



**Darwin Initiative/D+ Project  
Half Year Report  
(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019)**

<b>Project reference</b>	DPLUS076
<b>Project title</b>	Reducing South Georgia albatross mortality in High Seas tuna fisheries
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	South Georgia and the South Shetland Islands, Tristan de Cuhna
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<b>Partner(s)</b>	BirdLife International, British Antarctic Survey
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Stephanie Prince</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	<i>HYR2-31/10/2019</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	Main webpage <a href="https://www.birdlife.org/albatross-stories">https://www.birdlife.org/albatross-stories</a> UK Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/albatross_stories/">https://www.instagram.com/albatross_stories/</a> UK Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Albytaskforce/">https://www.facebook.com/Albytaskforce/</a> UK Twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/albytaskforce">https://twitter.com/albytaskforce</a> RSPB blogs <a href="https://community.rspb.org.uk/getinvolved/b/albatross-stories">https://community.rspb.org.uk/getinvolved/b/albatross-stories</a> Japan webpage <a href="https://tokyo.birdlife.org/albatross-stories">https://tokyo.birdlife.org/albatross-stories</a> Japan Twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/albatross_story">https://twitter.com/albatross_story</a> Japan Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/albatross_stories_jp/">https://www.instagram.com/albatross_stories_jp/</a> Japan Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/albatross.stories/">https://www.facebook.com/albatross.stories/</a>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.**

**Output 1: Level of night setting by Japanese and Taiwanese tuna vessels determined at start of project (for advocacy purposes) and end of project (to allow impact evaluation), and presented to CCSBT.**

**Objective 1.1** *Proportion of sets made at night assessed for 2015-2017 through analysis of Global Fishing Watch data and presented to CCSBT and Japan and Taiwanese Fisheries Agencies as a tool for monitoring*

Progress to date: As reported we have completed this objective. An article on our work was printed in the July edition of the Audubon magazine, which is distributed to all of their members and can be seen online here: <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2019/seabird-experts-turn-algorithms-help-keep-fishing>

At the Agreement of Conservation for Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Seabird bycatch working group in May, our paper was highly regarded and was cited as the reason why other NGOs now want ACAP to advocate for compulsory night setting in the RFMOs, as we can now monitor compliance using our technique.

Following the release of our paper for the first time Taiwan has reported non-compliance with seabird mitigation measures at the West and Central Pacific Fishery Commission (WCPFC). In previous years Taiwan they reported high compliance with night setting.

**Objective 1.2** *Proportion of sets made at night assessed for 2019-early 2020 through follow-up analysis of Global Fishing Watch data*

Progress to date: The end of project report has not been produced yet as this will be completed in early 2020, however discussions with Global Fishing Watch have begun to plan how this work will be conducted, and we are on track for completing on schedule.

**Output 2: Tuna purchasing companies commit to buying tuna only from vessels complying with seabird bycatch mitigation requirements, due to increased awareness of albatross bycatch issues**

**Objective 2.1** *Key tuna purchasing companies identified through supply chain analysis by October 2018*

Progress to date: As previously reported the supply chain analysis was completed in January 2019 and identified nine key companies purchasing tuna from longline vessels. The report is a living document as it needs to be regularly updated with information gathered from tuna purchasers through in-person meetings and calls.

**Objective 2.2** *At least 70% of key companies engage with BirdLife through 1-1 meetings and calls*

Progress to date: We have achieved this objective having engaged with 78% of key companies. Since introducing the seabird bycatch problem to purchasers at the WWF roundtable meeting in Tokyo, in February 2019, the Asia Project Lead contacted the tuna purchasing companies (and two large-scale retailers) who attended the meeting, as well as other companies identified through the supply chain analysis via email/calls. These initial communications led to in-person meetings with three tuna purchasing companies, and meaningful calls/email exchanges with two other purchasers and one large-scale retailer. The aim of these meetings was primarily to secure attendance to the workshop we are holding in November 2019, but also to raise further awareness of seabird bycatch issues, and to gather their opinions on how we can make meaningful progress.

