

Global patterns of marine mammal, seabird, and sea turtle bycatch reveal taxa-specific and cumulative megafauna hotspots

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Recent research on ocean health has found large predator abundance to be a key element of ocean condition. Fisheries can impact large predator abundance directly through targeted capture and indirectly through incidental capture of nontarget species or bycatch. However, measures of the global nature of bycatch are lacking for air-breathing megafauna. We fill this knowledge gap and present a synoptic global assessment of the distribution and intensity of bycatch of seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles based on empirical data from the three most commonly used types of fishing gears worldwide. We identify taxa-specific hotspots of bycatch intensity and find evidence of cumulative impacts across fishing fleets and gears. This global map of bycatch illustrates where data are particularly scarce—in coastal and small-scale fisheries and ocean regions that support developed industrial fisheries and millions of small-scale fishers—and identifies fishing areas where, given the evidence of cumulative hotspots across gear and taxa, traditional species or gear-specific bycatch management and mitigation efforts may be necessary but not sufficient. Given the global distribution of bycatch and the mitigation success achieved by some fleets, the reduction of air-breathing megafauna bycatch is both an urgent and achievable conservation priority.

fisheries bycatch | trophic downgrading | longlines | gillnets | trawls

Ocean health, a measure of the overall condition of marine ecosystems, has been the focus of a number of recent studies (1) that have shown that the impact fisheries can have on ocean health. Over the past 50 y, total world fisheries production has increased from 19.3 million tons in 1950 to more than 154 million tons today (2), and although fisheries management initiatives have reduced exploitation rates in some regions, a large fraction of stocks (approximately 63%) is still classified as overfished or collapsed (2, 3). Beyond the direct effects of fish removal, fishing exerts indirect effects through incidental capture of nontarget species or bycatch (4, 5). [The term bycatch is also defined as all unwanted, unmanaged, or discarded catch (4). Megafauna species are targets of fisheries in some countries, although targeted fisheries are a less common fishery interaction than incidental capture at the global scale.] Also, it is one of the primary causes of observed declines of seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles, collectively termed air-breathing marine megafauna (6–9). Fisheries bycatch is a product of susceptibility (driven by the distribution, type, and magnitude of fisheries effort

and vulnerability (based on ecological characteristics of the bycaught species; e.g., life history and species distribution) (10). For some depleted species, such as Pacific leatherback turtle (*Dermodochelys coriacea*), Amsterdam Albatross (*Diomedea amsterdamensis*), vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*), Atlantic hump-backed dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*), and Australian and New Zealand sea lion (*Neophoca cinerea* and *Phocartos hookeri*), fisheries bycatch has been identified as the single largest threat to extant populations (7, 11–15).

Beyond issues of species viability, declines in marine megafauna lead to major changes in ecosystem function and process (16, 17). This loss of megafauna, referred to as trophic downgrading, has

Significance

Loss of megafauna, termed trophic downgrading, has been found to affect biotic interactions, disturbance regimes, species invasions, and nutrient cycling. One recognized cause in air-breathing marine megafauna is incidental capture or bycatch by fisheries. Characterizing megafauna bycatch patterns across large ocean regions is limited by data availability but essential to direct conservation and management resources. We use empirical data to identify the global distribution and magnitude of seabird, marine mammal, and sea turtle bycatch in three widely used fishing gears. We identify taxa-specific hotspots and find evidence of cumulative impacts. This analysis provides an unprecedented global assessment of the distribution and magnitude of air-breathing megafauna bycatch, highlighting its cumulative nature and the urgent need to build on existing mitigation successes.

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reverberating effects on biotic interactions, disturbance regimes, species invasions, and nutrient cycling (17). Fisheries bycatch, a major driver of trophic downgrading, can be difficult to assess; accurate bycatch data collection requires dedicated and trained observers and considerable resources across fleets and vast oceans (18). Nevertheless, a comprehensive understanding of the extent and magnitude of bycatch is a necessary first step to direct conservation actions that may ameliorate this threat.

We conducted a direct global assessment of fisheries bycatch using empirical data from peer-reviewed publications, agency and technical reports, and symposia proceedings published between 1990 and 2008 to characterize bycatch in three taxonomic groups (seabirds, marine mammals, and turtles) and three general categories of widely used fishing gear (gillnets, longlines, and trawls). This direct and comprehensive assessment differs from most previous studies that have focused on a proxy of bycatch (e.g., fisheries yield) rather than empirical bycatch data (19), a single species or taxon (20–22), or a single type of fishing gear in one region (23, 24), often without consideration of the spatial distribution of bycatch. A direct, spatially explicit cross-taxa and cross-gear bycatch assessment is necessary to analyze the complex patterns of global bycatch. Without such information, well-intentioned fisheries management schemes, such as modifications to gear or the location or timing of fishing effort, may reduce bycatch of one taxon but exert collateral damage on other species (e.g., a switch from demersal longlines that take seabirds to bottom set gillnets may reduce the bycatch of seabirds but increase bycatch of small cetaceans) (25). The concern regarding collateral damage stems from the one-to-many relationship among gear and bycatch species—one species may be caught by multiple gear types and one gear type may catch multiple species within a single fishing region. The one-to-many relationship among gear and bycatch species can lead to cumulative population or assemblage effects that may be greater than the sum of individual effects.

We used a multitaxa, multigear bycatch database to answer three questions. (i) Where is bycatch highest by taxon and gear type? (ii) Are there hotspots of cumulative bycatch across taxa and gear? (iii) Where are the gaps in existing bycatch data? Because there are no standard metrics for reporting bycatch within or among ocean regions, substantial nonuniformity exists among available bycatch data. For example, in a single taxa (sea turtles) and a single gear type (gillnets), 17 different metrics were used to report bycatch (table 1 in ref. 9). The lack of standard metrics for bycatch reporting presents a formidable impediment to direct comparison or integrated analyses of existing bycatch data. To address this lack of conformity, we used expert knowledge to allow for synthesis among bycatch records. Expert knowledge has been shown to be a necessary approach to account for data gaps and synthesize existing knowledge and disparate data (26–29). Our expert panel consisted of 17 independent experts (5, 6, and 6 experts with expertise in seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles, respectively) with at least 5 y of experience in fisheries bycatch evaluating the intensity of each bycatch record from high (five) to low (one) within each gear category type. Bycatch intensity represents a common metric of bycatch level or severity that integrates bycatch rate, species affected, spatial location, and fishing effort information (*Materials and Methods*). Working independently, at least three experts reviewed each record, and we averaged intensity scores to account for differences among respondents. Using these expert-based bycatch intensity scores, we then mapped patterns of bycatch intensity of all documented bycatch reports by taxa and gear and generated a cumulative map integrated across taxa and gear.

