

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Buller's Albatross

1	Family	Diomedidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Thalassarche bulleri</i> (Rothschild, 1893)
3	Common name	Buller's Albatross
4	Conservation status	
	Population visiting Australian territory	Vulnerable: A2d

5 Reasons for listing

The size of the population visiting Australian waters is likely to decrease by more than 20% over the next three generations (45 years: Vulnerable: A2) as a result of fishing bycatch (d). Globally, the species breeds at fewer than five locations (Vulnerable: D2).

Australian Fishing Zone	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	5,000,000 km ²	medium
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	5,000 km ²	low
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	22,000	medium
trend	decreasing	low
No. of sub-populations	1	medium
Generation time	15 years	medium

6 Intraspecific taxa

Separation of *T. bulleri* from *T. sp. nov.*, formerly known as *T. bulleri* "platei" (Robertson and Nunn, 1998) is controversial, but adopted here pending publication of genetic analysis.

7 Past range and abundance

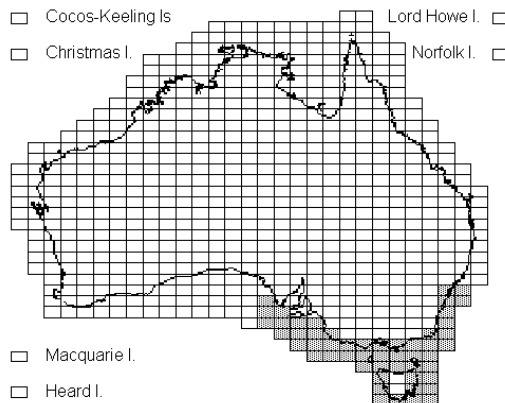
Breeding on Snares and Solander Is, New Zealand. Generally remains near breeding sites, but, even when breeding, may cross Tasman Sea. Recorded off the coast of south-eastern Australia, between Coffs Harbour and Eyre Peninsula (Marchant and Higgins, 1990, Gales, 1998). At Snares I., population apparently increased from 4,750 pairs in 1969 to 8,460 pairs in 1992 (Sagar *et al.*, 1994) but on Solander I. decreased from 4,300 pairs in 1986 to 2,500 pairs in 1996 (Croxall and Gales, 1998).

8 Present range and abundance

Current global population estimated at 50,000-55,000 individuals, with 11,000 pairs breeding annually (Gales, 1998, EABG, 1999).

9 Ecology

Buller's Albatrosses nest in colonies. They attend fishing vessels and, though their natural food source is not recorded, they are likely to take squid, fish and cephalopods (Marchant and Higgins, 1990, Murray *et al.*, 1993).



10 Threats

Despite an apparent increase in the breeding population at one colony, drowning in longline fishing gear kills an unsustainable 600 breeding adults annually in Japanese operations off New Zealand alone (Murray *et al.*, 1993). Some birds are also killed in the Australian Fishing Zone (Gales *et al.*, 1998) from longlining and as a result of collision with cables and warps used on fishing trawlers (EABG, 1999).

11 Information required

- 11.1 Develop genetic profiles to determine provenance of birds caught as bycatch.

12 Recovery objectives

- 12.1 Reduce at-sea threats to acceptable levels.
- 12.2 Obtain global agreement on conservation measures required.
- 12.3 Promote public awareness of the conservation needs of albatrosses.

13 Actions completed or under way

- 13.1 A Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) to minimise fishing bycatch has been prepared (EABG, 1998).
- 13.2 Effective mitigation techniques have been developed and are being improved.
- 13.3 Bycatch rates in the AFZ and the success of mitigation measures are monitored and the results quickly analysed.

- 13.4 Measures known to be effective in mitigating seabird bycatch within the AFZ are promoted by legislation, a code of practice and education programs.
- 13.5 A Recovery Plan has been written and a Recovery Team is in place.
- 14 Management actions required
None.
- 15 Organisations responsible for conservation
Environment Australia.
- 16 Other organisations involved
Antarctic Science Advisory Committee, Australian
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Convention for Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Ecologically Related Species Working Group of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and its Committee on Fisheries, Incidental Mortality Arising from Longline Fishing – ad hoc Working Group of the Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment of Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Tasmanian Fisheries Service, professional fishing industry groups.

17 Staff and financial resources required for recovery to be carried out

<i>Staff resources required 2001-2005</i>	1.0	<i>Project Officer (international liaison)¹</i>
	1.0	<i>Extension Officer¹</i>
	3.0	<i>Technical Officers (fisheries observers)¹</i>

Financial resources required 2001-2005

<i>Action</i>	<i>Conservation agencies</i>	<i>Other funding sources</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Develop improved fishing bycatch mitigation¹</i>	\$10,500	\$10,500	\$21,000
<i>Monitor bycatch rates in the AFZ and success of mitigation measures¹</i>	\$3,600	\$8,600	\$12,200
<i>Analysis of annual bycatch data¹</i>	\$8,300	\$0	\$8,300
<i>Educate fishers in the AFZ in mitigation techniques¹</i>	\$6,300	\$5,400	\$11,700
<i>Inform national fora about the TAP¹</i>	\$2,300	\$0	\$2,300
<i>Inform international fora about the TAP and pursue international threat abatement¹</i>	\$3,900	\$0	\$3,900
<i>Maintain currency of TAP and report annually¹</i>	\$2,100	\$0	\$2,100
<i>Research on genetics²</i>	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
<i>Managing recovery process²</i>	\$4,600	\$1,800	\$6,400
<i>Total</i>	\$42,100	\$26,800	\$68,900

1 Costs for TAP actions divided amongst all 20 albatrosses, 2 giant-petrels, White-chinned Petrel and Grey Petrel

2 Costs shared among 20 albatrosses and 2 giant-petrels

18 Bibliography

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