

Saving seabirds in Ecuador

Title

Early indications suggest that the artisanal demersal longline fishery, operating from small open out-board boats in South Ecuador, has a negative impact on seabirds, specifically the Critically Endangered Waved Albatross *Diomedea irrorata*. Observations have identified that seabirds are caught during both the set and haul of longline gear, principally due to poor line weighting that results in floating fishing gear.

The proposed solution to the problem is to increase line weighting, which may require the additional use of a hand-winch system to facilitate hauling operations. We are going to work with fishermen in Santa Rosa Harbor testing a new weighting regime and a new system of hand winch which will be more efficient in hauling the heavier line, and reduce the surface time of the gear during hauling operations.

At the same time, we want to generate accurate sink rate profiles for fishing gear (hooks) during the setting operations. Experiments are starting January (2011) and we expect to develop a feasible and economic mitigation measurement to mitigate the impact of this fishery on seabirds of Northwestern South America.

This is an extract from the latest issue of BirdLife's 'Global Seabird Programme 4x4' newsletter which is now available to download by [Global Seabird Programme Newsletter](#).