

## CCAMLR SCHEME OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION

### Scientific Observations Conducted in the 1996/97 Fishing Season

3.1 Last year, the Commission confirmed that 100% observer coverage under the CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation should continue to apply to all longline fisheries for *D. eleginoides*. It was also agreed that new fisheries should have 100% observer coverage. In new fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp., observers should be appointed under the CCAMLR scheme. In the fishery for *M. hyadesi*, observers should be appointed, if possible, under the scheme.

3.2 The following activities were reported during the 1997 split-year:

- (i) twelve longline vessels (16 cruises) fished for *Dissostichus* spp. in the fisheries in Subareas 48.3 and 88.1, and all cruises carried international scientific observers;
- (ii) nine longline vessels fished for *D. eleginoides* within the South African EEZ at the Prince Edward Islands (Subareas 58.6 and 58.7) and national scientific observers were deployed on 11 out of 14 cruises in the EEZ;
- (iii) one vessel (two cruises) jigged for *M. hyadesi* in Subarea 48.3, and carried an international scientific observer on each cruise; and
- (iv) two trawlers (three cruises) fished for *D. eleginoides* in Division 58.5.2 with all cruises carrying international scientific observers.

3.3 The Scientific Committee noted that the introduction of technical coordinators had greatly improved the coordination and submission of information by scientific observers and the submission of observer logbook data. Technical coordinators now provided a single point of contact in Member countries for clarifying, or elaborating, issues arising from observer activities.

3.4 However, the Scientific Committee noted that some technical problems still remained, and included: difficulties in tracking scientific observers and their data because only about 45% of the bilateral scientific observer arrangements had been submitted to the Secretariat (Annex 5, paragraph 3.29); delays in submitting the observer data largely due to the late closure of the longline fisheries (Annex 5, paragraph 3.28); and lengthy processing of data because approximately 25% of the data submissions used non-CCAMLR formats and codes (Annex 5, paragraph 3.29). In addition, some observer logbooks did not contain all the data required under the scheme.

3.5 The Scientific Committee noted that data submission which did not conform to CCAMLR formats or codes strained the resources available for data processing within the Secretariat.

3.6 The Scientific Committee noted the feedback in reports of scientific observers, and endorsed WG-FSA's proposal regarding the resolution of problems in data collection and recording. It tasked the Secretariat with addressing issues under paragraph 3.31 in Annex 5 during the intersessional period. The Scientific Committee also endorsed the establishment of a task group to address issues raised in paragraph 3.33 in Annex 5, and related matters, during

the intersessional period. Dr Sabourenkov (Science Officer) was appointed as coordinator of the task group, and the terms of reference and an action plan were developed during the meeting (Annex 6).

3.7 The Scientific Committee noted that some scientific observers had reported that several vessels appeared unaware of CCAMLR conservation measures, including the setting of longlines during night-time only and the use of streamer lines (Conservation Measure 29/XV) (Annex 5, paragraph 3.37), and the prohibition of the use of plastic packaging bands (Conservation Measure 64/XV) (Annex 5, paragraph 3.38).

3.8 The Scientific Committee noted that the summary of observers' activities in Annex 5, Table 6 contained information on both international and national observers. Dr E. Balguerías (Spain) and Dr Miller confirmed that the scientific observer aboard *Garoya* was South African, and not Spanish as indicated in Table 6.

3.9 Dr Holt informed the Scientific Committee that the two US-flagged vessels reported fishing in Subareas 58.6 and 58.7 (*American Champion* and *Mr B*) had not been licensed by the USA to fish in CCAMLR waters, and did not carry international scientific observers.

3.10 The Scientific Committee noted the discussion of WG-FSA regarding the timing of, and responsibility for, submissions of catch and effort, biological and observer data (Annex 5, paragraph 3.10). The Working Group recognised the concern expressed by Members that the current schedule for submitting these data may result in expensive data transmissions or delays in cases where vessels undertook prolonged fishing trips (SC-CAMLR-XVI/BG/21). WG-FSA had discussed the requirements for vessels carrying observers to report biological data and the possibility that observers collect these data as part of their own observations and submissions.

3.11 The Scientific Committee confirmed that its primary concern was that the right data be collected reliably and submitted in time for consideration by WG-FSA; from a scientific point of view, the source of these data was unimportant. However, the provision of fisheries information may be of concern to the Commission in the context of the responsibility of Flag States, and this matter was referred to SCOI.

3.12 The Scientific Committee discussed the requirements for observer reports, and agreed that observers should submit reports for all cruises undertaken, and the format and contents of reports should follow the guidelines given in the Part I, Section 5 of the *Scientific Observers Manual*.

3.13 The Scientific Committee endorsed the recommendation of WG-FSA that prior to future meetings the Secretariat prepare, where possible, tables along the lines developed by WG-FSA summarising the trips conducted by scientific observers and information in their reports. In addition, the Secretariat should maintain an inventory for the observer logbook dataset (Annex 5, paragraph 10.8). The Scientific Committee also agreed that the Secretariat should consider developing simple stand-alone programs for data entry, primarily for use in the field (Annex 5, paragraph 10.11).

3.14 The Scientific Committee endorsed the recommendation of WG-EMM that time-budget data for the krill fishery be collected, where feasible, and submitted to the Secretariat (Annex 4, paragraph 2.11).

3.15 The Scientific Committee noted the growing appreciation of the work of scientific observers, the duties they performed, and the information they collected. This year, observer reports and logbook data were analysed by the working groups, in particular WG-FSA, and provided a greater understanding of the fishery operations, the biology of the target species, and the level of incidental mortality.

3.16 The Scientific Committee agreed to write to the technical coordinators thanking them and commending all the scientific observers who had submitted reports to CCAMLR for their efforts (Annex 5, paragraph 3.27).

#### Publication of the *Scientific Observers Manual*

3.17 Advance copies of the revised *Scientific Observers Manual* were circulated to Members in December 1996 so that the manual could be used during the 1996/97 season. The *Scientific Observers Manual* was later published in the four languages and circulated to technical coordinators of the national observer programs. The manual was published in a loose-leaf format to facilitate updates and amendments.

3.18 The Scientific Committee noted that a number of difficulties experienced by observers in fulfilling or reporting their tasks (Annex 5, paragraph 3.31) could easily be resolved, and recommended that the Secretariat issue the appropriate changes and corrections to the *Scientific Observers Manual* via the technical coordinators.

3.19 The Scientific Committee recommended that other matters raised by observers (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.33 and 3.35) should be considered by the observer task group (paragraph 3.6). In addition, future feedback and suggestions from observers should be regularly reviewed with a view to improving the scheme's efficiency.

#### Advice to the Commission

3.20 The Scientific Committee noted that the current schedule for submitting fine-scale catch, effort and biological data may result in expensive data transmissions or delays in cases where vessels undertook prolonged fishing trips (Annex 5, paragraph 3.10). WG-FSA had discussed the requirements for vessels carrying observers to report fine-scale biological data, and the possibility that observers collect these data as part of their own observations and submissions. WG-FSA agreed that vessels carrying observers need not collect or submit fine-scale biological data provided that the responsibility for data collection and reporting these data is clearly specified in the bilateral observer agreements.

3.21 The Commission should therefore consider to what extent Flag State responsibility for submission of data required by CCAMLR would allow for observers to submit such data directly to the Secretariat.