



CIRCUMPOLAR SEABIRD GROUP

CBIRD XV

**Westman Islands (Heimaey), Iceland
23 September – 26 September 2009**

Meeting Report

September 2009



Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

CIRCUMPOLAR SEABIRD GROUP

CBIRD XV

**Westman Islands (Heimaey), Iceland
23 September – 26 September 2009**

Meeting Report

September 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>I. Executive Summary</i>	4
<i>II. CAFF/Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan, 2009-20011,</i> <i>Progress in 2009</i>	4
A. Conserving Arctic Species	4
1. International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy.....	4
2. Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy	5
3. Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy	5
4. Seabird Harvest in the Arctic	5
5. Seabird Bycatch in Commercial Fisheries in the Arctic	5
B. Conserving Arctic Ecosystems and Habitats.....	5
C. Assessing and Monitoring Arctic Biodiversity	5
1. Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program and the Marine Integrated Monitoring Plan	5
<i>Action: Cbird has participated in the CAFF Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program and assist in developing the Marine Integrated Monitoring Plan.</i>	5
2. Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern.	6
3. Circumpolar Seabird Status and Trends Report.....	6
4. Seabird Information Network	6
5. Circumpolar seabird colony database	6
6. Glaucous Gull Decline Paper	6
7. Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends.....	6
8. Murre, Eider and Harvest Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports, ABA Seabird Chapter and Murre Arctic Report Card.....	7
<i>Action: Murre and Eider Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports were written.</i>	7
<i>Action: A harvest Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports was written.</i>	7
<i>Action: Murre and eider Arctic Biodiversity Assessment Chapter was written.</i>	7
D. Global Issues	7
1. CBirdSTAMP Project	7
2. Arctic Tern Project.....	7
E. Engaging Society	7
1. Continue updating the CAFF CBird Website	7
<i>III. Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan Recommendations: 2009-2010</i>	8
A. Conserving Arctic Species	8
1. International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy.....	8
2. Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy	8
3. Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy	8
4. Seabird Harvest in the Arctic	8
5. Seabird Gillnet Bycatch in Commercial Fisheries in the Arctic	9
B. Conserving Arctic Ecosystems and Habitats.....	9
C. Assessing and Monitoring Arctic Biodiversity	9

CAFF, Circumpolar Seabird Group, CBird XVI, Nuuk, Greenland

1. Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network of the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program	9
2. Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern	9
3. Circumpolar Seabird Status and Trends Report	9
4. Seabird Information Network	9
5. Circumpolar seabird colony database	10
6. Glaucous Gull Decline Paper	10
7. Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends	10
D. Global Issues	10
1. CBirdSTAMP Project	10
2. Arctic Tern Project	10
E. Engaging Society	11
1. Continue updating the CAFF CBird Website	11
<i>IV. Summary of Deliverables for the CAFF 2009-2011 Work Plan</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>V. Discussion of New Issues</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>VI. Future Circumpolar Seabird Group Meetings</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>VII. List of Participants</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>VIII. Appendices</i>	<i>16</i>
1. List of CBird Products	16
2. List of CBird Meetings	16

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 15th meeting and in the past 15 years CBird has been instrumental in addressing and raising the visibility of priority circumpolar Arctic seabird conservation issues. It has published three Conservation Action Plans (Murres, Eiders, and Ivory Gulls), several CAFF Technical Reports, three posters, 14 Progress Reports, and participated in numerous meetings and workshops. CBird is one of the species groups for the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program. CBird has been successful in meeting its objectives because the members are united and focused on their desire to conserve Arctic seabirds and realize that there is synergy in bringing experts from all Arctic countries together to address pressing circumpolar issues such as climate change. CBird meets once a year to ensure progress is made on their action items and projects.

CBird conducted its 15th meeting in Westman Islands (Heimaey), Iceland 23 to 26 September 2009. The meeting was one of our largest meetings ever, attended by about 30 seabird specialists and managers representing the eight Arctic countries, and an official observer from UK along with several interested local attendees. CBird primarily focused its attention on the following issues: Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database, Seabird Information Network, Harvest of Seabirds in the Arctic, and a Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends paper. Funding for the Seabird Information Network and Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database was recently obtained and promises to speed the completion of these projects. For more details please see the Meeting Report that follows and the CAFF website www.caff.is/ for the complete CBird XIV Meeting Report with all appendices attached.