Results

Bycatch Intensity by Taxa and Gear Type. Because the traditional approach to characterizing bycatch has been taxa- or gear-specific, we first mapped bycatch intensity to illustrate patterns in megafauna bycatch by taxonomic group (Fig. 1) and gear type (Fig. S1). Among the three taxa, sea turtles had statistically higher bycatch intensity followed by marine mammals and then seabirds [generalized linear model; $F_{(2,2,117)} = 98.65$, $P < 0.001$]. This difference among taxa likely reflects the tenuous conservation status of sea turtles: six of seven sea turtle species are classified as threatened with extinction by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (redlist.org). We also found significant differences within taxa among regions with available data (regions shown in Fig. 2). High-intensity sea turtle bycatch was most prevalent in three fishing areas—the southwest Atlantic Ocean, eastern Pacific Ocean, and Mediterranean Sea. Marine mammal bycatch intensity was highest in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, whereas seabird bycatch was highest in the southwest Atlantic Ocean and the southern Indian Ocean, where several petrel and albatross breeding colonies are located (23).

Considering bycatch intensity by gear categories worldwide (Fig. S1), we found that gillnets had the highest bycatch intensity scores followed by longlines and then trawls [$F_{(2,2,052)} = 10.927$, $P < 0.001$]. Within a gear type, we found differing patterns of

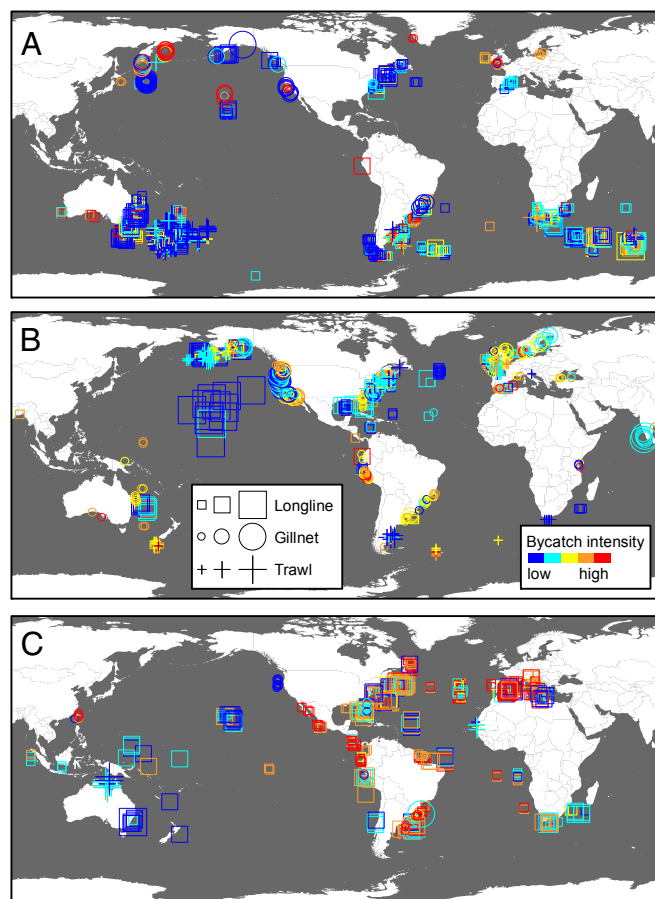


Fig. 1. Bycatch intensity for (A) seabirds, (B) marine mammals, and (C) sea turtles for records from 1990 to 2008. Three gear categories (gillnet, longline, and trawl) are represented by separate symbols, and symbol size is scaled to reflect the proportional amount of observed fishing effort for each record. Bycatch data records that did not have reported observed effort are shown in Fig. S2.

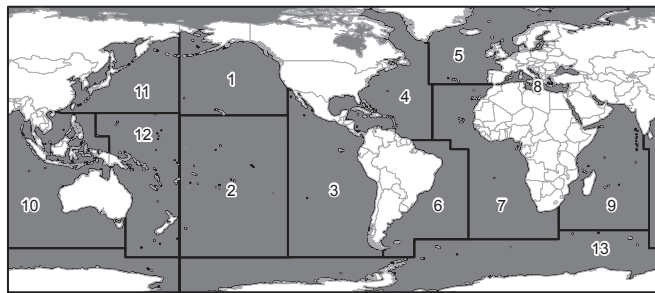


Fig. 2. Geographic regions used for analysis: 1, northeast Pacific; 2, south-east Pacific; 3, eastern Tropical Pacific; 4, northwest Atlantic/Caribbean; 5, northeast Atlantic; 6, southwest Atlantic; 7, eastern Atlantic; 8, Mediterranean; 9, western Indian Ocean; 10, eastern Indian Ocean; 11, northwest Pacific; 12, southwest Pacific; and 13, southern Ocean/Antarctica.

bycatch intensity among regions, with some gears associated with both high- and low-intensity bycatch. For gillnets, however, bycatch intensity was similar among fishing regions (mean SE = 0.35). Longline and trawl bycatch intensity did suggest that there were differences in intensity among regions, because intensity values were significantly higher in the eastern Pacific Ocean than other regions where data are available [$F_{(9,1,844)} = 5.927$, $P < 0.01$].

Despite these broad patterns, gear-specific bycatch intensity was found to be variable within a region, with a single gear type associated with both very high- and very low-intensity bycatch. This intraregional variability could reflect bias in bycatch data availability or data accuracy, because the level of fishing effort influences the precision of the reported bycatch rate (9, 30) and differences in fishing effort practice or distribution, or it could reflect the highly variable nature of spatiotemporal overlap between fishing effort and megafauna (31).

Cumulative Bycatch Intensity. To consider potential impacts to wide-ranging megafauna species as an assemblage, we calculated cumulative bycatch patterns across large ocean regions. To consider the impact of bycatch from different fleets and gears, we calculated a cumulative bycatch intensity index for all bycatch records in each region. Cumulative intensity (I_C) was calculated as

$$I_C = \frac{\sum_i (R_i \times OE_i)}{r_c} \quad [1]$$

where the mean product of R_i , the bycatch intensity score for each record within a region, and OE_i , the scaled observed fishing effort for each record within a region, is divided by r_c , the total number of data records per region. Weighting the bycatch scores by the relative amount of fishing effort observed resulted in

greater weight being given to the more precise bycatch estimates, because estimate precision is highly correlated with the level of observed effort (9, 30). Cumulative megafauna bycatch intensities varied among regions, with the highest cumulative scores (>1 SD) occurring in the Mediterranean and the southwest Atlantic (Fig. 3 and Table 1), although these values could not be calculated in data-poor regions.

