

Finally the EU gets serious about protecting seabirds from fishing!

Thanks to the advocacy work carried out by Birdlife Europe and Central Asia and other partner organisations the EU is taking important first steps towards solving the seabird bycatch problem. Today the European Parliament adopted the essential data collection regulation.

Seabirds are amongst the world's most threatened group of birds. Across Europe, it is estimated that around 200,000 seabirds are accidentally caught and killed by commercial fishing hooks and nets each year. In many cases, the lack of systematic data on the number of birds caught makes it difficult to identify the extent of seabird bycatch within a specific fishery.

The data collection regulation will oblige EU member states to supply data to the European Commission about the impact of fisheries on the wider ecosystem. This kind of data will help us understand the levels of incidental bycatch of seabirds and other species occurring across Europe.

Bruna Campos, EU Marine and Fisheries Policy Officer, BirdLife Europe & Central Asia said: *"We are very happy to see that the EU is finally taking action to tackle seabird bycatch. Knowing where, when and how a seabird is being caught by a fishermen is fundamental to be able to have the right solutions in the right place and stop this disastrous ecological challenge".*

Eliminating seabird bycatch ensures that we can sustain the integrity of the ocean ecosystem. Europe is falling behind many other countries such as South Africa and Namibia that already have minimised seabird bycatch with more than 90%. It's about time that the EU got serious about this issue. **ENDS**

For further information, please contact:

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Notes:

[1] Briefing: Revision of the Data Collection Framework (DCF)
[http://www.birdlife.org/sites/default/files/attachments/briefing -
_ngo_views_on_ec_proposal_to_revise_dcf_final.pdf](http://www.birdlife.org/sites/default/files/attachments/briefing_-_ngo_views_on_ec_proposal_to_revise_dcf_final.pdf)

[2] European Marine Observation and Data Network. Impact Assessment.
COM(2010) 461. SEC(2010) 999

*BirdLife Europe and Central Asia is a **partnership of 48 national conservation organisations** and a **leader in bird conservation**. Our **unique local to global approach** enables us to deliver high impact and long term conservation for the benefit of **nature and people**. BirdLife Europe and Central Asia is one of the six regional secretariats that compose BirdLife International. Based in Brussels, it supports the European and Central Asian Partnership and is present in **47 countries** including **all EU Member States**. With more than **4100 staff** in Europe, **two million members** and tens of thousands of skilled volunteers, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, together with its national partners, owns or manages more than **6000 nature sites** totalling 320,000 hectares.*