

IUU FISHING IN THE CONVENTION AREA

6.1 The Scientific Committee noted the advice of WG-FSA (Annex 8, paragraphs 3.10 to 3.14 and 7.1 to 7.5 and Tables 4 to 7) on IUU fishing trends in the 2009/10 fishing season. It also noted that the estimated IUU catches had increased from 938 tonnes in 2008/09 to 1 615 tonnes in 2009/10 and approached the level of the 2007/08 season (1 712 tonnes) (Annex 8, Tables 4 and 5).

6.2 The Secretariat received information from reports submitted by Members that seven vessels were engaged in IUU fishing in the Convention Area in 2009/10, and all were believed to be gillnet vessels (Annex 8, paragraph 7.1).

6.3 The estimated catch history of *Dissostichus* spp. taken by IUU longlining and gillnetting activities in the Convention Area was updated using new information on estimated catch rates for gillnets (Annex 8, Tables 5 and 6).

6.4 The Scientific Committee noted the shift in IUU fishing activities, from high levels in Divisions 58.5.1 and 58.5.2 and Subareas 58.6 and 58.7 in the late 1990s and early 2000s, to lower levels in the more southern areas of Divisions 58.4.1, 58.4.2 and 58.4.3b in recent seasons. IUU fishing activities appear to have been concentrated in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 in 2009/10 (Annex 8, Table 5).

6.5 The Scientific Committee agreed that the methodology used by the Secretariat for estimating IUU effort was appropriate, but that catch estimates made using this information were highly uncertain because the catch rates in toothfish gillnet fisheries are unknown. The Scientific Committee requested that, in future, tracking of progress of CCAMLR in eliminating IUU fishing was best done by monitoring trends in IUU effort rather than estimates of IUU catch. It agreed that WG-FSA should use these effort estimates along with knowledge of catch rates, when available, when estimating total removals needed for assessments.

6.6 The Scientific Committee reiterated its previous advice that gillnets are less selective than longlines, the by-catch of fish and seabirds and impact on benthos are unknown, and nets continue to fish if abandoned or lost. The Scientific Committee agreed that gillnets are a destructive fishing method. Every effort should be made to end gillnet IUU activity in the Convention Area. Additional information and approaches are urgently required to better document the extent of IUU fishing and its impact on toothfish stocks and the environment.

6.7 The Scientific Committee asked SCIC to confirm that the estimates of zero catch are based on actual intelligence, rather than simply resulting from a lack of information.

6.8 Dr L. Pshenichnov (Ukraine) noted there is an inverse correlation between distribution of IUU and legal vessels fishing for toothfish. He suggested that the principal reason for the absence of IUU fishing estimates in the areas closed to fishing was that there has been an absence of licensed vessels in those areas. As a result, the real number of IUU vessels, especially in closed areas, could be grossly underestimated.

6.9 Dr Pshenichnov also believed that most companies that manage IUU vessels are familiar with CCAMLR conservation measures (for example, through the CCAMLR website), which provide explicit details of areas of the Southern Ocean in which it would be possible to encounter licensed ships in the upcoming year, and in which areas it would be

unlikely to encounter them. To avoid this problem, he suggested the removal from the CCAMLR website of the Fishery Reports, Commission reports and conservation measures. Non-Member countries could get access to these documents in accordance with the Rules for Access and Use of CCAMLR Data, following a formal request.

6.10 Other Members agreed that the information now available on the CCAMLR website could be used improperly by operators engaged in IUU fishing. However, they emphasised the value of transparency, publicity and openness of CCAMLR activities that should not be put at risk. The Scientific Committee agreed that the existing level of transparency of CCAMLR fisheries should be retained.