



Typology of small-scale fishing gear impact on seabirds in the Senegalo-Mauritanian Upwelling

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Abstract

Situated in West Africa, Senegal has 700 km of coastline characterized by a large Eastern Boundary Upwelling Ecosystem providing significant biological productivity. Small-scale fishing plays an important role in the national economy of Senegal. The fishing gear used has a potentially direct or indirect impact on seabirds. To examine and evaluate this impact surveys were conducted on eight landing sites. Field surveys (2-3 days) took place in 2015 based on a standardized interview with questionnaire conducted with 225 small-scale fishermen. The results obtained indicate that longlines are the fishing gear that causes the highest rate of annual accidental seabird catch (63 % of seabird caught (n = 702)), followed by handlines (16%) and anchored gillnet (6 %). The Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) is the most captured bird annually (29 % of total captured birds), closely followed by the Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*) (28 % of captured birds) and the Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*) (13 % of captured birds). The village of Yoff is the landing site which has the highest rate of annual seabird catch with 39% of the total catch indicated, followed by Kayar with 19 % and Saint Louis with 14%, both situated on the Grande Côte. Further studies should be conducted in the entire Senegalese-Mauritanian coast in particular in the northern part of Senegal, to better evaluate the annual catch of seabirds. A great collaboration should also be established with longliners, handliners and anchored gillnet fishers to better quantify incidental catch of seabirds by the artisanal fishing gear and set up mitigation actions.

Keywords: small-scale fishing gear, seabirds, bycatch mitigation, Senegal.



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