



ALBERT TIMES

February 2008 Issue 22

"Don't be warped - trawl for fish, not birds"

From the desk of Admiral Albert Ross, MBE (Mighty Big Eater)

Well the holidays are over folks. I reckon this year's going to be a "big one" for the cousins and I. The squid fleet is back down here in my neck of the ocean, HQ is fully manned and the long range scouts are out looking for "free feeds". Get it while you can boys, that's what I say! MFish are trying to starve us all, what! With offal control, seabird standards and the NPOA, the chattering classes are all over this stuff (like a rash). There's offal control trials (batching and mincing), going on this year as well. Gosh, it's all a bit much being the centre of all this attention. I am hoping "Big Jim's" offal control regulation is underpinned with a good pinch of common sense, because I need those big steel lunchboxes operating down here. The cousins and I need that squid guts! What! I have briefed the flock to file flight plans so I can tell which vessels are placing the flock at increased risk by not batching, mincing or holding their offal during hauling and shooting as per their VMPs. My scouts tell me that this squid season, MFish observers are collecting seabird observation data to calculate the effectiveness of batch discharging of offal and collecting information on the numbers of seabirds and their behaviour when offal is batch-discharged across different interval times.

We are after your best photos of the cousins in action. You will be rewarded and may get your pic on the front cover of the next issue, don't be shy, send them in!

This month we have Nici Gibbs, Policy Manager at SeaFIC and Rebecca Bird, Marine Programme Leader at WWF contributing articles. Couple of great "birds" these two, thank you both for your contributions.

Chow Albert

Seabird Standards

The management of seabird interactions is set to come under MFish's Standards Framework with the recent release of a draft Seabird Standard and the revised draft Seabird National Plan of Action (NPOA).

The standard sets a numerical threshold for seabird mortality which, if triggered, will cause the Minister to consider whether additional management interventions are required to manage the effects of fishing-related mortality on seabirds. The standard covers all seabird species and all fisheries collectively. MFish proposes four options 2,000, 1,500, 1,000 or 500 seabirds. This compares with an estimated current fishing-related mortality of 3,000 to 11,500 seabirds.

The revised NPOA provides the framework for implementing the standard through fisheries plans prepared by MFish over the next two years. If a fishery does not achieve under a specified "maximum allowable rate of capture" derived from the standard, then MFish and DoC will assess why this has happened and involve stakeholders in a process to recommend an appropriate response. Regulatory interventions are preferred unless voluntary approaches are "likely to be adequate and effective".

SeaFIC is concerned that the draft standard and NPOA embed a management approach that is entirely government based with very little room for rights holder responsibility. Our initial

analysis suggests that there is no problem in theory with having a clear seabird standard. For instance, if properly set and implemented, the standard could provide a useful performance indicator to industry and could facilitate a shift towards effective rights-holder based management. In practice, however, the standard is not set appropriately, and the proposed implementation by MFish detracts from, rather than supports, rights holder mitigation initiatives. The standard will be extremely costly to monitor mainly as a result of substantial additional observer costs potentially detracting from the continued development and implementation of effective seabird mitigation across all fisheries.

The MFish consultation paper can be found at <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/Seabirds/default.htm> and submissions close on 14 March. SeaFIC will be working with industry to develop an approach to managing seabird interactions that is based on a proper assessment of risks, and provides stronger incentives for industry initiatives.
Nici Gibbs, SeaFIC

"ALBERT'S BEST PICS"

