



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC)

MINUTES
TELECONFERENCE
10 NOVEMBER 2015

SUB-ANTARCTIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SouthMAC)

CHAIR: Mr Peter Neville

Date: 10 November 2015

Venue: Teleconference

Attendance

Members

Mr Peter Neville, Chair

Dr Malcolm Haddon, Scientific Member

Mr Malcolm McNeill, Industry Member

Mr Martin Exel, Industry Member

Ms Lihini Weragoda, AAD Member

Ms Jo Fisher, AFMA Member

Ms Sarah Kirkcaldie (Executive Officer)

Observers

Mr Les Scott, Industry

Mr Rhys Arangio, Industry

Mr Trent Timmiss, AFMA

Ms Sophie Fisher, AFMA

Apologies

Mr Jon Bryan, Conservation Member

Introduction

A Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC) teleconference was held on 10 November 2015.

The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss the outcomes of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and make recommendations on the total allowable catch (TAC) for the two quota species Patagonian toothfish and Mackerel Icefish, as well as catch limits for bycatch species in the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery (HIMIF) for the 2015/16 season which starts on 1 December 2015. Members also discussed the 2016/17 TACs for the quota species.

The meeting met all requirements of Fisheries Management Paper 1, including the rules for dealing with conflicts of interest.

Agenda item 1 - Preliminaries

The meeting was opened at 2.00pm on 10 November 2015 by the Chair, Mr Peter Neville. Mr Neville welcomed the attendance of members and the observers, Mr Trent Timmiss and Ms Sophie Fisher from AFMA, Mr Les Scott from Australian Longline Pty Ltd and Mr Rhys Arangio from Austral Fisheries Pty Ltd.



1.1 Declaration of interests

Mr Neville declared that he was the Principal of a fisheries consulting business (P.J.Neville & Associates) but had no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Dr Haddon advised he is employed by CSIRO and is not undertaking specific research projects in relation to Sub-Antarctic fisheries, although he does provide advice to other researchers in relation to stock assessments, particularly for the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery (MITF). Dr Haddon is also a member on the Northern Prawn Fishery Resource Assessment Group and Slope Resource Assessment Group.

Mr Exel advised that he is the General Manager, Environment and Policy, Austral Fisheries P/L. Austral Fisheries P/L owns Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) in the Australian sub-Antarctic fisheries and waters under the jurisdiction of Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). Mr Exel also declared that he is a Director of the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, Member of the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA), member of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), Member of the Great Australian Bight Industry Association, Member of Coral Sea Fishers Association and Chair of the Coalition of Legal Toothfish Operators. He was not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against his Company or of any legal action taken by his Company against AFMA.

Mr McNeill advised he is the Chief Executive Officer of Australian Longline P/L which holds various fishing rights in, and operates vessels in the sub-Antarctic fisheries and waters under the jurisdiction of CCAMLR. Mr McNeill was not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against his Company or of any legal action taken by his Company against AFMA.

Ms Fisher advised she is employed by AFMA and is currently acting manager for sub-Antarctic fisheries and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Ms Kirkcaldie advised she is employed by AFMA and is the executive officer for Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee, Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee and the Sub-Antarctic Resource Assessment Group and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries.

Ms Lihini Weragoda advised that she is an employee of the AAD and her colleagues conduct the HIMI stock assessment. Ms Weragoda attends international meetings related to Antarctic fisheries and no pecuniary interest in Antarctic fisheries and that her salary is not dependent on AAD, industry and other research collaborations.

Mr Timmiss advised he is employed by AFMA and is the Senior Manager for Tuna and International fisheries and has no pecuniary interest in the sub-Antarctic fisheries. He also advised that he is a member of the Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee (SBTMAC) and the Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC).

Mr Scott advised that he is the Managing Director of Australian Longline P/L and Managing Director of Petuna Sealord Deepwater Fishing P/L and which holds various fishing rights in, and operates vessels in the Australian Sub-Antarctic fisheries and waters under the jurisdiction of CCAMLR. Mr Scott is also an advisor to Petuna Fisheries. Mr Scott further advised he is a member on SlopeRAG, the Sub-Antarctic demersal longline member on the Threat Abatement Plan, industry representative on the Australian delegation to CCAMLR, director to CFA and Director of SETFIA. Mr Scott was not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against his Company or of any legal action by his Company against AFMA.

Mr Arangio advised he is employed by Austral Fisheries who hold SFRs in the Australian sub-Antarctic Fisheries. He is also the Secretary of COLTO, the Coalition of Legal Toothfish



Operators. Mr Arangio is not aware of any investigation or prosecution action by AFMA against Austral Fisheries or of any legal action taken by Austral against AFMA. Mr Arangio declared an interest in all agenda items.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Jon Bryan.