As a follow up to our meeting with Mitsubishi London in March, and subsequent contact with Mitsubishi Tokyo, we had a call with Mitsubishi London who gave us feedback on our approach of holding a large scale workshop, and gave valuable advice on how to adapt our approach so we do not appear to be acting too fast too soon. They suggested raising awareness of seabird bycatch more generally in Japan by presenting at seafood conferences. The Asia Bycatch Lead has secured a slot to present on bycatch at the upcoming Tokyo Sustainable Seafood symposium in November 2019, which was an event recommended by Mitsubishi.

**Objective 2.3** *At least 50% of key companies attend workshop on seabird bycatch issues and thus gain increased awareness of albatross bycatch issues, as shown by surveys before and after workshop*

Progress to date: the workshop will be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019. As detailed below in Section 2a, we have changed the format to a seminar which will be a half day rather than a full day meeting. We have invited six companies and two large scale retailers. The Japanese Fisheries Agency is confirmed to attend and we have the Managing Director of a fishing company who has successfully tackled seabird bycatch in South Georgia speaking at the event. We will report on the attendance of the workshop in our final report.

**Objective 2.4** *At least 50% of companies attending the workshop provide written declaration of intent to buy tuna only from vessels that can prove compliance with seabird measures.*

Progress to date: the workshop at which we hoped to get the written declarations of intent is happening in November 2019, as detailed above. However, following discussions with Mitsubishi and some of the other companies unfortunately we do not envisage that this will be possible, or appropriate at this stage to get the written declaration. We will complete a change request to account for this

**Output 3: Awareness of bycatch problem, and desire to tackle it, further strengthened in Japan through creation and promotion of South Georgia albatross characters and stories**

**Objective 3.1** *At least five albatross characters developed and cartoons produced, tailored to Japanese audience*

Progress to date: this objective was completed as previously reported. Since April we have had “sad” versions of our albatross created to use when we are talking about the threats to albatross.

**Objective 3.2** *Characters and cartoons online in Japanese on Wild Bird Society of Japan website and other social media*

Progress to date: We remain active on social media in both Japan and UK posting 3-4 times/week/account, as well as working with partners in Taiwan and Brazil who are posting less frequently. Since our last report we have increased our following in Japan on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook by 370%, 99% and 38%. Twitter is the key platform in Japan with posts regularly getting over 500 likes and over 80 retweets each week, which is very high for a relatively new account. The UK Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts have increased by 18%, 18% and 120%, which although smaller percentages, equate to larger increases in followers, as we began with a larger initial audience.

**Objective 3.3** *Stories generated throughout 2018 and 2019 South Georgia breeding seasons, making use of webcam footage from Bird Island and aiming for at least one update in Japanese per fortnight*

Progress to date: One camera remains tracking the development of Greta our wandering albatross chick, who will fledge in December. The other camera was redeployed in September to a black-browed albatross colony to document the return of the birds after the winter. We will move it in the next couple of weeks to focus on an individual nest which will become our final albatross character for the project. Since the start of April 11 blogs have been uploaded to the RSPB Albatross Stories blog site, and the employment of an intern in Japan in August has allowed us to begin translating these to Japanese. Some highlights of the last period include Greta’s six month birthday, and tracking the grey head juveniles across the ocean all the way to New Zealand.

**Objective 3.4** *Albatross stories used and have a positive impact in workshop under Output 2, ongoing engagement with purchasing companies, and media coverage of Global Fishing Watch report*

**Progress to date:** the presentations made by the Asia bycatch lead in the run up the workshop have made use of the albatross characters. We will make use of the characters and the campaign during our workshop next month.

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

In our annual report we expressed concern that we may not be able to secure written declarations from tuna purchasing companies at the workshop. Further discussions with Mitsubishi, WWF, EDF, and MSC have confirmed that asking for a written declaration at this stage would not be appropriate or effective in creating change. There is a feeling amongst the purchasers that they need to know more information about bycatch and the profile of bycatch must be raised in Japan more generally before action can be taken. Mitsubishi also feel that a full day workshop is too much at this stage, hence our change in approach to having a half day seminar instead. This change to a seminar has reduced the budget required for the workshop by around £, which we hope to move to another budget line to keep the Albatross Stories funded from January until the end of the project.

**2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS: Yes (partially through our previous report)

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: ~£

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

**4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R25 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**