

INTERSESSIONAL WORK

Reorganisation of the work of the Scientific Committee and its working groups

13.1 Dr Holt reported on the work of the Steering Committee on the Review of the Structure of the Working Groups of the Scientific Committee. In 2005/06 the Committee had worked by correspondence and had met in association with the meetings of WG-FSA-SAM and WG-EMM.

13.2 The Committee had:

- (i) reviewed information and proposals on the reorganisation of the work of the Scientific Committee;
- (ii) agreed that both short- and long-term needs of the Scientific Committee must be accommodated in any plausible reorganisation scheme;
- (iii) agreed that it would be preferable for the reorganisation of the working groups to evolve from the existing framework used by the Scientific Committee and its working groups;
- (iv) recognised that some aspects of the reorganisation may be introduced in the short term to address the present needs of the Scientific Committee, however the process is likely to require considerable time to be fully implemented;
- (v) recognised that any reorganisation should not increase the total meeting time from the present five weeks (two weeks for WG-FSA including ad hoc WG-IMAF, two weeks for WG-EMM, and one week for WG-SAM) and that no increase in resources be required from the Secretariat.

13.3 The Steering Committee agreed that implementation of its requirements will impact on the way that the Scientific Committee currently does business. For example, it is anticipated that the Scientific Committee will be required to provide advice to the Commission with respect to matters such as MPAs, predator-prey-fishery models, stock assessment models, icefish and krill acoustic measurements, conservation status of seabirds and destructive fishing practices. In addition, it was recognised that some items presently on the working groups' agendas may be considered at multi-year intervals instead of annually, or not at all.

13.4 The Steering Committee recognised that the present working group structure could, with appropriate modification, address present and future needs. In particular, the role of WG-FSA-SAM could be expanded to serve as a technical group to address issues relevant to all three existing working groups (WG-FSA, WG-EMM and ad hoc WG-IMAF). Under this scenario, WG-FSA-SAM would be used by all three groups to address technical assessment and modelling issues, including fish stock assessment issues (of interest to WG-FSA), krill, seal and seabird stock assessment issues (of interest to WG-EMM), and estimation of the status of seabirds (of interest to WG-IMAF).

13.5 In order to address issues of interest to all working groups, the Steering Committee proposed that the Scientific Committee establish WG-FSA-SAM as a full working group (provisionally known as the Working Group on Statistics, Assessments and Modelling

(WG-SAM)), and develop a long-term science plan so its tasks may be prioritised. This would allow long-term planning by WG-SAM so that the appropriate experts could be present at the appropriate meetings. In addition, WG-SAM would need to be fluid in its composition, duration of meeting time and issues addressed. For example, the group might meet for two weeks to consider both fish and krill–predator–prey issues or for one week, for example, to consider only fish stock assessment issues. Conversely, WG-EMM may need to meet for one or two weeks depending on its workload for that year. Further, the duration of the meetings of WG-FSA may vary as its work becomes more established and some assessments are conducted at multi-year intervals instead of annually using standard models.

13.6 The Steering Committee proposed that the Scientific Committee establish a steering group to develop, and keep under review, a long-term science plan which would guide the work of its working groups, including WG-SAM. Membership of the steering group may be open to all Scientific Committee representatives, and would include the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the conveners of the working groups.

13.7 The Scientific Committee noted that WG-EMM had agreed that the proposed restructuring of WG-FSA-SAM outlined above had the potential of providing flexibility for appropriate experts present to address specific questions of interest to WG-EMM. Conversely, this new structure may reduce the total time some Members might spend participating in meetings. WG-EMM also agreed that it was necessary to ensure that the restructuring did not create the situation in which biologists and quantitative modellers are separated, as it is important to have input from both areas of expertise to develop appropriate management advice (Annex 4, paragraphs 7.6 and 7.7).

13.8 The Scientific Committee also noted that the proposal to restructure the work of WG-FSA-SAM had been considered by the subgroup itself (WG-FSA-06/6, paragraphs 8.2 to 8.4). The subgroup agreed that it could serve as a common umbrella under which the development of assessment methodologies of various types may be examined. This would provide a forum where the required expertise could be assembled for shorter and concentrated periods of time. This format would also enhance the subgroup's ability to assemble a critical mass of expertise needed to address its assigned tasks.

