



Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck
Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Senator for Tasmania

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Safeguarding the health of our Aussie seabirds

Australia continues to improve its fisheries management systems with the release of a new national approach to mitigating incidental catch of seabirds.

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Senator Richard Colbeck, said the release of Australia's *National Plan of Action for Minimising Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Australian Capture Fisheries* (NPOA–Seabirds) demonstrates Australia's commitment to ensuring our world-leading sustainable fisheries don't negatively impact our unique environment.

"It's very important that we maintain trust among Australian and international consumers, and manage our fisheries with minimal impact on the natural environment – including seabirds," Minister Colbeck said.

"The NPOA–Seabirds provides guidance on best-practice mitigation, monitoring and reporting of seabird interactions across all fishing activities in Australian waters.

"National consistency and coordination will result in more streamlined and effective seabird bycatch management.

"The action plan fulfils our obligations and aligns our national efforts with those of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, *International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries* (IPOA–Seabirds).

"Voluntary measures like the NPOA–Seabirds enhance the reputation of the Australian seafood industry, particularly in high-value export markets, and help strengthen our international seafood brand.

"We are taking proactive steps now to ensure global, long term conservation of our natural marine environment, and ensure world leading fisheries management for generations to come."

The NPOA–Seabirds is available online at
<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/fisheries/environment/bycatch/seabirds>

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