CCAMLR DATA MANAGEMENT

10.1   The Scientific Committee noted that most of the tasks it requested in 1996 have been completed. However, some tasks require further follow up and input.

10.2   Structural problems with the databases are significant and will require a staged approach to their solution, and collaboration with Members. Most of these problems relate to the way in which the CCAMLR databases have evolved, the absence of a formal underlying documented data model, the rapid expansion in the use of the databases and amount of data which they contain. Immediate issues were addressed and resolved during 1997 (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/11, 17, 18, 21 and 22).

10.3   Some problems are expected to require continued attention as the databases, and data submissions, evolve further and according to the needs of CCAMLR. Addressing these issues is part of the database development and maintenance workload identified by the Secretariat (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/14).

10.4   The Secretariat had processed more data this year than in 1996 or previous years, and this was made possible by employing a part-time contract data entry person from June to October 1997 to assist with this task. A part-time contract programmer was employed from June to October 1997 to relieve Secretariat staff to work on correcting these problems, and preparing the databases for the new fisheries. A greater quantity of data is expected during 1998 because of new and exploratory fisheries.

10.5   The Scientific Committee agreed that use of contract labour for data entry and programming was essential in view of the increasing data management workload of the Secretariat resulting from increases in the number of fisheries managed by CCAMLR.

10.6   The Scientific Committee noted that WG-FSA and WG-EMM had identified a large number of tasks for data management, and that these would be prioritised by the Chairman of the Scientific Committee and the conveners of the Working Groups before handing over to the Secretariat. WG-FSA had set up a small data steering group, and identified a number of key scientists to assist the Secretariat in performing its tasks. This approach was seen as constructive, and the Scientific Committee encouraged further such developments.

10.7   The Scientific Committee considered some strategic aspects of the proposed web site (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/20). The resources required to develop the data elements of such a web site, such as electronic data entry and validation, were estimated in SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/14.

10.8   The Scientific Committee agreed that the development and implementation of the web site should follow the outline presented in SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/20, including:

(i)   objective of the web site – provide a framework for organising, presenting and delivering CCAMLR information in the four languages of the Commission; and

(ii)   levels of access – at least two levels: (a) public access for all to see, and (b) secure and restricted access using password protection.

10.9   The Scientific Committee recommended that the *Basic Documents*, information on IMALF issues and standard software packages, such as those requested by WG-FSA (Annex 5,

paragraph 10.17), be added to the information available via the web site (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/20, Table 1).

10.10 The Scientific Committee considered aspects of the web site security and recommended that:

(i)   the primary databases should not be accessible via the web site; and
(ii)   with the exception of STATLANT data, methods for data retrieval require careful consideration.

10.11 The Scientific Committee recommended that the implementation of sections containing meeting reports and published documents, conservation measures in force, and meeting documents be given the highest priority, and be developed during 1998. Other items should be referred to specialist groups for allocation of priorities.

10.12 The Scientific Committee advised, however, that development of the CCAMLR web site should not proceed at the expense of the higher priority database management activities essential to the assessment work of the Scientific Committee and its working groups.

10.13 The Scientific Committee considered the memorandum from the Chairman of SCAF seeking comments from the Scientific Committee on three recommendations contained in a management review of the Secretariat conducted by a Group of Experts in April 1997 (COMM CIRC 97/33). The Scientific Committee agreed with the three recommendations made by the management audit:

(i)   the measures suggested by the Data Manager to keep the integrity of the database be endorsed;

(ii)   the Data Manager's suggestions for reducing the workload associated with data entry and validation be endorsed; and

(iii) activities underway by the Secretariat to develop software for data entry and validation on board fishing vessels and/or in Member countries be endorsed.

10.14 The Scientific Committee agreed that the Data Manager should submit a regular status report to Scientific Committee on progress under recommendation 10.13(i). The Scientific Committee noted that developments in electronic data submission (recommendation 10.13(ii)) were also identified by WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraph 10.11). Similarly, the development of standard software (recommendation 10.13(iii)) was also identified by WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraph 10.11).

10.15 The Scientific Committee agreed that the task of forecasting resources for data entry (recommendation 10.13(iii)) could be done by Committee Members, rather than passing this task on to technical coordinators.