

## ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION

16.1 The Commission elected the USA as Vice-Chair of the Commission from the end of this meeting to the conclusion of the 2005 meeting.

16.2 In electing the USA, the Commission noted it was unable to follow its established practice of electing a non-fishing Member as Vice-Chair if the Chair is a fishing Member.

## NEXT MEETING

### Invitation of Observers to the Next Meeting

17.1 The Commission will invite the following States to attend the Twenty-third Meeting of the Commission as observers:

- Acceding States – Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, Greece, Netherlands, Peru and Vanuatu;
- non-Contracting Parties participating in the CDS who are involved in harvesting or landing and/or trade of toothfish – the People's Republic of China, Mauritius, Seychelles and Singapore;
- non-Contracting Parties not participating in the CDS but possibly involved in harvesting or landing and/or trade of toothfish – Angola, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Panama, Philippines, Sao Tome and Principe, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Thailand and Togo.

17.2 The following international organisations will be invited: ASOC, CCSBT, CEP, CITES, CPPS, FAO, FFA, IATTC, ICCAT, IOC, IUCN, IWC, SCAR, SCOR, SPC and UNEP. It was agreed that should COLTO approach the Commission with a request to attend CCAMLR-XXIII, the matter would be dealt with in strict accordance with the Commission's established rules of procedure governing observers.

### Date and Location of the Next Meeting

17.3 The UK recalled the Commission's request of two years ago that 'the new Executive Secretary, with the support of Australia, as offered in SCAF, give priority to ascertaining the best possible location for future meetings' (CCAMLR-XX, paragraph 17.6). There had not yet been any tangible results and, as the meetings have continued to get larger and more complex, the problems associated with the existing location are compounding.

17.4 The Executive Secretary noted that the Secretariat had worked hard over the past two years to resolve this issue and the Australian Government was currently focusing on the latest proposal that had also been discussed with members of the Project Oversight Committee at the time of the ATCM meeting in May 2003. He drew to Members' attention the fact that, if

there is no certainty that another meeting venue can be available for next year, then the current venue will need to be secured by the payment of a deposit, and thus will reduce the budget amount that could otherwise be transferred to the costs of the new venue.

17.5 Australia advised that it appreciated the advice and concerns received from other Members during the meeting and assured the Commission that the issue was being addressed as a matter of urgency. However, a number of internal Australian Government procedures need to be satisfied. The Australian Government is fully committed to ensuring a satisfactory outcome as expeditiously as possible. In addition, it is also committed to advising the Commission of the outcomes as they are resolved.

17.6 South Africa identified the linkage in the Convention between the Commission Headquarters and the meeting venue. Australia advised that it was actively cooperating on exploring possibilities for premises for the Commission's Headquarters, as well as the need for a meeting venue more suitable than that currently being used, in good faith, even though it understood that it had responsibility only in respect of the Headquarters.

17.7 The Executive Secretary assured the Commission that the Secretariat would continue to provide all possible assistance to Australia in its work in this respect, especially in assisting with Australia's recent indication that it is appraising the continued suitability of the present Secretariat building as the CCAMLR Headquarters.

17.8 The Commission endorsed the concerns of SCAF at the continuing uncertainty attached to identifying a suitable venue for future annual meetings and invited the Secretariat and Australia to pursue this matter with some urgency with a view to enabling the annual meeting to take place in a new location next year, which would require a decision on the matter to be made in the next few months. Pending a conclusion to the above negotiations, the Commission agreed that the Secretariat should provisionally book Wrest Point for CCAMLR-XXIII. It noted that, should the Secretariat be required to incur costs associated with any possible relocation, funds could be sourced in accordance with the prevailing rules for use of the Contingency Fund.

17.9 The Commission asked Australia to keep Members informed on its progress in pursuing meeting venue opportunities.

17.10 Noting that an alternative meeting venue would be unlikely to be ready in time for the next meeting, the Commission noted that the current location at the Wrest Point Hotel would again be used for the Twenty-third Meeting of the Commission, to be held in Hobart, Australia, from 25 October to 5 November 2004. Heads of Delegation were requested to be in Hobart for a meeting on 24 October 2004.

### Organisation of Next Meeting

17.11 The Commission recalled the advice of its standing committees in 2001 that they needed additional discussion time during the meetings in order to give proper attention to the matters which the Commission had referred to them.

17.12 South Africa stated:

‘It has always been the understanding of the South African Delegation that the standing committees’ and the Scientific Committee’s roles were to make clear recommendations to the Commission. However, South Africa is concerned that a number of important issues are not properly addressed at these committees. We sympathise with the chairpersons of these committees who have the unenviable task of attempting to resolve difficult agenda items. It is unfortunate that these unresolved and substantive matters have now been referred to the conservation measure group for finalisation. We sympathise with the onerous task now facing Dr D. Agnew (UK), the chairperson of this group. We hope that this does not set a precedent for future meetings and strongly urge that in future, these matters are prioritised for debate and are tackled early on, and that clear recommendations are provided for the deliberations of the Commission. This will facilitate the effectiveness of the work of this Commission.’

17.13 The European Community, UK and the USA associated themselves with the opinions expressed by South Africa.

17.14 The Commission took account of these concerns when addressing the logistical and other aspects of next year’s work of SCIC (paragraph 6.12).