TECHNICAL SHEET N° 1 - SEABIRD SPECIES MOST AFFECTED BY MEDITERRANEAN PELAGIC LONGLINE FISHERIES (1/2)

European shag 
(*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*)
- Short crest
- Slightly-hooked beak
- Black plumage with a green tinge
- Dark red beak with a black bar near the tip
- Dark gray-green legs
- Legs protrude from the tail in flight
- White breast and darker belly

Audouin's gull 
(*Larus audouiniil*)
- Wings with pale-gray edging

Yelkouan shearwater 
(*Puffinus yelkouan*)

Mediterranean gull 
(*Larus melanocephalus*)
- Black hood
- Uniformly-gray wings
Balearic shearwater
(Puffinus mauretanicus)

Long thin beak
Brown underwing covert
Grayish-beige belly and pink legs

Scopoli’s shearwater
(Calonectris diomedea)

Yellowish, hooked beak
Pure white underwing covert with darker edging
White chest and throat

European storm petrel
(Hydrobates pelagicus)

Black plumage
White rump
Small dark beak
TECHNICAL SHEET N° 2 - RELEASING SEABIRDS CAUGHT INCIDENTALLY IN PELAGIC LONGLINE FISHERIES (1/2)

1. Have the correct equipment:
   - A towel/blanket
   - A knife
   - A net
   - A box/tray with a lid
   - Pliers/bolt cutters
   - Gloves
   - Protective glasses

2. With the engine in neutral, use the net to lift the seabird on board.
   Alternatively, grab the bird with both hands, keeping its wings pressed against its body to avoid damaging its feathers.

Do not:
- Pull the line
- Grab the seabird by the neck
TECHNICAL SHEET N° 2 – RELEASING SEABIRDS CAUGHT INCIDENTALLY IN PELAGIC LONGLINE FISHERIES (2/2)

3. Restraining the bird

If the hook is visible and can be removed

Slowly bring the bird on board and gently fold its wings against its body. Wrap it in a towel/blanket (not too tightly) and, if possible, cover its eyes. Hold its beak gently shut but do not cover its nostrils. Make sure that it does not come into contact with oil on the deck.

If hook removal is not possible

If you can see it, flatten the barb first with the pliers.

Cut the hook using the pliers (or the bolt cutters for thicker hooks) and extract separately the two parts of the hook. Do not pull the hook in the opposite direction as the barb could further injure the bird. If you can see it, flatten the barb first with the pliers.

4. Holding the bird firmly

Hold the bird firmly between your legs without squeezing. Keep its wings against its body to avoid any risk of dislocation or fracture.

5. Removing the hook

Because removing the hook might further injure the bird or the hook has been ingested, cut the line as close to the beak as possible and leave the hook in the bird. Follow the guidelines provided in Technical Sheet 3.
**LET THE BIRD REST**

Place the bird in a ventilated box or tray in a quiet, dry, shaded place. Make sure that it is kept away from oil. Do not try to feed it. Wait for an hour or two.

If the bird has ingested the hook or is in bad shape, keep it on board and contact the relevant national authorities as indicated in Technical Sheet 4.

If the hook has been removed, the bird’s feathers are dry, and the bird is alert and able to stand, it can be released.

**RELEASE THE BIRD**

*Small vessels*

Slowly lower the bird onto the water. The bird may remain on the water for some time after release.

*Large vessels*

Lift the bird and release it into the wind from the vessel deck.
Contact the relevant national authorities to report each incidental seabird catch.

Describe the seabird’s condition, especially whether it is in good shape and has been released or it has swallowed the hook and/or is in poor shape and has been kept on board.

Organise with the authorities any follow-up care that will be necessary on return to port.

FOR THE CATCH OF ANY SEABIRDS, RECORD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THE LOGBOOK:

- Date
- GPS Position
- Geographical subregion
- Type of vessel (Fleet segment)
- Fishing gear
- Species caught
- Total number of specimens caught
- Number of specimens released alive
- Number of dead specimens
- Number of specimens in unknown status

And if possible...

Take photos of the seabird(s). If a bird is ringed, note the ring number.

The information above is extremely important! Please submit it, as soon as possible, to the relevant national authorities. If in doubt, ask for their help.
This guide was developed within the framework of a project which aimed to mitigate the negative interactions between endangered marine species and fishing activities. This project was implemented by the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) and by the Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), in collaboration with the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC). The main objective of the project was to enhance the conservation of endangered marine species (cetaceans, sea turtles and seabirds, etc.) by promoting responsible fishing practices in the Mediterranean.

Technical and scientific contribution (in alphabetical order)
Aurora Nastasi, Julia Pierraccini, François Poisson, Jacques Sacchi

Illustrations
Cyril Girard (Fiche technique 1)
Alberto Gennari (Fiches techniques 2-3-4)

Graphic design
Stile Libero Communication Monaco

Main bibliographic references
LPO. Comment manipuler un oiseau ? Programme Oiseaux en Détresse de la LPO, France.
By Sultana J. & Azafzaf H.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), or of the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO, or ACCOBAMS in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO, or ACCOBAMS.

FAO and ACCOBAMS encourage the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Except where otherwise indicated, material may be copied, downloaded and printed for private study, research and teaching purposes, or for use in non-commercial products or services, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of FAO and ACCOBAMS as the source and copyright holder is given and that FAO/ACCOBAMS’ endorsement of users’ views, products or services is not implied in any way.

© FAO and ACCOBAMS, 2018