



CIRCUMPOLAR SEABIRD GROUP

CBIRD XI

**Aberdeen, Scotland
2 – 5 March 2005**

Meeting Report

March 2005



Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

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I. Executive Summary

The concept of a Circumpolar Seabird Group (CBird) was approved by CAFF in 1993 in recognition that Arctic countries have many seabird species in common and often share the same populations and conservation issues, and therefore share a joint and equal responsibility for their conservation. This was CBird's 11th meeting and in the past 11 years CBird has been instrumental in addressing and raising the visibility of priority circumpolar Arctic seabird conservation issues. It has published two Conservation Action Plans (Murres and Eiders), six CAFF Technical Reports, two editions of the Circumpolar Seabird Bulletin, two posters, ten Progress Reports, and participated in numerous meetings and workshops. CBird has been successful in meeting its objectives because the members are united and focused on their desire to conserve Arctic seabirds. CBird meets once a year to ensure progress is made on their action items and projects.

CBird conducted its 11th meeting in Aberdeen, Scotland 2 – 5 March 2005. The meeting was attended by about 25 seabird specialists and managers representing the nine Arctic countries including the Faroe Islands, and an official observer from Great Britain along with several interested local attendees. The CAFF Chair also attended. CBird primarily focused its attention on the following issues: Circumpolar Murre and Eider Conservation Strategies, Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern, Harvest of Seabirds in the Arctic, Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network, and the Arctic Seabird Status and Trends Report, a Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends Report, an International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy. The Nordic countries have recently completed a database of seabird colonies, there is also an existing North Pacific Seabird Colony Database, the existence of these two major databases prompted the group to begin discussion on the idea of creating a Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database, which would be web-based and make data readily available to all users. The next year promises to be very busy, CBird has 12 products that are due by the CAFF meeting in June 2006. These include: (1) complete a CAFF Technical Report summarizing the results of each country's Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern status report and prioritized recommendations, (2) update the Technical Report on seabird harvest in 2006, (3) produce a CAFF Technical Report on the status and progress of the Eider Conservation Strategy, (4) publish a report on the Thick-billed Murre Population Model for the Atlantic Region, (5) complete a peer-reviewed publication "Seabird and Climate Change: a Circumpolar Seesaw", (6) complete a Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Framework and (7) a Circumpolar Murre Monitoring Plan, (8) complete a murre poster for the Atlantic region, (9) publish the third Circumpolar Seabird Bulletin, (10) write an Arctic Seabird Status and Trends Report, (11) complete a draft International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy, and (12) complete a CAFF Technical Report on Seabird Gillnet Bycatch. For more details please see the Meeting Report that follows and the CAFF website www.caff.is/ for the complete CBird XI Meeting Report with all appendices attached.

II. CAFF/Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan, 2004-2006, Progress in 2004

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
Work Plan 2004 - 2006

Conserving Arctic Species

FAUNA

- 1.1 Complete a review on “Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern” in 2005.

Lead: US and Wetlands International

A presentation was made at CBird XI in March 2005. The design of several summary tables were reviewed and revised. The drafting of the country reports is progressing and will be completed in 2006.

- 1.2 Complete a review of impacts of bycatch and harvests on seabirds by 2006.

Lead: Greenland and US

Each country reported on seabird gillnet bycatch issues at CBird XI. We discussed gillnet bycatch issues and will write a CAFF Technical Report on the status of gillnet bycatch that will be finished by CBird XII.

Harvest issues for each country were discussed and the format for the technical report was decided upon. A general timeline for completing a CAFF Technical Report by CBird XII was completed.

- 1.3 Complete a review of progress on the CAFF Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy by 2006. *Lead: Canada*

Countries continued to implement the “Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy and Action Plan”. We completed a draft “Common Eider Colony Poster” of the circumpolar region for all four eider species. We also reviewed the status and progress of the Eider Conservation Strategy and will produce a Technical Report on the status and progress of the Eider Conservation Strategy by 2006.