Discussion

Widespread Nature of Megafaunal Bycatch. These results represent the most complete representation of the global distribution of megafauna bycatch. Our synthesis reveals bycatch hotspots that may be driven by megafauna density (32–36), fishing intensity (37), or a combination of both density and intensity. We found evidence of taxon-specific hotspots of bycatch intensity (e.g., southwest Atlantic and Mediterranean for turtles, eastern Pacific Ocean for marine mammals, and southwest Atlantic for seabirds) as well as some significant differences in bycatch intensity among gears and regions (e.g., gillnets in all regions and longlines and trawls in the eastern Pacific Ocean).

These spatial patterns are most directly influenced by data availability but also likely influenced by (*i*) the global distribution of air-breathing megafauna, (*ii*) the distribution of fishing effort, and (*iii*) the success of bycatch mitigation for some gear types, taxa, and regions. The distribution of megafauna and subsequent bycatch is likely influenced by both oceanographic (32–36) and physiological forces [i.e., this group of (primarily) endothermic megafauna is more likely to occur in cooler waters] (38). Additionally, the distribution of fishing effort is known to be non-random, with greater effort concentrated in productive Eastern Boundary Currents and shallow coastal zones (39). The patterns of species and vessel distribution and biophysical features may account for the documented hotspots in the eastern Pacific and southwestern Atlantic, respectively. Finally, regional bycatch mitigation efforts have altered the global distribution of bycatch intensity. For example, turtle excluder devices in trawl fisheries have been implemented successfully in Australian fisheries, where the bycatch of sea turtles has been reduced by 90% (40). Likewise, a suite of seabird mitigation devices has successfully reduced the bycatch of albatross and petrels in longline vessels in Hawaii, Alaska, and the Southern Ocean (41, 42).

Despite these improvements and other important technological and policy improvements (43), bycatch remains a significant threat to many populations of megafauna, because many nations and regional fisheries management agencies do not require or enforce the use of proven bycatch reduction measures; bycatch mitigation is long on potential solutions and short on effective implementation (44). Furthermore, although targeted, top-down mitigation implementation and enforcement have proven effective for some fishing sectors [e.g., seabird bycatch mitigation measures in the Southern Ocean (45)], community-level

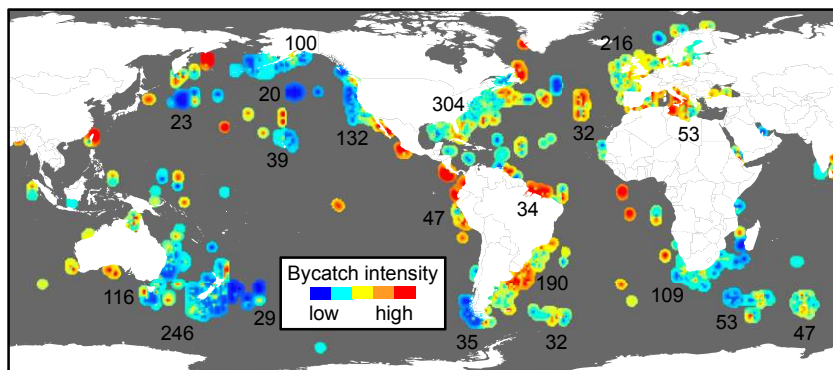


Fig. 3. Calculated cumulative bycatch intensity (Eq. 1) for all taxonomic groups and gear types. Bycatch intensity values were used to generate a raster surface from an inverse weighted distance function for polygons with available data. Interpolated values are displayed using the same color ramp as in Fig. 1. Numbers represent the number of data records represented within each polygon.

Table 1. Calculated cumulative bycatch intensity and associated bycatch records for 10 ocean regions

Ocean region	Cumulative bycatch intensity	Number of bycatch records included
Northwest Pacific	2.53	224
Southeast Pacific	3.59	120
Northwest Atlantic/ Caribbean	2.84	215
Northeast Atlantic	3.37	124
Southwest Atlantic	3.84	155
Southeast Atlantic	3.0	81
Mediterranean	4.77	90
Eastern Indian Ocean	3.23	69
Southwest Pacific	2.73	217
Southern Ocean/Antarctica	3.28	188

Cumulative scores were only calculated for regions with more than 50 bycatch records. Ocean regions are shown in Fig. 2.

engagement is needed to successfully reduce bycatch in less-regulated, small-scale fisheries (46–48).

Bycatch as a Cumulative Threat to Megafaunal Assemblages. Beyond the taxon- and gear-specific patterns that can be used to inform management and conservation action for a particular species group or region, our analyses highlight potential cumulative impacts of bycatch across gears and taxa. Our findings suggest that traditional management and mitigation efforts that are species-, taxa-, or gear-specific may be necessary but not sufficient. Many species included in the database are wide-ranging, traveling hundreds to thousands of kilometers, and thus, encounter fishing vessels from numerous fleets that deploy many types of fishing gear. Because the loss of marine megafauna has been linked to major changes in marine ecosystem function and process (17), the cumulative effect of bycatch across fisheries sectors and fleets represents a threat to both species viability and ecosystem process. This data synthesis suggests a confluence of species- and ecosystem-level effects for at least two regions—the Mediterranean and the southwest Atlantic—that are experiencing large cumulative bycatch impacts and that are areas of high-intensity bycatch for particular taxa.

Identification of Critical Data Gaps and Needs. Our analyses also identified several critical knowledge gaps. One data gap is the disparity in information from different fisheries sectors. High-seas and industrial fisheries have been the focus of more data collection than coastal or small-scale fisheries (>50% of all records), a result driven by the infrastructure of the industrial fisheries and the national and regional management organizations that oversee these fisheries (49). The lack of information from coastal and small-scale fisheries is troubling given that bycatch in small-scale fisheries can be substantial (on par with or exceeding bycatch levels in industrial fisheries) (31, 50, 51), suggesting that small-scale fisheries may pose a much greater challenge to marine megafauna than previously thought. Existing data from small-scale fisheries show that this sector requires mitigation (31) in addition to data collection to help guide efforts to develop appropriate conservation strategies.

This assessment also illustrates the disparities in the availability of bycatch data among regions (Fig. 3). The most obvious data gaps are in the Indian Ocean, eastern Atlantic, southeast Asia, and central and western Pacific. Although some bycatch data exist in these ocean areas (Fig. S1), there is relatively little information for these large fishing regions that are known to support highly developed industrial fisheries as well as many millions of small-scale fishers (52, 53). It is likely that other

undocumented hotspots of bycatch exist in these regions, where data are simply not available.

