

DEVELOPMENT OF APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION  
OF ANTARCTIC MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

New Fisheries

6.1 At its 1990 Meeting, the Commission considered appropriate measures to ensure that Members intending to develop new fisheries in the Convention Area notify the Commission in advance of commencing such fisheries (CCAMLR-IX, paragraphs 9.1 to 9.10). On the basis of a paper prepared by the Secretariat and discussions by its Working Groups, the Scientific Committee agreed a definition for a new fishery on any marine living resource in the Convention Area (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraph 9.3).

6.2 The Swedish Delegation put forward a proposal for a conservation measure concerning new fisheries in the Convention Area. In considering this proposal, the Commission noted that the primary purpose of Conservation Measure 31/X is to require any Member considering initiating a new fishery to notify other Members of such plans or possibilities and that this conservation measure does not apply to research vessels.

6.3 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 Conservation Measure 31/X regarding notification of commencement of a fishery does not apply to the Exclusive Economic Zones around Crozet and Kerguelen Islands insofar as his country has never failed to provide CCAMLR with all information concerning its fisheries in the two areas concerned and therefore fully satisfies the objectives aimed at by that conservation measure.

6.4 In regard to the reservations expressed by the French Delegation, the Commission noted the US Delegation's intervention that although the conservation measure does not formally apply to Division 58.5.1, the Commission would welcome the voluntary compliance with the spirit of the conservation measure, so that Members could be aware of any new fisheries that may be initiated in that division. In response, the French Delegate stated that his country would, as it has never failed to date, continue to provide CCAMLR with all information concerning the activities carried out in the Exclusive Economic Zones around the Crozet and Kerguelen Islands.

6.5 The Chairman invited the observer from ASOC to address the Commission. ASOC sees it as a matter of urgency that the impacts of any new fisheries are assessed prior to the occurrence of those fisheries. ASOC does not envisage that the advice of intention to develop a new fishery will necessarily always lead to instant regulations being placed on that fishery. What it will do is allow scientists to raise any concern they might have about the fishery and for those concerns to be addressed during the development of that fishery.

6.6 Conservation Measure 31/X was adopted (paragraph 10.3).

## Potential New Fishery for Antarctic Crabs

6.7 In 1990, the Commission was informed that the US was considering an exploratory fishery for king and stone crabs in Statistical Area 48 during the 1990/91 season. This fishery did not occur prior to the permit's expiry in June 1991.

6.8 An application for a new permit was received by the US in July 1991. This application was reviewed in light of the 1990 discussions of the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-IX, paragraphs 15.7 to 15.10) and Commission (CCAMLR-IX, paragraphs 9.1 to 9.10) pertaining to new and developing fisheries. As part of this review, the applicant was required to develop and submit a plan for research and data collection, including an environmental impact assessment of the proposed exploratory crab fishery. A short-term fishing permit was issued, the details of which were reviewed by the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraph 5.7).

6.9 Logistical complications precluded the exercising of the permit prior to its expiry in September 1991. Although the US fisherman maintains an interest in the possibility of undertaking an Antarctic exploratory crab fishery at some time in the future, he has not submitted an application for a new permit nor indicated his specific future plans.

6.10 In conformity with the Commission's request concerning advance notification during 1991 (CCAMLR-IX, paragraph 9.8) the US notified Members of its potential new crab fishery, and presented the research and data collection plan and environmental impact assessment to the Scientific Committee for review (SC-CAMLR-X/BG/20).

6.11 It was noted that the process undertaken by the US in developing a plan and assessment for this potential new fishery may provide a useful example of appropriate steps needed to help meet the request for information as specified in paragraph 3 of Conservation Measure 31/X.

6.12 In regard to the potential exploratory crab fishery being considered, the Commission noted that prior to the adoption of Conservation Measure 31/X, the US had complied with the spirit of advance notification and had provided information to assist deliberations in the Scientific Committee. The Commission welcomed the US Delegation's advice that they would continue to provide further information on this exploratory fishery if and when it proceeds.

## Consideration of Possible Limits on Krill Catches

6.13 The Commission noted the advice of the Scientific Committee on the status of krill stocks given in the report of the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR-X, paragraphs 3.103 to 3.109). The Commission endorsed the advice of the Scientific Committee that reactive management - the practice of taking management action when the need for it has become apparent - is not a viable long-term strategy for the krill fishery. Some form of feedback management, which involves the continuous adjustment of management measures in response to information, is to be preferred as a long-term strategy. In the interim, a precautionary approach is desirable and in particular, a precautionary limit on annual catches should be considered.

6.14 The Commission took note of the fact that all Members presently fishing for krill intend that their fishing will stay at current levels in the coming season and expect that the disposition of the fishing will generally follow historical patterns.

6.15 With regard to the possibility of new fisheries starting in future years, the Commission also noted that an application from an Australian company to harvest up to 80 000 tonnes of krill annually is currently under consideration by the Australian Government.

6.16 The Scientific Committee advised the Commission that, for Statistical Area 48, an annual catch limit of 1.5 million tonnes based on estimates of potential yield, was the best available scientific advice on a precautionary catch limit. It also advised:

- this limit needs to be divided into subareas to allow for the possible interaction between krill populations in these subareas;
- this limit may need to be supplemented by other management measures to ensure that the catch is not entirely concentrated in the foraging range of vulnerable land-breeding predators. Currently much of the krill catch in Statistical Area 48 is taken in such areas (SC-CAMLR-X/BG/7 and WG-Krill-91/39);
- this limit has not involved an allowance for possible unreported mortality of krill associated with fishing operations (although there was very limited information on the matter).

6.17 Accordingly, the Commission adopted Conservation Measure 32/X (see paragraph 10.4). The Commission requested the Scientific Committee, as a matter of priority, to advise the Commission on precautionary catch limits by subarea and, where it considers appropriate, on finer spatial scales.

6.18 The Delegate from Korea, supported by Spain, expressed his concern with the procedure employed by the Commission in arriving at the text of the Conservation Measure. They wished to place on record their request that in future all delegations be given the full opportunity to participate in discussions of recommendations for the Commission.

6.19 The Commission noted that the future work of WG-Krill outlined in paragraphs 3.92 to 3.94 of SC-CAMLR-X was in accordance with the Commission's priority in this matter. The Commission endorsed the holding of a meeting of WG-Krill in 1992, and welcomed the offer of Chile to host the meeting.

#### Working Group on the Development of Approaches to Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (WG-DAC)

6.20 The Working Group on the Development of Approaches to Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (WG-DAC) was established at the Fifth Meeting of the Commission in 1986 'to carry forward the development of possible conservation approaches for achieving the objectives of the Convention, as set out in Article II, by the application of the conservation measures specified in Article IX'.

6.21 The Commission acknowledged that the Working Group had made a considerable contribution towards developing approaches for implementing Article II of the Convention. These approaches are now an integral part of the work of the Scientific Committee and the Commission.

6.22 It was agreed that the Working Group could now be disbanded.

6.23 The Commission thanked Australia for its efforts as Convener of WG-DAC since its inception.