

NEW AND EXPLORATORY FISHERIES

New and Exploratory Fisheries in 2001/02

9.1 The Commission noted that 13 notifications of new or exploratory fisheries had been made in 2001/02 (CCAMLR-XX, Table 1), but that fishing occurred in respect of only two of these (CCAMLR-XXI/BG/5):

- exploratory longline fishery for *Dissostichus* spp. in Subarea 88.1 (north of 65°S: 58 tonnes; south of 65°S: 1 275 tonnes); and
- exploratory longline fishery for *Dissostichus* spp. in Subarea 88.2 (south of 65°S: 41 tonnes).

Only New Zealand-flagged vessels had participated in these fisheries.

New and Exploratory Fisheries in 2002/03

9.2 Eight notifications of exploratory fisheries were made for 2002/03 (Table 1), and there were no notifications of new fisheries. All notifications had been received by the Secretariat by the due date (21 July 2002), except for the Russian notification, for which only a statement of intent to submit had been received. The formal Russian notification was received on 6 September 2002 and was revised on 7 October 2002 (CCAMLR-XXI/16 Rev.1 and BG/16).

9.3 Management measures for exploratory fisheries notified for 2002/03 are detailed in section 11.

9.4 The Commission noted that Australia had notified the commencement of a longline fishery for *D. eleginoides* in Division 58.5.2. That notification was not formally for a new or exploratory fishery, but rather for the introduction of a new fishing gear to an established fishery. The Commission welcomed the approach taken by Australia in providing advance notification of the proposed fishery and of the management provisions planned for that fishery.

9.5 As in previous years, the Commission also noted that there had been a large number of notifications for Subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2 and Division 58.4.4. In fisheries with low precautionary catch limits, this implied that if all vessels operated simultaneously, the available catch per vessel could be lower than that required for economic viability, especially in high latitudes where fishing imposes considerable operational difficulties. Further, in Subarea 88.2, the catch limit could potentially be taken in a short time or be over-shot if all notified vessels participate. In Division 58.4.4, if all five notified vessels participate and achieve typical daily catch rates, the Commission agreed that it may be administratively impossible for the Secretariat to close the fishery before the catch limit has been taken.

9.6 The Commission noted that there were still inconsistencies in the way in which notifications specified intended catch levels. As was the case last year, some notifications attempted to specify realistic levels of intended catches, while others simply specified an intended catch that was equal to the current precautionary catch limit.

9.7 The Commission requested that the Scientific Committee further develop the notification requirements, including the capacity to discern between applications which deserved consideration and those which were repeat notifications with little intent to fish.

9.8 The Commission agreed to further consider options for alleviating the work of the Scientific Committee, including the application of cost recovery.

Precautionary Catch Limits

9.9 The Commission noted that the Scientific Committee was unable to provide new advice on precautionary catch limits in new or exploratory fisheries in 2002/03, except for those in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2.

9.10 The Scientific Committee had estimated the precautionary catch limits for *Dissostichus* spp. in Subarea 88.1 and 88.2 using new data resulting from the exploratory fisheries in these subareas. The assessment method, which was developed in 2000 (SC-CAMLR-XIX, Annex 5, paragraphs 4.20 to 4.33), used information on CPUE from the exploratory fishery, biological parameters for *D. mawsoni* and yield estimates for *D. eleginoides* in Subarea 48.3.

9.11 The estimated yield for Subarea 88.1 in 2002/03 had more than doubled since last year to 13 882 tonnes (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 4.110), and the Commission noted that this increase was due to the large increase in CPUE in that subarea in 2001/02, as well as the increased recruitment estimates for Subarea 48.3.

9.12 The Commission noted that increased recruitment estimates for Subarea 48.3 did not imply a direct biological link between Subareas 48.3 and 88.1. Rather, the estimate of yield in Subarea 48.3 was a key parameter in the assessment for Subarea 88.1, and an increase in yield in Subarea 48.3 (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 4.55) would therefore affect the estimated yield in Subarea 88.1.

9.13 Similarly, the estimated yield of *Dissostichus* spp. in Subarea 88.2 in 2002/03 had increased to 602 tonnes, and the Commission noted that this yield applied only to SSRU A (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraph 4.111).

9.14 The Commission noted that the revised estimates of yield for Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 should be treated with considerable caution. Further, it was noted that the Scientific Committee had advised that the approach employed to estimate yield in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 may no longer be applicable and that this issue would be reviewed at the 2003 meeting of WG-FSA (SC-CAMLR-XXI, Annex 5, paragraphs 5.27 to 5.29).

9.15 The Commission considered options for discounting estimated yields in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 in the face of uncertainty in the parameters used in the assessments. Options ranged from applying discount factors of 0.3 or 0.5, as was used in recent years, to retain the precautionary catch limits presently in force.

9.16 The Commission recalled the need to ensure that exploratory fisheries did not expand faster than the acquisition of information necessary to ensure that these fisheries can and will

be conducted in accordance with the principles set forth in Article II (Conservation Measure 21-02 (2002) (see paragraph 11.23)).

9.17 The Commission agreed that the catch limit in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 in 2001/02 would not be increased by more than 50% (see section 11).

9.18 The Commission urged Contracting Parties to undertake further research in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2, notably research on recruitment, the most effective means of deploying effort and the continuation of mark-recapture experiments.

Incidental Mortality

9.19 The Commission noted that consideration of new and exploratory fisheries from the perspective of seabird incidental mortality was undertaken by ad hoc WG-IMAF (SC-CAMLR-XXI, paragraphs 5.38 to 5.40). Incidental mortality is further considered in section 6.