

INTERSESSIONAL WORK

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

14.1 Following the establishment of WG-SAM in 2006, the Scientific Committee had agreed to establish a long-term science plan to set the priorities of WG-SAM, WG-EMM, WG-FSA, ad hoc WG-IMAF and its other groups including SG-ASAM (SC-CAMLR-XXV, paragraph 13.13).

14.2 The Scientific Committee agreed that the development of a long-term science plan and the setting of priorities will require lengthy and detailed consideration of the future work of the working groups.

14.3 As a first step, the Scientific Committee reviewed and endorsed the intersessional work plans of WG-EMM, WG-FSA, ad hoc WG-IMAF and SG-ASAM, and future work on bioregionalisation.

14.4 The Scientific Committee also endorsed the intersessional work plan of WG-SAM, noting that:

- (i) WG-EMM had identified the following priority task for WG-SAM (Annex 4, paragraph 7.30(i)):
 - (a) the development and provision of advice on Stage 1 of the subdivision of the Area 48 krill catch limit among SSMUs;
- (ii) WG-FSA had identified the following priority tasks for WG-SAM (Annex 5, paragraphs 12.1(i) to (iv)):
 - (a) undertake methodological work to design research programs for exploratory fisheries;
 - (b) undertake evaluations of assessment methods and management strategies for assessed fisheries, including, as a priority, evaluations of management strategies for *C. gunnari*;
 - (c) development of methods for estimating abundance and productivity of key by-catch species, notably rajids and macrourids;
 - (d) developing approaches to minimise the effects of changing gears or implementing by-catch mitigation measures in toothfish fisheries on assessments of CPUE and stock status, including the potential confounding of mitigation measures and whether or not depredation is occurring;
- (iii) WG-IMAF had identified the following task for WG-SAM (Annex 6, paragraph I.8(ii)):
 - (a) review French analysis of petrel population responses to fisheries and environmental factors;

- (iv) the Bioregionalisation Workshop had referred the following task to WG-SAM (Annex 9, paragraphs 140 and 141):
 - (a) review of the Boosted Regression Tree method (BRT);
- (v) FEMA had referred the following task to WG-SAM (SC-CAMLR-XXVI/BG/6, paragraph 51):
 - (a) evaluate ecosystem/multi-species models considered at FEMA.

14.5 In addition, the Scientific Committee reviewed the future work on bottom fishing in the CCAMLR high-seas areas, recognising that the full development of the process will require further work in 2007/08 to meet the requirements of the UNGA resolution. Such work could include, *inter alia* (Annex 5, paragraph 14.40):

- (i) development of rules and data collection requirements needed to trigger actions for different gears and situations during a season with respect to avoidance of potentially vulnerable areas and the gathering of data to assist in identifying VMEs;
- (ii) identifying the method for specifying areas in which evidence of VMEs is detected in order that interim within-season protection could be established either for the vessel concerned or the fishing fleet;
- (iii) developing an approach, including data requirements, for annual assessments of benthic interactions of bottom fishing and identification of Vulnerable and Potentially Vulnerable Areas;
- (iv) consideration of the requirements for observations and reporting;
- (v) consideration of the available management approaches to avoid and mitigate interactions with VMEs;
- (vi) further consideration of the relationship between effective fishing footprint and geomorphological features;
- (vii) a method for assessing the amount of seabed directly affected by the gears, such as through the use of cameras, where such methods could then be used to better evaluate the potential spatial extent of disturbance of VMEs at scales less than the resolution of the cell size used in evaluating the effective fishing footprint.

14.6 The Scientific Committee noted the deliberations of WG-FSA with respect to biennial assessments (Annex 5, paragraphs 12.9 to 12.14), and endorsed the management advice that assessments of long-term precautionary yield for *Dissostichus* spp. in the Ross Sea, Subarea 48.3 and Division 58.5.2 had been moderately stable in the last few years, and stocks were at or above target levels. The Scientific Committee therefore recommended that biennial assessments for these *Dissostichus* spp. fisheries were appropriate, unless any of the following factors (Annex 5, paragraph 12.12) occur during the intersessional period:

- (i) new or refined methods of assessment become available and recommended by WG-SAM for use in the assessment;

- (ii) parameters used in the assessment are revised significantly; or
- (iii) a large IUU catch (unless this was anticipated in the assessment).

14.7 Other tasks identified by the Scientific Committee included:

- (i) further development of the procedural steps to enable multi-year assessments in fisheries for *D. eleginoides* (referred to WG-FSA and WG-SAM);
- (ii) further development of the requirements for scientific observers in krill fisheries, including consideration of fishery-based research requirements in exploratory krill fisheries (referred to WG-EMM and the ad hoc technical group);
- (iii) development of methods for quantifying effort in krill fisheries, including consideration of new fishing methods, such as the continuous fishing system and pair trawling, and associated data requirements (referred to WG-EMM);
- (iv) evaluation of the risk of incidental mortality arising from the use of the pair trawling method proposed in the notification for krill fishing from the Cook Islands (referred to ad hoc WG-IMAF);
- (v) further development of the work on bioregionalisation, and in particular establishing a procedure for identifying areas for protection to further the conservation objectives of CCAMLR (2007 Workshop Term of Reference 3(vi); SC-CAMLR-XXIV, paragraph 3.66) (referred to WG-EMM);
- (vi) development of the terms of reference for the next meeting of FEMA (referred to WG-EMM, WG-FSA and WG-SAM).

