

## DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR ANTARCTIC MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

136. It was agreed that the title of this agenda item in future would be 'Development of Approaches to Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources' and that the name of the Working Group would be changed to the 'Working Group for the Development of Approaches to Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources'. The changes were made in order to avoid confusion regarding the nature of the work under this item.

137. The delegation from Australia presented the Working Group's Report (CCAMLR-VII/11 Rev. 1).

138. In the report, a need was identified for clarification of the status of paragraphs 114 and 115 in the report of last year's Commission meeting.

139. It was noted that paragraph 114 was a summary of Article II of the Convention and as such should not be accorded special status. It was agreed, however, that paragraph 115 was a useful extension of the principles set out in Article II and could, with one modification to subparagraph (ii), be endorsed by the Commission as a basis for further work by the Group. The basis for the revision was taken from paragraph 14 of Annex 1 to the Working Group's Report. The revised subparagraph (ii) of paragraph 115 reads:

- (ii) that harvesting on a sustainable basis means that harvesting activities are so conducted as to ensure that the potential for achieving the highest possible long-term yield is preserved, subject to the principles of conservation above;

140. The Working Group's Report contained a suggestion that implementation of Article II 3 (b) of the Convention would be assisted by the development of operational definitions for depletion and for target levels for recovery of depleted populations. The Working Group agreed to seek advice in this regard from the Scientific Committee and suggested that the advice should contain information for groups of species about the likely range of levels of greatest net annual increment.

141. The Working Group requested the Scientific Committee's advice on the ability of the CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP) to detect changes in ecological relationships and to recognise the effects of simple dependencies between species, including distinguishing between natural fluctuations and those induced by fisheries.

142. The report recognised that conservation approaches have to consider both short and long time scales and it was noted that the Working Group for Fish Stock Assessment had already begun to develop short-term approaches to the management of finfish stocks.

143. The Working Group agreed that the Antarctic should not be regarded as a single ecosystem but, rather, as a set of linked subsystems subject to widely differing levels of exploitation in which the potential effects of fisheries on related subsystems would have to be considered.

144. The report drew attention to the value of additional information about plans for fisheries development and descriptions of operational tactics applied to fishing activities. The delegations from the Soviet Union and Japan noted certain difficulties in providing such information.

#### Future Work

145. It was noted that groups to deal with single species or groups of species (i.e. IWC, SCAR Group of Specialists on Seals, the Working Group on Krill and the Fish Stock Assessment Working Group) already exist and it was agreed that the future work of the Group should be carefully managed in order to avoid duplication in relation to these other Groups.

146. It was suggested, however, that it is also important to encourage further development of multispecies and ecosystem approaches. It was agreed that the Scientific Committee and Commission should organise their work in such a way that multispecies and ecosystems approaches would be given necessary emphasis. In this context, the Commission agreed that all Working Groups should provide the Scientific Committee with information about any multispecies interactions that appear to be significant.

147. It was suggested that the development of CEMP should continue on an experimental basis until it was known whether or not a practically feasible monitoring program for predators, prey and environmental parameters could be developed to the point where:

- a) natural variations could be detected and explained;
- b) the effects of humans as predators on one or more species could be detected in terms of dependent species;
- c) the cost/effectiveness of monitoring as an input to single species and ecological management could be calculated.

148. The delegation from Japan suggested that the Commission would, in view of recent changes in Antarctic Ecosystems, have to define the characteristics of the ecosystem that it wished to conserve in order to develop suitable approaches to conservation strategies. In this connection other delegations drew attention to the conservation principles established in Article II of the Convention.

149. The Commission agreed that there was a need to begin development of possible conservation approaches for achieving the objectives of Article II. It was also agreed, however, that the priority for the development of long-term ecosystem oriented approaches should be determined in relation to other important tasks.

150. The Commission agreed that the Working Group should communicate intersessionally concerning the future direction of its work. In doing so, members could consider the range of issues which had emerged at this year's meetings in the light of its second term of reference.