

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

43. The Commission received the Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Scientific Committee including its proposals for the 1988 Budget. The Report is published separately (SC-CAMLR-VI).

44. With regard to the Scientific Committee's deliberations on krill resources, the Commission noted the reported activity of the fishery in the past season. It also noted the research activities being undertaken on the biology of krill and on estimating its abundance using acoustic methods. The Commission strongly supported the Scientific Committee's decision to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group on Krill to review and evaluate research on krill biology and ecology relevant to the work of the Scientific Committee and to advise the Scientific Committee on the potential application of the research to stock assessment and ecosystem monitoring.

45. The Commission noted that the submission of catch data had improved in the past year and that Chile, Spain and the USSR had reported fine-scale catch and effort data in accordance with last year's decision of the Commission (CCAMLR-V, paragraph 71). The Japanese delegate informed the Commission that Japan had also sent fine-scale data to the Secretariat in response to that decision but it had not yet arrived at the Secretariat.

46. The Commission supported the Scientific Committee's emphasis on the requirement for Members to report past and future catch and effort data by STATLANT subareas and divisions in accordance with decisions of the Commission at past meetings and endorsed the Committee's requirement for fine-scale krill catch and effort data in support of the Ecosystem Monitoring Program and the Krill Simulation Study.

47. In relation to fish resources, some delegations expressed concern at the level of catches of *Champsocephalus gunnari* around South Georgia reported for the 1986/87 season, especially in view of the undertaking by the fishing Members last year to limit catches to 1985/86 levels (CCAMLR-V, paragraph 51). Catches have increased five-fold from 1985/86 to 1986/87. It was explained that estimates of abundance provided to the last meeting had differed significantly and there was no agreement on which was correct. The fleets had found large quantities of the species and a far greater quantity could have been landed if restrictions had not been placed on the fleets in line with last year's undertaking.

48. It was noted that a large number of vessels were reported to have been fishing on the shelf area of South Georgia in August and September of this year and that a considerable catch might already have been taken. This would have implications for measures adopted at the meeting in

accordance with Conservation Measure 7/V. It was agreed that data on this fishing activity would be provided to the Commission as soon as possible.

49. The Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's decision to establish a standing Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment and noted its terms of reference. The establishment of two new divisions of statistical Subarea 58.5 was recommended by the Scientific Committee to distinguish catches taken in the Kerguelen region from those taken around Heard and Macdonald Islands. The Commission endorsed this recommendation.

50. The Commission took note of the Scientific Committee's discussions on squid resources in the Convention Area. Catches are very low and are for research purposes only. No Member of CCAMLR has reported any intention to fish commercially for squid in the near future. The Commission joined the Scientific Committee in encouraging further research on squid, noting their important ecological role as predators of krill and as food for large vertebrates.

51. The Commission endorsed the recommendations embodied in the Scientific Committee's Report concerning the implementation of an Ecosystem Monitoring Program (SC-CAMLR-VI, paragraph 7.49) and the requirement to undertake detailed research directed towards the evaluation of additional parameters for monitoring (SC-CAMLR-VI, paragraph 7.50).

52. The Commission noted particularly that the program should commence with the monitoring of predator parameters approved by the Scientific Committee, principally of penguins (Adelie, chinstrap and macaroni) and fur seals. This should take place in the integrated study areas (South Georgia region, Antarctic Peninsula region and Prydz Bay region) and associated network sites as set out in SC-CAMLR-VI, Annex 4, Table 2. It was further noted that these monitoring studies should be conducted as specified in the Standard Method Sheets, which would be circulated to all Members shortly.

53. The Commission noted the topics for directed research set out in SC-CAMLR-VI Annex 4, Tables 4 and 8. It agreed that because these parameters of selected predators may prove useful for monitoring (and in some cases equally or more suitable than those already recommended) directed research on these parameters should be undertaken.

54. The Scientific Committee reported on the activities that would be undertaken in the intersessional period and that no meeting of the Working Group for the CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Program would be convened in 1988. Work on this program would be continued by the Secretariat, and by members of the Group by correspondence. Funds were allocated in the 1988 Budget for some specialist assistance to the Secretariat.

55. The Commission noted that work would be undertaken to develop management plans for the land-based monitoring sites identified in Tables 1 and 4 of Annex 4 of the Scientific Committee's Report, and would be submitted for consideration at the next meeting of the Commission. The Commission agreed that in developing these plans the term 'human interference' would not be interpreted to include fishing.