



## Project Report to Pacific Seabird Group

### **Project: Encouraging at-sea monitoring efforts of the waved albatross in the Southeast Pacific**

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#### **Brief intro and objectives**

The Waved Albatross (WAAL) is endemic to the Southeast Pacific. The species breeds exclusively in Ecuador and forages off the Ecuador and Peru coasts. The species has been up-listed to Critically Endangered status by the IUCN, due to recent information on the decline of the population. The main anthropogenic threat to the species at sea comes from interactions at their foraging grounds with Peruvian and Ecuadorian artisanal fisheries, as well as their use for human consumption in some communities.

The objectives of this proposed project were to:

- Design and deploy standardize onboard observer datasheets in Peru and Ecuador to monitor WAAL at-sea abundance and distribution.
- Increase awareness of seabird conservation and monitoring efforts occurring locally.

#### **Activities to accomplished objectives**

##### a. Design and deployment of standardized observer datasheets in Peru and Ecuador

Both projects conducted in Peru and Ecuador to monitor WAAL at-sea abundance and bycatch from artisanal fishing vessels (ProDelphinus and Equilibrio Azul [www.equilibrioazul.org](http://www.equilibrioazul.org), respectively) are now sharing information and collecting the same minimum data on their forms for the onboard observer program. Information gathered will be entered in each organization's database. Information collected includes bird counts during setting and hauling of fishing gear, repeated counts while the vessels are traveling frequent, and, in cases of WAAL bycatch, the number of birds caught and details of the event.

##### b. Increase awareness of seabird conservation and monitoring efforts occurring locally

Workshops for fishermen at Santa Rosa, Bolivar, Esmeraldas and Chanduy in Ecuador are being conducted by Equilibrio Azul, while in Huanchaco, Salaverry and San Jose in Peru, talks by ProDelphinus staff started in October 2010. The purpose of these workshops is to raise awareness among local fishers, local authorities and general public, regarding seabird conservation efforts in the area.

## Acknowledgements

We thank Pacific Seabird Group for its support for this small but important project which promotes the conservation of the waved albatross and also promotes and enhances regional collaboration among agencies working with the species.



Natalia Ortiz (ProDelphinus) and Jodie Darquea (Equilibrio Azul, Ecuador), comparing information on seabirds collected in the two countries.



Santa Rosa port, in Ecuador, during visit to some artisanal ports where information on waved albatross bycatch is being collected.



Jodie Darquea working with an Ecuadorian fisher. Robert Medina, an Ecuadorian colleague, during a talk on seabird conservation at the IMARPE marine lab, in Huanchaco, Peru.