

## CCAMLR SCHEME OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION

2.1 Reports from five cruises on krill vessels in the 2001/02 fishing season were reviewed by WG-EMM. The observer database now holds eight sets of observer data from krill vessels. WG-EMM concluded that several revisions should be made to the krill section of the *Scientific Observers Manual*, including the addition to existing guidelines for sampling larval finfish by-catch in krill catches (Annex 4, paragraph 3.42). Furthermore, it recommended that electronic logbooks should become standard for all scientific observations on krill vessels, and that they be translated into all official languages of the Commission (Annex 4, paragraph 3.45). The Scientific Committee endorsed these recommendations.

2.2 In the 2002/03 season observers were present on 37 longline, 10 finfish trawl and six krill trawl cruises (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.21 to 3.24). Regarding the finfish data, all but one logbook had been received before the WG-FSA meeting, the last one being received during the meeting. The krill cruises finished in October, so although the reports had not been received they were not yet overdue.

2.3 Observers submit their data in electronic or paper logbooks and additionally provide a narrative cruise report. All required information was submitted electronically in the 2002/03 fishing season. However, most observers in Subarea 48.3 had not used the new cruise report format. Despite this, all the data required by the Observer Scheme had been collected and submitted from all areas in the 2002/03 fishing season. Although the failure to use the new format had not significantly affected the quality or resolution of data required from the fishery, the Scientific Committee reiterated that for the 2003/04 fishing season the new report format should be used for all fisheries.

2.4 Some difficulties had been experienced with the observer requirements for by-catch recording, in particular for recording the fate of skate and ray discards, which this year followed a trial format (Annex 5, paragraph 5.284). The UK noted that these difficulties were not related to the failure of observers to use the new report format in Subarea 48.3. WG-FSA was therefore only able to make estimates of the number of rays cut off lines in two areas, Subarea 48.3 and Division 58.5.2 (Annex 5, Table 5.25). Following these experiences, WG-FSA recommended a revision of this part of the observer requirements and logbooks (Annex 5, paragraphs 10.13 to 10.15).

2.5 In compliance with the instructions of the *Scientific Observers Manual*, observers had recorded conversion factors in the 2002/03 season and reported a similar spread of conversion factors in longline fisheries for toothfish as has been noted in previous seasons. WG-FSA had insufficient time to analyse these data in any more detail, but the Scientific Committee endorsed WG-FSA's request for Members to undertake additional analyses of conversion factors to improve estimates of total removals from all fisheries (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.26 and 3.27). For *C. gunnari* the only processing method is whole and consequently no conversion factors are required.

2.6 WG-FSA noted that in a number of cases incorrect species codes had been used by observers. The Scientific Committee confirmed that Members should inform the Secretariat when they wished to use a new species code, so that the Secretariat may assign one.

2.7 Several observers had commented on issues of safety concerning vessels fishing in high latitudes (Annex 5, paragraph 10.10). The Scientific Committee agreed that it did not have primary competency to comment on this issue, and referred it to the Commission.

2.8 The Scientific Committee endorsed the suggestions for additions or modifications to the *Scientific Observers Manual* made by WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraphs 10.23 and 10.40). It noted that several observers had indicated that their workload was at capacity. In this light the Scientific Committee noted with appreciation WG-FSA's recommendation that some aspects of current observer duties should be removed from the manual, so as to create time for the suggested additions.

2.9 The Scientific Committee was concerned that the data being collected from observers should be prioritised so as to maximise its value, in particular for the conduct of assessments of target species and the impacts on populations of by-catch species. In this regard, it noted that WG-FSA had asked WG-FSA-SAM to report on the types of data essential for stock assessment purposes (Annex 5, paragraph 10.42), in particular the practicality of alternative data collection methods. It further noted that WG-FSA-SAM was reviewing subsampling methodologies, and asked that this review take into account a cost-benefit analysis incorporating the additional cost of data collection under various subsampling schemes compared with the benefit to assessments of any improvements in the estimation of population parameters.

2.10 The Scientific Committee endorsed the need for a major review of the content and structure of the *Scientific Observers Manual*. It recommended that this activity could be achieved through an intersessional group that comprised technical coordinators and members of WG-FSA, and would be coordinated by the Secretariat (Annex 5, paragraph 10.45).