FISHERY STATUS AND TRENDS

Krill

2.1 The catch of krill (*Euphausia superba*) for the 1997 split-year totalled 82 508 tonnes, i.e. 19% less than in the 1996 split-year (101 707 tonnes). This total is almost exclusively made up of catches taken by Japan, Poland and Ukraine (Tables 1 and 2). Almost all catches were taken in Subareas 48.1 and 48.3. No commercial catches were taken in Areas 58 and 88 (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/1 Rev. 2).

2.2 Dr Everson inquired about the availability of information on krill catches by Panama for the 1997 split-year. The Secretariat explained that it had made an official inquiry to Panama about the catch data for the 1997 split-year but no information had been received so far. It noted that it had received catch data from Panama for the 1995 and 1996 split-years.

2.3 The Scientific Committee was informed that the fishing plans of Japan and Poland for 1998 were similar to the fishing operations of those countries last season (i.e. about 60 000 tonnes and four vessels, and about 20 000 tonnes and four vessels, respectively). Ukraine planned a joint operation with Canada in Area 48 using two vessels. The Republic of Korea planned to deploy one trawler and take about 4 400 tonnes of krill. Uruguay noted its intention to operate in two subareas of Area 48. Russia may resume krill fishing using three vessels in Area 48.

2.4 Dr Everson informed the Scientific Committee that a UK company planned to fish for krill during December 1997 and January 1998 and take about 1 000 tonnes in total divided between Subareas 48.1, 48.2 and 48.3. The same company indicated that it was currently considering using a single large vessel to catch up to 45 000 tonnes during 1998 from the same subareas.

2.5 Dr Holt indicated that companies in the USA had expressed an interest in fishing for krill, although at present no actual plan had been formulated.

2.6 In recent years krill catches have been reported from localities outside, but adjacent to, the Convention Area. There is no routine mechanism for this information to be received within the normal timetable for reporting catch and effort data. It is possible that a similar situation has arisen this year (Annex 4, paragraph 2.2). The Scientific Committee endorsed the WG-EMM request that the Secretariat identify the nationality of vessels fishing in those areas, and seek information from those Members on any krill catches which may have been taken in adjacent waters.

2.7 When originally described, Subarea 48.1 extended northwards to latitude 55°S between longitudes 50° and 60°W (Everson, 1977 – Figure 11.2(a)) (see Figure 1). Significant catches of krill from outside the Convention Area have been reported from this region, bounded by latitudes 55° and 60°S and longitudes 50° and 60°W. Consequently, the Scientific Committee recommended that Members undertaking krill fishing be asked to supply data from this area in accordance with the conservation measures for krill fishing in Area 48.

Fish

2.8 The total reported catch of finfish in the Convention Area during the 1997 split-year was 10 562 tonnes (Table 3), mainly (97%) *Dissostichus eleginoides* (10 337 tonnes). The bulk of catches was taken by Chile and France in Subarea 48.3 and Division 58.5.1 respectively, and by South Africa in Subareas 58.6 and 58.7 (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/1 Rev. 2) (Table 4).

2.9 The Scientific Committee drew attention to the substantial amount of unreported catches of *D. eleginoides*, in particular in the Indian Ocean sector (Area 58). The total reported catch of *D. eleginoides* from EEZs outside the CCAMLR Convention Area and from inside the CCAMLR Convention Area was 32 991 tonnes in the 1997 split-year (see Annex 5, Appendix D, Table D.1). In addition, the unreported catch derived from landings in ports of southern Africa and Mauritius was estimated to be 74 000 to 82 200 tonnes. The total catch was estimated by WG-FSA to be 107 000 to 115 000 tonnes (Annex 5, paragraph 3.20). It was thought that about 130 000 tonnes of *D. eleginoides* were available on the world market.

2.10 Based on sightings of longliners, their known fishing capacities, and catch and effort data from licensed fisheries, estimates for the various subareas and divisions add up to only 38 000 and 42 800 tonnes (Annex 5, Appendix D, Table D.4), i.e. approximately 50% of the landings. WG-FSA was unable to reconcile the two estimates of the amount of unreported catches at the present stage (Annex 5, paragraph 3.21).

2.11 The discrepancy between the landing figures and estimates of catches based on sightings may be attributable to underestimation of the total amount of fishing activities based on sightings.

2.12 Information from recent landings and sightings of vessels in Divisions 58.5.1 and 58.5.2 provided strong evidence that unregulated fishing in the 1998 split-year will continue at a similar level to 1997 (Annex 5, paragraph 3.22).

2.13 The Scientific Committee expressed great concern that continuing high levels of unregulated fishing, especially in the Indian Ocean sector with such levels being five- or six-times greater than in the regulated fishery, will affect the sustainability of the *D. eleginoides* stocks being targeted. It also noted that WG-FSA took unreported catches into account in developing management advice on the assumption that unregulated catches can be brought under control. Further discussion on unreported catches is contained in paragraphs 5.100, 5.108 to 5.111, 5.130 and 5.138.

2.14 A commercial catch of 216 tonnes of *Champsocephalus gunnari* was taken by one vessel from Australia in Division 58.5.2 during the 1996/97 season (Annex 5, paragraph 4.273).

2.15 Australia reported interest in continuing the *C. gunnari* fishery in Division 58.5.2 for the coming season. France stated its intention to take a limited catch (<100 tonnes) of *C. gunnari* in Division 58.5.1 in the next season. The UK indicated an interest in pursuing this fishery in Subarea 48.3 if the Commission makes management advice for this fishery along the line suggested by WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraphs 4.210 and 4.211). Russia indicated that it may be carrying out a survey as well as taking limited catches in Subarea 48.3.

2.16 Catches of fish by-catch species were reported in SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/1 Rev. 2. Skates (32 tonnes) and *Macrourus* spp. (15 tonnes) accounted for most of the by-catch.

Crabs

2.17 There was no fishery for crabs in the CCAMLR Convention Area in the 1996/97 season and no additional data on crabs have been reported to the Secretariat.

Squid

2.18 In the Republic Korea/UK new fishery for *Martialia hyadesi* in Subarea 48.3, a Korean fishing vessel caught 28 tonnes of squid in June (i.e. 1997 split-year) and a further 53 tonnes since then, making a total of 81 tonnes so far this year (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/10).

2.19 The level of effort in this fishery was relatively low this year partly because catches of squid elsewhere in the South Atlantic had been very large so economic motivation for this fishery was modest (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/10). This lack of effort may extend for the coming season since the price of this type of squid will remain relatively low in line with the depressed demand for squid in general.

2.20 Currently the improvements in the processing of *M. hyadesi* catches would indicate that its market value is likely to become substantially higher than had previously been thought,
which may affect the future prospects for this fishery as well as associated catch levels (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/10).

2.21 Further discussion on the *M. hyadesi* fishery is given in paragraphs 9.3, 9.15 to 9.18.