

Illegal fishing dominates 20th CCAMLR

A major agenda item for the 20th meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (Hobart, 22 October to 2 November 2001) was illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing for Patagonian toothfish. Several delegations reported sightings, arrests and prosecutions for IUU activities in the Southern Ocean. While difficult to estimate, IUU fishing in the CCAMLR area has increased significantly over the last year and remains at unacceptably high levels.

The meeting agreed to compulsory use of vessel monitoring systems to verify the area fished by a vessel, which if adopted should significantly reduce fraudulent reporting of Patagonian toothfish catch origins. This was a key goal for the Australian delegation.

The meeting also saw useful advancements in management of exploratory fisheries, including acknowledgment of the need for improved arrangements to minimise bycatch and commitment to further research. A program was endorsed to improve monitoring and assessment of fisheries' impact on Antarctic ecosystems.

Illegal fishers brought to account

Two Russian-flagged fishing vessels have been taken into custody by Australian defence and fisheries officers following their apprehension in Australian waters off the Territory of Heard and McDonald Islands, about 4000 km from the Australian mainland. The vessels apprehended, *Lena* (apprehended on 6 February) and *Volga* (7 February) are suspected of fishing illegally for Patagonian toothfish inside Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone around the territory. The *Lena* had previously been sighted in the Heard Island region late last year.

The vessels were brought to Fremantle, where three *Lena* officers pleaded guilty to charges under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* related to using a foreign vessel equipped to fish inside the Australian fishing zone. No pleas had been made at time of writing by officers from the *Volga*.



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

The apprehension of the *Lena* and the *Volga* are part of a much broader campaign by Australia and other members of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) to stamp out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which undermines international efforts to manage the toothfish resource sustainably.

All 24 CCAMLR members were represented, including Namibia at its first meeting since joining the commission. Other delegates represented Convention parties, states with an interest in Patagonian toothfish issues, intergovernmental organisations,

regional fisheries management organisations and conservation organisations.

The Commission meets again in Hobart from 21 October to 1 November 2002.

Gill Slocum, Antarctic Treaty and Government, AAD

Environmentally-friendly Swedish station minimises impact on Antarctica

Australian participation in the 2001–02 Swedish expedition to Dronning Maud Land provided an opportunity to see one of Antarctica's most innovative low-impact station designs, Wasa station on Basen Nunatuk, 120 km inland. The visit aimed to facilitate information exchange between the two Antarctic programs with emphasis on environmental management practices.

The 2001–02 Dronning Maud Land expedition was termed 'light-weight'. It was deployed via aircraft with minimal cargo and used skidoos as the main form of transport in the field. The group of 11 – expedition leader, doctor, three scientists, logistics expert, technician, glacier safety expert, environmental chemist, photographer and myself, as the



WARREN PAPWORTH

Wasa station on Basen Nunatuk, Dronning Maud Land. From left: portable laboratory, main station building, blue generator modules, workshop and storage area, blue and yellow portable laboratories, and red storage containers.

Australian representative – was flown on an Illyushin 76 from Cape Town to Novolazarevskaya and from there to the Swedish station, Wasa, on a Basler DC3 aircraft.

Wasa, completed in 1989 and designed to accommodate 16 people, combines good design with use of appropriate technology and operating procedures to minimise impact on

the Antarctic environment. Operation of the station over the two months of occupation in 2001–02 used about 300 kg of LPG and 28 litres of petrol.

Wasa's solar-gain design uses well-placed triple-glazed windows that can be opened in a variety of positions to ventilate and regulate heat within the building. Other Wasa design features include solar electricity panels, well insulated walls, floor and ceiling,

a heat exchanger to circulate air within the building, and a 'dry' toilet for human waste.

Adoption of these measures has resulted in an Antarctic station that is not only environmentally friendly, but also highly efficient, effective and comfortable.

Warren Papworth, Antarctic Treaty and Government, AAD