



Toothfish positives overshadowed

COLTO members were pleased CCAMLR had recognised and reaffirmed the huge successes for toothfish fisheries in 2012, including continued low levels of seabird by-catch, international recognition of sustainable and well managed toothfish fisheries, and continued massive reduction of IUU fishing.”

Another positive was the release of a short DVD by Southern Seabird Solutions Trust called “*Seabird Safe Fishing – A Collaborative Approach*” during the meeting. Production of the video was supported by many seabird agencies, conservation groups, industry, government and CCAMLR. It promotes the achievements of toothfish fisheries at reducing seabird bycatch, and can be used as a model for other international fisheries organisations to reduce incidental bycatch of seabirds.

The few remaining IUU boats were again recorded in high seas areas, large distances away from legal fisheries, making control and surveillance of those boats very difficult for CCAMLR. COLTO reaffirmed its commitment to work to eliminate the remaining IUU fishing for Antarctic toothfish.

COLTO also highlighted that 4 toothfish fisheries – those in the Ross Sea, South Georgia, Heard Island, and Macquarie Island - had been independently certified as well managed and sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council. This further confirmed the positive results by CCAMLR at managing sustainable, healthy fisheries for toothfish.

Martin said however “...The disappointing lack of result on MPAs overshadows these many positives from CCAMLR. COLTO supported MPAs in the Ross Sea, and off the East Antarctic Continent, provided they were designed to maximise biodiversity conservation benefits, while minimising the negative impacts on legal industry.”

Martin noted that “...The differing proposals and views on MPAs became impossible for CCAMLR to reconcile. While disappointed, COLTO will continue to work with CCAMLR members and conservation groups over the coming year to achieve positive, lasting, MPAs in Antarctica waters.”

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More information

COLTO represents 39 member companies from 11 countries, and catch over 80% of all toothfish globally.

COLTO supports the implementation of MPAs in Antarctica, with effective balance between biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

A copy of the DVD “Seabird Safe Fishing – A Collaborative Approach” can be viewed on the Southern Seabird Solutions Trust website www.southernseabirds.org

More details on the reduction of IUU fishing for Patagonian toothfish, and continued low levels of Antarctic toothfish IUU fishing can be found on the COLTO website at www.colto.org.

IUU fishing for Patagonian toothfish caught over 30,000 tonnes in 1997 and has been reduced to an estimated few hundred tonnes in 2011/12. IUU fishing for Antarctic toothfish has remained relatively constant over recent years, around 1,000 tonnes. All IUU fishing catch estimates are included in scientific stock assessments, to ensure legal allowable catches of toothfish remain sustainable.

Combined estimates of seabird deaths as a result of IUU fishing, and legal fisheries, in 1997 resulted in over 100,000 (one hundred thousand) seabird deaths that year. At this CCAMLR meeting, as a result of elimination of IUU fishing, and seabird mitigation measures developed in toothfish fisheries, there were 57 (fifty-seven) recorded deaths of seabirds.

More information on Marine Stewardship Council certification of the 4 toothfish fisheries can be found at www.msc.org , including details on the additional 2 fisheries currently under full assessment by MSC (SARPC fishery at Kerguelen Island, and Falkland Islands fishery).

Over 30% of global toothfish catches are certified by MSC as well managed and sustainable.

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