II. CAFF/Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan, 2009-2011, Progress in 2008-2009

A. Conserving Arctic Species

1. International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy

Action: Countries continued implementing applicable action items in the CAFF report "International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy" and related national action plans, and report progress at CBird meetings.

Lead: Canada-Grant Gilchrist/Norway-Hallvard Strom

2. Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy

Action: Countries continued 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

3. Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy

Action: Countries continued 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

Action: Thick-billed Murre population model for the Atlantic Region is in draft form.

Lead: Canada-Greg Robertson

4. Seabird Harvest in the Arctic

Action: Countries continued to report on seabird harvest and implementation of applicable recommendations in CAFF Technical Report No. 16 at CBird meetings.

Lead: Greenland-Flemming Merkel

5. Seabird Bycatch in Commercial Fisheries in the Arctic

Action: All countries continued 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

B. Conserving Arctic Ecosystems and Habitats

No CBird recommendations at this time.

C. Assessing and Monitoring Arctic Biodiversity

1. Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program and the Marine Integrated Monitoring Plan

Action: Cbird has participated in the CAFF Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program and assist in developing the Marine Integrated Monitoring Plan.

Lead: CBird

Action: The progress on the circumpolar seabird monitoring plan has been delayed.

Lead: US-David Irons UK- Jim Reid

2. Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern.

This is no longer a CBird project following a CAFF board decision in Akureyri in October 2009.

3. Circumpolar Seabird Status and Trends Report

Action: This report on the status and trends of Arctic seabirds is in progress.

Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen/US-David Irons

4. Seabird Information Network

Action: A Seabird Information Network (SIN) is on the web in at seabirds.net and needs to be placed on the CBMP website.

Lead: US-David Irons

5. Circumpolar seabird colony database

Action: We have made progress in producing an online circumpolar seabird colony database. We have a North Pacific Seabird Colony Database online and will expand that to the circumpolar areas as data come in.

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

6. Glaucous Gull Decline Paper

Action: The paper for peer-reviewed journal on the decline of Glaucous Gulls in the Arctic is in progress.

Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen

7. Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends

Action: Funding was applied for in Norway to hire person to work on paper and update data, but it was not obtained, we need to discuss other funding options.

Lead: Norway-Tycho Anker-Nilssen/US-David Irons

8. Murre, Eider and Harvest Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports, ABA Seabird Chapter and Murre Arctic Report Card.

Action: Murre and Eider Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports were written.

Lead: Canada-Tony Gaston, Grant Gilchrist, Greenland-Fleming Merkel

Action: A harvest Arctic Biodiversity Assessments Arctic 2010 Biodiversity Highlights Reports was written.

Greenland-Fleming Merkel

Schedule:

Action: Murre and eider Arctic Biodiversity Assessment Chapter was written.

Lead: Canada-Tony Gaston, Grant Gilchrist, Greenland-Fleming Merkel

Action: A murre Arctic report card was written.

Lead: Canada-Tony Gaston, US-David Irons

9. Thick-billed Murre North Atlantic geolocator study

Action: We held a workshop to pool existing data, identify data gaps and start writing a paper.

D. Global Issues

1. CBirdSTAMP Project

Action: Wait for decision from CAFF on whether to implement CBirdSTAMP project as a joint CAFF/AMAP project.

2. Arctic Tern Project

Action: A paper on the migration of Arctic Terns was written and published.

E. Engaging Society

1. Continue updating the CAFF CBird Website

Action: CBird documents have been put on the CAFF website

Lead: CAFF Secretariat

2. We have planned World Seabird Conference in conjunction with 25 other seabird groups.

Lead: US-David Irons

III. Circumpolar Seabird Group Work Plan Recommendations: 2009-2010

A. Conserving Arctic Species

1. International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy

Action: Countries involved will implement the “International Ivory Gull Conservation Strategy” and related national action plans and report progress at CBird meetings.

Lead: Canada-Grant Gilchrist/Norway-Hallvard Strom

Schedule: CBird XVI

2. Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy

Action: 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

Schedule: CBird XVI

3. Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy

Action: 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 XVI

Action: Develop a Thick-billed Murre population model for the Atlantic Region.

