

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

7.1 The Commission noted the Scientific Committee's discussion on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, paragraph 3.55), especially on progressing implementation of spatial management measures to facilitate marine biodiversity conservation (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, Annex 4, paragraphs 3.1 to 3.78).

7.2 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's conclusions that (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, paragraph 3.55):

- (i) discussions by CCAMLR and the CEP have concluded that the issues of where and how to establish a system of marine areas for biodiversity conservation in the Southern Ocean should be addressed as a matter of priority (CCAMLR-XXIII, paragraph 4.13; CEP IX Final Report, paragraphs 94 to 101);
- (ii) existing benthic and pelagic bioregionalisations developed by the 2007 Bioregionalisation Workshop were adequate for use in such work;
- (iii) a number of methods could be used for designing a representative system of MPAs, including, *inter alia*, bioregionalisation;
- (iv) the use of the spatial planning software package MARXAN should be endorsed as one feasible method for undertaking systematic conservation planning;
- (v) the priority need agreed by the Commission (CCAMLR-XXVI, paragraph 7.18) for continuing the process of consolidating scientific views to maintain a common and objective basis for developing a representative network of MPAs;
- (vi) the development of a representative system of MPAs should focus on, but not be limited to, the priority areas identified by WG-EMM in Figure 12 of SC-CAMLR-XXVII, Annex 4. Therefore, Members were encouraged to use appropriate methodologies to further this work.

7.3 The Commission thanked the Scientific Committee for its significant progress in implementing a representative system of MPAs. It endorsed the Scientific Committee's program of work in this regard (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, paragraph 3.55).

7.4 The Commission also noted that the issue of MPAs was seen as one of the Scientific Committee's priority items in its consideration of the Performance Review Panel Report (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, paragraph 10.10) (see also paragraphs 17.7 to 17.10).

7.5 The USA indicated that work on MPAs should be a priority for the Commission, and noted that progress could be made at the Joint SC-CAMLR-CEP Workshop in Baltimore, USA (paragraph 15.4).

7.6 The European Community and the UK noted that the Commission should consider the issue of MPAs in the general context of spatial management. They urged all Members to engage in implementing a representative system of MPAs in the Convention Area, especially those Members who have expressed concerns in the past.

7.7 Belgium noted that there is now a large body of science that enunciates the benefits of MPAs, a process exists to identify MPAs and that the latter is consistent with the high priority afforded to this issue globally. Belgium further noted that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has developed criteria to identify MPAs. Therefore, CCAMLR should consider applying all the tools available to ensure that it remains at the leading edge of Antarctic policy. Belgium welcomed the inclusion by WG-EMM of the Ross Sea in the list of priority MPA sites. Belgium reminded the Commission of the Special Fund established in 2005 by that Member for MPA work. It indicated that no new proposals have yet been made to allocate the A\$29 968 available.

7.8 Russia was pleased with the significant progress made on the subject of MPAs by the Scientific Committee and its working groups. It recalled that Russia has always held science-based marine conservation in high regard, noting that designation of MPAs would require a high level of integrated scientific research of the relevant marine systems.

7.9 New Zealand welcomed the work that had been undertaken by the Scientific Committee on bioregionalisation and recalled that the Committee had deemed this work sufficient to progress the establishment of MPAs in the Convention Area. It also welcomed the recommendations set out in the Performance Review Report which urge CCAMLR to take steps toward the designation of MPAs as a matter of urgency, and that the Scientific Committee had placed the development of MPAs in its top three priorities in response to the Review Panel's recommendations. New Zealand joined other Members in urging the Commission to establish a representative network of MPAs in the Convention Area.

7.10 Australia endorsed this statement by New Zealand.

7.11 Argentina indicated its support of the Scientific Committee's work. It noted, however, that there is work on the matter that needs to be undertaken by the Commission, which needs to establish priorities on the subject and agree to the terms under which the CCAMLR system of protected areas should be developed. It further proposed that Members commence these tasks and reach the necessary agreements at the same time, if not sooner, as the Scientific Committee determines which are the areas to be protected. This is clearly an issue of a political nature which is intimately linked to the tasks of the Scientific Committee and needs urgent solution. Management of the system of protected areas should be undertaken with caution and in depth, whilst attempting to avoid adopting hasty decisions once the Scientific Committee has determined which areas to protect.

7.12 Japan recognised the progress made by the Scientific Committee on the subject of MPAs and looked forward to further progress. It recognised that there is a complex array of spatial designations available to the Commission (e.g. CEMP sites, ASMAs, ASPAs and VME Risk Areas) for implementing spatial management measures.

7.13 Japan also noted that the term 'MPA', for the Commission's purposes, required careful and clear definition. There is also a need to balance conservation with rational use in implementing MPAs in the Convention Area. Furthermore, Japan noted that the definition and purpose of MPAs are essentially scientific, and not political, issues. It therefore welcomed clarification of the definition and purposes of MPAs for the Commission to make progress.

7.14 ASOC made the following statement:

‘ASOC has been encouraged by the progress made in the last year by WG-EMM towards establishing MPAs in the Southern Ocean.

The mandate, tools and knowledge based on the broad-scale bioregionalisation now exist for CCAMLR to commit to a definitive process towards designating networks of comprehensive, adequate and representative marine protected areas, including marine reserves, to meet the 2012 commitments as highlighted in section 2.4 of the report of the CCAMLR Performance Review Panel.

As noted by Belgium, broad-scale bioregionalisation supported by systematic conservation planning and the criteria adopted by the CBD provide the suite of tools ready to be applied by CCAMLR to move forward without further delay.

ASOC believes the identification of areas of high heterogeneity by WG-EMM, including the Ross Sea, as priority areas to identify sites and introduce protective measures.

The forthcoming meeting with CEP provides an opportunity to identify further areas in order to create networks of representative MPAs that meet the objectives of both CCAMLR and the ATCM.’

7.15 IUCN made the following statement:

‘IUCN would like to congratulate the Commission and its Scientific Committee on the progress made with regard to bioregionalisation of the Southern Ocean. We believe that the results of the work undertaken greatly contribute to achieving the objectives of CCAMLR as stated in Article II of the Convention.

At the 4th World Conservation Congress, IUCN members adopted a recommendation on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean where they reiterated their call to CCAMLR Members to develop a comprehensive and representative network of protected areas by 2012, including consideration of declaring the Ross Sea an Antarctic Specially Protected Area.

We are pleased by the statements of the various Members highlighting the importance and urgency of this issue.

CCAMLR has the potential to serve as the best model for other areas of the world’s oceans and to contribute to achieving the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) target of establishing networks of MPAs including in areas beyond national jurisdiction by 2012, and we urge the Commission to continue on this path.’

7.16 The Commission recognised that the term MPA does not have a single definition and that a range of tools exist for implementing spatial management measures aimed at facilitating conservation of marine biodiversity. In addition, the Commission agreed that MPAs have a variety of forms and that the precise level of protection afforded to any specific area depends on the characteristics and qualities that require protection. Therefore, it agreed that it is important to develop a clear process for implementing MPAs concurrent with the ongoing

scientific process which identifies where such areas should be located. This should allow the Commission to fully utilise all the tools at its disposal and so implement a representative system of MPAs.