



CCAMLR

COMM CIRC 08/156
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Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME) - Indicator Notifications

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**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION
AND THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

**COMM CIRC 08/156
SC CIRC 08/69**

17 December 2008

Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME) – Indicator Notifications

Members are advised that the Secretariat has received the first VME-indicator notification for the 2008/09 season (9.3 VME-indicator units reported from a line segment in Subarea 88.2).

The guidelines for the collection and reporting of VME-indicator data in accordance with Conservation Measure 22-07, and the VME-indicator data form are available on the CCAMLR website (see www.ccamlr.org/pu/E/sc/fish/forms.htm); copy attached.

The requirements of CM 22-07 apply to all exploratory fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. and the exploratory fishery for crab in Subarea 48.2. The main elements in a VME-Indicator Notification are as follows:

- (i) A VME-indicator notification is required for every line segment where 5 or more VME-indicator units are recovered. All VME-indicator notifications must be immediately emailed to the Secretariat, either directly when a vessel is authorised to do so, or via the Flag State. The mid-point of the line segment must be reported in degrees and minutes (including fractions of minutes, e.g. 64 degrees 37.8 minutes south).
- (ii) On receipt of a VME-indicator notification where the quantity of VME-indicator units notified is greater than or equal to 10, the Secretariat will, within one working day, notify all Members and vessels involved in that fishery of the location of the Risk Area, based on the mid-point of the line segment and the area within 1 nautical mile radius of that point (see email template, attached) .
- (iii) On receipt of 5 VME-indicator notifications from within a single fine-scale rectangle the Secretariat will, within one working day, notify all Members and vessels involved in that fishery of the location of that fine-scale rectangle (see email template).

The locations of all risk areas and fine-scale rectangles will be listed in the Secretariat's summary reports for the relevant exploratory fishery.

Risk Areas shall remain closed to bottom fishing until they have been reviewed by the Scientific Committee and management actions are determined by the Commission. Vessels may continue to fish in VME fine-scale rectangles in accordance with conservation measures in force.

Due to the current heavy translation workload, this circular has been issued to all Members in English only. Translations will follow as soon as practically possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Miller', with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr D.G.M. Miller
Executive Secretary

Attch.

Collection and Reporting of VME-Indicator Data in Accordance with Conservation Measure 22-07

Application

The requirements of Conservation Measure 22-07 apply to all exploratory fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. (Conservation Measures 41-04, 41-05, 41-06, 41-07, 41-09, 41-10 and 41-11), as well as the exploratory fishery for crab in Subarea 48.2 (Conservation Measure 52-02).

Responsibility

The collection and reporting of VME-indicator data in accordance with Conservation Measure 22-07 is a Flag State responsibility. Vessels are required to collect the data and report these data to the CCAMLR Secretariat, either directly when authorised to do so (with copy to the Flag State), or via the Flag State.

If 5 or more VME-indicator units are recovered within one line segment (see below), a vessel is required to immediately notify the Secretariat of the location of the mid-point¹ of the line segment and the quantity of VME-indicator units recovered.

Definitions

VME-indicator organism - any benthic (bottom-dwelling) organism listed in the 'Benthic Invertebrate Classification Guide' (poster).

VME-indicator unit - either one litre of those VME-indicator organisms that can be placed in a 10-litre container, or one kilogram of those VME-indicator organisms that do not fit into a 10-litre container.

10-litre container - a bucket or other container with a total volume of 10 or more litres. The container must have graduations marks at 5 and 10 litres.

Line segment - a 1000-hook section of a longline, or a 1200 m section of a longline, whichever is the shorter in length, or a 1200 m section of a pot line.

Risk Area - an area where 10 or more VME-indicator units are recovered within a single line segment. A Risk Area has a radius of 1 nautical mile from the mid-point¹ of the line segment from which the VME-indicator units are recovered (see Figure 1). However, Flag States may require their vessels to observe a larger Risk Area in accordance with their domestic laws.

Fine-Scale Rectangle - a rectangle of 0.5° latitude by 1.0° longitude, identified by the latitude of the northernmost boundary and the longitude of the boundary closest to the 0° meridian (see Figure 2).

¹ The mid-point of line segment must be reported in degrees, minutes and fractions of minutes (e.g. 64 degrees 37.8 minutes south)

Collection and Reporting of Data

Vessels are required to clearly mark the start and end of all line segments on each longline or pot line.

Vessels are required to monitor all line segments for the quantity of VME-indicator organisms recovered during hauling.