13.9 Further, the Scientific Committee noted that WG-FSA had endorsed the proposal for the reorganisation of the work of the Scientific Committee and restructuring of WG-FSA-SAM (Annex 5, paragraph 14.8). In doing so, the Working Group agreed that:

- (i) a technical working group would allow the Scientific Committee to address a range of methodological issues using a common pool of experts. This would provide consistency in the approaches developed by the working groups;
- (ii) the Scientific Committee would need to establish a long-term science plan which incorporated flexibility to address other important issues as these arose. It was recognised that the proposed restructure would require considerable time to be implemented, and that further changes may be required;
- (iii) the introduction of multi-year assessments and reviews would allow WG-FSA to devote more time to other important matters such as biological and ecosystem processes. This multi-year approach may also be implemented by the other working groups, thereby allowing those groups to consider in detail other

matters of importance to their work (e.g. technical developments in the krill fishery; impact of fishing outside the Convention Area on Antarctic species).

13.10 The Scientific Committee also noted that ad hoc WG-IMAF had endorsed the proposed restructure (Annex 5, paragraph 7.60). In addition, WG-IMAF had reviewed its own structure and terms of reference, and identified some core intersessional tasks to further streamline its work (Annex 5, paragraphs 7.63 to 7.65). WG-IMAF had also confirmed that the existing linkage with WG-FSA remained appropriate, and facilitated the development of integrated advice on the management of fisheries.

13.11 Noting responses from WG-EMM (Annex 4, paragraphs 7.1 to 7.7), WG-FSA including WG-FSA-SAM (Annex 5, paragraphs 14.1 to 14.9; WG-FSA-06/6, paragraphs 8.2 to 8.4) and ad hoc WG-IMAF (Annex 5, Appendix D, paragraphs 181 and 182) to this proposal, the Scientific Committee thanked Dr Holt and the Steering Committee for developing this proposed reorganisation of the work of the Scientific Committee and its working groups.

13.12 The Scientific Committee endorsed the proposal and agreed to establish WG-SAM effective from the end of CCAMLR-XXV. It was agreed that 2007 would be a transition year when WG-SAM would focus on the tasks assigned by WG-FSA as well as the further development of the methodology for subdividing the catch limit of krill among SSMUs in Area 48. The Scientific Committee agreed that Drs Jones and Constable co-convene WG-SAM.

13.13 The Scientific Committee also agreed to establish a long-term science plan which would set the priorities of WG-SAM and the other working groups and subgroups. The Scientific Committee requested that working group conveners submit a joint paper to SC-CAMLR each year, outlining the priorities for their work. The Scientific Committee would review this paper and revise its priorities for future work.

13.14 Noting Dr Hanchet's wish to step down from his role as Convener of WG-FSA following the 2007 meeting, the Scientific Committee agreed to the following arrangements for the conveners of WG-SAM and WG-FSA after the 2007 meetings:

- Dr Jones would convene WG-FSA
- Dr Constable would convene WG-SAM.

13.15 The Scientific Committee thanked Dr Hanchet for continuing to convene WG-FSA until the end of the 2007 meeting of that working group, and thanked Dr Jones for co-convening WG-SAM in its first year, and then assuming the role of Convener of WG-FSA. The Scientific Committee also thanked Dr Constable for accepting to co-convene WG-SAM from the end of the 2007 meeting of that working group.

13.16 The Scientific Committee requested additional funds for editing, translating and publishing the report of WG-SAM as an annex to the report of SC-CAMLR (see paragraph 10.1).

Intersessional activities during 2006/07

13.17 The Scientific Committee accepted with great pleasure New Zealand's invitation to host the 2007 meeting of WG-SAM (one week) and the meeting of WG-EMM (two weeks) from 9 to 27 July 2007 in Christchurch.

13.18 The Scientific Committee reviewed and endorsed the intersessional work plans of WG-EMM, WG-FSA and ad hoc WG-IMAF, and the work plan for WG-SAM which had been agreed by WG-FSA.

13.19 The Scientific Committee agreed to the following meetings in the 2006/07 intersessional period:

- meeting of SG-ASAM and planning meeting for the CCAMLR-IPY projects in April 2007, in association with the 2007 meeting of ICES WGFAST in Dublin, Ireland, 23 to 27 April (Convener, dates and venue to be announced in December 2006);
- meeting of WG-SAM in Christchurch, New Zealand, from 9 to 13 July 2007 (Co-conveners Drs Jones and Constable);
- one-day joint workshop by WG-EMM and WG-FSA (developing methods of incorporating ecosystem models in finfish fishery assessments) in Christchurch, New Zealand, in July 2007 (Co-conveners Drs Hanchet and Reid, date to be announced);
- meeting of WG-EMM in Christchurch, New Zealand, from 16 to 27 July 2007 (Convener Dr Reid);
- Bioregionalisation Workshop in Brussels, Belgium, from 13 to 17 August 2007 (Co-conveners Drs Penhale and Grant);
- meeting of WG-FSA, including ad hoc WG-IMAF, in Hobart, Australia, from 8 to 19 October 2007 (Convener WG-FSA Dr Hanchet; Co-conveners WG-IMAF Ms Rivera and Mr Smith).

