



CCAMLR

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
Commission pour la conservation de la faune et la flore marines de l'Antarctique
Комиссия по сохранению морских живых ресурсов Антарктики
Comisión para la Conservación de los Recursos Vivos Marinos Antárticos

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ASOC report to CCAMLR

Submitted by ASOC



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Abstract

ASOC has submitted 7 background papers to this CCAMLR meeting, all containing policy recommendations on a variety of issues relevant to the work of the Commission, including on marine protected areas, krill fisheries management, climate change, vessel safety, transshipment and toothfish fisheries. Throughout the intersessional period, ASOC and its member groups have conducted a variety of activities with the aim of supporting Antarctic conservation: supporting science, engaging in public advocacy, and facilitating opportunities for discussion between CCAMLR stakeholders. CCAMLR must respond to the ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis and take immediate steps to achieve the long-term conservation of the Southern Ocean.

Introduction

ASOC appreciates the opportunity to participate in the 38th annual meeting of CCAMLR. ASOC has submitted 7 background papers on a variety of issues relevant to the work of the Commission, including on marine protected areas, krill fisheries management, climate change, vessel safety, transshipment and toothfish fisheries. During the intersessional period, ASOC and its member groups have worked to enhance the conservation and preservation of Antarctica through a variety of activities: supporting science, engaging in public advocacy, and facilitating opportunities for Antarctic stakeholders to come together to discuss important issues.

ASOC has followed closely the news on the ongoing climate and biodiversity crisis. CCAMLR has a clear role to play in responding to these global threats to the ocean. The scientific evidence is overwhelming and it is clear that we can no longer act as if marine protection can be addressed only after we have made sure to accommodate fishing and other activities. In fact, we must put protection and conservation first if we are to have any hope of maintaining the many ecosystem services provided by the ocean. ASOC will support CCAMLR in achieving the full and long-term conservation of the Southern Ocean, but urges CCAMLR to act swiftly.

Key Priorities and Activities of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition

Designating a representative system of marine protected areas in the Southern Ocean

ASOC believes that CCAMLR must act without delay to realise its commitment to a system of MPAs in the Southern Ocean. At this meeting, it should designate proposed MPAs in East Antarctica, the Western Weddell Sea, and the Antarctic Peninsula. ASOC also encourages the development of proposals for other planning domains. The science supporting the need for large, no-take MPAs with no duration is clear. ASOC hopes that Members can put aside short-term fisheries interests and enact meaningful MPAs (for additional information see CCAMLR-38/BG/44).

To promote the designation of MPAs, ASOC and its members have engaged in a variety of activities throughout the year. Some highlights of these activities are described below:

Representatives of ASOC and WWF participated in the Domain 1 Expert Group discussion on the CCAMLR website and appreciated the opportunity to discuss potential ways forward on the D1MPA with colleagues.

Pew supported a range of scientific research projects related to the development of MPAs and also supported Antarctica2020, a group of influencers including Slava Fetisov (former Russian Minister of Sport), Jose Maria Figueres (former president of Costa Rica) and Sylvia Earle (noted ocean explorer and conservationist), whose mission is to protect more than 7 million square kilometers of the ocean by 2020. Several of the influencers traveled to Antarctica in January 2019 with Chilean President Pinera to discuss the creation of MPAs in the Antarctic Peninsula.

Greenpeace released its 30 by 30 report, which articulates an ambitious vision for 30% of all the world's oceans, including the Southern Ocean, to be protected in no-take ocean sanctuaries by the year 2030. The report notes that “[t]he need is immediate and the means readily available. All that is required is the political will.”¹ Greenpeace has also embarked on a pole to pole ship tour to promote the designation of ocean sanctuaries, and plans to visit the Antarctic in early 2020.

WWF has supported conservation science projects over the last 12 months, studying krill, baleen whales, penguins and seals throughout the Antarctic, resulting in several publications in *Nature Climate Change*. These projects will also help inform MPA planning and future monitoring. In 2019, WWF has produced a new report highlighting the impacts of climate change within the Antarctic and the urgent nature-based solutions, including MPAs, that CCAMLR Members should make in response to the climate crisis.

ASOC, in conjunction with member organizations Greenovation Hub, Citizens' Institute for Environmental Studies-Korean Federation of Environmental Movements (CIES-KFEM), and Friends of the Earth – Japan, hosted MPA science workshops in Seoul, South Korea and Qingdao, China. The workshop in China was co-hosted by the First Institute of Oceanography. These workshops brought together scientists, policymakers, and NGOs to discuss the science and management of MPAs in East Asia and in Antarctica.

