

## ADVICE TO SCOI AND SCAF

11.1 The Chair presented the Scientific Committee advice to SCOI and SCAF during the meeting. The advice to SCAF is in Section 10.

### Report to SCOI of Scientific Committee Chair

11.2 Information on scientific observations conducted in the 2001/02 season and implementation of the Scheme of International Scientific Observation are set out in section 2 of this report.

### IUU Fishing

11.3 The Scientific Committee endorsed the report and conclusions of WG-FSA with regard to its assessment of the threats from IUU fishing, including threats to the rational use of toothfish (Annex 5, paragraphs 5.202 to 5.227) as well as the threats to seabirds (Annex 5, paragraphs 6.86 to 6.126). In summary, the Scientific Committee agreed to the following points:

- (i) The reports of catches from outside the Convention Area in Areas 51 and 57 provided in *Dissostichus* Catch Documents (DCDs) were unlikely to have come from those areas. Instead, these catches were most likely to have come from within the Convention Area in the Indian Ocean. The estimates of toothfish removals arising from these DCDs are, taken alone, still likely to be underestimates of total catch from IUU fishing in the Convention Area.
- (ii) The estimates of IUU fishing within the Convention Area for the Indian Ocean are most likely to be underestimates of this activity.
- (iii) The current levels of IUU fishing reported from Areas 51 and 57 would have seriously depleted whatever stocks might have been present in those areas, if they were present at all.
- (iv) Continued IUU catches at the current levels will cause further significant declines in the legal fisheries in the Indian Ocean over the next five years, noting that IUU fishing has depleted stocks in Division 58.4.4 and in Subareas 58.6 and 58.7, and that the catch rates in Division 58.5.1 have been substantially reduced suggesting that the stock in this area is also reaching low levels.
- (v) When combined with the broad estimates of population abundance of seabirds in the Southern Ocean, the rate of mortality of seabirds from IUU fishing over the last seven years indicates that, even by conservative estimates, seabird populations are likely to become substantially reduced over the next five years if IUU fishing continues at the current rate. It was noted that a number of these seabird populations are already considered to be either vulnerable or endangered.

11.4 The Scientific Committee also requested SCOI to indicate whether it has information to verify that the observer report from Uruguay (WG-FSA-02/67) is likely to contain data from the locations indicated in the report. This request has arisen because known information for the region suggests that most of the area is deeper than 1 000 m and is unlikely to have great quantities of young toothfish that were the primary component of the catches described in the report (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.23 and 3.24). Comparative data have been available to the Scientific Committee through surveys and other analyses presented by WG-FSA (e.g. SC-CAMLR-XX, Annex 5, Figures 16 and 20).

11.5 In view of the difficulties in estimating total removals, the Scientific Committee recommended the establishment of a technical group that would have as its primary role the compilation, validation and review of reports and information from all available sources to estimate total removals of Antarctic marine living resources and the locations from which these are taken. The Scientific Committee recommended that this group serve the needs of SCOI as well as the Scientific Committee. This group would need to meet just prior to the meetings of WG-FSA and SCOI.

11.6 The Scientific Committee is reviewing the Rules of Access and Use of CCAMLR Data to ensure that appropriate confidentiality requirements are met while maintaining appropriate access to data required for assessments and other purposes in CCAMLR. It has been recommended that the management of all data within CCAMLR be subject to a common set of rules and guidelines. To that end, the Scientific Committee invited members of SCOI to be involved in the revision of the data access rules.

#### Fishing Seasons

11.7 In relation to potential imminent achievement of full compliance with Conservation Measure 29/XIX and the continuing very low level of seabird by-catch, the Scientific Committee recalled its recent advice to the Commission (SC-CAMLR-XIX, paragraph 4.42; see also SC-CAMLR-XX, Annex 5, paragraph 7.91) that any relaxation of closed seasons should proceed in a step-wise fashion (e.g. similar to the process by which the closed season was extended) and the results of this be carefully monitored and reported.

11.8 Noting the timeliness of considering this issue from the perspective of the rapid recent improvement in compliance, the Scientific Committee endorsed the advice developed in relation to potential extensions to the fishing season (Annex 5, paragraphs 6.37 and 6.38), noting the associated discussion (Annex 5, paragraphs 6.39 to 6.46).

11.9 The three proposed options for season extension are:

- (i) An extension of the season for two weeks in September once there was full compliance with Conservation Measure 29/XIX, and subject to a limit of three birds per vessel, assuming fishing effort was maintained at current levels. Vessels would be required to carry two observers, so that the limit could be monitored accurately, and either two streamer lines or a single streamer line with a boom-and-bridle system would be required.
- (ii) An extension of the season for the last two weeks in April once there was full compliance with Conservation Measure 29/XIX, and subject to a limit of three

birds per vessel, assuming fishing effort was maintained at current levels. Vessels would be required to carry two observers, so that the limit could be monitored accurately, and either two streamer lines or a single streamer line with a boom-and-bridle system would be required.

- (iii) In the forthcoming season to allow only vessels in Subarea 48.3 that were adjudged to have complied fully with Conservation Measure 29/XIX in 2001/02 to fish during the last two weeks of April to enable a preliminary assessment of seabird by-catch during this period. As part of the access arrangement during this period, the vessel would be required to collect data to allow a more reliable assessment of the risk to seabirds during this period. This would include collection of data on the sink rate of longlines, and observations of seabird behaviour around the vessel. A limit of three birds would be applied to the vessel; two observers would be required so that the limit could be monitored accurately; two streamer lines or a single streamer line with a boom-and-bridle system would be required.

Of the two options outlined in paragraphs 11.8(i) and 11.8(ii), the option in paragraph 11.8(i) is preferable, in terms of leading to an extension to the fishing season at a time of lower potential risk to seabirds.

#### Compliance with Conservation Measure 29/XIX

11.10 The Scientific Committee reiterated its advice of last year (SC-CAMLR-XX, paragraph 4.41) that vessels which do not comply with all elements of Conservation Measure 29/XIX should be prohibited from fishing in the CCAMLR Convention Area (Annex 5, paragraphs 6.25 and 6.29). It was noted that the request to the Commission to define its understanding of full compliance (paragraph 11.11) was an important consideration here.

11.11 The Scientific Committee referred this advice to SCOI and the Commission to assist their deliberations and with a view to receiving advice on, *inter alia*, what the Commission might wish to define as full compliance, whether this would relate to individual vessels, particular fisheries and/or subareas, or other criteria and how the Commission might wish to proceed when appropriate compliance had been achieved.