In this assessment, we provide a synoptic view of existing records of air-breathing megafauna bycatch interactions. However, a detailed map of global fishing effort is needed to fully contextualize these interaction data. Information on the amount and spatial distribution of fishing effort is rarely reported, because fishing activity is typically reported as landed catch because of the relative ease of data collection at landing sites (54). Catch data provide information on the harvest of target species but do not represent fishing effort because of variable catchability in space and time. As with bycatch data, fishing effort mapping has been hindered by a lack of data, but there have been a number of attempts to map fishing effort in large ocean regions (35, 55–57). Even with the inherent imprecision of such mapping exercises and their inability to capture dynamic changes to fisheries, these maps, together with bycatch data, can serve as the foundation for spatially explicit bycatch risk assessments. Maps that provide gross estimates of total fishing effort can be combined with bycatch data to help frame the potential risk that fisheries pose to megafauna in particular fishing regions.

Conclusions

Our analysis shows that air-breathing megafauna bycatch is widespread at a global level and that the bycatch landscape is complex, because bycatch intensity varies substantially within and among gears and regions. Wide-ranging megafauna species are likely to encounter multiple gears and experience cumulative effects from multiple fisheries across the seascape. This assessment also identifies critical data gaps (most notably, the need for more data from small-scale and coastal fisheries, gillnets and trawls, and large fishing regions that are known to support highly developed industrial fisheries as well as many millions of small-scale fishers).

This comprehensive bycatch assessment can be used to improve our understanding of population-level effects of bycatch (13), develop and strengthen existing dynamic management approaches to minimizing bycatch (58–60), and prioritize management and conservation efforts worldwide (23, 61). It is likely that many hotspots of bycatch of marine megafauna remain to be identified, particularly in small-scale fisheries and data-deficient ocean regions. This synoptic approach also supports the development of fisheries management strategies that focus on cumulative impacts to avoid the transfer effect (i.e., the reduction of bycatch of one species or taxon that leads to bycatch of another species) and address both the species- and ecosystem-level effects of megafauna bycatch.

Given the global nature of megafauna bycatch, there is a need for cross-sectoral and coordinated international action to effectively reduce bycatch of this assemblage in high-seas and coastal waters. Although some national and regional fisheries agencies have initiated bycatch reduction measures (62), these measures have not been globally adopted. Reducing bycatch levels in coastal fisheries sectors will require coordination across national boundaries using integrated approaches that link conservation actions with sustaining human livelihoods, incentives, and commitment to protecting the environment (63–67). Management structures that focus on solutions with fisher communities, cooperatives, and councils taking an active role in developing and testing mitigation measures to reduce bycatch have proven effective in many areas (47, 48, 68, 69). Although megafauna bycatch is pervasive and in some regions, intense, the recovery of depleted populations is possible if threats are mediated (70). There is an urgent need for the development and adoption of participatory and adaptive approaches to promote sustainable harvest practices, reduce the bycatch of air-breathing and other marine megafauna through effective mitigation, and ultimately, protect the health and function of marine ecosystems.

Materials and Methods

We compiled a global bycatch database from peer-reviewed publications, agency and technical reports, and symposia proceedings published between 1990 and 2008 (a complete bibliography of the sources in the database is in [Data Sources S1](#)). We chose three taxa (seabirds, marine mammals, and sea turtles), because they represent marine megafauna that are not typically retained or commercially valuable (i.e., in contrast to sharks or large finfish). We focused on the three most globally distributed fishing gear and used gear categories recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (www.fao.org/fishery/topic/1617/en) (13). Despite the broad nature of these gear categories, which included several different gear types within each gear category (e.g., trawls includes both bottom and midwater trawls), this classification scheme allowed us to draw general conclusions over two decades, hundreds of studies, and multiple spatial scales, while balancing relevant variation and details. The database represents bycatch information from direct observation, termed observer data, as well as interviews with fishers (~10% of all records). Because much of the bycatch literature exists outside scientific literature databases, we also directly contacted agencies around the world in charge of collecting and collating bycatch information to ensure that our database was comprehensive ([Data Sources S1](#) has a complete bibliography of the sources in the database). The research team systematically evaluated records for errors by species groups. We did not include logbook data, because such data have been found to underrepresent observed bycatch of marine megafauna (6). Even observer data, while providing the most accurate direct measure of bycatch, have been shown to underestimate bycatch, because bycaught individuals may drop out of fishing gear during hauls or go undetected (42). A record in the database represents a unique bycatch report for a particular species and includes records in which zero bycatch was observed. A single reference may contain many records. The database contains a total of 2,270 records across the three taxa and gear types included in this study ([Table S1](#)). More information on the database fields and database access is in [SI Text](#).

Bycatch Intensity Scores. We solicited input from 17 independent scientists who are established experts and leaders in research on seabirds ($n = 5$), marine mammals ($n = 6$), or sea turtles ($n = 6$) with an established familiarity with fisheries bycatch. Our use of expert knowledge followed guidelines established by existing literature in the field (ref. 26 and references therein). Our selection criteria for panelists were independence (to avoid conflict of interest), research expertise, and years of experience (≥ 5 y) (26). Experts came from government agencies, research institutions, and academia from different countries (Argentina, Brazil, Taiwan, United States, and United Kingdom). To support the expert knowledge process, participants were given a specific elicitation to help them draw on appropriate data and relevant background information (26). Each participant was given three datasheets: one for each gear category—trawl, gillnet, and longline—for the taxonomic group for which she or he had expertise. Each taxa group had at least five different experts, and every record in the database was reviewed and scored by at least three experts. For each bycatch record, experts were asked to evaluate the intensity represented by each bycatch record from high (five) to low (one) within each gear category type. Bycatch intensity scores integrated all of the information for each record (e.g., bycatch per unit effort, species information, gear type, region, any spatial information, and the amount of observed fishing effort from which the bycatch rate was calculated) and generated a common measure across all records. In this way, bycatch intensity reflects not only the recorded bycatch but also, the spatial and species-specific information. For example, record A could have the same bycatch per unit effort as record B, but if the species caught in record A is a common species and the species caught in record B is endangered, the bycatch intensity score for the two records would reflect those differences. A high-intensity bycatch score (i.e., five) may reflect both the reported bycatch rate as well as the status of the population or stock caught, because the

experts were given all of the species and spatial information that was provided with the bycatch record. Experts were instructed to score records within but not among gear categories, such that a record with high-intensity bycatch in one gear category (e.g., gillnets) would not be considered equivalent to a record with high-intensity bycatch in another gear category (e.g., trawls). Expert responses were aggregated (averaged) to control for differences among experts (26). Intensity scores were analyzed for differences by taxa, gear, and region using generalized linear models in STATISTICA (Statsoft), and therefore, we could test for effects of categorical and continuous predictor variables assuming a Poisson distribution and log canonical link functions.

