

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE SCAR GROUP OF SPECIALISTS ON MARINE
LIVING RESOURCES OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

CAMBRIDGE 6-8 OCTOBER 1975

Present

Members of Group of Specialists:

Dr S Z El-Sayed	(Convenor) USA
Dr J A Gulland	ACMRR/FAO nominee
Dr J C Hureau	France
Dr R M Laws	UK
Dr T Nemoto	Japan
Dr G G Newman	South Africa
Dr A P Tomo	Argentina

By invitation:

Dr S J Holt	FAO
Mr W N Bonner	UK
Dr I Everson	UK
Dr M G White	UK
Dr O Mamayev	IOC

Members of Group of Specialists
who were unable to attend

Professor G Hempel	IABO
Professor G A Knox	New Zealand
Dr D B Siniff	USA

Introduction

Dr J A Gulland was appointed as Rapporteur.

The members of the Group were welcomed by the Chairman Dr El-Sayed, who reviewed the recent activities relevant to the groups responsibilities. These had increased with the growing concern about proper use of the Antarctic resources, and the interest in commercial utilization of previously unharvested resources such as krill. These large responsibilities had been recognized by SCAR, which at its Executive Meeting in June 1975 had up-graded the status of the group from a sub-committee of the SCAR Working Group on Biology to a SCAR Group of Specialists. As such it would report directly to SCAR although the Working Group on Biology would be kept informed.

Other International Bodies

Several international bodies have interests in the marine resources of the Southern Oceans. These include the United Nations and several bodies of the United Nations system - FAO (in respect of the possible supply of food); UNESCO and IOC (scientific research), UNDP (problem of developing the supply of food from the resources), and UNEP (environmental aspects), as well as some of their subsidiary bodies, particularly the Committee of Fisheries of FAO (the major forum for general discussions at the governmental level of problems of the utilization of the fish and other living aquatic resources), ACMRR (especially its working group on Marine Mammals) and

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IOC's ICG for the Southern Ocean. Intergovernmental bodies outside the UN system with interests include the Antarctic Treaty, International Whaling Commission and ICSEAF IUCN. Finally a number of non-governmental groups, particularly SCAR, but also SCOR and IABO have interests.

The interests of these groups were complementary rather than overlapping. Initially problems of duplication and possible conflict could be dealt with by full and prompt exchange of information between the different bodies concerning their activities.

Proposals for a study of marine living resources

Available information indicates that a number of countries have become interested in the possibilities of exploiting the marine living resources of the southern oceans, especially krill, squid and several species of fishes. As yet inadequate information exists concerning the stocks of these resources and their interaction with other elements of the Antarctic marine ecosystem. It is essential, therefore, that before significant exploitation commences, urgent steps be taken to further the understanding of the biological oceanography of the region and to assess the resource potential in order to provide the scientific basis for advice on wise management.

As a first step it will be necessary to review all existing information and to bring together knowledge of ongoing and presently planned programmes of marine biological investigations and to prepare practical proposals, which have reasonable prospects of achievement, for longer term cooperative investigations, which should include multiship studies. The group examined a draft outline for the implementation of these objectives, which would constitute the response to relevant IOC resolutions and Antarctic Treaty Consultative meeting recommendations. With some modifications this was adopted by the group and it was agreed that an annotated outline (Appendix 1) be submitted through SCAR for consideration by the Ninth Session of the IOC Assembly, 22 October - 4 November 1975.

It was agreed that authors should circulate first drafts to all members of the group (and if wished to any other scientist who might give useful comments) by 1 February 1976. Comments should be sent within six weeks to authors, who should send amended drafts to the Convenor by the end of April. The first draft of the complete proposal could then be circulated to those invited to the international meeting to be held in August by July 1976, and would be one of the basic documents for that meeting.

International Meeting

The Group welcomed the offer of the US to host a scientific meeting on the Marine Living Resources of the Southern Ocean in the United States in 1976. It felt that the most useful function of such a meeting would be to strengthen the work of the SCAR Group in its two main activities of reviewing the present knowledge of the resources and preparing a practical proposal for intensified research. The meeting will be held in the Summer Studies Centre of the US National Academy of Sciences, Woods Hole, Massachusetts, from 17 to 21 August 1976.

In view of the objectives of the meeting, and the fact that accommodation at the proposed meeting-place is limited, the group recommends that the meeting be restricted to no more than 60 specialists, all of whom would attend by invitation. If SCAR so wishes, the Group of Specialists would be prepared to serve as the Steering Committee for this meeting.

A draft timetable for the meeting was prepared (Appendix 3); the main documentation for the meeting will be the draft proposal referred to in the previous section together with drafts of reviews of the status of the main resources. The subjects of these reviews were identified as; seaweeds, krill, squid, other crustaceans, fish, birds and marine mammals. A review of the ecosystem dynamics would also be included. Responsibilities with the Group for ensuring the preparation of the drafts of these reviews is shown in Appendix 2.

In addition to the draft proposal for a programme any invited scientist having substantial suggestions for amendments or additions should submit these as short working papers for the meeting. Countries and institutions were also invited to submit working papers outlining briefly (in no more than a couple of pages) the support that might be available for Antarctic marine biological research over the next 5 years.

Three background papers would be commissioned for the meeting, giving information on international legal aspects; the prospects for different methods of utilization of krill, taking account of economic and other related factors; and the technological problems in harvesting Antarctic resources, particularly krill and squid. FAO was invited to arrange for suitable contributions on the last two items.

The Group established a preliminary list of about 50 specialists who should be invited to the meetings. Proposals for modifications to this list should be sent by members of the Group to the Convener. It was hoped that most of these could arrange for their attendance to be financed by their own institutions. However it is possible that some scientists who could make useful contributions to the meeting might not be able to find such support. The Group hoped that some finances (say \$20,000 - \$30,000) could be found to support these scientists who might otherwise be unable to attend. The Convener would consult with the SCAR Executive and the US National Academy of Sciences to seek such support.

When this preliminary list had been prepared by the Group of Specialists, copies will be sent to National Committees who should be invited to convey to the convener their suggestions for additional specialists who might be considered. In addition all international organizations with significant interests in the Antarctic marine living resources should be invited to designate participants to the meeting. These organizations will include SCOR, IABO, IUBS, IOC, FAO, (and CARBAS, and COMRR), IWC, SCOPE, IUCN, ICSEAF, UNEP, UNDP, World Bank, and the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific.

Other Matters

The next meeting of the Group will be held on 23-24 August 1976 immediately following the international meeting. It was felt that the group should include members from all countries with significant research programmes or interests in the resources. It was proposed that the Norwegian National

072
Committee should be approached to suggest a member. The continued absence of any Soviet scientist was greatly regretted, and approaches should be made to the relevant authorities in the USSR to encourage the participation of Soviet scientists in the activities of the Group and in the August 1976 meeting. The Group recommended to SCAR that Dr D Tranter (Australia) be added to the membership of the Group.

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