



POSITION PAPER

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Twenty Seventh Meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR XXVII)

Hobart, October 27 - November 7 2008

CCAMLR XXVII – A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

WWF welcomes ...progress and the increasing momentum made by the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) XXVI in protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) from bottom fishing, establishing a network of marine protected areas (MPA), and converting the krill harvesting trigger level into an effective precautionary catch limit. In addition, WWF welcomes recent success in reducing seabird bycatch in regulated longline fisheries, although bycatch in the French EEZ, in trawl fisheries and, in particular, by Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) vessels remains a serious concern.

WWF also welcomes the announcement of a CEP-SC-CCAMLR Workshop to be held in April, 2009.

WWF's CALL TO ACTION IN IPY:

CCAMLR XXVII marks the last opportunity for CCAMLR Members to jointly mark International Polar Year (IPY) by taking significant steps forward to safeguard the unique biodiversity and enormous productivity of the Southern Ocean.

WWF asks that CCAMLR Members:

Adopt a Resolution at CCAMLR XXVII outlining the necessary activities and timescale to identify and designate ecologically representative networks of high seas marine protected areas in the Southern Ocean by 2012;

and

That CCAMLR strengthen its efforts to combat IUU Fishing through further tightening Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) arrangements, improving Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) measures and developing trade measures to take against states that fail to comply with, or otherwise undermine, CCAMLR conservation measures.

WWF also asks that CCAMLR Members take action in relation to krill management, seabird protection, climate change and cooperation with other bodies.

WWF specifically calls upon CCAMLR XXVII to take concerted action in the following areas:

1) Networks of MPAs in the Southern Ocean

WWF believes that sufficient information based on broad-scale bioregionalisation exists, and informed by international efforts to develop representative criteria for the selection and designation of MPAs to allow CCAMLR XXVII to initiate the process of identifying and designating MPAs. Furthermore, CCAMLR should establish a clearly defined process and accompanying timeline for completing the establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and fully-representative series of MPAs by 2012.

WWF is encouraged by the announcement of a joint CEP-SC-CAMLR Workshop, to be held in April 2009 coinciding with the XXXII ATCM in Baltimore and urges CCAMLR to use the opportunity presented by the workshop to achieve the protection of the marine environment and particularly to develop scientifically based principles and criteria for MPAs and make further progress towards the designating of networks of representative MPAs and marine reserves in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean.

WWF calls on CCAMLR to fully use the outcomes of the 2007 CCAMLR Bioregionalisation Workshop process to move forward using the precautionary approach and begin designating networks of representative MPAs.

Background:

WWF commends CCAMLR on the progress made towards building a system of comprehensive protection of the Antarctic marine environment and its work on bioregionalisation of the Southern Ocean including the CCAMLR Bioregionalisation Workshop (Brussels, 13 – 17 August 2007). Such work has ensured CCAMLR is a leading international body in the development of MPAs on the high seas. At CCAMLR XXVI it was agreed that further work on the designation of representative networks of MPAs in the Commission area would be progressed within the 2008 WG-EMM meeting. WWF is hopeful that discussions at this year's WG-EMM meeting have contributed to keeping CCAMLR at the forefront of developments to designate MPAs on the high seas.

Internationally, in May 2008, the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted a set of

scientific criteria for identifying areas in need of protection in open waters and deep sea habitats, and adopted scientific guidance on designating representative networks of marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

In July 2008, in a historic announcement, the OSPAR Commission, the intergovernmental body protecting the North-East Atlantic, agreed in principle on a proposal to designate a 300,000km² area of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge as an MPA. OSPAR is pioneering conservation of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

WWF notes the Commission's acknowledgement that protection of Antarctic marine areas has considerable potential for furthering CCAMLR's objectives in applications ranging from protection of ecosystem processes, habitats and biodiversity to protection of particular species (including population and life history stages) (CCAMLR-XXIV, para 4.14).

Further, the Commission follows a 'precautionary' approach that aims to minimise long-term adverse effects rather than delaying decisions until all necessary data are available, and an 'ecosystem' approach that takes into account all the relationships between organisms and physical processes constituting the Antarctic marine ecosystem.

