

ASSESSMENT AND AVOIDANCE OF INCIDENTAL MORTALITY

Marine debris

5.1 The Commission noted the report prepared by the Secretariat and considered by the Scientific Committee on the current status and trends of national surveys on monitoring marine debris and its impact on marine mammals and seabirds in the Convention Area (SC-CAMLR-XXV/BG/9; SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraphs 6.1 to 6.12).

5.2 It also noted that Members conducted marine debris programs in accordance with the CCAMLR standard methods at 12 sites, predominantly within Area 48 (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 6.2).

5.3 The Commission noted the continual reduction in levels of marine debris reported throughout the Convention Area, and encouraged all Members to submit data on marine debris to the Secretariat in the CCAMLR standard format (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 6.12).

5.4 It endorsed a proposal by the UK to provide information on marine debris to the annual CEP meeting and that this could be forwarded as a summary of the deliberations of the Scientific Committee and the Commission on the matter.

Incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals during fishing operations

5.5 The Commission considered and noted all items of general advice received from the Scientific Committee regarding incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals during fishing operations (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.56).

5.6 In particular, it noted with great satisfaction the continuing low levels of incidental seabird mortality in regulated longline fisheries in most parts of the Convention Area in 2006 and that for the first time, no albatrosses were reported taken in regulated longline fisheries.

5.7 Australia informed the Commission that all of its longline vessels operating in the Convention Area have used paired streamer lines for the past three years, and will provide advice on its experience to the next meeting of ad hoc WG-IMAF.

5.8 South Africa supported the Scientific Committee's recommendation to expand the level of data collected to assess seabird interactions with trawl warp cables through dedicated trawl warp observations (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.21). South Africa informed the Commission that it has enacted domestic legislation for bottom trawl fisheries in its continental EEZ making it compulsory for vessels in these fisheries to deploy streamer lines. It requested other Members to be mindful of potential interactions between seabirds and trawl warps.

5.9 Japan noted that the use of bird lines alongside trawl warps on their krill vessels had been very effective in avoiding seabird incidental mortality. Similarly, seal excluder devices had also been effective in reducing fur seal mortality in this fishery.

5.10 The UK noted CCAMLR's exemplary record in reducing seabird by-catch in longline fisheries, and recommended that extracts from the Scientific Committee and Commission reports be reported to ACAP at its next meeting in mid-November 2006.

5.11 New Zealand informed the Commission that it would be in a position to present this information on behalf of the Commission to the Second meeting of ACAP Parties.

5.12 The Commission agreed with the UK proposal and thanked New Zealand for its offer to act as the CCAMLR Observer at the Second meeting of ACAP Parties.

5.13 Russia and Ukraine informed the Commission of their use of recently modified longline gear that has resulted in the reduction of both macrourid and seabird by-catch. Russia had presented a description of the gear used to WG-FSA (WG-FSA-06/5). It also encouraged experimental trials to determine the extent in the reduction of by-catch rates (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraphs 4.32 and 4.232, see also Annex 5, paragraphs 3.14 and 6.52).

5.14 The European Community praised the Commission's achievements in reducing seabird and marine mammal incidental mortality associated with fishing in the Convention Area. It noted CCAMLR's role as a model of best practice for other RFMOs in effectively reducing seabird by-catch. The European Community recommended that the Secretariat continue to exchange information with other RFMOs on CCAMLR's implementation of seabird mitigation measures.

5.15 The Co-convenor of ad hoc WG-IMAF noted the growing cooperation with RFMOs over the past year on seabird by-catch reduction (SC-CAMLR-XXV, Annex 5, Appendix D, paragraphs 160 to 177).

5.16 Noting the above, New Zealand proposed revising Resolution 22/XXIII to further enhance cooperation with other RFMOs on effective seabird by-catch mitigation measures (see paragraph 12.20).

5.17 Chile and Brazil informed the Commission of their recent implementation of their NPOA-Seabirds.

5.18 The USA noted that Uruguay has recently finalised its NPOA-Seabirds and that together these three new NPOAs represent a significant accomplishment. It also supported a revision of Resolution 22/XXIII to enhance cooperation with other RFMOs.

5.19 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's recommendations (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.57) in respect of further actions to address the issue of incidental mortality associated with fishing in the Convention Area.

5.20 The Commission also considered various other incidental mortality-associated matters highlighted by the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.58) and made several decisions together with additional comments as described in the paragraphs below.

5.21 In particular, the Commission noted the success of net binding in reducing seabird by-catch in the pelagic trawl fishery for *C. gunnari* in Subarea 48.3 (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.57(v)) and accepted the proposed revision of Conservation Measure 42-01 encouraging the use of net binding (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.58(i)).

5.22 Australia requested the Scientific Committee and ad hoc WG-IMAF to provide additional clarification on area-specific risks associated with seabird–trawl net interactions. This information should be further considered next year following provision of additional information from vessels using net binding.

5.23 The UK suggested that any proposed revision to Conservation Measure 42-01 in relation to net binding should only be made obligatory following some limited period of application so that further information on its effectiveness can be obtained. The Scientific Committee would then be in a better position to consider modifying the measure.

5.24 Australia welcomed the work to be undertaken in Subarea 48.3 and looked forward to considering the outcomes of this work at the next meeting of the Scientific Committee. It suggested that such a requirement for net binding was unlikely to be needed to be implemented uniformly and reiterated its request (see paragraph 5.21) that the Scientific Committee and ad hoc WG-IMAF consider those circumstances where application of net binding would be most effective.

5.25 In considering other requests, the Commission, in particular, noted that requests for continued action in respect of seabird mortality caused by IUU fishing and observer coverage in krill fisheries have already been considered by the Commission under other agenda items (see sections 9 and 10).

5.26 The USA informed the Commission that they would be able to represent CCAMLR at the tuna RFMO meeting in Kobe, Japan, in January 2007 and that they would report back to Commission next year. The Commission was appreciative of this offer.

5.27 The Commission requested that the Secretariat provide a paper to the Kobe meeting describing the scientific and fisheries management processes CCAMLR has followed in developing its seabird by-catch mitigation measures.

5.28 Australia noted that it was appropriate for CCAMLR Members that are also members of other RFMOs to ensure that seabird mortalities are reported and mitigation measures are improved in the fisheries being managed by such organisations.

5.29 Following the Scientific Committee's recommendation (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 5.58(v)), the Commission encouraged Members to support a BirdLife International initiative at COFI-27 to advance best-practice guidelines for the setting-up and implementation of NPOA-Seabirds.