

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR 1983**

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY – 1983**

### Introduction

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee has been the major issue of 1983. The failure to resolve them at the 1982 meeting has meant that the Scientific Committee has not been able to proceed with its work. This has delayed the preparation of data gathering procedures which should have been a major area of effort of the secretariat during this year.

### Administration

Administrative procedures have been established and I am pleased to report that the 1983 meeting has been organised and will be supported with only limited, although important, help from the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

A number of deficiencies have been identified in the Staff and Financial Regulations. The more serious ones are being brought to the attention of the 1983 meeting with proposals for their amendment.

### Finance

There were some problems with the budget for 1983, but by deferring some expenditure and obtaining the Chairman's approval to involve Financial Rule 4.4 serious difficulties have been avoided.

I am proposing a further review of the Budget at this meeting. A paper presenting the options will be tabled at the meeting.

### Staffing

Two additional staff members have been added to the Secretariat since my last report.

Mr Terry Grundy was appointed on 19 May 1983 as Administration/ Finance officer, and Mr Frank Ralston commenced duty as Data Manager on 4 July, 1983.

Mr Grundy had been on loan to the Commission from the Australian Government since the Headquarters was opened in August 1982. He is a qualified accountant with experience in government and private enterprise. His previous position was with the Australian Government Audit Office.

Mr Ralston is qualified in computer science and has held the position of Data Manager/System Analyst for the National Marine Fisheries Services, United States Department of Commerce. He has experience in all aspects of the design and implementation of large scale systems for the collection and computer maintenance of fishing data.

An offer of appointment has been made for the position of Science Officer. Medical examinations and other appointment procedures are in progress.

A small team of locally recruited translators has been employed casually as required throughout the year. For the longer term I am looking closely at the prospect of employing our own translators, but selecting them so that they are competent to undertake other aspects of the Secretariat's work.

#### Other Activities

Contact has been established with the Secretariats of the IWC, IOC, ICES, ICCAT, SCAR and SCOR and with the Fisheries Division of FAO. The flow of information into the CCAMLR Secretariat from these bodies has commenced. Full sets of reports of the IWC and of the BIOMASS program have been given to the Commission. The FAO has provided selected relevant reports and has made arrangements to have fishing nations transmit annual catch and effort data direct to CCAMLR. We have consolidated the available FAO data into a set of tables for the use of the Commission and Scientific Committee.

At the 1982 meeting of the Commission, funds were allocated for the convening of a working group of the Scientific Committee during 1983. There was general informal agreement that the first priority was for advice on the collection, storage and retrieval of data for the implementation of the management principles of the Convention. A detailed proposal for such a group was prepared by the Secretariat and is ready for consideration as soon as it is agreed that the Scientific Committee can commence work.

## The 1983 Meetings

In preparing for the 1983 meetings I have had to look ahead to forecast the major tasks of the Secretariat in 1984. This, in effect, has involved the setting of objectives for the meetings which might be helpful to the Commission and Scientific Committee.

The approval and adoption of the Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee is the primary objective of the 1983 meetings. Given the informal agreement achieved at the discussion in Canberra in April, this should be a formality. The way will then be clear for the substantive work to begin. The Convention points to three areas of work which should be started on immediately

- Data gathering;
- Development of a management strategy;
- Assessment of the state of the ecosystem.

Catch and effort data on past fishing activities should be obtained from members immediately in accordance with Article IX, 1(b) and procedures should be instituted for the collection of data on future activities according to Article IX, 1(c). The working group referred to above would be relevant here.

The Convention sets down in some detail objectives, functions and obligations. It is left to the Commission and Scientific Committee to develop procedures for its implementation.

In this regard, the Commission and Scientific Committee will be well served by its members experienced in applying conventional fisheries management techniques. But this Convention goes beyond fisheries management. It is concerned with conserving the ecosystem. Existing techniques will not be sufficient and may even be inappropriate. Policies and procedures must be developed to handle this more complex management task.

Informal discussions among scientists at the 1982 meeting drew attention to the importance of developing principles for conservation and management of the Southern Oceans and raised the possibility of a meeting involving scientists and other experts to discuss the matter. In my report for 1982, I mentioned an offer of assistance in this regard from the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.

It is a complex task which should be commenced immediately. I suggest that an overall plan for addressing the problem be developed at the meeting so that the matter can be progressed in the period before the 1984 meeting.

The Conservation Principles contained in Article II of the Convention refer to the maintenance of harvested populations at levels which ensure their greatest net annual increment and the maintenance of ecological relationships. Article II also makes it clear that decisions will be made on the basis of available scientific knowledge.

There is published opinion that some species may have already reached these levels. The current situation should be assessed as soon as possible on the basis of existing knowledge so that any necessary action can be taken in compliance with the Convention.

In summary, apart from the general objective implied by the agenda, this meeting should aim to achieve:

1. the approval and adoption of the Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee ;
2. procedures for the immediate implementation of Article IX 1(b) and (c) and Article XX, 1 and 2 ;
3. the commencement of work on the development of a management strategy and a program of tasks to be completed for the 1984 meeting ;
4. the commencement of work on an assessment of the present state of the ecosystem.

The activities resulting from these last three objectives are not mutually exclusive. Information gathered in the course of working on each of them will benefit work on the others. They should therefore be progressed in parallel.

The achievement of these objectives would provide a clear direction for the Secretariat in 1984. The work envisaged could be accommodated within the proposed budget.