WWF recognizes that the Scientific Committee, at SC-CAMLR-XXIV, agreed to work toward developing a system of protected areas according to certain parameters (SC-CAMLR-XXIV para 3.57) and the Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's work plan (CCAMLR-XXIV, para 4.17). Bioregionalisation of the Southern Ocean was identified as an important first step in this process. The CCAMLR Bioregionalisation Workshop utilized outcomes of the Experts Workshop on Bioregionalisation of the Southern Ocean hosted by WWF / ACE CRC (Hobart, 4-8 September, 2006) and demonstrated the "feasibility" of a broad-scale analysis towards identifying suitable areas for MPA designation. The Workshop on Bioregionalisation led to the identification of two approaches for designating representative areas including systematic conservation planning and site selection based on broad scale bioregionalisation. Last year, CCAMLR endorsed the Scientific Committee's recommendation that a procedure should be

established for identifying areas for protection and to further the conservation objectives of CCAMLR.

WWF is of the view that the approach based on broad-scale bioregionalisation agreed upon at the 2007 CCAMLR Bioregionalisation Workshop and endorsed at CCAMLR XXVI provides sufficient biogeographical framework to immediately begin designating representative networks of MPAs. Although fine-scale bioregionalisation and systematic conservation planning can be used to enhance and improve implementation of representative MPA networks, WWF believes that areas identified via broad-scale bioregionalisation are sufficiently distinct in biogeographical heterogeneity to begin designating representative MPA networks.

WWF also acknowledges the importance of identifying and implementing national representative systems of MPAs within exclusive economic zones (EEZs) that overlap with the Antarctic and sub-Antarctic regions, e.g. Auckland Islands Marine Reserve (New Zealand EEZ), Heard and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve (Australian EEZ), the Kerguelen Island and Crozet Islands MPAs (French EEZ), and eagerly anticipates new development towards a Prince Edward Islands MPA in the South African EEZ.

2) Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing

WWF urges CCAMLR members to make strenuous efforts to reach consensus on the EC's proposal to adopt a transparent, non-discriminatory measure to provide for the implementation of trade sanctions against States / entities which fail to control the operations of their vessels or nationals that are considered to be involved in activities that undermine the effectiveness of CCAMLR's conservation measures. This may also have to involve a discussion on how to avoid such decisions being blocked by a member against whom action was directed.

WWF urges CCAMLR XXVII to amend its vessel monitoring system (VMS) to bring it into line with best practice, the current CM be amended to mandate real time reporting to the flag State and in parallel to the CCAMLR Secretariat, and for the value of real time VMS data to be maximized, with data made available in confidence to the MCS agencies of CCAMLR members for planning and operational surveillance purposes.

Further, WWF calls for the revision of Conservation Measure (CM) 10/05 Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) for *Dissostichus* spp. to include a clear definition of where, when and under what arrangements transshipment can take place; and to provide for formal, transparent, reconciliation of individual flag States catch records with landings data from their *Dissostichus* spp. Catch Documents by the Secretariat.

WWF urges that public access to CDS data be improved with a view to facilitating external and internal review of the data and, in particular, that the current publicly available data be enhanced by publication of exports of *Dissostichus* spp. by product form, for both Patagonian toothfish and Antarctic toothfish; landings / transshipment by port of landings or receiving vessel of transshipment, and by product form; and trade data by month.

WWF urges that all CCAMLR members and acceding states, be required to implement, at a minimum, the current Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding Systems codes for toothfish.

WWF also calls for the CCAMLR secretariat to be charged with, and provided with the resources to undertake, regular analyses of trade and CDS data in order to develop a better understanding of the landings and trade flows and to identify changes in the pattern of trade and fishing practices.

In order to provide the best possible estimate of IUU fishing, WWF proposes that the Standing Committee on Inspection and Compliance explore the opportunities to access information from all available sources, including from non-governmental organizations, trade data and the fishing industry, and facilitate the participation of those with relevant information.

Background:

CCAMLR has progressively over the last 20 years introduced an extensive suite of MCS measures. While these measures have gradually tightened arrangements in support of management and conservation measures and IUU catch appears to have decreased, they have not been able to reduce the IUU catch of *Dissostichus* spp. much below 10% of the CCAMLR's reported landings.

IUU fishing remains a significant problem for *Dissostichus* spp, particularly in the Banzare Banks where the IUU catch is 10 times the legal catch. In 2007, for example, the estimates of IUU fishing as a

percentage of total trade range from 10% (using CCAMLR's estimate of IUU catch) to 16% using the trade based estimate.

