

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 39
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: List of threatened Albatross and Petrels Species
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 16 February 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Siewert, Rachel asked:

1. How many Commonwealth listed threatened albatrosses and petrels of species have been caught and released, or killed by Australian fishing vessels in Australian waters since 2010?
 - a) What are reasons for the ongoing take of these listed threatened species?
 - b) Does the Government have any planned measures to improve the measurement of the number of seabirds caught in trawling operations?
 - c) Does the Government have any details of the number of listed albatross and petrel species that have been caught and released, or killed by recreational fishing efforts in Australia on an annual basis?
 - d) Does the Government have plans to gather data on the impact that recreational fishing is having on seabirds in Australian waters through bycatch and interactions?

Answer:

1. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) has provided the following table, which contains logbook reported interactions with threatened species of seabirds in Commonwealth managed fisheries summed for the calendar years 2010 to 2015*.

Species	Alive	Dead	Total
Albatrosses (all reported species)	33	146	179
Petrels (Includes all reported petrel species)	41	26	67
Other birds (mixed species but includes some petrels, prions and shearwaters)	37	229	266
Total	111	401	512

*Based on Commonwealth commercial fishing logbook records and includes general 'albatross' category where identification to species level was not possible.

State and territory governments would need to be approached about interactions in fisheries falling under their jurisdictions.

- 1 a) AFMA advises that commercial and recreational fishing poses risks that can sometimes lead to unintentional harm of protected species, including threatened species, even with mitigation measures in place. Minimising interactions from fishing to threatened, endangered and protected species is a key focus for AFMA. It is a requirement of the 2005 Ministerial Direction to AFMA and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

A number of regulatory instruments are used by the Department of Environment and AFMA to minimise interactions including; the *Seabird Threat Abatement Plan for Longline Fishing*, which specifies acceptable interaction rates; seabird management plans in the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery trawl sectors that set out boat-specific mitigation measures; and vessel management plans for the Small Pelagic Fishery that set out a range of mitigation measures for seabird interactions.

- 1 b) AFMA advises that for Commonwealth trawl fisheries managed by AFMA there is an on-going observer program that gathers information on seabird interactions, and in specific circumstances electronic monitoring (including cameras) is also used. Industry associations have also instituted education programs to improve identification and reporting of threatened species, including seabirds.
- 1 c),d) The management and collection of data in relation to recreational fishing is the responsibility of the relevant state and territory government. These governments would need to be approached about interactions in recreational fisheries falling under their jurisdictions.