

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Southern Royal Albatross

1	Family	Diomedidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i> Lesson, 1825
3	Common name	Southern Royal Albatross
4	Conservation status	Population visiting Australian territory Vulnerable A2d

5 Reasons for listing

Although the size of the breeding population may currently be increasing, the size of the population visiting Australian waters is likely to decrease by more than 20% over the next three generations (75 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	medium
Area of occupancy	5,000 km ²	low
trend	stable	medium
No. of breeding birds	17,000	medium
trend	stable	low
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	25 years	medium

6 Intraspecific taxa

None described, although, until recently, species encompassed Northern Royal Albatross as *D. e. sanfordi*, with which it hybridises at Taiaroa Head and Enderby I. (Gales, 1998).

7 Past range and abundance

Breeds on Campbell, Adams, Enderby and Auckland Is. south of New Zealand. Forages in Southern Ocean primarily between western Australia and South America, although can circumnavigate the Southern Hemisphere (Marchant and Higgins, 1990, Gales, 1998).

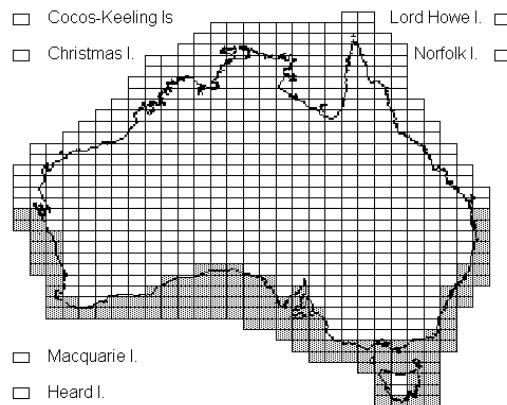
8 Present range and abundance

There are estimated to be 8,200-8,600 breeding pairs, all but about 70 being on Campbell I. The breeding population increased during the 1980s, possibly recovering from previous exploitation (Croxall and Gales, 1998), but may now be stable (Birdlife International, 2000). Recolonised Enderby I. in 1940s after extirpation in 1860s and colony of 55 pairs still growing. A further 20 pairs breed on Auckland and Adams Is (Croxall and Gales, 1998, Gales, 1998).

9 Ecology

Southern Royal Albatrosses breed biennially (when successful) in colonies among grass tussocks and feed

pelagically, primarily on squid and fish (Marchant and Higgins 1990, Gales, 1998, Imber, 1999).



10 Threats

Drowning in longline fishing gear is the primary threat facing Southern Royal Albatrosses in Australian waters, though, by feeding over the continental shelf and the shelf break, they are less vulnerable than many other albatross species (Imber, 1999). Birds may also suffer from collision with cables and warps used on fishing trawlers (Gales, 1998, EABG, 1999). Although the population is possibly increasing, trends among other albatross species suggest precautionary listing until more data is available.

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 – as 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 TA¹</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 genetics⁵</i>	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
<i>Managing recovery process⁵</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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