

OTHER BUSINESS

Revision of the Scientific Committee Agenda

18.1 In recent years the tasks undertaken by the Scientific Committee, and the way it has organised its work, have changed in response to the extent and type of advice required by the Commission. A primary concern is that the size and complexity of the working group reports has restricted the time available for debate within the Scientific Committee. Accordingly, the Scientific Committee reviewed its agenda, preparations prior to the meeting, and the conduct of business within the meeting.

18.2 The Scientific Committee reaffirmed that its role is to provide advice to the Commission with respect to the conservation of living marine resources that fall under the competence of CCAMLR, taking into account ecosystem approaches to management and the precautionary principle. In order to accomplish this function, the Scientific Committee relies on information provided by its working groups, by the Secretariat and by attendees to its annual meeting. Accordingly, the agenda should focus on those considerations that pertain to the following actions:

- (i) providing advice to the Commission;
- (ii) defining the issues to be addressed by the working groups;
- (iii) reviewing and acting upon advice, recommendations, notations and requests from the working groups; and
- (iv) identifying issues relating to fisheries observation, budget, CCAMLR publications and other organisations.

18.3 It was further agreed that the conveners of the working groups prepare and circulate summaries of their reports as they pertain to the Scientific Committee agenda. Such summaries would contain references to the appropriate paragraphs in the reports of the working groups. It was also agreed that the annotated agenda be revised to include references to all paragraphs in the reports of the working groups that invite comment from the Scientific Committee. With the current intersessional arrangements this would mean that the first circulation of the annotated agenda would include references to all appropriate paragraphs in the WG-EMM report, and that a revised version of the annotated agenda would be prepared on completion of the WG-FSA report.

18.4 It was also suggested that the working groups consider whether it would be desirable to assemble the synopses of working papers, pending notification and agreement of authors, and circulate these to the Scientific Committee as a background paper. The preparation of such synopses by contributors of working papers is the current practice in WG-EMM.

18.5 The Scientific Committee agreed that its advice needed to be set in context such that the Commission may understand its rationale. This need to provide background material must be balanced against the desire to keep the report of the Scientific Committee as brief as possible and focused towards the issues of resource management. It was recognised that in any one particular year, portions of this agenda might be expanded or, conversely, treated in a brief manner.

18.6 The Scientific Committee was unable to reach agreement on a provisional agenda for its 2002 meeting. The Chair of the Scientific Committee offered to continue the task of developing an agenda for the 2002 meeting through correspondence.

Application by ASOC for Observer Status at Meetings of Subsidiary Bodies

18.7 The Scientific Committee considered an application by ASOC for observer status at meetings of the Scientific Committee's subsidiary bodies. Most Members agreed to this application on the proviso that ASOC sends scientists with appropriate expertise to the meetings of the Working Groups, and that such observers participate as individual scientists. Scientific expertise was valued by the Scientific Committee and its working groups. Participation by ASOC at the meetings of the Scientific Committee had been valuable. Participation by ASOC in the work of the working groups was seen as potentially beneficial.

18.8 Japan and Russia objected to ASOC's participation in the working groups on the basis that ASOC was primarily concerned with developing policies dealing with fisheries and conservation, and did not conduct its own research.

18.9 The Scientific Committee examined the possibility of ASOC contributing to the working groups through the submission of meeting papers. Again, most Members agreed that this would be a valuable contribution to the scientific endeavours of the working groups. However, Japan objected to such a proposal.

18.10 The Scientific Committee was unable to reach consensus on this matter, and the application by ASOC for observer status at meetings of its subsidiary bodies was rejected.