Bycatch Maps. All geospatial analysis was performed and all maps were visualized using ArcGIS 10.0 software (ESRI). Individual bycatch records were assigned an initial location based on geographic information in the source material. In some cases, precise latitude and longitude coordinates were provided. More often, only coarse geographic data, such as ocean region or relation to geographic features, were provided. In these instances, records were assigned a location based on the named geographic features in the reference. To visualize individual records at the global scale, overlapping or highly clustered points were exploded out into 0.5° grids centered on the initial locations.

To represent the precision of the bycatch estimates, we determined the proportional fishing effort to reflect the amount of observed fishing effort on which the bycatch estimate was based. Proportional effort was calculated as the ratio of the observed effort for the record to the summed total amount of fishing effort observed for each gear category and each taxon. These proportional values were divided into three classes to represent the lower 5%, middle 90%, and upper 5% of records. This classification yielded scaled fishing effort for each taxon and gear type. Weighting records based on the amount of effort used to generate a bycatch rate is important, because it has been directly linked to the precision of reported rates (i.e., rates based on relatively little observed effort tend to exhibit substantial error vs. rates based on a large amount of fishing effort) (9, 30). Therefore, records based on more fishing effort (larger symbols) are likely to be more precise than those records based on lower levels of effort (smaller symbols). Ranked bycatch records that did not report observed fishing effort were mapped separately ([Fig. S2](#)).

Cumulative Bycatch Intensity. We evaluated cumulative bycatch intensity across all taxa and gears, both graphically and numerically, to consider the total aggregate bycatch using the bycatch intensity scores. Although records from gear categories were scored independently, the cumulative bycatch calculation serves to identify areas where high-intensity bycatch among gear types overlaps. Graphically, bycatch intensity values were used to generate a raster surface from an inverse weighted distance function to consider cumulative bycatch intensity. The extent of the smoothed convex hull was a 2.5° buffer around all points. This spatial extent formed the polygon groups given in the cumulative surface figure and was used to limit the extent. Interpolated values were displayed using the same color ramp as the other visualization methods (dark blue, 1; red, 5). Numerically, we calculated cumulative bycatch intensity for ocean regions with more than 50 records. Cumulative intensity (I_c) was calculated as in Eq. 1 (the mean product of R_i , the bycatch intensity score for each record within a region, and OE_i , the scaled observed fishing effort for each record within a region, divided by r_c , the total number of data records per region).

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Supporting Information

Lewison et al. 10.1073/pnas.1318960111

SI Text

Database Data Fields and Database Availability. *Data fields.* The database included data fields to capture data on the ocean region in which the fishing occurred, any spatial information (e.g., longitude, latitude, and named water body) where gear was deployed, the nationality of the fleet, the total fishing effort, the observed fishing effort, the metric in which fishing effort was reported, gear type and characteristics, estimates of total bycatch, bycatch rates, the metric in which bycatch rates were reported, the amount of mortality observed, species identification, species group identification, any demographic data (size, age, and reproductive status) on bycaught individuals, and the source of the information.

To be included in the analyses described in the text, a data record had to include the following minimum information: spatial location, gear type, bycatch rate, and the amount of effort observed on which the rate was calculated. For some records, spatial location had to be manually georeferenced. Only records that included information on the amount of fishing effort observed are included in Figs. 1 and 2; data records without reported observed fishing effort information are shown in Fig. S2.

Database availability. The bycatch database is included in the OBIS SeaMAP data repository (<http://seamap.env.duke.edu/dataset/1117>). A full bibliography of the documents included in the database is provided in [Data Sources S1](#).

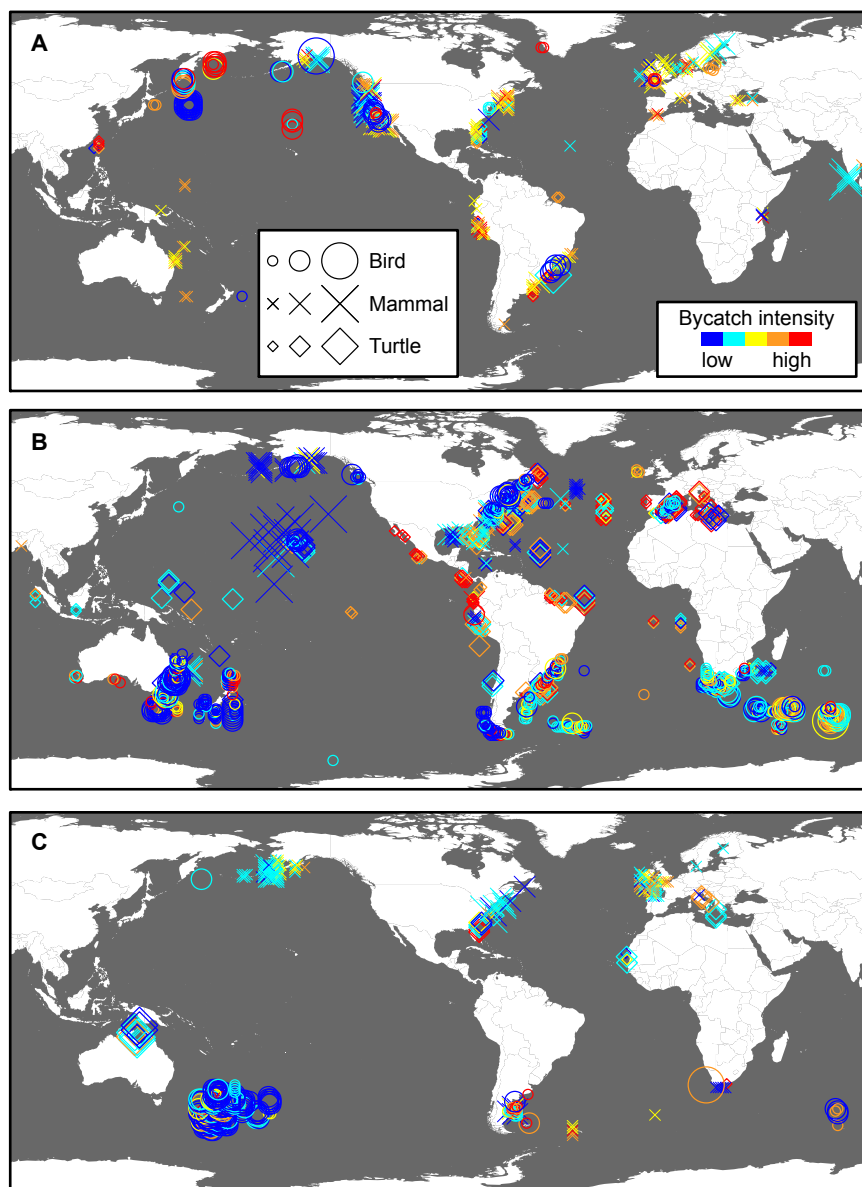


Fig. S1. Bycatch intensity for all taxonomic groups mapped by gear category: (A) gillnet, (B) longline, and (C) trawl. Symbol size is scaled to reflect the proportional amount of observed fishing effort for each record.

