

## RECOVERY OUTLINE

# Northern Royal Albatross

1	Family	Diomedidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Diomedea sanfordi</i> Murphy, 1917
3	Common name	Northern Royal Albatross
4	Conservation status	

Population visiting Australian territory Endangered: B1+2ce

### 5 Reasons for listing

Globally, the species is listed as Endangered because the area of occupancy is small (B1) and a decrease in the number of individuals has been inferred (2e). Although the status in Australian waters more closely fits Vulnerable (A2d), on the basis of probable decreases in population over the next three generations (75 years), it is upgraded as per Gärdenfors *et al.* (1999) to match the global status, because all visiting birds are from an Endangered population.

Australian Fishing Zone	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	5,000,000 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	5,000 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	medium
No. of breeding birds	13,500	high
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	25 years	medium

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

None described. This species was formerly *D. epomophora sanfordi* a subspecies of the Royal Albatross. Hybridises with *D. epomophora* at Taiaroa Head and Enderby I. (Gales, 1998).

### 7 Past range and abundance

Recorded breeding on Chatham Is and Taiaroa Head, South I., New Zealand (Gales, 1998). Regularly recorded feeding in Tasmanian and South Australian waters, and less regularly off New South Wales. Non-breeding range extending to south-west Atlantic (EABG, 1999).

### 8 Present range and abundance

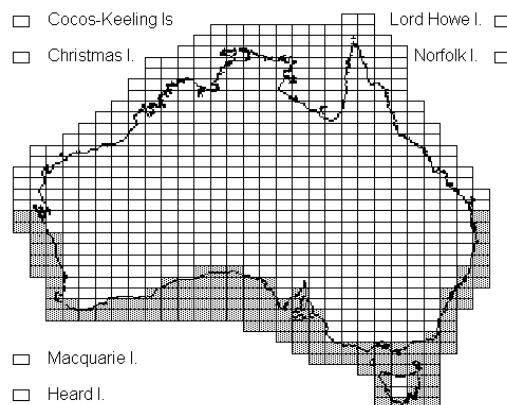
Population size: 6,500 to 7,000 breeding pairs on Chatham Is and 27 pairs on Taiaroa Head (Croxxall and Gales, 1998, Gales, 1998).

### 9 Ecology

Northern Royal Albatrosses breed biennially (when successful) in colonies among grass tussocks and feed pelagically on squid, fish and crustaceans (Marchant and Higgins, 1990, Gales, 1998).

### 10 Threats

Drowning in longline fishing gear appears to be the primary threat faced by Northern Royal Albatrosses in Australian waters. Birds may also suffer from collision with cables and warps used on fishing trawlers (Gales, 1998, EABG, 1999). The species is threatened extraliminally at breeding colonies (Robertson, 1998).



### 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.	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.
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	

#### 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)<sup>1</sup></i>
	1.0	<i>Extension Officer<sup>1</sup></i>
	3.0	<i>Technical Officers (fisheries observers)<sup>1</sup></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 mitigation<sup>1</sup></i>	\$10,500	\$10,500	\$21,000
<i>Monitor bycatch rates in the AFZ and success of mitigation measures<sup>1</sup></i>	\$3,600	\$8,600	\$12,200
<i>Analysis of annual bycatch data<sup>1</sup></i>	\$8,300	\$0	\$8,300
<i>Educate fishers in the AFZ in mitigation techniques<sup>1</sup></i>	\$6,300	\$5,400	\$11,700
<i>Inform national fora about the TAP<sup>1</sup></i>	\$2,300	\$0	\$2,300
<i>Inform international fora about the TAP and pursue international threat abatement<sup>1</sup></i>	\$3,900	\$0	\$3,900
<i>Maintain currency of TAP and report annually<sup>1</sup></i>	\$2,100	\$0	\$2,100
<i>Research on genetics<sup>5</sup></i>	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
<i>Managing recovery process<sup>5</sup></i>	\$4,600	\$1,800	\$6,400
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>\$42,100</b>	<b>\$26,800</b>	<b>\$68,900</b>

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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- EABG 1998. *Threat Abatement Plan for the incidental catch (or by-catch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations*. Environment Australia Biodiversity Group, Canberra.
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- Gales, R. 1998. Albatross populations: status and threats. Pp. 20-45 in *The Albatross: Biology and Conservation*. G. Robertson and R. Gales (eds). Surrey Beatty and Sons, Chipping Norton.
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- Marchant, S. and Higgins, P. J. (eds) 1990. *The Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Robertson, C. J. R. 1998. Factors influencing breeding performance of the Northern Royal Albatross. Pp. 99-104 in *The Albatross: Biology and Conservation*. G. Robertson and R. Gales (eds) Surrey Beatty and Sons, Chipping Norton.
- Comments received from Barry Baker, Nigel Brothers, Rosemary Gales, Tim Reid.