Third meeting of SG-ASAM

13.20 The Scientific Committee agreed to hold a third meeting of SG-ASAM in association with the 2007 meeting of ICES WGFAST (Dublin, Ireland, 30 April to 2 May). The Scientific Committee agreed to extend SG-ASAM's terms of reference (Annex 5, paragraphs 13.16 to 13.19) to include the development of acoustic sampling protocols for the CCAMLR-IPY projects (paragraph 13.39).

13.21 The Scientific Committee also agreed to hold the planning meeting for the CCAMLR-IPY projects in association with the meeting of SG-ASAM.

13.22 The Scientific Committee requested that the convener of WG-FSA, in consultation with the Scientific Committee's Chair and representatives, select a convener for the third meeting and determine a suitable venue and time for the meeting. It was hoped that these details could be announced by a CCAMLR circular in December 2006.

13.23 The Scientific Committee also agreed to the Data Manager's participation at future meetings of SG-ASAM (Annex 5, paragraph 13.22), and at the CCAMLR-IPY planning meeting associated with the 2007 meeting of SG-ASAM (paragraph 10.1).

CCAMLR-IPY projects

13.24 In 2005 the Commission noted the Scientific Committee's progress in developing CCAMLR's contribution to the IPY in 2008 (SC-CAMLR-XXIV, paragraphs 13.33 to 13.43). It noted that the Scientific Committee had developed a core project to conduct a synoptic survey of krill, pelagic fish and plankton biomass and biodiversity in the South Atlantic (CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey). This had been evaluated by the Joint IPY Committee and established as the 'lead project' under the IPY topic 'Natural Resources, Antarctic'. Accordingly, an umbrella project had been developed with a wider circum-Antarctic perspective than the original CCAMLR-IPY proposal above. The title of the umbrella proposal is 'Integrated circumpolar studies of Antarctic marine ecosystems to the conservation of living resources' and the short-form title of the proposed activity is listed as 'Antarctic Marine Ecosystem Studies (AMES)'.

13.25 The Commission had urged all Members to participate in the CCAMLR core project (CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey) or under the wider AMES umbrella. It noted that firm commitments for ship-time and other research activities were needed to be provided by the time of the 2006 meeting of WG-EMM.

13.26 Despite the strong request of the Commission, at the time of WG-EMM-06 no firm commitments could be made by Members to participate in the CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey.

13.27 WG-EMM and the CCAMLR-IPY steering group expressed their concerns about the lack of commitment for the necessary ship-time to conduct the CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey. The Working Group noted that the current situation could embarrass CCAMLR and its Members if the survey was to be cancelled, as this project had become a core research activity of the CCAMLR-IPY initiative. It was noted that all the necessary scientific requirements had been fulfilled to obtain the full endorsement of the IPY community and to finalise the necessary planning for the 2008 field season.

13.28 The Convener of the CCAMLR-IPY steering group and the Chair of the Scientific Committee were tasked to write an urgent CCAMLR circular (COMM CIRC 06/92 and SC CIRC 06/35) to inform Members of this serious situation and the potential consequences for the entire CCAMLR-IPY initiative. Commission representatives were asked to assist, where possible, in their national decision-making process required to secure the necessary budget and logistics support the CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey.

13.29 By the time of SC-CAMLR-XXV, only one firm commitment had been received. Peru, an Acceding State, had confirmed that it would participate in the CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey. The Scientific Committee thanked Peru for this commitment, and noted with great

regret that several Members who had expressed their strong interest at the beginning of the planning phase had withdrawn their tentative commitments due to domestic decisions on the necessary budget or access to the required ship-time.

13.30 The Scientific Committee agreed that the limited available resources of participating research vessels precluded the conduct of the CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey, as initially agreed by CCAMLR and endorsed by the IPY Joint Committee. As a consequence, it would not be possible for CCAMLR to obtain a revised estimate of krill biomass in Area 48 in 2008.

13.31 The Scientific Committee agreed that it would not be prudent to postpone the decision on the participation of CCAMLR in IPY any longer, because the steering group would run out of time to finalise the planning of the survey before the start of the field season in January 2008. Furthermore, it was felt necessary to inform those projects associated with the planned CCAMLR-IPY-2008 Survey, such as IWC and SCAR-GEB, about the unsuccessful development, so that they may modify their projects accordingly.

