

## CRAB RESOURCES

3.1 No fishing for crabs was undertaken in the 1993/94 season.

3.2 No new data for assessing the crab stock in Subarea 48.3 were available to WG-FSA (Annex 4, paragraph 4.105).

3.3 The Scientific Committee noted the continuing work on designing stock assessment procedures and a longterm management plan for crabs in Subarea 48.3 (Annex 4, paragraphs 4.108 to 4.110).

3.4 The USA and Sweden intend to conduct a survey of the crab stock in Subarea 48.3 in March 1995.

3.5 The Scientific Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group that the following are high priorities for future research:

- (i) the use of time-release or biodegradable devices should be considered as a means of reducing the effects of ghost fishing should pots be lost from a line;
- (ii) a minimum mesh size should be adopted and/or an escape port included in pots (usually a metal ring set into the side of the pot) following research on mesh or port selectivity. This will serve to select only crabs of harvestable size more effectively and to reduce the number of potential discards, although it will also reduce the ability to monitor parasitic infection; and
- (iii) experiments should be conducted using pots with finer mesh or escape ports added to commercial pot lines in order to obtain more representative length frequency information from harvested stocks.

## MANAGEMENT ADVICE

3.6 The Scientific Committee recommended that the current TAC of 1 600 tonnes and the other regulations contained in Conservation Measures 74/XII and 75/XII should remain in force for the 1994/95 fishing season.

3.7 In the case of data reporting, the Scientific Committee believed that it would be most appropriate for data to be in haul-by-haul form. However, it noted that at this stage of the fishery's development the question of industrial confidentiality arose (SC-CAMLR-XII, Annex 5, paragraph 6.103).