

**COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ANTARCTIC  
MARINE LIVING RESOURCES  
THIRTY SECOND MEETING**

**OPENING SPEECH**

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONORABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**

**CCAMLR Secretariat Headquarters  
181 Macquarie Street  
Wednesday 23rd October 2013**

Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome to Hobart and to the 32<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting of the Commission.

Mr Chairman. This is the sixth occasion that I have had the honour of welcoming representatives from CCAMLR Members and other participants to the annual meeting of CCAMLR here in Hobart. Each year I have looked forward to this meeting with great pleasure although I must admit that I am concerned that, as each year passes, your meetings appear to come around more and more quickly! I can only imagine what it is like for all of you given your intimate involvement in the growing annual program of work of this important organisation!

As I have said to you in my previous welcome remarks CCAMLR's relatively brief history is highlighted by many achievements that few other organisations with similar mandates for ecosystem conservation and management can emulate. CCAMLR has set benchmarks to which others aspire.

My discussions with experts regarding CCAMLR's achievements make it clear that CCAMLR appears to have been able to achieve success where others

stumble because the key principle that has always underpinned those past achievements is CCAMLR's commitment to the use of the best available science.

Your collective efforts to manage fisheries in a precautionary manner on the basis of the best information and assessments that you had available; to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; to manage bottom fishing in the vicinity of vulnerable marine ecosystems and to address incidental mortality arising from fishing, for species such as seabirds, has justifiably resulted in world-wide acclaim. CCAMLR does indeed serve as a model for multilateral cooperation in addressing matters of shared interest such as these.

The way that you approached these challenges in the past has provided a solid foundation for addressing the challenges ahead; challenges that in all likelihood will continue to place significant demands on this organisation. But, tests build character and there is no shortage of character in CCAMLR's 32 year history.

I have listened with great interest to various reports I received of your meeting in Bremerhaven in July and I was aware that there remained points of difference at CCAMLR-XXXI last October in relation to the proposals that you were considering for the establishment of the MPA's.

I was most impressed to learn that you agreed to continue your discussions by convening a special meeting of both the Scientific Committee and the Commission in the intersessional period. The fact that this is only the second time CCAMLR has met outside its regular annual session in its 32 year history (and the first time for the Scientific Committee) indicates to me how much significance you placed on this matter as an organisation.

There is no doubt that there has been a mixed reception to the outcomes of your discussions in Bremerhaven. There is a vocal and politically active global community that is impatient with the exhaustive multilateral processes that are engaged in a consideration of these MPA proposals. This community is hoping that CCAMLR will be successful in adding to the South Orkney MPA, declared in 2009, and so demonstrate that there is significant progress in establishing a representative system of MPAs within the CCAMLR Convention Area.

However, others accept that CCAMLR's consideration of MPAs requires significant time to work through complex issues that engage a range of national interests. CCAMLR's previous work on IUU fishing, by-catch mitigation, and the introduction of new technologies to monitor fishing vessel positions in the early 2000s all bear testimony to the fact that, given time for concerns to be worked through, CCAMLR does produce robust outcomes that have significant positive benefits for the conservation of Antarctic marine resources.

So, while no MPAs were adopted at Bremerhaven, the process within CCAMLR has not stopped. In fact, I imagine that during the next 8 days you will again dedicate considerable time to this issue. I hope that you are able to find a way forward that is acceptable to you all as a community using the processes and diplomacy that CCAMLR has used extremely effectively during the last three decades to address some particularly challenging matters.

It appears to an observer like me that the matter of MPAs is another challenge that will prove that CCAMLR is an organisation that can take on big and complex issues and, given time, successfully resolve them to broad satisfaction and international acclaim.

That CCAMLR's work, and the desire to be associated with it, continues to attract international attention has again been demonstrated during the last 12 months with yet another country, Panama, acceding to the CAMLR Convention. This follows closely on the heels of Pakistan last year. I warmly welcome Panama to the CCAMLR community.

Increasing international interest in the Antarctic, and the work of this organisation in particular, is likely to continue to see the membership of CCAMLR gradually grow. Of course this is good news for Hobart as each October we welcome more international visitors to our city. But, of course, it also has implications for your efforts to maintain your responsible and precautionary approach to managing Antarctic marine resources to ensure our marine ecosystems are conserved and fisheries are managed sustainably with adequate consideration of uncertainties such as those arising from climate variability.

This increased interest in CCAMLR has, as you can see, made the renovations to this conference room necessary. You certainly now have a comfortable meeting space and facilities. I hope that it serves you well in your deliberations this week.

I know that in the past two weeks some of you have been involved in working group meetings in the lead up to the meeting of the Scientific Committee which commenced its deliberations on Monday. My welcome may be a little late for those of you who have been involved in those meetings. I am sorry about that. Nevertheless, I want to take this opportunity to reaffirm how pleased the people of Hobart are to have you all here again for the annual series of CCAMLR meetings. Over the last 32 years they have become an important feature in Hobart's annual calendar of events.

Mr Chairman, may I congratulate you on your appointment to the important office of chairman of CCAMLR and extend a special welcome to you to your first meeting as Chair of the Commission. And may I also say that I wish everyone all the very best for productive and positive deliberations during the next 8 days under your expert guidance.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you well and look forward to discussing progress with you all next Tuesday night when I have the pleasure of hosting you at Government House. I'll now leave you to continue with the Commission's agenda or return to the Scientific Committee meeting.

Thank you.