1.3 Adoption of agenda

SouthMAC adopted the agenda with the addition of an agenda item requested by industry on the senate enquiry into factory trawlers.

CCAMLR

Agenda item 2 – Outcomes of CCAMLR & revised Conservation measures

CCAMLR XXXIV was held in Hobart from 19 October to 30 October 2015 and was preceded by meetings of the Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment and CCAMLR's Scientific Committee.

Members noted that the Australian papers presented to WG-FSA and recommendations were endorsed by CCAMLR as presented with one exception. The bycatch limit for macrourids was divided into two morphs and new move-on provisions were recommended. Members noted that the Patagonian Toothfish TAC of 3405 tonnes was endorsed for two years. The Mackerel icefish TAC of 482 tonnes was endorsed for 2015/16. AAD also advised that reverting to a biennial assessment of Patagonian Toothfish for HIMI was agreed to at Commission meeting. The longline season extension paper was also endorsed and the revised season extensions discussed under Agenda Item 4 will be in place for 2 years. Australia's new and exploratory applications were all endorsed (areas 88.1, 88.2, 58.4.1 and 58.4.2). Australia was not allocated any research quota in 88.2 as the current arrangements for research are in place till the 2016/17 season. The AAD member noted that Australia could express its intentions to participate in research in 2016 for the 2017/18 season. Members noted that Australia's proposed research plan as well as the multi member collaborative research for statistical areas 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 were endorsed by CCAMLR.

SouthMAC noted that in addition to a number of other conservation measures, the following relevant conservation measures were revised at the 2015 CCAMLR meeting:

10-04 – CCAMLR Vessel Monitoring System (now toothfish vessels are required to report hourly to the flag state);

21-02 – Exploratory fisheries (changed to clarify deadlines for notifications);

22-06 - Bottom fishing in the Convention Area (to allow Members to be exempt from submitting the preliminary assessment (Annex 22-06/A) if the relevant information had been submitted for a prior fishing season, and the vessel's gear configuration had not changed); and

25-02 – Minimisation of the incidental mortality of seabirds in the course of longline fishing or longline fishing research in the Convention Area (amended to clarify streamer line requirements).

Industry members thanked everyone, particularly AAD, involved in preparing for the meetings. However, an Industry member raised concerns regarding not seeing all papers before they



are submitted to WG-FSA. Industry members requested that all papers to be submitted to WG-FSA be cleared by SARAG. Members noted that, as agreed at SARAG, the next stock assessment will be completed earlier in the year and that should allow papers to be prepared earlier. AAD member stated that all reasonable efforts were made to make as many papers as possible available before submission to CCAMLR. It was agreed that AAD and AFMA would discuss out-of-session and inform SARAG of future consultative process (**Action arising 1**).

Action arising 1 – ADD and AFMA to discuss the consultative process for CCAMLR papers in 2016.

Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery

Agenda item 3 – Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and bycatch limit recommendations

Messrs Exel, McNeill, Scott and Arangio declared their interest under agenda items 2-5. Messrs Exel, McNeill, Scott and Arangio left the teleconference and the remaining members discussed whether Industry members and observers could participate in the discussions and recommendations; it was agreed that as their input was essential to most agenda items, they should remain on the teleconference unless a specific conflict of interest was identified, at which point members would be asked to leave the teleconference for the duration of that particular discussion/recommendation.

Members noted that the stock assessments for the two target species in the Fishery: Mackerel Icefish and Patagonian Toothfish were submitted for peer-review and consideration to CCAMLR's Working Group on Fish Stock Assessments, CCAMLR Scientific Committee and the Commission. Australia also submitted papers on the major bycatch species taken at HIMI.

SouthMAC agreed to recommend the following HIMI Fishery TACs and catch limits, as agreed to by CCAMLR, to the AFMA Commission:

Target species:

Patagonian Toothfish (<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>)	3 405 tonnes for 2015/16; and 3 405 tonnes for 2016/17*.
Mackerel Icefish (<i>Champscephalus gunnari</i>)	482 tonnes for 2015/16; and 357 tonnes for 2016/17*.