- 1.4 Complete a Circumpolar Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy by 2006.

Lead: Canada

A draft on the Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy was nearly completed in 2004 and a final will be completed by CBird XII.

Assessing and Monitoring Arctic Biodiversity

- 3.1 Complete the framework for a circumpolar seabird monitoring network in 2005. *Lead: Iceland and US*

The seabird monitoring network long-term plan is to develop a Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Plan. Interim objectives were to develop a Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network (CSMN) Framework. We have completed a draft CSMN Framework by CBird XI and will complete the final by CBird XII.

- 3.2 Complete a review of the status and trends of Arctic seabirds in 2006. *Lead: Iceland*

Work has begun on the review of the status and trends of Arctic seabirds and the report will be completed in early 2006.

Appendix II: Additional CAFF Projects Under Development or Consideration

1. Complete the third edition of the Circumpolar Seabird Bulletin in 2005. *Lead: US*
Ideas for the seabird bulletin were discussed at CBird XI, a third bulletin will be published in early 2006.
2. Evaluate the need for a CAFF Technical Report “Circumpolar Status and Trends of Arctic Seaducks”. *Lead: US*
The need for a report on the Circumpolar Status and Trends of Arctic Seaducks was discussed and based on what is known and has already been written by other groups, including a recent North American Status and Trends Report, it was decided that CBird should not pursue this project at this time.
3. Evaluate the need for a CAFF Technical Report “Circumpolar Status and Trends of Arctic Kittiwakes”. *Lead: Norway*
An inventory of all data on Black-legged kittiwakes in the Arctic was completed and a summary of general trends showed that kittiwakes are declining throughout the Arctic. CBird decided to continue examining the data more carefully and discuss ideas for a publication on the status and trends of kittiwakes.
4. Complete a CAFF Technical Report “Circumpolar Murre Monitoring Plan” in 2005. *Lead: US*
The plan was discussed at CBird XI and the plan will be completed in 2005.
5. Complete eight action items in the CAFF Murre Conservation Strategy by 2006. *Lead: US, Canada, Norway*
Countries continued to implement applicable action items in the CAFF report “International Murre Conservation Strategy and Action Plan” and related national implementation plans, and report progress at the CBird XII meeting. A draft

“Thick-billed Murre Population Model for the Atlantic Region” was completed and sent for review; comments were received and will be incorporated. The paper on murre and climate change was completed and submitted to the journal Nature, where it was rejected. It will be submitted to Science next. Canada wrote a national proposal for a Coordinated North Atlantic Thick-billed Murre Banding Program. Norway proposed using the existing software that is used for the Seabird colony database of the Barents Sea region, ARC IMS, for putting the Circumpolar Murre Colony Maps on the web. Vidar Bakken has completed a paper and it was accepted to be published, two other papers are still being written. There are no plans for doing the banding recovery atlas as discussed at the last meeting, it would require more funding to complete this task.

III. Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan Recommendations: 2005-2006

A. Action Item 1: Assess seabird status and trends

1. Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network

Ongoing	Participate in the CAFF Biodiversity Monitoring Network project as the Coordinator of the CSMN. Lead: US-David Irons Schedule:	Ongoing
Ongoing	Complete a circumpolar murre monitoring plan. Lead: US-David Irons Schedule:	
	Draft	Nov. 30
	Final	CBird XII
Ongoing	Complete a CSMN Framework. Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen/US-David Irons Schedule:	
	Matrices	April 15
	Draft	May 15
	Review	Sept. 1
	Final	Dec. 1

2. Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern.

Ongoing Using CAFF Technical Reports No. 4 and No. 8 on the subject, each country will develop a report containing a prioritized list of birds that primarily nest in the Arctic and primarily winter outside the Arctic. Using the country lists of priority birds and a set of criteria, a list of Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern (BACC) will be developed. Each country's

report will also contain an assessment of the status and trends, description of migration corridors staging areas, and wintering location, needed improvements to, and gaps in, international mechanisms to enhance the conservation status of BACCs.

