



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

WG-FSA-15/54

20 September 2015

Original: English

Proposed allocation of research catches in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2

WG-FSA

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Abstract

At WG-SAM-15, it was noted that 5 members, Australia, France, Japan, Korea and Spain had notified to conduct research in the exploratory toothfish fisheries off East Antarctica, covered by CCAMLR Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2. This proposal seeks to establish an arrangement whereby all notified members have a catch allocation to undertake research, thereby avoiding Olympic fishing.

Introduction

At WG-SAM-15, it was noted that 5 members, Australia, France, Japan, Korea and Spain had notified to conduct research in the exploratory toothfish fisheries off East Antarctica, covered by CCAMLR Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2. These fisheries are managed under Conservation Measures 41-11 (Division 58.4.1) and 41-05 (Division 58.4.2). The Working Group requested that the notified members coordinate to ensure that research to progress a stock assessment in this area would not be jeopardised by Olympic fishing (SC-CAMLR-XXXIV/05, paragraph 3.25). Furthermore, as the region has a strong seasonal pattern of sea-ice coverage, a narrow time of opportunity to conduct research is likely to exist in any season.

This proposal seeks to establish an arrangement whereby all notified members have a catch allocation to undertake research. However, if for any member other research priorities or operational issues interfere, those allocations can be released to be utilised for research by Members that have commenced research in the region. The intention is that this arrangement would be included in the text of the relevant Conservation Measures.

The general principle therefore is that all notifying members have a minimum research allocation at the start of the season to conduct meaningful research, such that the sum of the allocations do not exceed the precautionary catch limit for any SSRU in these Divisions (Table 1). Then after a nominated date (for example the 30th of January 2016) if any other Member's vessel had not commenced research in either Division, then their allocations for all SSRUs in both Divisions would be distributed evenly amongst members that had commenced their research. A Member could also notify at any other time that they had finished research, or no longer intended to conduct research, and again their allocation would be redistributed amongst remaining notified Members.

Allocations are not intended to be transferable. For example, if a member decides they no longer intend to conduct research in the coming season prior to 30th January, they cannot specify another Member's vessel to access that allocation.

In 2014/15, Spain had 42t of catch allocated in open SSRUs 58.4.1 C and G to conduct depletion experiments. In those SSRUs, Spain would retain an allocation of 42t. However, in the open SSRUs, Spain's allocation would be redistributed if the depletion experiment had not commenced by 30th of January.

Table 1. Proposed initial allocation to the five members that have notified to fish in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 in 2015/16.

Division	SSRU	2014 TAC	Australia	France	Japan	Korea	Spain	Total
58.4.1	C	257	53	53	53	53	42	257
	D	42	-	-	-	-	42	42
	E	315	78	78	78	78		312
	G	68	4	4	4	4	42	68
	H	42	-	-	-	-	42	42
58.4.2	E	35	8	8	8	8	-	32
Total		759	133	133	133	133	210	755

Examples of implementation

Example 1:

In SSRU E of Division 58.4.1, the current catch limit is 315 tonnes. At the start of the season, 4 members have initial allocations (Table 1) to conduct research as per the plans endorsed the Scientific Committee. Vessels from Japan, France and Korea enter at the end of December and commence research in SSRU E. Australia has not entered either 58.4.1 or 58.4.2 by 30th January so the research allocation increases to 78 tonnes in SSRU E for the three vessels present. On 2th February, France notifies that it has concluded research in and departs after catching 85 tonnes. The allocation to the remaining 2 vessels in SSRU E increases to 123 tonnes, and the catch limit in the other open SSRUs is allocated evenly between Korea and Japan. Korea and Japan notify that they have concluded their research after catching 80 and 115 tonnes respectively and then depart the area. Australia then enters SSRU E and conducts research using the 35 tonnes remaining, up to the total precautionary catch limit, and the remaining catch in the other open SSRUs.

Example 2:

France enters Division 58.4.1 and commences research in SSRU C. Spain enters Division 58.4.1 and commences fishing in SSRU G. France completes its initial allocation for SSRU C of 51 tonnes on the 13th of January and moves to SSRU E. Japan enters 58.4.2 on the 28th of January and commences research. No other members enters either Division by 30th of January, so the catch limits across the two divisions are allocated between Japan, France and Spain. France and Spain notify that they will not enter 58.4.2 this season, so Japan is able to conduct research using 35 tonnes in 58.4.2 SSRU E. Japan notifies that it will not be able to reach any of the SSRUs in 58.4.1, so Spain and France continue research with half of the

catch limit in each open SSRUs in 58.4.1. Spain also goes on to complete a depletion experiment in 58.4.1 H using its 42 t allocation.

Example 3:

Sea ice conditions are so poor that no research blocks are open until 20th February in either 58.4.1 or 58.4.2. Australia and Japan enter Division 58.4.1 and commence research in SSRU E. As no other vessels have entered the Division, and it is after 30th January, the catch limits in all open SSRUs in Divisions 58.4.1 and 58.4.2 are reallocated between Japan and Australia.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Taebin Jung and Malcolm McNeil for their assistance in developing this proposal.