By comparison, with other regional fisheries bodies standards CCAMLR has a comprehensive suite of measures to address and reduce IUU fishing. However, not all the measures are being implemented effectively and there are some inherent weaknesses which need to be addressed. IUU fishing persists because those involved can continue to access markets for their product. Measures restricting market access to IUU products therefore provide key areas for CCAMLR's attention. CCAMLR's implementation of the CDS acknowledged this; however the persistence of IUU fishing suggests that CCAMLR's measures have not been entirely successful in closing off the market for IUU-caught *Dissostichus* spp. There remains scope for tightening the CDS arrangements and for increasing the comprehensiveness of its application. In addition, the adoption of measures to provide a swift and effective response mechanism against those States believed to be engaged in or supporting IUU fishing must be a priority.

3) Krill Management – Tightening the knot

WWF calls on CCAMLR Members at CCAMLR XXVII to ensure ecosystem-based management of the krill fishery, by ensuring systematic scientific observer coverage, the development of a coordinated research plan to address key scientific uncertainties, adopting a well managed system of smaller scale management units (SSMUs) with krill catch limits for each SSMU at levels that protect local predators, and the consideration of feedback management approaches as soon as possible.

Further, CCAMLR XXVII should take precautionary measures to prevent concentration of catches in coastal areas as the fishery approaches the interim catch limit in Subareas 48.1-48.4 and should follow a consistent management model for krill fisheries across the Convention Area as the fishery expands to other areas of the Southern Ocean.

WWF urges CCAMLR to maintain the interim catch limit of 620,000 tonnes until an adaptive feedback management system has been adopted, that not only divides the catch limit into smaller units, but is flexible enough to respond to ongoing monitoring.

WWF urges CCAMLR to develop funding mechanisms that ensure that resources are available for an expanded, on-going monitoring program, such as a dedicated CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Programme (CEMP) Fund to monitor krill-predator interactions, the effects of krill fishing on predator populations, the effects of climate change and the impacts of larval bycatch.

Background:

Antarctic krill is considered to be the lynch pin of the Antarctic food chain. Krill can also be worth millions of dollars to industrial fishing operations. There is a growing interest in entering into the fishery and notifications to fish for krill continue to increase. This heightened interest coupled with improvements in technology may result in localized depletion of krill and serious damage to the Southern Ocean foodweb. It is important to meet these challenges by ensuring that adequate conservation and management measures are in place. Furthermore, recognizing that the Southern Ocean is already experiencing impacts associated with global climate change, CCAMLR must meet the challenge of further strengthening the regulations that apply to the krill fishery. WWF considers that precautionary management of the krill fishery, which is transparent and enforceable, is fundamental not only to the health and status of krill stocks and all Southern Ocean species dependent on krill, but also to the credibility of CCAMLR.

WWF commends CCAMLR for adopting important management measures at its XXVI Meeting, including the establishment of an interim catch limit (CM 51- 01), until SSMU allocations are in place in subareas 48.1- 48.4.

WWF acknowledges the challenges related to accurately dividing the catch into SSMUs, and believes there is an urgent need for more detailed knowledge about the relationship between krill biomass and predator populations in space and time, the effects of krill harvesting on predator populations and the impacts of climate change on krill recruitment and survival to be able to make the correct division. Until such a division can be made there should be no expansion of the krill fishery beyond the interim catch limit of 620,000 tonnes.

WWF believes that it is the responsibility of all participants in the krill fishery to contribute to research in the region, by both allowing researchers to enter onboard the vessels and by contributing to monitoring costs.

WWF believes that the krill fishery must be subject to a comprehensive international scientific observer program in accordance with CCAMLR's Scheme of International Scientific Observation to collect data necessary to evaluate and mitigate the impact of all krill fishing technologies, and that the krill fishery should not be allowed to expand beyond the interim catch limit until all participants agree to comply.

WWF believes that krill management needs to be adaptive and flexible in order to allow rapid adjustments as new information on the impacts of climate change becomes available. Failure to do so could mean that current management may prove to be inadequate as changes in seasonality, food availability, and migration result in changes in krill stocks that could not be foreseen under non-climate change scenarios.