Enhancing the ecosystem-based management of the krill fishery

ASOC calls on CCAMLR and SC-CAMLR to take a number of actions to improve the management of the krill fishery, including that SC-CAMLR endorses the work plan proposed by WG-EMM and prioritizes implementation of the work plan (for further details see SC-CAMLR-38/BG/22).

To support EMM and SC-CAMLR in developing management measures for the krill fisheries, The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF (in conjunction with ARK) convened a krill workshop in Concarneau, France in June 2019. This workshop united stakeholders from industry, science, and NGOs and used an interactive format to stimulate lively discussions on possible approaches to the future management of the krill fishery. Over the course of a week, participants collaborated on the development of a vision for the krill fishery. Pew and WWF were pleased to support this workshop, the outcomes of which helped inform discussions at WG-EMM-2019 on krill fishery management.

Responding to climate change and ocean acidification

ASOC believes that the climate crisis is a matter of global urgency and deserves consideration in all relevant areas of CCAMLR's work. The designation of MPAs and the implementation of highly precautionary, ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management are vital to ensuring the resilience of Antarctic marine ecosystems in a changing climate. It is important for CCAMLR to put aside minor procedural issues and ensure that climate science is considered in all decisions.

Monitoring and controlling transshipments in the Convention Area

As highlighted last year in CCAMLR-XXXVII/BG37, CCAMLR has fallen behind some RFMOs in terms of having a robust and effective regime for monitoring and controlling transshipments. Moreover, the 2nd

¹ Greenpeace. 2019. 30X30: A Blueprint for Ocean Protection.
<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/publication/21604/30x30-a-blueprint-for-ocean-protection/>.

Performance Review Panel has identified transshipments as a “significant gap”. There is growing global interest in ensuring that transshipments cannot be used to avoid adherence to regulations. For CCAMLR to remain a leader in compliance, it must implement stricter controls for this activity, including monitoring of all transshipments and developing a standard reporting form (for further details see CCAMLR-38/BG/46).

The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF are part of a coalition that released a report in May of 2019 titled “Achieving Transparency And Combating IUU Fishing In RFMOs”, which, while not addressing CCAMLR directly, contains a number of useful recommendations for organizations with responsibilities for fisheries management and compliance. The report highlights that “clear rules for transshipment are essential for ensuring a strong, legal, and verifiable seafood supply chain” and suggests that if organisations are unable to enact strict monitoring and reporting requirements for transshipments, “transshipment at sea should be banned and limited to ports”.²

Coordinating effectively with adjacent RFMOs

ASOC has been following the issue of fishing on straddling stocks shared between the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) and CCAMLR. ASOC calls on CCAMLR and SIOFA to convene a technical workshop as soon as possible to implement the terms of the 2018 CCAMLR-SIOFA arrangement. Moreover, CCAMLR should urge SIOFA to adopt conservation measures equivalent to those in CCAMLR to eliminate any loopholes in terms of bycatch, and VME protection (for further information see CCAMLR-38/BG/45). Above all, CCAMLR should reaffirm the obligations of Members not to undermine the Convention in adjacent areas, and take immediate steps to ensure that harmonisation of the management measures of all shared populations of toothfish occurs, including additional technical workshops and datasharing.

Incorporating the role of whales into the work of CCAMLR

ASOC member organizations are supporting a number of projects related to understanding whale abundance, behaviour and foraging ecology with the hope that this will help progress krill fishery management and the development of MPAs. Besides fulfilling CCAMLR’s obligation to conserve ecosystems, protecting whales will protect the important ecosystem services whales provide, such as ocean fertilization and carbon sequestration. ASOC encourages CCAMLR to incorporate this and other research on cetaceans into SC-CAMLR advice and conservation measures (for further information see SC-CAMLR-38/BG/24).

Improving fishing vessel safety

ASOC participates in IMO meetings related to the Polar Code, and continues to advocate for the inclusion of fishing vessels in Phase 2 of the Code. ASOC encourages CCAMLR Members to engage fully in negotiations on Phase 2 at the IMO; to designate CCAMLR observer to the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee and relevant technical sub-committees to facilitate CCAMLR’s engagement in Phase 2; to support action through the IMO to address the threat from ship-sourced marine plastics; and to assist in the collection and analysis of data to inform management and mitigation of vessel impacts on marine mammals (for further details see CCAMLR-38/BG/47).

² Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Oceana, The Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, WWF. 2019. *Achieving Transparency and Combating IUU Fishing in RFMOs*. Available online: <<http://www.iuuwatch.eu/2019/06/new-report-achieving-transparency-and-combating-iuu-fishing-in-rfmos/>>.