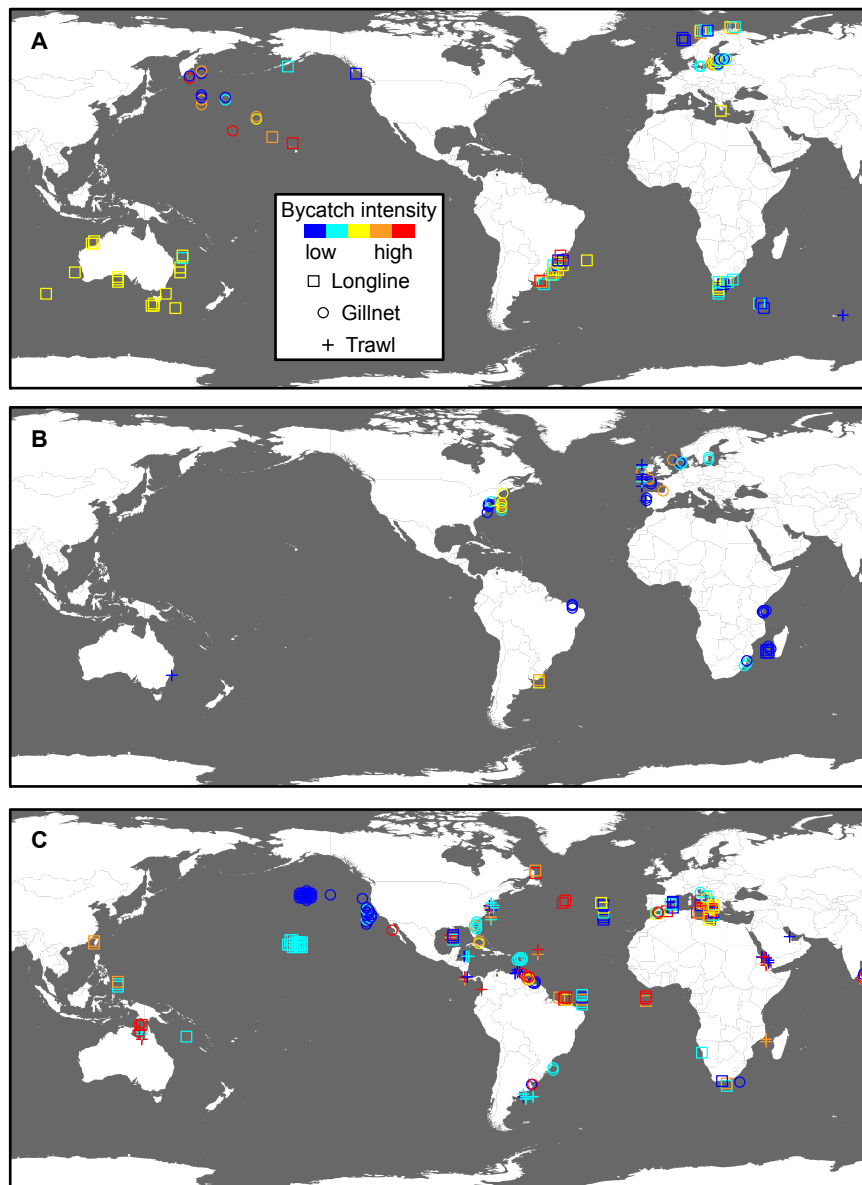


Fig. S2. Bycatch intensity for data records in which observed fishing effort was not reported for (A) seabirds, (B) marine mammals, and (C) sea turtles. Three gear categories (gillnet, longline, and trawl) are represented by separate symbols.

Table S1. Total number of records in the bycatch database by taxa and gear type ($N = 2,270$)

	Total number of records	Number of records by gear type		
		Gillnet	Longline	Trawl
Seabirds	799	158	575	66
Marine mammals	538	339	57	142
Sea turtles	933	255	552	126

Other Supporting Information Files

[Data Sources S1 \(PDF\)](#)