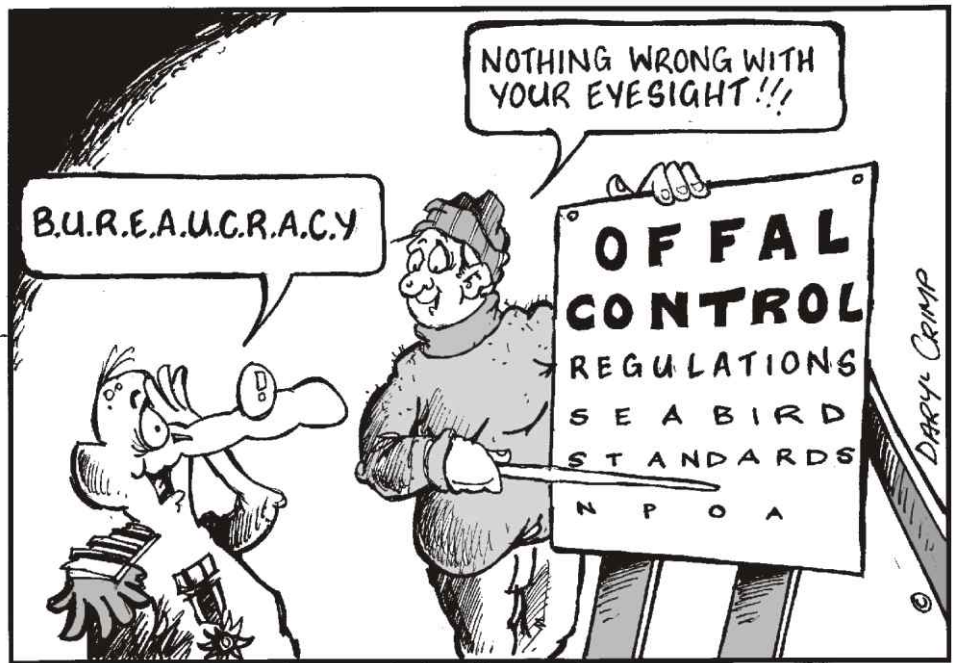
Readers to email in interesting photos of my cousins

The best photo may be placed on the front page of the next issue and wins (A Fishers Guide to NZ Seabirds)

WWF-New Zealand and Seabirds...our communities...

WWF is about people and nature. We are a science-based organisation that works together with many sectors: government, business, science, environment, and communities. Together we find solutions. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature:

Our work covers many different areas - from policy analysis to campaigning, from on-the-ground action to education and capacity building.



WHICH COUSIN OF MINE IS THIS?



Breeds on many islands and is more abundant than all other southern ocean albatrosses combined.

If you know the name of this bird then email your answer, name, postal address and date of publication to albertross@fishinfo.co.nz

BE IN TO WIN: Albert Ross' cap and the "Field Guide to New Zealand Seabirds"

Last Months Winner:
Richard Thesiger



Last months Cousin:
White capped albatross

WWF runs a comprehensive Marine Programme and New Zealand is a key player in meeting our international and national priorities for seabird conservation.

We engage:

- through Southern Seabird Solutions in face to face meetings such as the in-shore trawl workshop held in Tauranga in September 2007
- through Technical Advisory Roles including working alongside government and industry to oversee the trials and implementation of mitigation techniques in Southern waters

We co-operate:

- with partners committed to reducing seabird bycatch in their industries and fleets
- with fishers who have innovative ideas that require practical assistance to turn those ideas into action

We support and deliver:

- we believe there is merit in recognising industry-led efforts to mitigate bycatch. We deliver this by way of funding (of Southern Seabird Solutions), by lending our brand to seabird projects and initiatives and making sure our media recognises

efforts of key players in the industry who work to reduce bycatch and pull up those who don't

- we promote the WWF International Smart Gear competition and support our national winners
- we run public awareness campaigns to highlight the plight of seabirds such as albatross and we use our international linkages to ensure seabird conservation is a global priority

Rebecca Bird, WWF-New Zealand

DID YOU KNOW?

Fairy Prions are the smallest of all prions. They are also one of New Zealand's most abundant petrels. Research indicates that New Zealand has more than 50% of the world population.

Wedge tailed shearwaters have a wide variety in plumage: the birds in the Hawaiian and Indian Ocean colonies have white underparts; while birds on the Kermadec Islands, Norfolk Island, Lord Howe Island and other islands off the coast of Australia all have dark underparts.

To learn more go to www.albertross.co.nz and pick up this month's issue

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