Lead: Canada-Greg Robertson

Schedule: CBird XVI

4. Seabird Harvest in the Arctic

Action: Countries will continue to report on seabird harvest and implementation of applicable recommendations in CAFF Technical Report No. 5.

Lead: Greenland-Flemming Merkel

Schedule: CBird XVI

5. Seabird Gillnet Bycatch in Commercial Fisheries in the Arctic

Action: 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 XVI

B. Conserving Arctic Ecosystems and Habitats

No CBird recommendations at this time.

C. Assessing and Monitoring Arctic Biodiversity

1. Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network of the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

Action: Participate in the CAFF Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program as the Coordinator of the Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network.

Lead: US-David Irons

Schedule: Ongoing

Action: Complete a circumpolar seabird monitoring plan.

Lead: US-David Irons UK- Jim Reid

Schedule: Delayed

2. Birds of Arctic Conservation Concern.

No action by CBird required.

3. Circumpolar Seabird Status and Trends Report

Action: Write report on the status and trends of Arctic seabirds.

Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen/US-David Irons

Schedule: CBird XVI

4. Seabird Information Network

Action: Create a Seabird Information Network (SIN) on the web in conjunction with UNEP-WCMC and CBMP.

Lead: US-David Irons

Schedule:

Online version CBird XVI

5. Circumpolar seabird colony database

Action: Produce an online circumpolar seabird colony database.

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

Schedule:

Demo CBird XVI

6. Glaucous Gull Decline Paper

Action: Write paper for peer-reviewed journal on the decline of Glaucous Gulls in the Arctic.

Lead: Iceland-Aevar Petersen

Schedule: Draft paper CBird XVI

7. Circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake Status and Trends

Action: Analyze all data collected in circumpolar countries on kittiwake population trends and productivity.

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

Schedule:

Present results CBird XVI

D. Global Issues

1. CBirdSTAMP Project

Action: Wait for decision from CAFF on whether to implement CBirdSTAMP project as a joint CAFF/AMAP project.

Lead: Norway-Rob Barrett, US-David Irons

Schedule: CBird XVI

2. Arctic Tern Project

Action: Write a peer review paper on Arctic Tern migration.

Lead: Greenland-Carsten Egevang

Schedule: Completed

E. Engaging Society

1. Continue updating the CAFF CBird Website

Action: *Put CBird documents on website*

Lead: CAFF Secretariat

Schedule:

CBird XVI

IV. Summary of Deliverables for the CAFF 2009-2011 Work Plan

Taken From CAFF WORKPLAN 2009-2011

2.2 CAFF Seabird Group (CBird)

- a. Complete the circumpolar Eider conservation strategy - *Lead: Canada*
- b. Complete the Circumpolar Murre conservation strategy - *Lead: United States*
- c. Complete the report on birds of Arctic conservation concern - *Lead: Finland/Greenland*
- d. Complete the report on seabird gillnet bycatch in commercial fisheries in the Arctic - *Lead: United States*
- e. Develop a Thick-billed Murre population model for the Atlantic region - *Lead: Canada*
- f. Write paper for peer-reviewed journal on the decline of Glaucous Gulls in the Arctic - *Lead: Iceland*
- g. Complete a peer-reviewed publication on seabirds and climate change - *Lead: United States/Norway/Canada*
- h. Complete a circumpolar seabird monitoring plan - *Lead: United States/United Kingdom*
- i. Complete the report on the status and trends of circumpolar seabirds - *Lead: Iceland / United States*
- j. Complete an analysis of population and productivity data on circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake status and trends - *Lead: Norway/United States*
- k. Implement the CBird-STAMP project - *Lead: Norway/United States*
- l. Conduct Arctic Tern Project - *Lead: Greenland*
- m. Develop an online circumpolar seabird colony database - *Lead Norway /United States/ Canada*

Future Project Ideas

Seabird Population Index

Conservation Strategy for Black-legged Kittiwakes

Peer-reviewed paper on the world status of Ivory Gulls

Peer-reviewed paper on the change in circumpolar seabird phenology in relation to climate change

Summarize information on seabirds as indicators of change in the marine ecosystem in easy to use and update format – discuss at CBird XVI

Index to Arctic seabird health – discuss at CBird XVI

Report on implementation of Eider Conservation Strategy

State of the Arctic Report Card on Arctic Tern Migration

Other Issues

The AEWA Secretariat, Sergey Dereliev, joined us for the CBird meeting and explained that AEWA was expanding the numbers of seabirds in their agreement; they have now added 20 species. Sergey asked the CBird group to consider reviewing flyway population delineation and status. In the long-term he suggested that CBird could help guide research, monitoring and conservation work of AEWA and help in compiling population assessments.

