

NEW AND EXPLORATORY FISHERIES

New and exploratory fisheries in 2008/09

11.1 In 2008 the Commission agreed to seven exploratory longline fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. (Conservation Measures 41-04, 41-05, 41-06, 41-07, 41-09, 41-10 and 41-11). These exploratory fisheries were conducted in 2008/09 in Subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2, and Divisions 58.4.1, 58.4.2, 58.4.3a and 58.4.3b. The total reported catch of *Dissostichus* spp. for these fisheries was 3 624 tonnes (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, Annex 5, Table 5).

11.2 The Commission noted that the *Isla Eden* had participated in the exploratory fisheries in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 in 2008/09. It further noted that the vessel's tagging rates for *Dissostichus* spp. had been incorrectly reported in SC-CAMLR-XVIII, Annex 5, Table 8. The correct tagging rates for that vessel in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 were 1.41 and 1.17 fish per tonne of green weight caught respectively.

Notifications for new and exploratory fisheries in 2009/10

11.3 Twelve Members submitted notifications for exploratory longline fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. in 2009/10 in Subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2, and Divisions 58.4.1, 58.4.2, 58.4.3a and 58.4.3b. Members also submitted notifications for an exploratory trawl fishery for *Euphausia superba* in Subarea 48.6, and for exploratory pot fisheries for crab in Subareas 48.2 and 48.4. No new fishery was notified.

11.4 The Republic of Korea withdrew two notifications from Subarea 88.1, one notification from Subarea 88.2 and two notifications from Division 58.4.3b. New Zealand withdrew one notification from Division 58.4.1 and one notification from Division 58.4.2. The UK withdrew one vessel from Subarea 88.1 and one vessel from Subarea 88.2.

11.5 The Commission thanked Members for their notifications, and agreed to Members' participation in exploratory fisheries in 2009/10 as indicated in Table 1.

Exploratory fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp.

11.6 The Commission noted that the Scientific Committee had made further progress towards developing methods for assessing exploratory fisheries, including the use of tag-recapture data (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.144 to 4.151) and research hauls (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.152 to 4.155). The Commission also noted the importance of understanding stock structure, productivity and abundance, as well as the Scientific Committee's advice that estimation of stock abundance in many of the exploratory fisheries remains a key problem (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.156 to 4.168).

11.7 The Commission noted with concern that the data currently provided from the exploratory fisheries in areas other than in the Ross Sea are unlikely to provide an assessment of harvested stock status in the near future. The Scientific Committee advised that the low

commitment by some vessels to implementing research plans cast doubt on the likelihood that useful data may be collected by these vessels in the future (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraph 4.163).

11.8 The Commission reaffirmed that Members' participation in exploratory fisheries represents a commitment towards undertaking research that will lead to a stock assessment and the development of management advice based on CCAMLR's decision rules. The Commission noted that research programs will have to operate in a different manner in fisheries that have not been previously exploited compared to those which have been depleted.

11.9 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's advice that any research strategy targeting a depleted stock should be designed to ensure that research catch requirements do not impact on the ability of the fishery to recover (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.162 to 4.168).

11.10 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's management advice on the exploratory fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. in Subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2, as well as in Divisions 58.4.1, 58.4.2 and 58.4.3a (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.174, 4.180, 4.185, 4.190 and 4.212 to 4.214). It noted that the catch limits in Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 can be carried over into the 2010/11 fishing season, subject to the conditions of the biennial assessment procedure agreed by the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-XXVI, paragraph 14.6). The Commission also noted that catch limits of less than 100 tonnes in some small-scale research units (SSRUs) and divisions posed problems with the Secretariat's forecasting of SSRU and fishery closures (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.180, 4.185 and 4.203).

11.11 The Commission noted that intensive IUU fishing had occurred in Division 58.4.3b (BANZARE Bank; see SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, Annex 5, Table 3) and that there was disagreement within the Scientific Committee on the level of depletion of the stocks of *Dissostichus* spp. in that division (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.191 to 4.203). The Commission agreed that a precautionary catch limit of zero would be set for Division 58.4.3b pending the results of a research plan to be undertaken by Japan, South Africa, Republic of Korea and Uruguay in this division in 2009/10.

11.12 The Commission also noted the debate within the Scientific Committee regarding open and closed SSRUs in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.156 to 4.160).

11.13 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's advice on the research requirements to clarify stock status issues in Subarea 58.4 (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.159 and 4.168). These requirements included:

- (i) a research experiment designed and undertaken in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Scientific Committee and endorsed by the Commission in 2008 (SC-CAMLR-XXVII, paragraphs 8.9 to 8.11; CCAMLR-XXVII, paragraph 4.66). The aim of such an experiment would be to provide information on the status of stocks of *Dissostichus* spp. in Subarea 58.4 over a 2–3 year time period;

- (ii) implementation of catch limits consistent with the objectives of the experiment;
- (iii) use of simulations and Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) frameworks to address the potential bias in assessments arising from open and closed SSRUs.

11.14 The Commission urged Members involved in exploratory fisheries in Subarea 58.4 to collaborate and develop suitable research experiments based on the guidelines outlined above (paragraph 11.13), as well as recent experience in Subarea 48.4 and in Divisions 58.4.4a and 58.4.4b (paragraph 4.33). The Commission agreed that the closed SSRUs in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 would remain closed until the results from such research experiments have been considered by the Scientific Committee.

Exploratory fishery for *E. superba*

11.15 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's improvements to the research plan for exploratory fisheries for krill (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.217 and 4.218). These improvements included an option for vessels to carry out the research plan either before or after the commercial fishery, and requirements for calibrating echo sounders.

11.16 The Commission noted that there would be a need for ongoing review of the research plans for exploratory krill fisheries.

Exploratory fisheries for crab

11.17 The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's advice on the exploratory crab fisheries in Subareas 48.2 and 48.4 (SC-CAMLR-XXVIII, paragraphs 4.221 to 4.223). This comprised:

- (i) a requirement to revise the research plan at the next meeting of WG-FSA
- (ii) closure of the experimental harvest blocks A, C and E in Subarea 48.2 in order to protect known VMEs (see paragraph 5.4).