dehooker

☐ Line cutter

☐ Knife

☐ Other: _____

Were the tools available and at hand sufficient for a quick release? (Y/N)

3. Any additional information/observations

- Was there any evidence of a previous fisheries interaction (e.g., embedded hook, trailing line)?

- Other turtles in the vicinity?

- Were there sea jellies in the area (e.g., jellyfish)?

- What hook type and size (including offset angle of the barbs) was used?

- Bait type?

- Set or haul?

- Depth of fishing gear/number of hooks between floats?

- Number of hooks from sea turtle to the nearest float?

- Species caught either side of the turtle?

- The duration of the fishing event?

- Weather/sea conditions at the time?

- Sea surface temperature?

- Did the animal have a tag? Any information on the tag?

Comments

Appendix 7: Bycatch Mitigation Document Tracking

This table is, at the time of this reporting period, a comprehensive list of all the mitigation documents handed out to fishers through the Liaison Programme. PDFs are available for download on the [DOC Liaison Programme webpage](#).

Surface Longline (SLL)

	Version
FINZ 10 Golden Rules – Small Vessel SLL	3.0 (2022)
FINZ 10 Golden Rules for NFPSCR	2022
SLL Tori Line Design Guide	2021
Small Vessel SLL Operational Procedures	3.0 (2021)
Turtle Handling and Release Fact Sheet	2022
Fur Seal Handling and Release and Crew Safety Guide	-
ACAP Hook Removal from Seabirds Guide	-
FINZ International and National Seabird Risk Frameworks	-
Fisheries (Seabird Mitigation Measures – Surface Longline) Circular	2024
MPI Shark Factsheets 1-4	2020
Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Standards Guide - SLL	2021
Managing Artificial Lights to Reduce Seabird Vessel Strikes	2022
Small Vessel Surface Longline Crew and Vessel Safety Guide	-
Tākaketai/ Black Petrel Factsheet	2020
Toanui/ Flesh-footed Shearwater Factsheet	2020
Observer PSRMP Audit Form	2021

Bottom Longline (BLL)

	Version
FINZ 10 Golden Rules – BLL	2.0
FINZ 10 Golden Rules for NFPSCR	2022
MPI BLL Circular One-pager	2021
Streamer Line and Bottle Tests – The Basics	2021
Sink Rate Test Protocol	2021
Sink Rate Test Record Sheet	2021
Guiding Principles for Improved Aerial Extent and Sink Rate	2021
BLL Tori Line Design Guide (>7m)	2021
Inshore BLL Operational Procedures	2.0 (2021)
ACAP Hook Removal from Seabirds Guide	-
Fisheries Seabird Mitigation Measures - BLL Circular	2021
FINZ International and National Seabird Risk Frameworks	-
Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Standards Guide - BLL	2021
Managing Artificial Lights to Reduce Seabird Vessel Strikes	2022
Tākaketai/ Black Petrel Factsheet	2020
Toanui/ Flesh-footed Shearwater Factsheet	2020
Observer PSRMP Audit Form	2021

Trawl

	Version
FINZ 10 Golden Rules – Coastal Trawl	3.0 (2024)
FINZ 10 Golden Rules for NFPSCR	2022
Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Standards Guide - under 28m trawl	2021
Managing Artificial Lights to Reduce Seabird Vessel Strikes	2022
FINZ International and National Seabird Risk Frameworks	-
Identifying New Zealand Mollymawks	2024
Toanui/ Flesh-footed Shearwater Factsheet	2020
Observer PSRMP Audit Form	2021

North Island specific

NI Coastal Trawler Operational Procedures	2.1 (2021)
MPI Factsheet - Hector's and Maui dolphins TMP (North Island)	2020
Tākoketai/ Black Petrel Factsheet	2020

South Island specific

SI Coastal Trawler Operational Procedures	1.5 (2020)
Warp Mitigation Options - Design Guide for Large Coastal Trawlers	-
Warp Strike Risk and Mitigation for Inshore and Coastal SI Trawlers	-
MPI Factsheet - South Island Hector's Dolphin BRP	2022
Hector's TMP South Island Trawl Restrictions	2020

Set Net

	Version
FINZ 10 Golden Rules – Coastal Setnet	3.0
FINZ 10 Golden Rules for NFPSCR	2022
MPI Shark Factsheets 1-4	2020
Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Standards Guide - Set Net	2021
Managing Artificial Lights to Reduce Seabird Vessel Strikes	2022
Identifying New Zealand Mollymawks	2024
Shag ID	2022
Acoustic Pinger Info Sheet	-
Observer Audit Form	2021

North Island specific

NI Coastal Setnet Operational Procedures	3.0 (2021)
Tākoketai/ Black Petrel Factsheet	2020
Toanui/ Flesh-footed Shearwater Factsheet	2020
MPI Factsheet - Hector's and Maui dolphins TMP (North Island)	2020

South Island specific

SI Coastal Setnet Operational Procedures	3.0 (2021)
FINZ YEP Factsheet	2022
FINZ SI Hector's Dolphin Factsheet	2022
MPI Factsheet - Hector's and Maui dolphins TMP (South Island)	2020
MPI Factsheet - South Island Hector's Dolphin BRP	2022

North Island Harbour Net

	Version
FINZ 10 Golden Rules – Harbour Net	2.0
FINZ 10 Golden Rules for NFPSCR	2022
NI Harbour Netting Operational Procedures	2.0 (2022)
Seabird Bycatch Mitigation Standards Guide - Set Net	2021
Managing Artificial Lights to Reduce Seabird Vessel Strikes	2022
Tākoketai/ Black Petrel Factsheet	2020
Toanui/ Flesh-footed Shearwater Factsheet	2020
Shag ID	2022
MPI Factsheet - Hector's and Maui dolphins TMP (North Island)	2020

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