

## ASSESSMENT AND AVOIDANCE OF INCIDENTAL MORTALITY

5.1 The Commission noted that Reports of Assessment and Avoidance of Incidental Mortality had been received from Australia, Brazil, Japan, Korea, UK and USA describing steps that had been taken to minimise the impact on Antarctic marine living resources caused by entanglement in and ingestion of persistent marine debris of human origin.

5.2 Three additional reports were available to the Commission. The US submitted a paper (SC-CAMLR-X/BG/18) on the incidence of the ingestion of plastic material by Antarctic seabirds. It concluded that there was not a large accumulation of plastic in seabirds.

5.3 Australia submitted a paper (SC-CAMLR-X/BG/19) which highlighted the impacts of bottom trawling on benthic communities in heavily fished areas.

5.4 The UK submitted a paper (CCAMLR-X/BG/5) which reported that for the second successive year there was a decrease in fur seal entanglement in marine debris at Bird Island, South Georgia.

5.5 The Commission continued to encourage Members to survey beaches to assess levels and the nature of marine debris and to report the results to the Commission. It endorsed the suggestion of the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraph 8.45) that Members should consider whether the survey and reporting formats and approaches described in SC-CAMLR-X/BG/16 would be of general utility.

5.6 The Commission noted the Scientific Committee's suggestion that a practical division of work in this item would have the Scientific Committee consider primarily evidence of impacts on biota, with the Commission considering general issues concerning the incidence of debris, dumping, pollution, etc. (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraph 8.52).

### Incidental Mortality in Longline Fisheries

5.7 Recalling the discussions concerning incidental mortality of seabirds in longline fisheries which led to the adoption of Resolution 5/VIII and to the creation of the draft conservation measure in Annex 6 of CCAMLR-IX, noting the papers SC-CAMLR-X/BG/14 and CCAMLR-X/BG/18, and noting particularly the advice of the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraphs 8.25 to 8.26), the Commission adopted Conservation Measure 29/X (paragraph 10.1) which requires specific action in the conduct of the longline fisheries aimed at minimising such incidental mortality.

5.8 The Chilean Delegation, supported by other Members including the USSR, drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that the effectiveness of the methods outlined in Conservation Measure 29/X had yet to be established for vessels fishing in the Convention Area. They noted that the Conservation Measure may need to be reviewed in the future, should further information on the performance of these methods or other techniques become available.

5.9 The Commission noted that the adoption of Conservation Measure 29/X was only one of two possible options identified by the Scientific Committee that could be effective in minimising incidental mortality in the longline fishery (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraph 8.26). The

Commission requested that the Scientific Committee investigate further the other option of restricting the operation of the fishery through some combination of catch and/or effort limitation.

#### Prohibition of Net Monitor Cables

5.10 The Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraphs 8.27 to 8.34) had considered the problem of the mortality of seabirds as a result of encounters with net monitor cables in trawl fisheries. Three papers had addressed this problem (SC-CAMLR-X/BG/4, 14 and 18). The Commission, having considered the views of the Scientific Committee, agreed that the use of net monitor cables in trawl fisheries would be prohibited from the 1994/95 season.

5.11 Conservation Measure 30/X was adopted (see paragraph 10.2). Until the start of the 1994/95 fishing season, the Commission agreed that net monitor cables still in use would be deployed from the 1992/93 fishing season in accordance with the illustration shown in Annex 6 of this report, or in accordance with any other method reviewed by the Scientific Committee designed to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds. Contracting Parties whose harvesting vessels continued to deploy net monitor cables until the start of the 1994/95 fishing season undertook to report annually to the Commission on progress achieved towards phasing out the use of such cable.

5.12 As authorised in the statement by the Chairman of the Conference on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, 19 May 1980, the Delegate of France indicated that the provisions of Conservation Measures 29/X und 30/X regarding incidental mortality due to fisheries activities will not apply to the Exclusive Economic Zone around Kerguelen and Crozet Islands if they prove to be less strict or less appropriate than the measures adopted or considered by French authorities in these two areas.

5.13 The Chairman invited the observer from ASOC to address the Commission. ASOC welcomed the institution of conservation measures to prevent incidental mortality resulting from longline and trawling activities in the Convention Area (Conservation Measures 29/X and 30/X). It was stressed that independent scientific observation is essential for solving problems such as these and will be important for refining measures aimed at reducing incidental mortality in the future.