

## ASSESSMENT AND AVOIDANCE OF INCIDENTAL MORTALITY OF ANTARCTIC MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

### Marine Debris

6.1 The Commission noted the report of the Secretariat summarising the data related to marine debris submitted by Members using the standard forms (SC-CAMLR-XXI/BG/13).

6.2 The Commission reiterated the recommendation of the Scientific Committee that the Secretariat should annually produce a report of status and trends relating to all of the main aspects of marine debris related observations (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 6.8).

6.3 The Commission noted the results of surveys of marine debris on beaches, of entanglement of marine mammals in debris and of marine debris associated with seabird colonies (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 6.10 to 6.21). It noted that the results of these surveys provided few indications that the levels of beached marine debris, or of its effects on marine mammals and birds, were improving.

6.4 The Commission also noted that packaging bands continued to be reported in the debris surveys in Area 48, and that these may also have been derived from IUU vessels or from fisheries in adjacent areas (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 6.16).

6.5 The Commission reiterated the request of the Scientific Committee that Members continue to submit data on standard forms in a timely fashion, which would allow time for the Secretariat to produce a summary report that would greatly simplify consideration of the topic by the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 6.23).

6.6 Members were also encouraged to provide historical data to the Secretariat, collected using the standard format, for inclusion in the CCAMLR marine debris database. The Secretariat was requested to enter the data received and to consult with relevant Members to ensure appropriate data validation (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 6.9).

### Incidental Mortality of Marine Animals during Fishing Operations

6.7 The Commission reviewed the report of the Scientific Committee in respect of assessment and avoidance of incidental mortality of Antarctic marine living resources (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.1 to 5.54). It endorsed the report and its conclusions, subject to the comments below.

6.8 The Commission noted:

- (i) that the levels and rates of seabird by-catch in longline fisheries in the Convention Area in 2002 had been the lowest ever recorded (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3);
- (ii) that the level of compliance with Conservation Measure 29/XIX in 2002 had substantially improved, particularly in respect of the line-weighting element of the measure (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.7 to 5.9); for the first time a

majority of vessels fishing in the Convention Area had attained at least 95% compliance with all elements of the measure;

- (iii) the progress achieved with research into and development of mitigation measures relevant to Conservation Measure 29/XIX, in particular to autoline vessels (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.10); and
- (iv) with concern, estimates of potential seabird by-catch associated with IUU longline fisheries in the Convention Area in 2002 which continue to be at levels unsustainable for the populations concerned (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.17 and 5.21 and Figure 5).

6.9 The Commission noted that the level of incidental mortality of seabirds in trawl fisheries for icefish in Subarea 48.3 in 2002 was comparable to that of last year and at a level three times that in regulated longline fisheries in Subarea 48.3 this year.

6.10 The Commission expressed concern at the absence of by-catch data from longline vessels fishing in French EEZs in Subarea 58.6 and Division 58.5.1, given the apparently continuing high by-catch rates of white-chinned petrels in these areas. It welcomed the initiative of France to send a seabird scientist to next year's meeting of ad hoc WG-IMAF and to conduct intersessional work to help address the issue of seabird by-catch in the French EEZs (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.4 to 5.6).

6.11 The Commission endorsed the advice of the Scientific Committee on the following matters:

- (i) reaffirmation of support for – and encouragement of Members' contributions towards – a key experiment concerning mitigation measures for the Spanish system of longline fishing (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.13);
- (ii) renewed attempts to acquire data, as specified in SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.24, from Members involved in longline fishery operations in areas adjacent to the Convention Area and requests to Members to develop provisions for the mandatory use of mitigation measures in such fisheries, following the example of Japan (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.25);
- (iii) the need for continued submission by Members of data on seabird population sizes, foraging ranges and provenance of by-catch (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.27);
- (iv) support for forthcoming international initiatives, especially the Second International Fishers' Forum (IFF2) and the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.29); and
- (v) renewed attempts to obtain progress reports on the development and implementation of FAO National Plans of Action (NPOAs) from Members, especially those listed in SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.36, with responsibilities for areas adjacent to the Convention Area or conducting fisheries in these areas (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.35 to 5.37).

6.12 Spain informed the Commission of its adoption on 23 May 2002 of a regulation setting up measures to reduce the incidental mortality of birds associated with pelagic longline fisheries. This regulation relates to the use of longline gear by all Spanish pelagic longliners fishing for tuna, swordfish and related species, in waters south of 30°S.

6.13 The Commission welcomed this information from Spain and encouraged other Members to adopt similar measures for their vessels and fishing operations.

6.14 The Commission endorsed the proposed revision to Conservation Measure 24-02 (2002), as set out in SC-CAMLR-XXI, Annex 5, paragraph 6.81.

6.15 The Commission noted the advice concerning revision of Conservation Measure 29/XIX (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.16 and Annex 5, paragraphs 6.82 and 6.83); it agreed, however, that revision to include provision for the removal of hooks from offal before discharge should be undertaken this year.

6.16 The Commission noted that intersessional contact with regional fishery management organisations (RFMOs) with competences in areas adjacent to the Convention Area regarding the issue of incidental mortality of seabirds had been limited and unsatisfactory. It requested that Members, who are also members of other RFMOs, ensure that the issue of seabird by-catch is included on the agendas of appropriate meetings of all relevant RFMOs (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.30 to 5.34).

6.17 Spain stated that the Scientific Committee of ICCAT focused its attention on the impact of fisheries on non-target species, such as sharks, but not on 'non-productive species' (birds), as was mandated by the ICCAT Commission. Spain hopes that during the ICCAT annual meeting its parties will instruct its Scientific Committee to prepare advice on the impact of fisheries on birds. The Commission noted that several resolutions had apparently been prepared to facilitate this (CCAMLR-XXI/BG/4; SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.34).

6.18 In relation to notifications for new and exploratory fisheries in 2002, the Commission noted that, in respect of seabird by-catch the only issues apparently unresolved following the meeting of the Scientific Committee, concerned defining the status and nature of birds caught and the levels of observation necessary to detect low levels of bird by-catch (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.39).

6.19 In relation to the latter point, the Commission agreed that each vessel participating in new and exploratory fisheries should have one scientific observer appointed in accordance with the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation and, where possible, one additional observer on board throughout all fishing activities.

6.20 The Commission endorsed the recommendation of the Scientific Committee that further data be collected in order to define appropriate seabird mitigation measures for the icefish trawl fishery in Subarea 48.3 (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.45(i)) and that the definition of birds caught be reviewed (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.45(iii)).

6.21 The Commission requested the Scientific Committee to consider the implications of restricting the fishing season for icefish in Subarea 48.3 and to provide recommendations to the Commission next year (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.45(ii)).

6.22 In relation to issues associated with the use of bottom trawl gear (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.46 to 5.49), the Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's advice that it should review relevant conservation measures, taking account of issues relating to by-catch of seabirds and non-target species, and the potential damage to benthos (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 5.50), and present its findings to the Commission next year.