

RECOVERY OUTLINE

# White-chinned Petrel

1 Family	Procellariidae
2 Scientific name	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i> Linnaeus, 1758
3 Common name	White-chinned Petrel
4 Conservation status	
Population visiting Australian territory Vulnerable: A1d+2d	

5 Reasons for listing

The size of the population visiting Australian waters has probably decreased by more than 20% over the last three generations (45 years: Vulnerable: A2) as a result of fishing bycatch (d). This trend is likely to continue (2d). The species' global status is also Vulnerable.

Australian Fishing Zone	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	5,000,000 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	500,000 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	5,000,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	15 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

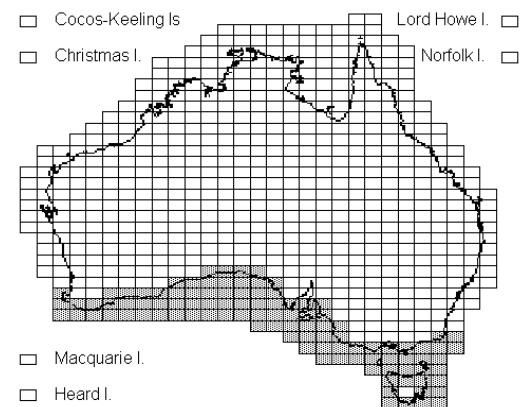
None described.

7 Past range and abundance

Circumpolar, breeding on numerous subantarctic islands.

8 Present range and abundance

As above. Largest breeding sub-population of about 2,000,000 individuals is on South Georgia (Marchant and Higgins, 1990), but has been declining rapidly there (Birdlife International, 2000). Observations at sea also suggest a decline (Woehler, 1996).



9 Ecology

White-chinned Petrels feed on fish and offal, being one of the more enthusiastic scavengers at fishing boats (Croxall *et al.*, 1995, Barnes *et al.*, 1997, Weimerskirch *et al.*, 1999). They also take cephalopods while breeding. They nest in burrows on subantarctic islands (Marchant and Higgins, 1990).

10 Threats

White-chinned Petrels are being ensnared then drowned by longline fishing gear in substantial numbers throughout their range (Barnes *et al.*, 1997, Brothers *et al.*, 1998a,b, Weimerskirch *et al.*, 1999).

11 Information required

None.

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 this species, along with 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.

14 Management actions required

- 14.1 Manage the recovery process with a Recovery Team.

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)<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>Managing recovery process<sup>1</sup></i>	\$4,600	\$1,800	\$6,400
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>\$41,600</b>	<b>\$26,300</b>	<b>\$67,900</b>

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

## 18 Bibliography

Barnes, K. N., Ryan, P. G. and Boix-Hinzen, C. 1997. The impact of the hake *Merluccius* spp. longline fishery off South Africa on procellariiform seabirds. *Biol. Conserv.* 82:227-234.

Birdlife International. 2000. *Threatened Birds of the World*. Birdlife International, Cambridge.

Brothers, N., Gales, R. and Reid, T. 1998a. Seabird interactions with longline fishing in the AFZ: seabird mortality estimates and 1988-1996 trends. Wildlife Report 98/1, Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania.

Brothers, N., Gales, R. and Reid, T. 1998b. Seabird interactions with longline fishing in the AFZ: seabird mortality estimates and 1988-1997 trends. Wildlife Report 98/3, Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania.

Croxall, J. P., Hall, A. J. and Rodhouse, P. G. 1995. The food and feeding ecology of the White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis* at South Georgia. *J. Zool.* 237:133-150.

EABG 1998. *Threat Abatement Plan for the incidental catch (or by-catch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations*. Environment Australia Biodiversity Group, Canberra.

Marchant, S. and Higgins, P. J. (eds) 1990. *The Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Weimerskirch, H., Catard, A. and Croxall, J. P. 1999. Foraging White-chinned Petrels *Procellaria aequinoctialis* at risk: from the tropics to Antarctica. *Biol. Conserv.* 87:273-294.

Woehler, E. J. 1996. Concurrent decreases in five species of Southern Ocean seabirds in Prydz Bay. *Polar Biol.* 16:379-382.

Comments received from  
Barry Baker, Rosemary Gales, Tim Reid.