

LONG-TERM PROGRAM OF WORK OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

12.1 The United States delegation presented a proposal to develop a long-term program of work to guide the activities of the Scientific Committee.

12.2 The Scientific Committee has the task of providing information and management advice about a complex ecosystem. To accomplish this task, the Committee must oversee the collection, analysis and reporting of a broad spectrum of data which includes fishery statistics, biological attributes and status of target and non-target species, characteristics of the physical environment, and ecological relations among living resources and their environment.

12.3 It was suggested that the Scientific Committee's ability to successfully achieve its goals would be enhanced by outlining a long-term program of work. The establishment of a long-range agenda would permit the orderly and sequential development of the appropriate data bases and analyses required to meet the Commission's responsibilities in establishing policy and conservation measures.

12.4 It was proposed that a timetable would help to define goals and assure that they are completed. It would also permit the Commission and members to make the appropriate scientific and budgetary plans.

12.5 A matrix of proposed activities for the Scientific Committee was prepared on the basis of informal consultations among members (Annex 9). In light of the short time available for consideration of the specific points included in this timetable, it should be considered as tentative, and subject to review and revision.

12.6 In general, the Scientific Committee supports the idea of the development of a long-term program of work to guide its activities.

12.7 There was some discussion of the timing of obtaining sets of fisheries data, and this topic is discussed in further detail under other relevant agenda items.

12.8. It was suggested that monitoring krill distribution and abundance should be incorporated into the matrix under fishery stock assessment.

12.9 It was suggested that in addition to marine mammal and bird assessment, aspects of trends could also be treated in the matrix under ecosystem monitoring.

12.10 Such a plan should be updated regularly, and members were encouraged to further consider the program of work during the inter-sessional period.

12.11 The utility and desirability of joint work among members and other groups such as SCAR/SCOR, the BIOMASS Program, and the IWC should be emphasised.

12.12 It was agreed that this preliminary long-term plan would be used to help prepare for the next Scientific Committee meeting, that the item be further considered at the next meeting, and that a one day meeting held immediately prior to the next session may be desirable.