Bycatch Species for the 2015/16 season only:

<i>Macrourus Caml</i> and <i>M. whitsoni</i>	409 tonnes
<i>M. halotrachys</i> and <i>M. carinatus</i>	360 tonnes
Unicorn Icefish (<i>Channichthys rhinoceratus</i>)	1 663 tonnes
Skates and Rays (<i>Bathyraja spp.</i>)	120 tonnes
Grey Rockcod (<i>Lepidonotothen squamifrons</i>)	80 tonnes
All other species	50 tonnes (for each species)



SouthMAC also supported the CCAMLR recommendation that if the by-catch in any one haul exceeds the following limits then the fishing vessel shall not fish using that method of fishing at any point within 5 nautical miles of the location where the by-catch limit is exceeded for a period of at least five days:

Unicorn Icefish	≥ 5 tonnes
All <i>Macrourus</i> spp.	≥ 3 tonnes (combined)
Grey Rockcod, <i>Somniosus</i> spp. or skates and rays	≥ 2 tonnes.

*SouthMAC agreed that unless there is new advice from CCAMLR XXXV (2016), AFMA will make a Determination in November 2016 to implement the 2016/17 Patagonian Toothfish and Mackerel icefish TACs as outlined above.

Agenda item 4 – Longline season extension periods

Members noted that the longline sector of the HIMI Fishery is managed around a core season, a pre-season extension period and a post-season extension period. Vessel access to the pre- and post-season extension periods is conditional on compliance with CCAMLR Conservation Measure 25-02 in the previous season. SouthMAC noted that, following consideration by SARAG, CCAMLR 2015 endorsed trial extensions of the pre-season and post-season extension periods. The season extension periods for 2015/16 and 2016/17 are described at Attachment 2. The AFMA member noted that if more than three birds are caught across the fishery in the periods 1 - 14 November 2014 and 1 – 14 November 2015, industry will not have access to the period 15 - 30 November 2016 and 15 – 30 November 2017. The AAD member noted that all the conditions and requirements are reflected in Conservation measure 41-08 (2015).

Members noted that the long-term goal is to manage the fishery with three fishing periods: pre-season, core season and post-season. This is conditional on the results of trial season extensions, effects of expansion of the fishery and agreement within CCAMLR.

Other

Agenda item 5 – Other Business

5.1 Requirement to carry SFR extract on board

SouthMAC noted that AFMA is proposing to remove the mandatory requirement to carry fishing concessions on board the boat across all Commonwealth fisheries. With the advent of remote access to the internet and other technologies now available to Compliance Officers the production of a hard copy of the extract by an operator is no longer required.

Members noted that at its October 2015 meeting the AFMA Commission agreed to undertake consultation through the MAC on removing the requirement to carry a copy of the SFR extract on board a boat. As this is not a complicated change a full public comment phase is not required.

SouthMAC approved the proposed change to the *Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery Management Plan 2006 (MIT Plan)* and the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery*



Management Plan 2002 (HIMI Plan) to remove the mandatory requirement to carry an extract of the Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) Register on board the boat.

The AAD member noted that it was a requirement under CCAMLR Conservation Measure 10-02 that all vessels fishing in the CCAMLR Area must still produce a hard copy of a licence to CCAMLR inspectors. As such operators must still carry a hard copy of the licence whilst in HIMI or other CCAMLR fisheries.

5.2 Trawl fishing capacity determination

Members noted that prior to 2012 the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan* restricted the Fishery to 3 boats through a minimum quota holding of 25.5%. With more of the catch being taken with automatic longline the three boat limit became restrictive. The Plan was changed to remove the limit on the number of longline boats, but retain a limit on the number of trawlers through a determination. This determination was for 3 years and meant to be an interim measure until the Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) was updated. The AFMA observer noted that the ERA has not been updated but now that the benthic impact study has been completed and shown that there is minimal impact at HIMI from benthic trawling, AFMA does not see a need to retain the Determination. Members noted that the Marine Stewardship Council approval and Strategic assessment export approval is not dependent on the 3 boat limit. The AFMA observer noted that removing the 3 boat limit would reduce unnecessary regulative burden and would be consistent with AFMA's policy that the number or size of a boat does not have an impact on a fishery. Members noted that the draft HIMF TAC and Trawl Fishing Capacity Determination 2015 sought to amend the existing Determination to state that an operator must hold 1% of SFRs to undertake trawl fishing thereby removing the current restriction of three trawlers in the HIMIF.

The AAD member expressed concern about removing the current 3 boat limit and the possible implications for CCAMLR. It was agreed that AFMA and AAD would discuss out-of-session and inform SouthMAC of a whole-of-government position (**Action arising 2**). SouthMAC agreed to the TAC section of the Determination and agreed to defer discussions on the trawl capacity until after AFMA and AAD consultations.

Action arising 2 – AFMA and AAD to discuss out-of-session a whole-of-government position on the removal of the trawl 3 boat limit.

