

Scientific Observation in the 1995 Season

9.1 The Scientific Committee recalled that it was a requirement of Conservation Measure 80/XIII that an international scientific observer be aboard each vessel fishing for *D. eleginoides* in Subarea 48.3. CCAMLR had received reports of 18 scientific observations in this fishery (from Argentina, Chile, Spain, Ukraine and Russia) which WG-FSA had used extensively in its work (Annex 5, paragraph 3.12). In addition, CCAMLR received reports of observations on board two krill trawlers, one under the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation (from the US) and two under a national program (Ukraine) (SC-CAMLR-XIV/BG/10, 20 and 22). The Scientific Committee most sincerely thanked all scientific observers for their considerable efforts in the 1994/95 season, and congratulated them on the quality of the data and reports arising from their work.

9.2 Experience has shown that the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation often is the only means to:

- obtain verifiable data from fisheries in the Convention Area;
- obtain information to better understand the conduct of particular fisheries; and
- educate crews of vessels in the use of measures mitigating the incidental mortality of seabirds.

9.3 In this regard, the Scientific Committee recalled its earlier discussions on the value of scientific observer data, given in paragraphs 3.36 to 3.38, particularly noting the increases in data quality and quantity that had been possible on those vessels using two scientific observers.

9.4 The 100% scientific observer coverage, and the observer data from the *D. eleginoides* fishery available to the Scientific Committee this year, had made it possible to conduct the first reliable assessments of *D. eleginoides* and the first systematic analyses of incidental mortality of seabirds. Information collected by scientific observers is crucial for future assessments and management of finfish fisheries in the Convention Area.

9.5 Therefore, the Scientific Committee recommended that it is essential to continue 100% coverage in the *D. eleginoides* fishery. This principle, which is also applied to the crab fishery, should be extended to other finfish fisheries.

9.6 The Scientific Committee has made considerable progress with increasing the efficiency of the scientific observer system, based on experience from the previous seasons, by:

- developing a system for the preparation of observer summary reports (Annex 5, Appendix H);
- defining priority tasks for scientific observers (Annex 5, paragraph 8.79);
- developing a logbook for ease of data collection and submission (Annex 5, paragraph 11.13); and
- further revising the *Scientific Observer Manual* (see below).

9.7 The Scientific Committee recommended that the Commission endorse each of the above initiatives.

9.8 In order to make maximum use of the data, however, and thus give full justice to the scientific observers' considerable efforts in collecting this information, observer data need to be processed and presented in such a way as to enable working groups to make full use of them in assessments. The large volume of data submitted by the scientific observers is likely to increase in the future. These need to be checked, coded, validated and summarised - often in a comparatively short time - in order to make efficient use of them in assessment work. The Data Management Group of the Secretariat is under-staffed to carry out this task. Therefore, the Scientific Committee strongly recommended the employment of a data analyst to undertake this work.

9.9 Similar fisheries for *D. eleginoides* occur in the waters adjacent to the Convention Area, and fishing vessels may fish both in the Convention Area and outside. Species subject to incidental mortality also occur both inside and outside the Convention Area. Information from these fisheries outside the CCAMLR area is very important for the assessment of CCAMLR *D. eleginoides* fisheries. Therefore,

- the Scientific Committee suggested that the Commission should draw to the attention of Members fishing in areas outside the Convention Area the benefits a high degree of scientific observer coverage can bring in terms of data quality for assessing the impact of fishing on *D. eleginoides* and seabirds caught incidentally in these fisheries; and
- in order for CCAMLR to gain access to information from observer programs in areas adjacent to the Convention Area, consideration should be given to ensuring a free flow of information between *D. eleginoides* longline fishery observer programs operating inside and outside the Convention Area. This should include provision of CCAMLR

information to bodies responsible for management of fisheries outside the Convention Area, where appropriate.

9.10 The Scientific Committee reiterated its advice from last year (SC-CAMLR-XIII, paragraphs 13.10 to 13.14) in relation to the presence of two scientific observers on board, the responsibilities of crews hosting an observer, the fate of samples collected on board, and the submission of data to CCAMLR and access to these data (SC-CAMLR-XIII, paragraphs 13.10 to 13.14).

9.11 It was agreed that in future, scientific observers would be asked to submit to the Secretariat all observer data, and a summary report using the format given in Annex 5 (Appendix H), and could submit an additional report at their discretion. Since a large number of summary reports is expected, the reports would not be copied and distributed to working groups or the Scientific Committee as working or background papers. Instead, an index of the contents of all scientific observer reports will be maintained by the Secretariat for distribution to all working groups and the Scientific Committee, and the summary reports themselves would be made available for reference.

9.12 It was emphasised that all data and all reports would be available to any Member, working group, the Scientific Committee or Commission at any time for consultation under the Rules for Access and Use of CCAMLR Data, and that the intention of this decision was to avoid unnecessary duplication of reports rather than to restrict access or scientific analysis.

Revision of the *Scientific Observers Manual*

9.13 A draft *Scientific Observers Manual* was prepared by the Secretariat as SC-CAMLR-XIV/6. The Scientific Committee endorsed all the changes to this draft suggested by WG-EMM (Annex 4, paragraph 3.15) and WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraphs 8.75, 8.76 and 8.79). It suggested further changes based on observations by Ukraine (SC-CAMLR-XIV/BG/31).

9.14 The Scientific Committee recommended that the amended *Scientific Observers Manual* should be published in loose-leaf form in 1996.