

INFORMATION ON CCAMLR MEASURES TO PREVENT INCIDENTAL MORTALITY OF SEABIRDS

The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) was established in 1982 in accordance with the Convention on the Conservation of the Antarctic Marine Living Resources. The Convention applies to antarctic marine living resources in an area bounded to the north by a line approximating, as closely as possible, the position of the Antarctic Convergence, found between 47°S and 63°S.

The assessment and avoidance of incidental mortality of Antarctic marine living resources has been a very important issue for the CCAMLR Commission and the Scientific Committee since the beginning of their operation. To assess and monitor incidental mortality of birds and marine mammals, the Commission in 1984 asked its Members to maintain records and report the number, species, and where appropriate the age and size, sex and reproductive status, of any birds and marine mammals taken incidentally during fishing operations. This information is annually reviewed by the Commission and the Scientific Committee.

Since longline fishing for Patagonian Toothfish *Dissostichus eleginoides* was introduced in 1989, to the CCAMLR Convention Area, the Commission has been working on a set of measures aimed at minimizing incidental mortality of seabirds during longlining. Each year since, the Commission has kept these measures under review in order to assess their effectiveness and to make any necessary changes. Conservation Measure 29/XI, adopted by the Commission in 1992, implements several strategies for preventing incidental mortality of seabirds.

The use of net monitor cables in trawl fishing in the CCAMLR Convention Area is prohibited from the 1994/95 season (Conservation Measure 30/X). Vessels trawling in the Convention Area are now using the suggested method of weighting monitor cables so that they do not snag flying birds, prior to the phasing out of monitor cables by the 1994/95 season.

CCAMLR also decided in 1990 that there will be no expansion of large-scale pelagic driftnet

fishing into the high seas of the Convention Area (Resolution 7/IX).

All measures adopted by the Commission are subject to an international inspection process established in accordance with the CCAMLR System of Inspection. This System has been in operation since the 1989/90 season. Inspectors have reported that necessary methods for preventing incidental mortality of seabirds are being used aboard inspected vessels of CCAMLR Members. Only occasional cases of incidental mortality of seabirds have been observed by inspectors and reported to the Commission.

A Scheme of International Scientific Observation in the Convention Area was introduced in the 1992/93 season. The Scheme is designed to gather and validate scientific information essential in the assessing of the status of populations of Antarctic marine living resources and in assessing impact of fishing on those resources. Observation on incidental mortality of marine mammals and birds is a priority item under this Scheme.

CCAMLR has always considered that prevention of incidental mortality of marine resources during fishing operations is very important. The conservation measures adopted by CCAMLR so far have proved to be effective in reducing incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals. CCAMLR is keeping this subject under constant review and will consider any additional measures as required.

Texts of the two conservation measures and the resolution of driftnet fishing follow.

CONSERVATION MEASURE 29/XI

Minimisation of the Incidental Mortality of Seabirds in the Course of Longline Fishing or Longline Fishing Research in the Convention Area

The Commission

Noting the need to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds during longline fishing by minimising their attraction to the fishing vessels and by preventing them from attempting to seize baited hooks, particularly during the period when the lines are set.

Recognizing that successful techniques for reducing the mortality of albatrosses have been employed in the longline fishery for tuna immediately to the north of the Convention Area.

Agrees to the following measures to reduce the possibility of incidental mortality of seabirds during longline fishing.

1. Fishing operations shall be conducted in such a way that the baited hooks sink as soon as possible after they are put in the water.
2. During the setting of longlines at night, only the minimum ship's lights necessary for safety shall be used.
3. Trash and offal are not to be dumped while longline operations are in progress.
4. A streamer line designed to discourage birds from settling on baits during deployment of longlines shall be towed. The specification of the streamer line and its method of deployment is given in the Appendix to this Measure.
5. This Measure shall not apply to designated research vessels investigating better methods for reducing incidental mortality of seabirds.

APPENDIX TO CONSERVATION MEASURE
29/XI

1. The streamer line is to be suspended at the stern from a point approximately 4.5 m above the water and such that the line is directly above the point where the baits hit the water.
2. The streamer line is to be approximately 3 mm diameter, have a minimum length of 150 m and be weighted at the end so that it streams directly behind the ship even in cross winds.
3. At 5 m intervals commencing from the point of attachment to the ship five branch streamers each comprising two strands of approximately 3 mm diameter cord should be attached. The length of the streamer should range between approximately 3.5 m nearest the ship to approximately 1.25 m for the fifth streamer. When the streamer line is deployed the branch streamers should reach the sea surface and periodically dip into it as the ship heaves. Swivels should be placed in the streamer line at the towing point, before and after the point of attachment of each branch streamer and immediately before any weight placed on the end of the streamer line. Each branch streamer should also have a swivel at its attachment to the streamer line.

CONSERVATION MEASURE 30/X

Net Monitor Cables

The use of net monitor cables on harvesting vessels in the CCAMLR Convention Area is prohibited from the 1994/95 fishing season.

RESOLUTION 7/IX

Driftnet Fishing in the Convention Area

1. The Commission endorsed the goals of the UN General Assembly Resolution 44/225 on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing, which calls, *inter alia*, for a cessation of any further expansion of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the high seas. Recognising the concentration of marine living resources present in Antarctic waters, it was noted that large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing can be a highly indiscriminate and wasteful fishing method that is widely considered to threaten the effective conservation of living marine resources. Although no Member is currently engaged in large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing in the Convention Area, the Commission expressed concern about the potential impact of marine living resources if large-scale pelagic driftnetting were to expand into the Convention Area.
2. To this end, the Commission agreed, in accordance with UN Resolution 44/225, that there will be no expansion of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing into the Convention Area.
3. It was agreed that, in accordance with Article X, the Commission would draw this Resolution to the attention of any State that is not a Party to the Convention and whose nationals or vessels engage in large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing.

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