4) Seabird Protection

WWF encourages CCAMLR Members and Parties to urgently implement the CCAMLR measures within their national waters as well as on all vessels flying their flag and fishing in waters inhabited by albatrosses and petrels, and WWF encourages CCAMLR Members and Parties to urgently fulfill Resolution 22/XXV on international actions to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds arising from fishing, and in particular the elements focusing on action to reduce and minimize bycatch of albatross and other seabirds in high seas areas adjacent to the CCAMLR Convention Area and within the range of seabirds that breed and forage in the Convention Area.

WWF calls on CCAMLR XXVII to extend Resolution 22/XXV to recognize, encourage and support national and international collaborative initiatives which involve fishers, seabird specialists and officials with the aim of promoting the adoption of fishing practices which avoid seabird mortality and facilitating the transfer of knowledge, technology and skills.

WWF calls on CCAMLR XXVII to agree a strong Conservation Measure to reduce bycatch of seabirds in trawl operations through the implementation of mitigation measures, and to urge Members and Parties to address the high seabird mortalities outside of the Convention area.

WWF calls on CCAMLR Members and Parties to ratify and fully engage in the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

In addition, **WWF calls on CCAMLR Members and Parties** to urgently adopt and implement National Plans of Action (NPOAs) to reduce seabird mortality in both longline and trawl fisheries. For those Members and Parties that have implemented a seabird NPOA for longline fisheries, WWF urges them to - review the effectiveness of their NPOA in reducing seabird mortality in longline fisheries, - adapt their seabird NPOA to also address seabird bycatch in trawl fisheries, and - assist and support other countries adopting and implementing a seabird NPOA for longline and trawl fisheries.

WWF urges CCAMLR XXVII to consider developing a Resolution recognizing the progress made to reduce the threat to seabirds from bycatch and the need to further protect seabirds through action to minimize the threat to Southern Ocean seabirds from invasive species.

Background:

Of the world's 24 species of albatrosses, 22 are considered endangered or vulnerable according to the latest 'red-list' criteria of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The global expansion of fisheries (longline and trawl) now poses the greatest overall threat to albatrosses and other seabirds which often feed by scavenging for food behind fishing vessels.

WWF commends CCAMLR on its achievements in reducing the incidental mortality of albatrosses and petrels in Southern Ocean fisheries. CCAMLR leads on best-practice and has contributed to the implementation of smart-fishing initiatives on a global scale. The trialing of integrated line weighting, the introduction of night setting, restrictions on offal discharge and innovative mitigation technology has resulted in a notable decrease in the number of seabirds killed in the CCAMLR region in longline fisheries and in the 2005/06 and 06 / 07 seasons no albatrosses were reported killed in regulated longline fisheries. However, seabirds remain at risk from bycatch in trawl fisheries. Seriously high mortalities in the French EEZ and impacts of IUU on seabirds remains a real concern that requires close attention from CCAMLR in 2008.

CCAMLR best practice measures include the development and implementation of mitigation measures to ensure countries are actively reducing

incidental catch of seabirds in their fisheries operations, however concerns remain that best practice measures have not yet been introduced throughout the foraging range of Southern Ocean seabird species. Further action is needed both within EEZs and in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Several innovative initiatives have been developed with the aim of promoting adoption of fishing techniques which reduce and eliminate seabird mortality and facilitating the transfer of knowledge, technology and skills between fishers. Two important international agreements relating to the seabird by-catch problem have been established.

First, in 1988, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) developed an International Plan of Action (IPOA) to tackle seabird by-catch. In implementing IPOA-Seabirds, States assess the seabird by-catch problem within their fisheries and/or within their coastal waters. If a bycatch problem exists, each State then develops and implements a National Plan of Action (NPOA), based on, but not limited by, the recommendations listed in the IPOA.

Second, the legally binding Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) requires signatory states to take specific measures to improve the conservation status of albatrosses and petrels. Eleven countries have ratified the Agreement (Australia, Ecuador, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, South Africa, Peru, France, Argentina, the United Kingdom, Chile and most recently, Brazil has deposited its instrument of ratification which will take effect from 1st December 2008). The Agreement entered into force on 1 February 2004.

WWF is calling on CCAMLR Members and Parties to adopt, ratify and fully participate in ACAP as a direct and concerted means of addressing threats to the conservation status of listed species. WWF recognizes that whilst addressing direct threats to seabirds other than fishing may sit outside of CCAMLR's jurisdiction, a resolution to encourage Members and Parties to engage in ACAP is essential to ensure recent success on bycatch is not undermined by inaction in addressing other impacts, such as invasive species impacts on seabirds.