Lead: US-Kent Wohl

Schedule:

Ongoing	Draft	May 1
	CBird will complete a CAFF Technical Report summarizing the results of each country's BACC status report and prioritized recommendations.	
	Lead: US-Kent Wohl	
	Schedule 2005:	
	Technical Report Draft Tables	April 15
	Country Reports	June 1
	Draft BACC Technical Report	Sept 1
	Comments on Draft	Nov 1
	Final BACC Technical Report	Dec 31

3. Circumpolar Seabird Status and Trends Report

New Write report on the status and trends of Arctic seabirds.

Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen/US-David Irons

Schedule:

Send Matrices to Aevar	April 15
Draft	June 1
Review	Sept 30
Final	Dec 15

4. Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends

New Obtain and summarize all data collected in circumpolar countries on kittiwake population trends and productivity.

Lead: Norway-Rob Barrett, Tycho Anker-Nilssen / US-David Irons

Schedule: CBird XII

5. Circumpolar seabird colony database

New Evaluate possibility of developing a circumpolar seabird colony web-based database.

Lead Norway - Strom, US - Irons, Canada - Gilchrist

Schedule: CBird XII

B. Action Item 2: Assess factors influencing populations

1. Seabird Harvest in the Arctic

- Ongoing** Countries will continue to report on seabird harvest and implementation of applicable recommendations in CAFF Technical Report No. 5.
Lead: Greenland-Jens Nyeland
Schedule: **CBird XII**
- New** Update Technical Report on Harvest for 2006
Lead: Greenland-Jens Nyeland
Schedule: **CBird XII**

2. Seabird Gillnet Bycatch in Commercial Fisheries in the Arctic

- Ongoing** All countries will continue to report on seabird bycatch initiatives including implementation of the Food and Agriculture Organization/Committee on Fisheries International Plan of Action to Reduce Seabird Bycatch in Longline Fisheries of the World and related national implementation plans.
Lead: US-David Irons
Schedule: **CBird XII**
- Ongoing** Write a technical report on Seabird Gillnet Bycatch.
Lead: US-Kent Wohl
Schedule: **CBird XII**

3. Arctic Council Oil and Gas Assessment

- New** Help write and review the “2006 Assessment of Potential Impacts of Arctic Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic” document.
Lead: Greenland-Mosbech
Schedule:
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Write needed sections | April 10 |
| Review | June 15 |

C. Action Item 3: Develop and implement conservation strategies

1. Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy

- Ongoing** Countries will continue implementing applicable action items in the CAFF report “Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy and Action Plan Countries” and related national action plans, and report progress at CBird meetings.
Lead: Canada-Grant Gilchrist

New	Schedule: Create a Common Eider Colony Poster of the circumpolar region for all four eider species. Lead: Canada–Grant Gilchrist/Greg Robertson, Schedule:	CBird XII April 30, 2005
New	Produce a Technical Report on the status and progress of the Eider Conservation Strategy. Lead: Canada-Grant Gilchrist/Greg Robertson Schedule: Draft Technical Report Final	Nov. 1 CBird XII

2 .Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy

Ongoing	Countries will continue implementing applicable action items in the CAFF report “International Murre Conservation Strategy and Action Plan” and related national implementation plans, and report progress at CBIRD meetings. Lead: US-David Irons Schedule:	CBird XII
Ongoing	Develop a Thick-billed Murre population model for the Atlantic Region. Lead: Canada-Greg Robertson Schedule: Final	CBird XII
Ongoing	Complete a peer-reviewed publication Seabirds and climate change, a circumpolar seesaw. Lead: US-David Irons/Norway-Tycho Anker-Nilssen Schedule: Submit to Science	Mar. 15, 2005
Ongoing	Finish murre poster for the Atlantic region. Lead: Norway-Hallvard Strom Schedule:	Nov. 1
Ongoing	Encourage completion of North Atlantic Murre Band Recovery papers. Lead: Norway-Vidar Bakken Schedule:	CBird XII.
New	Write joint proposal to obtain funds for coordinated North Atlantic Thick-billed Murre banding program. Lead: Canada-Greg Robertson, Grant Gilchrist, and Tony Gaston Schedule: Proposal	June 1

