Contribution from CCAMLR to the 2020 UN-DOALOS workshop on bottom fishing

Response Due Date(s):

Respond with any objection: 18 Jan 2021

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AND THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Members will recall that in April 2020, in response to a request from UN-DOALOS, the Secretariat circulated a proposed contribution to their workshop on bottom fishing and VMEs (COMM CIRC 20/44–SC CIRC 20/42). The Secretariat received one comment on the text of the proposed contribution. The amended contribution was forwarded to UN-DOALOS and informed their report (A/75/157 of 14 July 2020).

UN-DOALOS have now requested permission to post the full contribution (attached to this circ) on its website. The Secretariat requests any Member which does not agree to this request to inform us by 18 January 2021, after which time we will respond to UN-DOALOS accordingly.

Sincerely,

Dr David Agnew
Executive Secretary

Attch.

26 April 2020

Gabriele Goettsche-Wanli
Director
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
Office of Legal Affairs
United Nations

Dear Director

In response to your request of 8 January 2020 for information on the implementation of provisions relating to the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems, I have pleasure in enclosing the attached information.

Yours sincerely

David Agnew
Executive Secretary

CCAMLR experience with affording protection to Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems

In relation to the letter from Mr Goettsche-Wanli, Director, dated 8 January 2020, on the subject of paragraph 210 of General Assembly resolution 74/18, we offer the following information.

The Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources is an international agreement established to conserve Antarctic marine living resources and is an integral part of the Antarctic Treaty system. The Convention applies to all marine living resources within the Antarctic marine ecosystem. The objective of the Convention, set out in Article II, is the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources, where the term 'conservation' includes rational use.

The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) gives effect to the Convention's objective and its principles of conservation. CCAMLR adopts conservation measures which regulate fishing and related activities in the Southern Ocean. Conservation Measures (CM) adopted by CCAMLR with relevance to General Assembly resolution include the following:

Conservation Measure 22-04	Interim prohibition of deep-sea gillnetting
Conservation Measure 22-05	Restrictions on the use of bottom trawling gear in high-seas areas of the Convention Area
Conservation Measure 22-06	Bottom fishing in the Convention Area
Conservation Measure 22-07	Interim measure for bottom fishing activities subject to Conservation Measure 22-06 encountering potential vulnerable marine ecosystems in the Convention Area
Conservation Measure 22-08	Prohibition on fishing for Dissostichus spp. in depths shallower than 550 m in exploratory fisheries
Conservation Measure 22-09	Protection of registered vulnerable marine ecosystems in subareas, divisions, small-scale research units, or management areas open to bottom fishing

The abovementioned Conservation Measures prohibit bottom fishing in high seas waters by gillnets and trawls and restrict exploratory longline fishing for toothfish in high seas areas to waters deeper than 550m in depth. Conservation Measures 22-06 and 22-07, first adopted in 2007 and 2008 respectively, require preliminary assessment of the impact of planned activities on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs), provide mechanisms to catalogue VMEs identified through scientific research or VME risk areas identified through encounters with fishing gear, and prohibit fishing on VMEs or VME risk areas. VME data are catalogued in the CCAMLR VME Registry.