Addressing the invasives threat ; Some of CCAMLR's greatest achievements in reducing the threat to seabirds through strong conservation measures are being undermined by one of the major threats facing the wildlife of the Southern Ocean islands – the introduction of invasive animals. Rats

and mice threaten albatross and other seabirds on a range of Sub-Antarctic islands – in the South Atlantic mice alone kill one million petrels, shearwaters and albatross each year.

This problem can be addressed, since the 1970s, introduced rats and mice have been eradicated from more than 100 islands worldwide. However, at a global scale, prioritisation of islands, their values and priorities for invasive species eradication is necessary. CCAMLR's efforts to reduce bycatch of seabirds will be undermined if other threats to the same species are not addressed

5) Antarctic climate change

WWF calls on CCAMLR Members to adopt a Resolution acknowledging the potential adverse impacts of climate change on the Southern Ocean and its marine living resources, and commit to identifying and introducing necessary steps to minimize and avoid impacts in its fisheries management decisions.

WWF urges CCAMLR Members to apply to managing krill and finfish fisheries a highly precautionary approach that allows for existing uncertainties including the impacts of climate change. This will contribute to the future health, and sustainability, of krill and finfish populations and all the Southern Ocean species that are dependent on them.

WWF urges CCAMLR Members to urgently establish a series of ecologically representative MPAs to strengthen the resilience and ability of Antarctic and Southern Ocean species and ecosystem's to adapt to the impact of climate change without the added burden of fishing mortality and resulting alterations of foodwebs.

Finally, WWF believes that greater effort is needed towards prompt reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and to strengthen the Antarctic and Southern Ocean's resilience and ability to adapt to the impact of climate change by minimizing environmental pressures on the system.

Background:

Major changes have occurred over the past 50 years in the way that the Southern Ocean works and many scientists believe that these changes are accelerating as time passes. The observed changes are not purely a result of global warming, but are also due to the ozone hole becoming more pronounced. As a result, the dominant southern polar weather driver – the

Southern Annular Mode (or SAM) has been affected. In addition, increasing temperature and pressure differentials between mid-latitudes and the polar regions, are leading to regional changes in the extent and persistence of sea ice.

A result of warmer onshore winds, the Western Antarctic Peninsula is warming more than four times faster than the average rate of warming for the rest of the planet and sea ice is rapidly disappearing. In contrast, however, East Antarctica has been getting colder and windier, and the sea ice in the Southwest Pacific / Ross Sea region has been expanding in both extent and duration. In addition, the heat added to the Southern Ocean waters, from warmer mid-latitude waters, is making the surface layers of the Southern Ocean more dilute as subsurface glaciers melt.

Taking into account the changing climate and being precautionary will be essential in the future management of the Southern Ocean's marine living resources, and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean's resilience and ability to adapt to the impact of climate change environmental pressures on the system must be minimised.

6) Cooperation with other bodies

WWF encourages CCAMLR to actively engage and cooperate with other international bodies with responsibilities complementary to the Commission's.

WWF urges CCAMLR Members to actively consider strengthening regulation of fishing vessels in the Southern Ocean, including adopting a new Conservation Measure on ice-strengthening of fishing vessels.

WWF further urges CCAMLR to identify methods for cooperative working with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UN body responsible for regulation of international shipping, to strengthen standards and practices for fishing vessels in the region.

WWF calls on CCAMLR Members and Parties to ratify and fully engage in the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

WWF supports CCAMLR cooperation with the International Whaling Commission (IWC) such as the recent joint predator-prey relationship workshop conducted in Hobart in August 2008.

Background:

In the past two to three seasons, a number of shipping incidents in the Southern Ocean has heightened awareness of the risks to human life and to the environment. Greater efforts are necessary to ensure that all vessels operating in the Southern Ocean conform to the highest standards and practices to protect the sensitive environment and to avoid loss of human life.

In August 2008, CCAMLR and the IWC held a joint workshop on predator prey relationships in the Southern Ocean. There is still insufficient knowledge about the impacts of the fisheries on krill and dependent predators for many areas. However, there can be little doubt that krill fishing can have huge localized impact on predator populations. There is a close relationship between krill and baleen whale distributions, and the fisheries currently being undertaken are fishing close to land where the land-based predators forage. WWF hopes that this and future collaborations can inform management decisions that benefit the sustainability of Southern Ocean ecosystems.



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WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.