V. Discussion of New Issues

SIN Discussion Notes – September 26, 2009

- General comments:
 - People like the system a lot (many thumbs up around the table)
 - Some disagreement with productivity category definitions but this was resolved.
 - Any development and changes to the SIN system need to be done via CBIRD consensus.
 - ****Need to have SIN data populated in system as soon as we can and want operational system by WSC****
- Data Entry system comments:
 - People want users to be able to use batch mode to input their data into the system (a more user friendly data entry system) and have the ability to export data from SIN. If we don't allow batch import, then we will get less data entered because people don't have time. We will need identity coding to allow for the batch import.
 - Data entry system: start and end date should be by month and year (make day optional). Productivity field will be high, medium or low.
 - Will need to take the high or low confidence tags out of the comment box and into the new confidence box. And will need to change the productivity categories to high, medium or low.
 - Add in data enterer field. Who entered this data?
 - Want data entry system to allow you to enter multiple years for each colony without having to define the colony each time in the system.
 - Data enterer should only be allowed to edit and delete your own data and see your own data when on the data entry system.
 - Need observer, data enterer and the person in charge.
 - Add in the data entry for SIN a field that asks for people to give a sense of accuracy (2 categories: high confidence or low) of their category for a given year. We can then run the map analysis based on using all of the data, or only the high confidence data.
 - Add a comment box for each row to allow people to note if the measure is not by clutch size
 - CBIRDers will enter in their data right now and Andrew will have to create a cache next week and pull in the new data into the system. He will also create a direct link between WCMC and Anchorage site so that any new data entered is displayed immediately.
 - Import colony identities first for those that have colony identities. (Alaska and Russia are already entered via the Seabird colony database (its linked to the SIN data entry system). Others will need to add their colony identities.
 - Barents sea colony database contains 1600 colonies.
 - Need to allow for data owners to be visible on the colony tags on the map.

- ***put the colony data in first then enter the SIN categories for each colony.
- If national seabird colony databases are updated then can they be fed live to the data entry system?
- Change name from 'colony database' to 'colony inventory'
- Rob at Axiom will ensure that each person's colony inventory will be linked appropriately so that the data can be integrated. If a database is not made available online, then it will need to be sent to be batch imported. Where would this data be kept? CAFF Secretariat?
- Should be able to enter colonies even if there's no size data.
- Add back the drop down menu for what is counted for each spp (eggs, etc.). Add drop down menu for order of magnitude for colony size (10,100, 1000, 10000, 100000)
- Data stream needs to be thru the national database into the system
- Rob will look at the national seabird colony datasets to determine the common attributes. Those with national datasets should be allowed to batch import and export the data into the data system. Rob will have to set up the database mapping software to grab the relevant datafields from the national databases.
- Others who do not have a national dataset, will have to enter the data manually on the site.
- Need to develop a data entry manual that describes how to enter data into each field (what are the rules, the do's and don'ts)
- Productivity Definition Decisions:
 - Define by best possible productivity (set by maximum rather than mean – we do mean right now) for each spp and develop categories that go below that. Go by defined modal clutch size maximum for each spp (makes sense for all one egg spp)
 - Good – final brood size is 50% of known maximum and higher of modal clutch size.
 - Poor – below 10% of known maximum or lower
 - Medium – between 10 and 49% of maximum
 - Will need to define the maximum for each species (down to subspp for Eiders), and use the same boundaries for each species across the entire Arctic using Birds of the World standards.

VI. Future Circumpolar Seabird Group Meetings

It was proposed that the next Circumpolar Seabird Group Meeting be in Iceland in September 2009 and have the next meeting in conjunction with the World Seabird Conference in Victoria, B.C., Canada in September 2010.

