

REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION (Hobart, Australia, 26 October to 6 November 1998)

OPENING OF THE MEETING

1.1 The Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources was held in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia from 26 October to 6 November 1998 under the Chairmanship of Mr D. Bock (Germany).

1.2 In opening the meeting, the Chairman assured Members that it was a special honour for Germany to hold the chairmanship until the end of this year's meeting. He stated that CCAMLR, as an international organisation, enjoys an excellent reputation. He noted that the conservation measures adopted each year are exemplary, but that these measures will have little impact if they are not effectively controlled and implemented.

1.3 The Chairman further commented that the extent of illegal fishing, particularly for Patagonian toothfish (*Dissostichus eleginoides*), has led to great concern and seriously undermines CCAMLR's conservation policies. Consideration of the implementation and effectiveness of measures adopted last year, examination of additional measures and decisions necessary to contain illegal fishing were issues that he considered would play a central role at this meeting. However, he did not intend to anticipate the discussions of the ensuing days.

1.4 All 23 Members of the Commission were represented: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, European Community, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay.

1.5 Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, Greece, Netherlands and Peru were invited to attend the meeting as observers. Netherlands attended.

1.6 The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (IOFC), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) and the South Pacific Commission (SPC) were invited to attend the meeting as observers. ASOC, CCSBT, FAO, IUCN, IWC and SCAR attended.

1.7 At last year's meeting the Commission invited Mauritius and Namibia to attend CCAMLR-XVII as observers. Both countries were represented.

1.8 The List of Participants is given in Annex 1. The List of Documents presented to the meeting is given in Annex 2.

1.9 The meeting was addressed by His Excellency the Honourable Sir Guy Green, AC, KBE, Governor of Tasmania.

1.10 Attending his third meeting of the Commission, His Excellency paid tribute to the way in which the Commission had converted that part of the Antarctic Treaty System with which it was concerned into an effective regime supported by equally effective institutional arrangements.

1.11 His Excellency referred to the major challenge created by illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. Because the international community today more than ever accepts responsibility for conservation and environmental protection, he expressed his hope that this shared responsibility will mean that representations made to Flag States to take appropriate action to combat this problem will have positive results.

1.12 His Excellency also referred to the krill biomass survey to be carried out in the Southern Ocean in 2000. He considered this to be an exciting and important initiative and continued that the project deserved the support of everyone. This will ensure that the precautionary approach to any expanded krill harvesting operation will be based on even more solid foundations. He extended his best wishes for the successful completion of this survey and added that it will be a most auspicious way for CCAMLR to enter the new millennium.

1.13 In concluding the address, His Excellency expressed a hope that delegates may find some time to relax and enjoy some of the delights which Tasmania has to offer.