

NEXT MEETING

13.1 In accordance with discussions held during the 1985 session, hotel bookings have been made in Hobart for the sixth meeting of the Scientific Committee and Commission for the period of 26 October to 6 November 1987.

13.2 Tentative hotel bookings for the seventh meeting have been made in Hobart for the period 24 October to 5 November 1988.

13.3 It was noted that in 1988 there are three meetings planned of interest to Members: (1) Fifth SCAR Symposium on Biology (end of August/early September), (2) SCAR XX (3 weeks in September), and (3) the CCAMLR meetings. It was suggested that moving the CCAMLR meetings forward by at least one week, so that they follow the SCAR meetings, might reduce travel costs for delegates planning to attend several of these sessions.

13.4 The timing and venue of future meetings will be discussed further by the Commission and Secretariat.

OTHER BUSINESS

Declining Populations of Southern Elephant Seals

14.1 The Argentine delegation called attention to the apparent decline in southern elephant seal populations in several areas of the Antarctic over the past several decades. Bearing in mind Article II of the Convention and the possibility that such a decline is possibly related to harvesting of the prey of this species, the Argentine Delegation requested the Scientific Committee to review the current status of southern elephant seal populations.

Marine Mammal and Bird Agenda Item

14.2 In fulfilling the terms of Article II of the Convention, there are two general categories in which marine mammal and bird issues may arise:

- (a) Ecosystem monitoring -- which evaluates the dynamic manner in which mammals and birds interact with their prey and physical environment, and

- (b) Population assessment -- which considers specific aspects of trends in the populations themselves, especially depleted or declining populations.

14.3 Noting the issue raised concerning depleted stocks of southern elephant seals, the United States delegation proposed that an agenda item entitled 'Marine Mammal and Bird Population Assessment' be included on the agenda of the 1987 meeting of the Scientific Committee. Such an agenda item would provide a mechanism to the Committee for reviewing the status of marine mammal and bird populations, especially to assess the recovery of depleted populations.

14.4 When considering population assessment issues for marine mammal and bird populations, the Scientific Committee should avail itself, through consultations, with the expertise represented in the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission, the SCAR Group of Specialists on Seals, and the SCAR Subcommittee on Bird Biology.

Advice to Commission on Conservation Strategies

14.5 Attention was drawn to the paper submitted to the Commission by the Australian delegation (CCAMLR-V/11). The Committee noted that the paper would be discussed by the Commission and that following discussion, the Commission may ask the Scientific Committee for guidance as to possible alternative approaches to achieving the objectives of the Convention. This request may also seek an indication of the respective advantages and disadvantages of different approaches.

14.6 In this regard, it was noted that the Scientific Committee's long-term program of work (see Annex 9) calls for formulating and providing management advice to the Commission.

Conservation Measures for Fish Stocks

14.7 Attention was drawn to paragraphs 85–88 of the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment. The Working Group suggests that the Commission consider introducing 'relatively easily measurable criteria for bringing into effect different management measures.' The examples given are: to close a fishery for one season whenever the abundance of the adult stock was estimated to have fallen below some specified level or to re-open a directed fishery when survey information indicated increased biomass and/or recruitment.

14.8 Where the Commission is considering introducing specific measures, it would be desirable to determine the expected effects of such measures, and compare them with the effects of not taking action.

Exemption of Scientific Research from Conservation Measures

14.9 The Scientific Committee discussed the exemption from Conservation Measures for vessels conducting scientific research. It was pointed out that some types of valuable data (e.g. incoming recruits) could only be obtained by sampling in areas where Conservation Measures were in force (e.g. within 12 miles of South Georgia).

14.10 It was noted that the past scientific contributions made by commercial fishing vessels undertaking special research programs (e.g. F/V *Carina* SC-CAMLR-V/BG/28) have been quite helpful, and that future work could be expected also to make useful contributions. However, the Committee emphasised that care must be taken to ensure that in those few special cases in which exemptions are granted, ship activities are closely coordinated with other research operations.

14.11 The Scientific Committee requested that, except in special circumstances, notifications to the Commission of exemptions be made well in advance of the planned departure of the ship. Early notification will allow sufficient time to inform Members and increase the efficiency of coordination with other programs. Although it would be desirable to have notice at least 6 months prior to the start of a cruise, flexibility in this timetable is necessary in order to maintain the ability to take advantage of unexpected research opportunities which arise.

Improved Contact Between the Secretariat and Members

14.12 The Chairman expressed the view that the work of the Scientific Committee would be facilitated if it were possible to improve communication between Members and the Secretariat. He noted that the circulation of Committee documents and information did not always reach delegates expeditiously.

14.13 To improve the exchange of information, it was agreed that the list of participants in the report of the Scientific Committee meeting would include complete mailing addresses of all participants.

14.14 It was also agreed that Members would inform the Secretariat of any changes in personnel or addresses for persons in their delegations.