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COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

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AGENCY REPORT

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REPORT FROM CCAMLR

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SUMMARY

This paper outlines developments in fishery statistics and related information which have been undertaken by CCAMLR since the last meeting of CWP in July 1999. The major development has been the implementation of a catch documentation scheme for toothfish. Other developments include species identification guides for scientific observers and a vessel registry.

CCAMLR implemented the Catch Documentation Scheme for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) in 2000 as part of a set of Conservation Measures introduced to combat the problem of IUU fishing on toothfish stocks. This scheme monitors the international trade in toothfish; identifies the origins of toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties; determines whether toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties, if caught in the Convention Area, was caught in a manner consistent with CCAMLR conservation measures; and gathers catch data for the scientific evaluation of the stocks.

AGENCY REPORT (agenda item 6)

Modification since CWP-18

Key activities since 1999 include:

- implementation of a catch documentation scheme for toothfish (see page 3);
- revision of Conservation Measures in force (annual process);
- development of a vessel registry; and
- development of species identification guides for scientific observers (see page 4).

Main purpose and usage of statistics

[no change since CWP-18] – Statistics are used mainly for assessing and managing fisheries and the marine ecosystem within the CCAMLR Convention Area.

Catch data structure

[no change since CWP-18] – Types of catch, effort and biological data collected include: date, position, depth, fishing duration, gear characteristics, catch by species (including by-catch and incidental captures), and length frequencies. Data resolution ranges from single events (ie haul-by-haul) to summary data (eg collected over fine-scale rectangles and 10-day periods).

Reporting policy in relation to nationality of catch

[no change since CWP-18] - In general, CCAMLR Flag States will have assigned to them for the purpose of Article XIX.3 of the Convention, catches taken by their vessels on the high seas in the Convention Area. In cases of vessel charter between Members of the Commission, the Flag State and the State whose nationals control the vessel's operations may agree otherwise in respect of the responsibility for catch reporting and the attribution of the catch for the purpose of Article XIX.3 of the Convention. Members are requested to provide information on such agreements to the Secretariat as soon as they are concluded.

Observer program

[no change since CWP-18] - A Scheme of International Scientific Observation was adopted in 1992 under Article XXIV of the CCAMLR Convention. This Scheme is designed to gather and validate scientific information essential for assessing the status of populations of Antarctic marine living resources, and the impact of fishing on populations of harvested, related and dependent species. The Scheme is applied equally to harvesting and research vessels. Conservation Measures in Force require that at least one international scientific observer appointed under the Scheme should be aboard each fishing vessel operating in new or exploratory fisheries, or assessed fisheries targeting toothfish, crabs or mackerel icefish. The placement of scientific observers in krill fisheries and other fisheries is encouraged.

Vessel monitoring system

[no change since CWP-18] - Requirements for VMS are specified by Conservation Measure 148/XVII. Contracting Parties monitor their ships and down-times are reported to the Secretariat.

Fishery-independent data

[no change since CWP-18] – Datasets include data collected under CCAMLR' Ecosystem Monitoring Program, fishery survey data, remote sensing data, research data and trade data.

CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME (agenda item 9)

The scale of illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing for toothfish in the Southern Oceans is the most significant problem faced by CCAMLR. Over the past three years the amounts of toothfish taken by IUU fishing have been of the order of 90000 t, more than twice the level of catches taken in CCAMLR regulated fisheries. This rate of extraction is unsustainable and has led to a significant depletion of toothfish stocks in some areas. In addition, the mortality of seabirds, principally albatross and petrel species, taken as a by-catch of the longline fisheries is also unsustainable and has resulted in declines in the populations of these species.

To address this problem a number of Conservation Measures have been introduced by CCAMLR in recent years in order to combat the problem of IUU fishing on the toothfish stocks. These measures include:

- Flag State licensing requirement for all vessels in the fisheries;
- Conservation Measures fixing fishing levels for all toothfish fisheries in the Convention's waters;
- mandatory vessel monitoring systems;
- port inspections of landings and transshipments; and
- marking of vessels and fishing gear.

As a further means to address this problem which threatens the conservation of the toothfish stocks, CCAMLR implemented a Catch Documentation Scheme for toothfish in May 2000 (Conservation Measure 170/XVIII, revised in November 2000 and now measure 170/XIX).

The Catch Documentation Scheme aims to:

- monitor the international trade in toothfish;
- identify the origins of toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties;
- determine whether toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties, if caught in the Convention Area, was caught in a manner consistent with CCAMLR conservation measures; and
- gather catch data for the scientific evaluation of the stocks.

To meet this objective, all landings, transshipments and importations of toothfish into the territories of Contracting Parties must now be accompanied by a completed Catch Document specifying a range of information relating to the volume and location of catch, and the name and Flag State of the vessel.

The Catch Documentation Scheme is open to all Flag States irrespective of whether they are Members of CCAMLR or not. Non-Contracting Parties to CCAMLR have also been invited to participate in this Scheme. Participating countries need to ensure that their vessels are provided with Catch Documents for presentation to Contracting Party authorities as required.

The core element of the Scheme is a database where participating countries can access scanned images of original Catch Documents and related information through a secure Internet connection.

SPECIES IDENTIFICATION (agenda item 10)

Seabirds

The book 'Identification of Seabirds of the Southern Ocean' was published jointly by CCAMLR and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in 1999. This identification guide was written and illustrated especially for fishery observers, and takes into account the requirements of CCAMLR's Scheme of International Scientific Observation. The guide is published in English, French, Russian and Spanish, and is available to observers working on board fishing vessels in Antarctic waters. The book covers the identification of 36 species of birds from the Southern Ocean that have been caught in fishing gear or have been seen feeding from fishing boats. Penguins, cormorants, and some of the most abundant and characteristic Southern Ocean seabirds do not appear in the guide because the book focuses only on scavenging species associated with fisheries.

By-catch

CCAMLR is developing species identification sheets to assist scientific observers in making accurate identification of as many species as possible that appear in longline and trawl catches. The aim has been to compress as much information into a simple format that will allow observers to identify most species as quickly as possible.

Sheets for use in longline fisheries have been drafted for use during the 2000/01 season. Much of the information has come from standard reference texts; these are generally based on preserved specimens. Wherever possible additional information has come from direct observation on fresh caught or live fish. Scientific observers have been encouraged to provide further information and feedback on the sheets, including presentation and content, in their observer reports. The published version of the sheets will be water-proofed for use in the field.