

## THE ROLE OF SEA-GOING OBSERVERS IN PROMOTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMISSION

10.1 The United Kingdom delegation introduced a proposal to encourage the placement of scientific observers on commercial fishing vessels (SC-CAMLR-IV/11). Two main goals of this proposal were to: assist the non-fishing nations in gaining familiarity with the technical operations of Antarctic fisheries, and to assist in improving the evaluation of fishery data (e.g., fishing time, searching time, biological samples, etc.).

10.2 Some members suggested that the proposal could be developed into a useful scheme if it could be initially established on a voluntary, bilateral basis. Such bilateral arrangements could possibly begin during the 1985–86 fishing season. Representatives from fishing nations indicated that such arrangements could only begin on a reciprocal basis.

10.3 A clear distinction should be made between scientific observers and inspectors. The scientific observers would not have any role as fisheries inspectors; their role would be solely scientific. It was suggested that the term ‘scientific consultant’ might be a better description of these observers.

10.4 It was noted that the presence of scientific consultants on fishing vessels could contribute greatly to the quality of data coming from commercial and scientific operations.

10.5 To be most valuable, scientific consultants should have scientific training and be familiar with laboratory techniques applicable to fisheries operations.

10.6 The representative of France commented on the value of fishing nations accommodating and encouraging collaboration with scientific consultants from non-fishing nations and assisting in the placement of such consultants on commercial fishing vessels. The representative of Japan, however, stressed that quality data collection was best achieved when carried out by national scientists, as noted in paragraph 8.6 and indicated that they were giving consideration to the institution of such a system in the Japanese fishery.

10.7 There was some doubt as to how the placement of scientific consultants on vessels may relate to Article XXIV of the Convention. The Scientific Committee agreed that further consideration of this legal matter should be referred to the Commission.