5.3 Senate enquiry in to factory trawlers

Mr Scott asked if AFMA would be providing a submission to the senate enquiry on factory trawlers and stated that the sub-Antarctic fisheries cannot function without factory freezers. Mr Timmiss stated that AFMA will be making a submission and the sub-Antarctic fisheries will be used as an example as to why factory freezers are required. AFMA agreed to provide its submission to industry as soon as it was available (**Action arising 3**).

Action arising 3 – AFMA to provide senate enquiry submission on factory trawlers to industry.

Agenda item 6 - Next meeting

SouthMAC agreed to hold the next face-to-face meeting in Hobart on Wednesday 10 February 2016 with a SARAG meeting held on 9 February 2016.



Dr Haddon thanked AAD for providing the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery (MITF) data to CSIRO and noted that they were on schedule to have the MITF stock assessment completed by the end of 2015.

The Chair thanked members for participating in the teleconference and closed the meeting at 3 pm.



Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (SouthMAC) – Teleconference November 2015

Agenda

Tuesday 10th November 2015

2:00 – 3:00 pm (AEST)

Toll free number: 1800 153 721

Participant PIN code: 184210

Introduction

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|-----|--------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| 1. | Preliminaries | | |
| 1.1 | Declaration of interests | Chair | For Information |
| 1.2 | Apologies | AFMA | For Information |
| 1.3 | Adoption of Agenda | Chair | For Decision |

CCAMLR

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| 2. | Outcomes of CCAMLR & revised Conservation Measures | AAD | For Information |
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Heard Island and McDonald islands Toothfish Fishery

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| 3. | TAC and bycatch limit recommendations | AFMA | For Decision |
| 4. | Longline season extension periods | AAD | For Information |

Other

- | | | | |
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| 5. | Other Business | Chair | For Discussion |
| 5.1 | Requirement to carry SFR extract on board | AFMA | For Decision |
| 5.2 | Trawl fishing capacity determination | AFMA | For Discussion |
| 5.3 | Senate Inquiry in to factory trawlers | | |
| 6. | Next Meeting | Chair | For Discussion |



Attachment 2

Trial pre-season extension 1 - 14 APR 2016 & 1 - 14 APR 2017	Pre-season extension 15 - 30 APR	Core season 1 MAY - 14 SEP	Post-season extension 15 SEP - 31 OCT	Trial post-season extension 1 - 14 NOV	New conditional trial post-season extension 15 - 30 NOV 2016 & 15 - 30 NOV 2017
<p>Day and night setting is allowed and is subject to a three bird limit, whereby no more than three birds can be caught by each vessel during season extensions: i.e. between 1 and 30 April, and between 15 September and 30 November.</p> <p>Trial concludes once a cumulative total of at least 500,000 hooks have been set during daylight between 1 and 14 April.</p> <p>CCAMLR will review this trial after the above condition is fulfilled.</p>	<p>Day and night setting is allowed and is subject to a three bird limit, whereby no more than three birds can be caught by each vessel during season extensions: i.e. between 1 and 30 April, and between 15 September and 30 November.</p>	<p>Day and night setting is allowed.</p>	<p>Day and night setting is allowed and is subject to a three bird limit, whereby no more than three birds can be caught by each vessel during season extensions: i.e. between 1 and 30 April, and between 15 September and 30 November.</p> <p>In 2017, consideration may be given to including this season extension period in the core season, pending Australian government and CCAMLR considerations.</p>	<p>Day and night setting is allowed and is subject to a three bird limit, whereby no more than three birds can be caught by each vessel during season extensions: i.e. between 1 and 30 April, and between 15 September and 30 November.</p> <p>Trial concludes once a cumulative total of at least 500,000 hooks have been set (during day and/or night) in this season extension period.</p> <p>CCAMLR will review this trial after the above condition is fulfilled.</p>	<p>Day and night setting is allowed, subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cumulative number of hooks set between 1 and 14 November 2014, and 1 and 14 November 2015 exceeding 500,000 - no more than three birds being caught across the fishery between 1 and 14 November 2014 - no more than three birds being caught across the fishery between 1 and 14 November 2015. <p>Trial concludes once a cumulative total of at least 500,000 hooks have been set (during day and/or night) between 15 -30 November.</p> <p>CCAMLR will review this trial after the above condition is fulfilled.</p>

NB: Longline fishing in the season extension periods between 1 and 30 April and between 15 September and 30 November is conditional on that vessel demonstrating full compliance with Conservation Measure 25-02 in the previous season. Paired streamer lines and integrated weighted line must be used at all times.