Seabirds

	authors	year	title	journal	volume
1	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels Alaska Fisheries Science Center	2004	Report of the working group on fish stock assessment (extract on incidental mortality)	SC-CCAMLR XIII/4	
2	Seabird Program	2005	Annual Seabird Bycatch Estimates for 2005		
3	Alaska Fisheries Science Center	2011	Preliminary Seabird bycatch estimates for Alaskan groundfish fisheries, 2007-2010		
4	Agnew D.J., Black A.D., Croxall J.P., Parkes G.B.	2000	Experimental evaluation of the effectiveness of weighting regimes in reducing seabird by-catch in the longline toothfish fishery around South Georgia.	CCAMLR Science	7
5	Agnew, D.J. Kirkwood, G. P.	2005	A statistical method for estimating the level of iuu fishing: application to CCAMLR subarea 48.3	CCAMLR Science	12
6	Yu. B. Artyukhin, A. V. Vinnikov and D.A. Terentiev	2006	Sea Birds and Bottom Longline Fishery in the Kamchatka Region An assessment of CCAMLR measures employed to mitigate seabird mortality in longlining operations for	Environmental Impact of Fisheries	
7	Ashford, J.R., and J.P. Croxall Bailey, K., P.G. Williams, and D.	1998	Dissostichus eleginoides around South Georgia	CCAMLR Science South Pacific Commission, Oceanic Fisheries Programme.	5
8	Itano	1996	By-catch and discards in western Pacific tuna fisheries: A review of SPC data holdings and literature.	Technical Report No. 34	
9	Baird, S.J.	2001	Report on the International Fishers' Forum on Solving the Incidental Capture of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries	Auckland, New Zealand. Department of Conservation	
10	Baird, S., and D. Thompson	2002	Seabirds and the hoki (<i>Macruronus novaezelandiae</i>) trawl fishery: a review of current knowledge	NIWA Client Report No. WLG2002/5	
11	Baird, S.J.	2004	Incidental capture of seabird species in commercial fisheries in New Zealand waters, 2001-02	New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2004/60	
12	Baird, S.J.	2004	Incidental capture of seabird species in commercial fisheries in New Zealand waters, 2000-01	New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2004/58	
13	Baird, S.J.	2005	Incidental capture of seabird species in commercial fisheries in New Zealand waters, 2002-03	New Zealand Fisheries Assessment Report 2005/2	
14	Baker, B., Wise, B. Baker, Double, Gales, Tuck, Abbott, Ryan, Petersen, Robertson,	2005	The impact of pelagic longline fishing on the flesh-footed shearwater <i>Puffinus carneipes</i> in Eastern Australia	Biological Conservation	126
15	Alderman	2007	a global assessment of the impact of fisheries-related mortality on shy and white capped albatrosses: Conservation implications		
16	Bakken, V., Falk, K. Barcelona, S.G., J.M. Ortiz de Urbina, J.M. de la Serna, E. Alot, and	1998	Incidental take of seabirds in commercial fisheries in the arctic countries		
17	D. Macias Barnes K.N., Ryan P.G., and Baix- Hinzen Ch.	2010	Seabird bycatch in Spanish Mediterranean large pelagic longline fisheries 2000-2008	Aquatic Living Resources	23
18		1997	The impact of the hake <i>Merluccius</i> spp. Longline off South Africa on Procellariiform seabirds. Sexual segregation of foraging zones in procellariiform birds: implications of accidental capture on commercial	Biological Conservation	82
19	Bartle, J.	1990	fishery longlines of Grey Petrels (<i>Procellaria cinerea</i>)	notornis	37
20	Bartle, J.	1991	Incidental capture of seabirds in the New Zealand subantarctic squid trawl fishery, 1990	Bird Conservation International	1
21	Barton J. Beerkircher, L. Brown, C., Abercrombie, D., Lee, D.	2002	Fisheries and fisheries management in Falkland Islands Conservation Zones	Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems	12
22		2005	Overview of the SEFSC pelagic observer program in the northwest atlantic from 1992-2002	Col. Vol. Sci. Pap. ICCAT	58
23	E.J. Belda, A. Sanchez Benjamins, S, D.W. Kulka, and J.	2001	Seabird mortality on longline fisheries on the western Mediterranean: factors affecting bycatch and proposed	Biological Conservation	98
24	Lawson	2008	Incidental catch of seabirds in Newfoundland and Labrador gillnet fisheries, 2001-2003	Endangered Species Research	5
25	Bigelow, K.A. Bord Iascaigh Mhara (Irish Sea Fisheries Board - BIM)	2011	Seabird interaction rates estimated from observer data (2004-2011) in the Hawaii-based shallow and deep-set longline fisheries	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission 7th Regular Session. PIFSC Working Paper WP-11-009 Final report to the Commission of the European Communities. EU Contract No. 98/010	
26		2000	Diversification trials with alternative tuna fishing techniques including the use of remote sensing technology.		
27	Brothers, N.P., and A.B. Foster	1997	Seabird catch rates: an assessment of causes and solutions in Australia's domestic tuna longline fishery The influence of environmental variables and mitigation measures on seabird catch rates in the Japanese tuna	Marine Ornithology	25
28	Brothers, N., R. Gales, and T. Reid Bugoni, L., Neves, T., Carvalho, D., Peppes, F.	1999	longline fishery within the Australian Fishing Zone, 1991-1995	Biological Conservation	88
29		2007	Hook-and-line fisheries in Brazil: Description and impact on seabirds		

30	Bugoni, L, TS Neves, NO Leite JR, D Carvalho, G Sales, RW Furness, CE Stein, FV Peppes, BB Giffoni, DS Monteiro	2008	Potential bycatch of seabirds and turtles in hook-and-line fisheries of the Itaipava fleet, Brazil Marine turtles, mammals and seabirds captured incidentally by the Spanish surface longline fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea	Fisheries Research 90 (2008) 217-224	
31	Caminas, J.A. & Valeiras, J. Cardoso, L.G., L. Bugoni, P.L.	2001		Rapp. Comm. Int. Mer Medit.	36
32	Mancini, and M. Haimovici Carretta, J.V., T. Price, D. Petersen, and R. Read	2011	Gillnet fisheries as a major mortality factor of Magellanic penguins in wintering areas Estimates of marine mammal, sea turtle, and seabird mortality in the California drift gillnet fishery for swordfish and thresher shark, 1996-2002	Marine Pollution Bulletin Marine Fisheries Review	62 66
33	John Chardine, Julie Porter, Kenton Wohl	2004	Workshop on Seabird Incidental Catch in the Waters of Arctic Countries	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna	
34	Cherel Y., H. Weimerskirch, G. Duhamel	2000	Interactions between longline vessels and seabirds in Kerguelen waters and a method to reduce seabird mortality	Biological Conservation	75
36	Christensen	1995	Bycatches in the salmon drift net	International Council for the Exploration. Report of the Baltic Salmon and trout assessment working group	
37	Clemens, A.	2006	Annual report on seabird interactions and mitigation efforts in the Hawaii longline fishery for 2005	NMFS PIRO Administrative Report AR-PIRO-05-06	
38	Commonwealth of Australia John Cooper, Nicola Baccetti, Eduardo J. Belda, John J. Borg, Daniel Oro, Costas Papaconstantinou and Antonio Sanchez	2003	Seabird interactions with longline fisheries in the Australian fishing zone: assessment report for the National Plan of Action for reducing the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries	Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	
39		2007	Seabird mortality from longline fishing in the Mediterranean Sea and Macaronesian waters: a review and a way forward	Scientia Marina Marine and Coastal Management, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Cape Town	67
40	John Cooper and Peter G. Ryan	2004	South African National plan of action for reducing the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries		
41	Mindaugas Dagys, Ramunas Zydulis	2002	Bird bycatch in fishing nets in Lithuanian coastal waters in wintering season 2001-2002	Acta Zoologica Lituonica	
42	Darby, J.T., and S.M. Dawson	2000	Bycatch of yellow-eyed penguins (Megadyptes antipodes) in gillnets in New Zealand waters 1979-1997	Biological Conservation	93
43	Davoren, G.K.	2007	Effects of gill-net fishing on marine birds in a biological hotspot in the northwest Atlantic	Conservation Biology	21
44	DeGange, A.R., and R.H. Day de la Serna, Jose Miguel Ortiz de Urbina, Jose Maria	1991	Mortality of seabirds in the Japanese land-based gillnet fishery for salmon	The Condor	93
45	Garcia Barcelona, Salvador K. Delord N. Gasco H. Weimerskirch C. Barbraud	2006	Peces espada en peligro	Revista Electronica del Instituto Espanol de Oceanografia	5
46	T. Micol	2005	Seabird mortality in the Patagonian toothfish longline fishery around Crozet and Kerguelen islands, 2001-2003	CCAMLR Science	12
47	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	2003	Status report and future directions towards the development of a national plan of action for the reduction of incidental catch of seabirds in domestic and foreign longline fisheries in Canadian waters	Canadian Technical Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences	2471
48	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	2007	National Plan of Action for reducing the incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	
49	Dietrich, K.S., E.F. Melvin and L. Conquest.	2008	Integrated weight longlines with paired streamer lines - Best practice to prevent seabird bycatch in demersal longline fisheries	Biological Conservation	141
50	Dietrich, K.S., and S.M. Fitzgerald	2010	Analysis of 2004-2007 vessel-specific seabird bycatch data in Alaska demersal longline fisheries.	AFSC Processed Report 2010-04	
51	Euan Dunn and Christian Steel	2001	The impact of longline fishing on seabirds in the north-east Atlantic: recommendations for reducing mortality		
52	Euan Dunn	2007	The case for a community plan of action for reducing incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries	Birdlife International	
53	Falk, K., and J. Durinck	1991	The by-catch of Thick-billed Murres in salmon drift nets off West Greenland in 1988	Occasional Paper Canadian Wildlife Service	