3. International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy

New	Complete a final “International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy”. Lead: Canada-Grant Gilchrist/Norway-Hallvard Strom Schedule: Final Strategy	CBird XII
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2. Spatially explicit circumpolar models for seabirds

A request of the CBird group was made from a professor from U. of Alaska, Fairbanks to examine spatially explicit models concerning circumpolar seabirds. We discussed the request and decided that more information was needed. We thought that the professor should attend a meeting and tell us more about his ideas.

3. Potential joint CAFF/African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement project on migratory Arctic birds

Sergey Dereliev, who works with UNEP/AEWA, came to the meeting to discuss the possibility of a joint project between CAFF and the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. Sergey made a presentation and ideas were discussed. One possible project would be to examine the impact of climate change on harvest of waterbirds in the Arctic and implications i.e., cultural, economic, and spiritual importance of waterbird subsistence use by indigenous peoples throughout the circumpolar north.

4. CBird 2020, the next 15 years...

We discussed where CBird should be going in the next several years and decided: CBird should continue to be responsive to the Arctic Council and CAFF. The value of CBird is bringing circumpolar data together to view issues at the circumpolar scale, also the group can respond quickly to international issues because we have existing connections and working relationships among the Arctic countries. The two main issues for the near term are climate change and biodiversity monitoring, but CBird should also integrate into ecosystem studies where appropriate.

F. Future Circumpolar Seabird Group Meetings

Ongoing It was proposed that the next Circumpolar Seabird Group Meeting be in St. Petersburg, Russia 1-4 March 2006. Maria Gavrilov is the local committee chair. Sweden is hoping to host the 2007 meeting in Stora Karlso. Greenland volunteered to host the meeting in Nuuk in 2008, Iceland volunteered to host the 2009 meeting and we also discussed the value of having a World Seabird Conference in 2010.

Lead: US-David Irons,

Schedule:

Sept 2005

G. List of Participants

List of Participants, CBird XI, Aberdeen Scotland 2-5 March, 2005

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

Circumpolar Seabird Group (CBird XI)

Aberdeen Scotland 2-5 March, 2005

Name	Institution	Address	E-mail
Anker-Nilssen, Tycho	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research	NO-7485 Trondheim Tel.: +47 73 80 14 00 Cell: +47 93 46 67 71 Fax: +47 73 80 14 01	tycho@nina.no
Ekker, Morten	Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management	Tungasletta 2 NO-7485 Trondheim Tel.: +47 73580730 Fax: +47 73580501	morten.ekker@dirnat.no
Gavrilo, Maria	Arctic & Antarctic Research Institute (AARI)	Bering st., 38 St. Petersburg Russia 199392 Tel. +7 812 3522246 W Tel. +7 812 3774109 H	mashuka@aari.nw.ru m_gavrilo@mail.ru
Gilchrist, Grant	Canadian Wildlife Service	National Wildlife Research Centre, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Raven Road Carleton University Ottawa, Canada KIA OH3 Tel.: + 613 998 7364 Fax:	grant.gilchrist@ec.gc.ca
Hario, Martti	Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute	P.O. Box 6 FIN-00721 Helsinki Tel.: +358 205 751 273 Fax: +358 205 751 201	martti.hario@rktl.fi
Irons, David	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	1011 E. Tudor Rd. (MS-201) Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199 USA Tel.: +907 786 3376 Fax: +907 786 3641	david_iron@fws.gov
Mosbech, Anders	Department of Arctic Environment NERI	Frederiksborgvej 399 DK-4000 Roskilde Tel.: +45 4630 1934 Fax: +45 4630 1914	amo@dmu.dk