For each line segment, the vessel must:

- a) retain all VME-indicator organisms;
- b) on completion of the line segment, determine the quantity of VME-indicator organisms recovered (measured in VME-indicator units);
- c) to the extent possible, record the mid-point¹ of the line segment and the quantity of VME-indicator units recovered, using the VME-indicator data form VMEv2009, and submit these data with the fine-scale catch and effort data.
- d) if 5 or more VME-indicator units are recovered within one line segment, record the mid-point¹ of the line segment and the quantity of VME-indicator units, using the VME-indicator data form VMEv2009, and immediately notify this record to the Secretariat (data@ccamlr.org), either directly if the vessel is authorised to do so (with copy to the Flag State), or via the Flag State.

On completion of hauling the entire line, the vessel must:

- e) determine the total quantity of VME-indicator organisms (measured in VME-indicator units) recovered from the line;
- f) record the total quantity of VME-indicator units using the fine-scale catch and effort data form (longline: C2v2009 or pot: C5v2009).

On completion of each reporting period (5-day for exploratory fisheries for *Dissostichus* spp. and 10-day for the exploratory fishery for crab), the vessel must:

- g) Determine the total quantity of VME-indicator units recovered during the reporting period, and record this amount in the catch and effort report (TACv2009).

Submission of VME-Indicator Notifications

A 'VME-Indicator Notification' is required for every line segment where 5 or more VME-indicator units are recovered. All VME-indicator notifications must be recorded in the data form VMEv2009, and immediately emailed to the Secretariat, either directly when authorised to do so (with copy to the Flag State), or via the Flag State (data form VMEv2009 contains instructions for generating emails in the required text format). The Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of all notifications within one working day.

Risk Areas

On receipt of a VME-indicator notification where the quantity of VME-indicator units notified is greater than or equal to 10, the Secretariat will, within one working day, notify all Members and vessels involved in that fishery of the location of the Risk Area, based on the mid-point¹ of the line segment and the area within 1 nautical mile radius of that point (Figure 1). On sending such a VME-indicator notification, the vessel must complete hauling of any lines intersecting the Risk Area without delay, and cease fishing in the Risk Area.

Risk Areas shall remain closed to fishing (i.e. vessels are not permitted to set longlines or pots in Risk Areas) until they have been reviewed by the Scientific Committee and management actions are determined by the Commission.

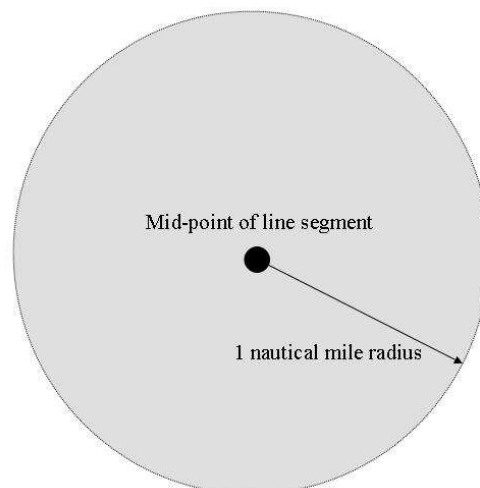


Figure 1: A Risk Area has a radius of 1 nautical mile from the mid-point of the line segment from which the VME-indicator units are recovered.

Fine-Scale Rectangles

On receipt of 5 VME-indicator notifications from within a single fine-scale rectangle the Secretariat will, within one working day, notify all Members and vessels involved in that fishery of the location of that fine-scale rectangle (Figure 2). On receipt of this information, vessels may continue to fish in the fine-scale rectangle(s) in accordance with conservation measures in force.

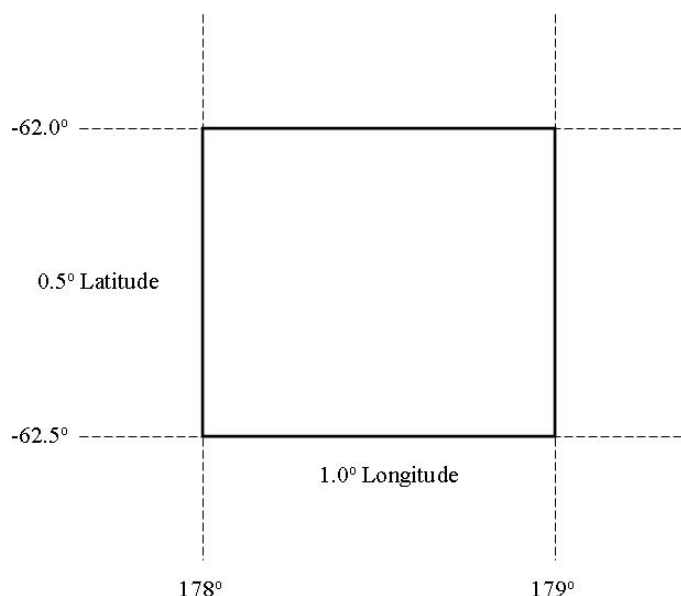


Figure 2: A fine-scale rectangle is a rectangle of 0.5° latitude by 1.0° longitude, identified by the latitude of the northernmost boundary and the longitude of the boundary closest to the 0° meridian.

