

OTHER BUSINESS

16.1 Further to changes to the Commission's Rule of Procedure 32(b) made by the Commission earlier in the meeting (paragraph 2.4), Japan pointed out that while the changes made had been necessary to accommodate the specific circumstances, they prevented the Standing Committees from restricting attendance to Members only. This was sometimes necessary, for example, for discussions on such matters as administration and finance.

16.2 The Commission recognised the importance of such restriction being available, and noted that this could be accomplished without counteracting the effect of the previous change. Accordingly, the Commission agreed that 32(b) be amended as follows:

Rule 32(b)

If a Member of the Commission so requests, sessions of the Commission at which a particular agenda item is under consideration shall be restricted to its Members and Observers referred to in Rule 30(a) and Rule 30(b). **With respect to any session so restricted, the Commission may also agree to invite observers referred to in Rule 30(c).**

16.3 Japan presented a proposal for the Commission to adopt a resolution on maintaining confidentiality without impeding the full exchange of information (CCAMLR-XVII/BG/41). Japan believed that, in the light of certain unfortunate circumstances during the current meeting, it was an appropriate time for the Commission to reaffirm the moral and ethical obligations of Members to respect the confidentiality of specific information presented to the Commission. In presenting the proposal, Japan noted that such a resolution could assist in the maintenance of transparency.

16.4 A number of Members pointed out that this responsibility is generally recognised within intergovernmental organisations, including CCAMLR, and that it would not be appropriate, therefore, for such a resolution to be passed by the Commission.

16.5 The European Community advised the Commission that this issue is by its nature a sensitive one and, together with the issue of transparency, one that is currently being discussed by a number of other organisations. The Commission confirmed that while transparency in its operation is important, especially for the involvement of non-Member States and intergovernmental organisations, the Members continue to take seriously their responsibilities with respect to confidentiality.

16.6 With respect to the representation of the Commission by Italy at the meeting of FAO and non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies in February next year (paragraph 12.47(iii)), the USA advised the Commission that it had now viewed the agenda of the meeting and noted a number of major items of relevance to CCAMLR. The Commission directed the Executive Secretary to provide Italy with a detailed briefing note on all the relevant issues.

16.7 The Commission noted that the present term of appointment of the Executive Secretary expires in February 2001 and that it was necessary to include on the agenda for CCAMLR-XVIII consideration of the process to fill the position of Executive Secretary beyond February 2001.

REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

17.1 The Report of the Seventeenth Meeting was adopted.

CLOSE OF THE MEETING

18.1 Dr M. Richardson (UK), on behalf of the delegates, expressed appreciation at the constructive way in which Mr T. Scully (USA) had lead the drafting group on conservation measures, and had brought deliberations to a successful close.

18.2 The delegates joined the Executive Secretary in thanking Mr Bock for his second and final year as Chairman of the Commission. The Executive Secretary presented the Chairman with a CCAMLR gavel.

18.3 In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked all the delegates for their efforts and collaboration during the meeting. He also thanked the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for their work. The meeting was closed.