CAFF, Circumpolar Seabird Group, CBird XI, Aberdeen, Scotland

Nyeland, Jens	The Greenland Institute of Natural Resources	P.O. Box 570 DK-3900 Nuuk Greenland Tel.: +299 361 200 Fax: +299 361 212	Jny@natur.gl
Olsen, Bergur	Faroese Fisheries Laboratory	Noatun FO – 100 Tórshavn Faroe Islands Tel.: +298 352 327 Fax: +298 352 321	berguro@frs.fo
Petersen, Aevan	Icelandic Institute for Natural History	P.O. Box 5320, Hlemmur 3 IS-125 Reykjavik Tel.: +354 5900 500 Fax: +354 5900 595	aevar@ni.is
Reid, Jim	Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Seabirds & Cetaceans 7 Thistle Place Aberdeen AB10 1UZ Scotland UK Tel.: +44 1224 655 702 Fax: +44 1224 621 488	jim.reid@jncc.gov.uk
Robertson, Greg	Canadian Wildlife Service	6 Bruce street Mount Pearl Newfoundland A1N 4T3 Canada Tel.: +709+772+2778 Fax: +709+772+5097	greg.robertson@ec.gc.ca
Strøm, Hallvard	Norwegian Polar Institute	Polar Environmental Center NO-9296 Tromsø Tel.: +47 777 50 548 Fax: +47 777 50 501	hallvard.strom@npolar.no
Wohl, Kent	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	1011 E. Tudor Rd. (MS-201) Anchorage Alaska 99503 USA Tel.: +907 786 3503 Fax: +907 786 3641	kent_wohl@fws.gov
Jaakkola, Esko	Ministry of the Environment	PO Box 35 00023 Government Finland Tel: +358 9 16039371 Fax: +358 9 16039364	esko.jaakkola@ymparisto.fi

CAFF, Circumpolar Seabird Group, CBird XI, Aberdeen, Scotland

Roddy Mavor	Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Dunnet House 7 Thistle Place Aberdeen AB10 1UZ Scotland Tel: +44 1224 655 703 Fax: +44 1224 621 488	rodny.mavor@jncc.gov.uk
Dereliev, Sergey	UNEP/AEWA	Martin-Luther-King Str. 8 53175 Bonn Germany Tel: +49 228 815 2415 Fax: +49 228 815 2450	sdereliev@unep.de
Dean, Ben	JNCC	Dunnet House 7 Thistle Place Aberdeen AB10 1UZ UK Tel: +44 (0) 1224 655711	ben.dean@jncc.gov.uk
Wilson, Linda	JNCC	Dunnet House 7 Thistle Place Aberdeen AB 10 1UZ UK Tel: +44(0) 1224 655711	Linda.wilson@jncc.gov.uk
Osterblom, Henrik	Stockholm University	Dept. of Systems Ecology SE-10691 Stockholm Sweden	henroste@nrm.se
Wanless, Sarah	CEH	CEH Banchory Banchory Scotland AB 314BW	swanl@ceh.ac.uk
Harris, Mike	CEH	CEH Banchory Banchory Scotland AB 314BW	mph@ceh.ac.uk
Webb, Andy	JNCC	Dunnet House 7 Thistle Place Aberdeen AB10 1UZ Tel: +44 (0) 1224 655705	Andy.webb@jncc.gov.uk
Fleming, Vin	JNCC	Monkstone House Peterborough PE1 1JY	Vin.fleming@jncc.gov.uk
Frederiksen, Morten	CEH (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology)	CEH Banchory Mill of Brathens Banchory AB31 4BW, UK	mfr@ceh.ac.uk

H. Appendices

- 1. Status of Seabird-related Activities Report**
- 2. Seabird Bycatch Report**
- 3. Seabird Harvest Report**
- 4. Eider Conservation Strategy Implementation Report**
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Reports can be found at the CAFF website www.caff.is/