54	Favero M., Khatchikian C.E., Arias A., Silva Rodriguez M.P., Canete G, and Mariano-Jelicich R.	2003	Estimates of seabird by-catch along the Patagonian Shelf by Argentinean longline fishing vessels, 1999-2001.	Bird Conservation International	13
55	Forney, K.A., S.R. Benson, and G.A. Cameron	2001	Central California gillnet effort and bycatch of sensitive species, 1990-1998	Seabird bycatch: Trends, roadblocks and solutions. E.F. Melvin, and J.K. Parrish (eds). University of Alaska Sea Grant	
56	Forsell, D.J.	1999	Mortality of migratory waterbirds in Mid-Atlantic coastal anchored gillnets during March and April 1998	US Fish and Wildlife Service Chesapeake Bay Field Office Administrative Report	
57	Gales, R., N. Brothers, and T. Reid Gandini P.A., Frere E., Pettovello	1998	Seabird mortality in the Japanese tuna longline fishery around Australia, 1988-1995	Biological Conservation	86
58	A.D., Cedrola P.V.	1999	Interaction between Magellanic Penguins and shrimp fisheries in Patagonia, Argentina	The Condor	101
59	Gandini, P., Frere, E.	2006	Spatial and temporal patterns in the bycatch of seabirds in the Argentinian longline fishery		
60	Geernaert, T.O., H.L. Gilroy, S.M. Kaimmer, G.H. Williams, and R.J. Trumble	2001	A feasibility study that investigates options for monitoring bycatch of short-tailed albatross in the Pacific halibut fishery off Alaska	NMFS and IPHC	
61	Gilman, E., C. Boggs, and N. Brothers	2003	Performance assessment of an underwater setting chute to mitigate seabird bycatch in the Hawaii pelagic longline tuna fishery	Ocean and Coastal Management	46
62	Gilman, E.	2004	Assessment of strategies to reduce seabird bycatch employed by Hawaii pelagic longline tuna vessels and of observer program data collection protocols	Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council	
63	Gilman, E., N. Brothers, and D. R. Kobayashi	2007	Comparison of three seabird bycatch avoidance methods in Hawaii-based pelagic longline fisheries	Fisheries Science	73
64	Glass N., Lavarello I., Glass J.P., and Ryan P.G.	2000	Longline fishing at Tristan da Cunha: impacts on seabirds	Atlantic Seabirds	2
65	Gomez Laich A., M. Favero, R. Mariano-Jelicich, G. Blanco, G. Canete, A. Arias, P. Silva Rodriguez, and H. Brachetta	2006	Environmental and operational variability affecting mortality of Black-browed Albatrosses associated with longliners in Argentina	Emu	
66	GonzalesZevallos, D. and Yorio, P.	2006	Seabird use of discards and incidental captures at the Argentine hake fishery in the Golfo San Jorge, Argentina	Marine Ecology Progress Series	316
67	Gonzalez-Zevallos, D., Yorio, P., Caille, G.	2007	Seabird mortality at trawler warp cables and a proposed mitigation measure: A case of study in Golfo San Jorge, Patagonia, Argentina	Biological Conservation	136
68	Hale, L.F., L.D. Hollensead, and J.K. Carlson	2007	Characterization of the shark bottom longline fishery: 2007	NMFS Tech Memo (SEFSC)	564
69	Nancy Harrison and Mark Robins	1992	The threat from nets to seabirds	RSPB Conservation Review 6, 1992	
70	Hata, D.N.	2006	Incidental captures of seabirds in the US Atlantic pelagic longline fishery, 1986-2005	NOAA SEFSC	
71	Heinemann, D., N. Klaer, T. Polacheck, G. Tuck and T. Davis	2002	The effects of longlining on seabird populations: by-catch estimation, archival tagging and population modeling	CSIRO Marine Research Final Report AFMA 97/98	
72	Huang, H.-W., and K.-M. Liu	2010	Bycatch and discards by Taiwanese large-scale tuna longline fleets in the Indian Ocean	Fisheries Research	106
73	International Fishers Forum	2002	Proceedings of the Second International Fishers Forum, November 19-22, 2002. Noreen M. Parks, ed.		
74	International Fishers Forum	2006	Proceedings of the International Tuna Fishers Conference on Responsible Fisheries & Third International Fishers Forum, July 25-29, 2005.		
75	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Jahncke, J. Goya, E.	2006	Report of the Second Session of the IOTC Working Party on Bycatch Seychelles, 31 July - 1 August 2006.		
76	Guillen, A.	2001	Seabird by-catch in small-scale longline fisheries in northern Peru	Waterbirds	24
77	Jimenez, S, and A. Domingo	2007	Albatros y Petreles: su interaccion con la flota de palangre pelagico Uruguay en el Atlantico Sudoccidental (1998-2006)	ICCAT Col. Vol. Sci. Pap.	60
78	Jimenez, S., M. Abreu, M. Pons, M. Ortiz, and A. Domingo	2010	Assessing the impact of the pelagic longline fishery on albatrosses and petrels in the southwest Atlantic	Aquatic Living Resources	23
	Gustavo Jiménez-Uzcátegui Jeffrey Mangel Joanna Alfaro-Shigueto				
79	Dave Anderson	2006	Fishery bycatch of the waved albatross <i>Phoebastria irrorata</i> , a need for implementation of agreements	Galapagos Research	64
80	Bogdan Kiez, and Teresa Tomek	1990	Bird Mortality in Fishing Nets in the Gulf of Gdansk, Polish Baltic Coast	Pelagicus	5

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