

## **Expressions of Interest for the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) exploratory fisheries**

Expressions of interests are sought from Australian companies or persons wishing to participate in exploratory fisheries in the CCAMLR Convention Area for the 2007/2008 fishing season.

At the annual CCAMLR meeting in October-November each year, proposals from nations seeking access to exploratory fisheries in the CCAMLR region in the following season are considered. Access to exploratory fisheries is limited to vessels from those nations which have lodged a proposal with CCAMLR and this has been approved by CCAMLR.

Accordingly, AFMA is seeking expressions of interest from Australian companies or persons wishing to make an application for exploratory fisheries to be considered at the CCAMLR meeting this year. The following are some examples of exploratory fisheries which would require Australia to lodge a proposal with CCAMLR:

- (a) using new methods than those previously used for a given species in a given area;
- (b) joining existing exploratory fisheries in the CCAMLR region; and
- (c) developing new fisheries for species and areas other than those currently commercially fished.

Applicants should note that access to the Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Fishery does not fall under the category of an exploratory fishery. The HIMI Fishery is a developed fishery within the Convention area, which is formally managed by AFMA under the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan 2002*.

To assist applicants to develop successful proposals AFMA, in consultation with the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD), has prepared the recently revised 'Guide to CCAMLR Exploratory Fisheries – March 2007'. A copy of the guide is available on the [AFMA website](#).

The aim of the Guide is to:

- make transparent the processes undertaken by Government;
- detail the standards which applicants must meet for Australia to support their applications to CCAMLR;
- make applicants aware that they must be prepared to make publicly available their individual/company details, including details of their fishing history and reputation; and
- provide background information to assist applicants in developing their proposals.

The process for consideration and approval of exploratory fisheries is described in Section 3 of the Guide.

As outlined in Section 4 of the Guide should you wish to apply for exploratory fisheries in 2007/2008 the following procedures apply:

1. Persons interested in undertaking exploratory fishing must submit to AFMA a written expression of interest by **13 April 2007**. Expressions of interest should be a page or less and provide information on the area(s) of the proposed fishery, species to be targeted,

the proposed fishing method(s) and the applicant details. AFMA will then provide applicants with feedback on the likely level of support for their proposals.

2. Industry members wishing to proceed further with their expressions of interest will then need to submit a proposal (in one or two stages depending on the level of interest) in the format described under Section 4.2 of the Guide to AFMA by **8 May 2007** and pay a non-refundable assessment fee of \$3000 per CCAMLR Statistical Division. For new applicants a 'one-off' vessel/operator assessment fee of \$2000 is also payable at this time. The relevant government agencies will then carry out a preliminary examination of the proposals to determine if the applications fall within the CCAMLR guidelines for exploratory fisheries.
3. All Australian applications for exploratory fisheries will be tabled at the CCAMLR Consultative Forum Meeting which is anticipated to be on **29 May 2007** and applicants will be invited to present their proposals. Please note that at this stage, industry members do not have access to full applications by other industry members. Participants at that Forum are expected to include representatives from conservation, the fishing industry and government agencies.
4. The final decision on whether to lodge a proposal with CCAMLR is taken by the relevant government agencies that are also responsible for final preparation and submission of the proposal documents. AFMA will advise applicants by **early July 2007** of the final decision and, if necessary, any amendments to the proposal that may be required before Australia would support the application. All final applications for exploratory fisheries must be submitted by Australia to the CCAMLR Secretariat no later than **22 July 2007**.

If you or your company are interested in exploratory fishing in the CCAMLR area, you are required to submit an expression of interest, briefly outlining in a page or less their proposed operation. Submission of an expression of interest does not have a fee attached. It will not commit you to submitting a proposal, and paying which attracts an assessment fee, if you decide not to proceed further with an application.

All expressions of interest must be forwarded to the following facsimile, postal or e-mail address by close of business on **13 April 2007**.

by mail:	Peter Neave Manager - Antarctic Fisheries Section AFMA Box 7051 Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610
by e-mail:	<a href="mailto:peter.neave@afma.gov.au">peter.neave@afma.gov.au</a>
by fax:	(02) 6225 5439

If you have any enquiries concerning this matter, please contact Peter Neave on (02) 6225 5302.