14.8 The Scientific Committee tasked the Chair of the Scientific Committee, conveners of working groups and the Secretariat with developing a list of achievable priority tasks for each working group, in consultation with Members, including consideration of other tasks identified in the reports of the working groups.

14.9 The Scientific Committee recognised the urgency of work in relation to bottom fishing, and sought advice from the Commission on this matter. Pending the outcome of this advice, the Scientific Committee encouraged its working groups to begin the work in 2007/08, and requested that discussions and outcomes from WG-SAM be considered by WG-EMM, and the findings of these two working groups be considered by WG-FSA and ad hoc WG-IMAF.

14.10 The Scientific Committee urged all Members to participate fully in its work in 2007/08, and to send experts to the meetings of all working groups. The work of the Scientific Committee is expanding and can only be achieved through contributions and active participation of Members.

14.11 The Scientific Committee also sought the advice of the Commission on how the Scientific Committee may meet its expanding scientific requirements and manage its activities in the long term (paragraph 11.8).

Intersessional activities in 2007/08

14.12 The Scientific Committee noted that a number of Members had made provisional offers to host the meetings of WG-SAM and WG-EMM, including TASO, over a three-week period from 14 July to 1 August 2008, however, an exact venue could not be decided at this meeting and it was agreed that this would be decided by correspondence during the intersessional period¹. In the event that Members could not host the meetings, they would take place at the CCAMLR Headquarters.

14.13 The Scientific Committee agreed to the following meetings in 2007/08:

- WG-EMM Predator Survey Workshop in Hobart, Australia, 16 to 20 June 2008 (Convener – Dr Southwell);
- meeting of WG-SAM (paragraph 14.12) (Convener – Dr Constable);
- two-day scoping workshop of TASO, held in association with the meetings of WG-SAM and WG-EMM, to begin the work of the ad hoc technical group and identify the terms of reference and long-term work plan (Co-conveners – Dr Welsford and Mr Heinecken);
- meeting of WG-EMM (paragraph 14.12) (Convener – Dr Watters);
- meetings of WG-FSA and ad hoc WG-IMAF in Hobart, Australia, from 13 to 24 October 2008 (Convener WG-FSA – Dr Jones; Co-conveners WG-IMAF – Ms Rivera and Mr Smith). WG-IMAF will also hold a one-day workshop.

14.14 The next meeting of SG-ASAM is scheduled in 2009 (see paragraphs 2.21 and 2.22).

CCAMLR-IPY projects

14.15 The report on the planning meeting of the CCAMLR-IPY Steering Committee was considered in paragraphs 2.23 to 2.31. The Scientific Committee noted the CCAMLR-related surveys which will be conducted during IPY, and thanked Members for undertaking extensive research on the marine ecosystems in the Southern Ocean.

Joint CCAMLR-IWC Workshop

14.16 The Scientific Committee noted the progress and arrangements made in preparation for the CCAMLR-IWC Workshop (Annex 4, paragraphs 7.25 to 7.28; SC-CAMLR-XXVI/BG/5).

¹ The Chair of the Scientific Committee, on behalf of the Scientific Committee, accepted with great pleasure the invitation by the Russian Federation, made during the Commission meeting, to host the next meetings of WG-EMM, the ad hoc Technical Group for At-Sea Operations (TASO) and WG-SAM in Moscow in July 2008 (CCAMLR-XXVI, paragraph 4.91).

14.17 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.

14.18 The Scientific Committee discussed the budget for the workshop, and noted that the majority of the funds would be expended on invited experts who would provide expertise in ecological and environmental matters, including cetaceans, seals, flying birds, penguins, fish, squid, krill, plankton and sea-ice.

14.19 The partial cost of the joint workshop was approved in the Scientific Committee's budget for 2008 (paragraph 11.1). The Scientific Committee noted that, to the extent possible, the workshop Steering Committee will strive to reduce the overall cost of the workshop. In addition, the Scientific Committee encouraged Members to investigate alternative options for funding in order to reduce the costs incurred by the Scientific Committee.

14.20 The workshop is scheduled for August 2008 at the CCAMLR Headquarters, Hobart, Australia.

Preparation for the Year of the Skate

14.21 The Scientific Committee endorsed WG-FSA's proposal to hold the Year of the Stake in 2008/09. WG-FSA had established a coordination group to plan and develop the requirements for the Year of the Skate (Annex 5, paragraph 13.4), and the Scientific Committee encouraged Members to participate in the preparatory work.

Invitation of observers to the next meeting

14.22 The Scientific Committee agreed that all observers invited to the 2007 meeting would be invited to participate in SC-CAMLR-XXVII.

Invitation of experts to the meetings of working groups

14.23 The Scientific Committee agreed to invite one expert to the WG-EMM Predator Survey Workshop, and noted the terms of reference for this expert. The Scientific Committee re-endorsed SCAR's participation in the workshop, and invited SCAR experts on the subject matter (paragraph 6.7).

Next meeting

14.24 The next meeting of the Scientific Committee is scheduled at the CCAMLR Headquarters in Hobart, Australia, from 27 to 31 October 2008.