13.32 The Scientific Committee decided, in order to minimise the negative effects on the international reputation of CCAMLR as a leading research organisation in the Antarctic, to carry on with its contribution to IPY with a modified acoustic research project on krill and other key species and to make best use of the available research resources during IPY.

13.33 Some Members (including India, Italy, New Zealand and Norway) and an Acceding State (Peru) indicated that they were still optimistic that they will be able to carry out CCAMLR-related krill research in different parts of the Convention Area during IPY 2008. The SCAR-CAML program may also collect ancillary acoustic and net-haul data and make these data available to CCAMLR.

13.34 Therefore, the Scientific Committee requested members of the CCAMLR-IPY steering group to determine, as a matter of urgency, if research vessels engaged in other IPY projects would be available to measure krill acoustic biomass and conduct net sampling and CTD casts. If such ships were available, the convener of the steering group should investigate if CCAMLR scientists may participate in the research effort to collect data relative to CCAMLR's objectives. If such opportunities exist, then the convener should communicate this to the steering group and to CCAMLR Members.

13.35 The Scientific Committee noted Dr Siegel's wish to resign from his post as Convener of the CCAMLR-IPY steering group. Dr Siegel expressed the opinion that the Convener, as well as the members of the steering group, should be recruited from Members who will actively participate with their vessels in the CCAMLR-IPY field activities. The Scientific Committee thanked Dr Siegel for his relentless efforts to establish the CCAMLR-IPY projects.

13.36 The Scientific Committee endorsed the nominations of Drs S. Iversen (Norway) and E. Fanta (Brazil) as the new Co-conveners of the steering group, and endorsed the revised membership of the group which now consisted of Drs V. Alder (Argentina), M. Azzali (Italy), M. Gutiérrez (Peru), S. Hanchet (New Zealand), G. Hosie (SCAR-CAML) and N. Sanjeevan (India), with support from the Data Manager.

13.37 The Scientific Committee agreed that the membership of this group would be open to all participating Members.

13.38 The Scientific Committee recommended that the Commission urge all Members to contribute to the CCAMLR-IPY projects and advise the CCAMLR-IPY steering group as soon as possible of any new development regarding the availability of ship-time.

13.39 The Scientific Committee tasked SG-ASAM in 2007 with developing the acoustic sampling protocols for the IPY, and agreed that the steering group hold a planning meeting in association with SG-ASAM (paragraphs 13.19 and 13.21).

Joint CCAMLR-IWC Workshop

13.40 The Scientific Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Steering Committee for the CCAMLR-IWC Workshop (SC-CAMLR-XXV/6). Details of the workshop would be developed in 2007 and finalised at SC-CAMLR-XXVI (see also paragraph 10.1).

13.41 The terms of reference for the workshop (SC-CAMLR-XXIV, paragraph 13.47) are to:

1. Consider the types of information needed for models on the Antarctic marine ecosystem that could be developed for providing management advice.
2. Consider how the information could be used in modelling the Antarctic marine ecosystem, the quality of the information, and key gaps needing to be resolved before such information might be used in the development of those models.
3. Consider metadata, rather than reviewing individual datasets and undertaking analyses to summarise the data, where the metadata would comprise information on the estimates of abundance, population trends and parameters, their data sources and methods used to estimate them.

The workshop is scheduled in April 2008 in Hobart, Australia.

Invitation of observers to the next meeting

13.42 The Scientific Committee agreed that all observers invited to the 2006 meeting would be invited to participate in SC-CAMLR-XXVI.

Invitation of experts to the meetings of working groups

13.43 The Scientific Committee agreed that up to three experts may be invited to the meeting of SG-ASAM, and endorsed the terms of reference for these experts (Annex 5, paragraph 13.21; see also paragraph 10.1(d)).

13.44 The Scientific Committee agreed that one invited expert would be invited to the meeting of WG-SAM, and endorsed the terms of reference and selection process for that expert (Annex 5, paragraphs 13.9 and 13.10; see also paragraph 10.1(d)).

13.45 The Scientific Committee noted that a number of experts may be invited to the 2007 Bioregionalisation Workshop, and that the workshop steering committee would finalise these arrangements intersessionally, and develop the terms of reference for the invited experts.

Next meeting

13.46 The next meetings of the Scientific Committee and the Commission are scheduled at the CCAMLR Headquarters in Hobart, Australia, from 22 October to 2 November 2007.