Lead: US-David Irons

Schedule:

Canada

Sept 13-16, 2010

US

Sept 2011

VII. List of Participants

List of Participants, CBird XV, Westman Islands (Heimaey), Iceland
23 to 26 September 2009

Name	Institute/address	email
Jens Bagger	Government of Greenland Agency of fisheries & agriculture Postbox 680, 3900 Nuuk	jeba@ghsdk.dk
Bergur Olsen	Faroes Marine Research Institute Nóatún 1, F0-100 Torshavn	bergur@hav.fo
Sverrir Thorstensen	Langahlið 9a, 603 Akureyri	sth@akmennt.is
Andrew Cottam	UNEP-WCMC 219 Huntingdon Road Cambridge, UK	andrew.cottam@unep-wcmc.org
Carsten Egevang	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources Kivioq 2, Postbox 570, 3900 Nuuk, Greenland	cep@dmu.dk
Lars Rasmussen	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources Kivioq 2, Postbox 570, 3900 Nuuk, Greenland	lara@natur.gl
Aili Lage Labansen	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources Kivioq 2, Postbox 570, 3900 Nuuk, Greenland	aili@natur.gl
Flemming Merkel	National Environmental Research Institute Frederiksborgvej 399, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark	fme@dmu.dk
Anders Mosbech	National Environmental Research Institute Frederiksborgvej 399, 4000 Roskilde, Denmark	amo@dmu.dk
Martti Hario	Finnish Game & Fisheries Research Institute	martti.hario@rktl.fi
Sergei Dereliev	AWEA, Hermann-Ehlers-Str.10, 53113, Bonn	sdereliev@unep.de
Maria Gavrilov	Arctic & Antarctic Res. Inst. 38 Bering St, St. Petersburg, Russia 199397	m_gavrilov@mail.ru
Tycho Anker-Nielsen	Norwegian Polar Institute for Nature Research No-7485, Tromsø, Norway	tycho@nina.no
Hallvard Strom	Norwegian Polar Institute Polar Environmental Centre N-9296 TROMSØ, Norway	hallvard.strom@npolar.no

CAFF, Circumpolar Seabird Group, CBird XVI, Nuuk, Greenland

Morten Ekker	Norwegian Polar Institute for Nature Research No-9296, tromso, Norway	morten.ekker@dimat.no
	Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management N-7485 Trondheim, Norway	
Maarten Loonen	University of Groningen, Arctic Centre Awaeg 30, 9718 CW Groninga, The Netherlands	m.j.j.e.loonen@rug.nl
Grant Gilchrist	Environment Canada, National wildlife Research Centre, 1125 Colonel by Dane, Raven Road, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, KIA OH3	grant.gilchrist@ec.gc.ca mark.mallory@ec.gc.ca
Mark Mallory	Canadian Wildlife Service, Box 1714, Iqaluit, Nunavit, Canada XOA OHO	
Aevar Petersen	Icelandic Int. of Natural History, Hlemmur 3, Po Box 5320, 125 Reykjavík, Iceland	aevar@ni.is
David Irons	US Fish & Wildlife Service, 1011E, Tudor Rd, Anchorage AK, US 99503	david_iron@fws.gov
Jim Reid	Joint Nature Conservation Committee Dunnet House, 7Thistle place, Aberdeeb ABIO IU2, Scotland	jim.reid@jncc.gov.uk
Elínborg Pálsdóttir	South Iceland Research Centre, Strandvegi 50 900 Vestmann Islands	espl@hi.is
Halfdán Helgasson	South Iceland Research Centre, Strandvegi 50 900 Vestmann Islands	hfh5@hi.is
Tony Gaston	Environment Canada, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada KIA OH3	tony.gaston.ec.gc.ca
Jón Einar Jónsson	University of Iceland, Snæfellsnes Research Centre, Hafnargata 3, 340 Stkkishólmur	joneinar@hi.is
Freydis Vigfusdóttir	University of Iceland, Snæfellsnes Research Centre, Hafnargata 3, 340 Stkkishólmur	freidisv@hi.is
Mike Gill	Environment Canada 91780 Alaska Highway Yukon, Y1A 5B7 Whitehorse Canada	mike.gill@ec.gc.ca
Tom Barry	CAFF, Akureyri, Iceland	tom@caff.is

VIII. Appendices

1. List of CBird Products

2. List of CBird Meetings

Reports can be found at the CAFF website www.caff.is/