Measuring the Quantity of VME-Indicator Organisms

VME-indicator units represent the combined volume of VME-indicator organisms which fit into a 10-litre container and the total mass (in kilogram) of VME-indicator organisms which do not fit into a bucket (e.g. branching species). The container must have graduation marks at 5 and 10 litres, and may be constructed as illustrated in Figure 3.

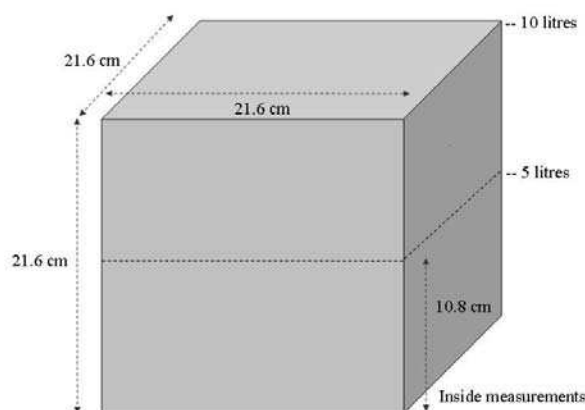


Figure 3: Inside dimensions for a 10-litre container, if made on board the vessel. The inside measurements are 21.6 cm x 21.6 cm x 21.6 cm.

Timeline and VME-Indicator Data Requirements

Timeline/Event	Data Requirement	Data Form and Submission Deadline
On hauling every line segment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to the extent possible 	Mid-point of the line segment, and quantity of VME-indicator units recovered	Use form VMEv2009 and submit data form with the fine-scale catch and effort data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If 5 or more VME-indicator units are recovered (VME-indicator notification) 	Mid-point of the line segment, and quantity of VME-indicator units recovered	Use form VMEv2009 and immediately notify the CCAMLR Secretariat
On completion of hauling entire line	Total quantity of VME-indicator units recovered from the longline or pot line	Use form C2v2009 (longline)*, or C5v2009 (pot)*
At the end of each 5-day reporting period (toothfish fisheries) or 10-day reporting period (crab fisheries)	Total quantity of VME-indicator units recovered during the reporting period	Use form TACv2009*

* submission deadlines: 5-day catch and effort reports (CM 23-01); 10-day catch and effort reports (CM 23-02); fine-scale catch and effort data (CM 23-04)

Collection and Reporting of VME-Indicator Data in Accordance with Conservation Measure 22-07



Email: data@ccamlr.org

- (1) to the extent possible, record the mid-point of each line segment and the quantity of VME-indicator units recovered
- (2) if five (5) or more VME-indicator units are recovered within one line segment, record the mid-point of the line segment and quantity of VME-indicator units, and immediately email this record to the Secretariat (data@ccamlr.org), either directly, if the vessel is authorised to do so (with copy to the Flag State), or via the Flag State.

(To generate an email in standard text format for an individual record with ≥ 5 VME-indicator units, complete the notification record, then click on [Email](#) and copy, click on 'Send email' then paste the record into the email and send)

(3) On completion, please include this form with the monthly fine-scale catch and effort data and email to data@ccamlr.org

Vessel flag	
Vessel name	
Vessel call sign	
Subarea or Division	

[illegible]

Email templates

NOTIFICATION OF VME RISK AREA

Distribution List - Participating Members and their vessels (when authorised to receive emails from the Secretariat)

Participating Members and vessels are advised that the Secretariat has received a VME-indicator notification where the quantity of VME-indicator units notified is greater than or equal to 10. As a result, the area within 1 nautical mile of latitude [DD] degrees [MM.00] minutes south and longitude [DDD] degrees and [MM.00] minutes [east/west] in [Subarea/Division] has been declared a VME Risk Area.

Risk Areas shall remain closed to bottom fishing (i.e. vessels are not permitted to set longlines or pots in Risk Areas) until they have been reviewed by the Scientific Committee and management actions are determined by the Commission.

The locations of all VME risk areas in this fishery will be listed in the next Fishery Report.

NOTIFICATION OF VME FINE-SCALE RECTANGLE

Distribution List - Participating Members and their vessels (when authorised to receive emails from the Secretariat)

Participating Members and vessels are advised that the Secretariat has received 5 VME-indicator notifications from within a single fine-scale rectangle. This fine-scale rectangle is located in [Subarea/Division] and has the following boundaries:

- northern boundary is latitude [DD.0] degrees south
- southern boundary is latitude [DD.0] degrees south
- eastern boundary is longitude [DD] degrees [east/west]
- western boundary is longitude [DD] degrees [east/west]

Vessels may continue to fish in this fine-scale rectangle in accordance with conservation measures in force.

The locations of all VME fine-scale rectangles in this fishery will be listed in the next Fishery Report.