

INTRODUCTION

The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), at its 1992 Meeting, adopted a Scheme of International Scientific Observation as required under Article XXIV of the Convention. The scheme is designed to gather and validate scientific information essential for assessing the status of populations of Antarctic marine living resources and for assessing the impact of fishing on those populations and populations of related and dependent species.

Information from the observer program is a fundamental part of the CCAMLR management approach. The scheme provides independent scientific data that are crucial input data for the assessment of target and by-catch fish species. It also allows the implementation and effectiveness of management measures to reduce incidental mortality associated with fisheries to be monitored. Fisheries in the CCAMLR region take place in areas where few national research surveys are undertaken and therefore the data from the scheme are also invaluable in understanding the ecosystem of the Southern Ocean.

In order to assist CCAMLR Members and their observers in planning observation programs and recording data, the CCAMLR Secretariat, in consultation with the Scientific Committee and its working groups, has developed this *Scientific Observers Manual*. The manual contains a number of guidelines for scientific observations and reference materials.

The components of the scheme that are most frequently updated, i.e. the observer cruise report and logbook forms and instructions are not included in this manual but are available in electronic format on the CCAMLR website (www.ccamlr.org) or by contacting the Secretariat.