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Hake and penguins under spotlight at international review of South African fisheries

Annual International Stock Assessment Review Workshop, 1 – 5 December 2014, Room M212, Mathematics Building, Upper Campus, UCT

Six leading international fisheries scientists are due to arrive in Cape Town this weekend to conduct an annual review of the analyses used to provide scientific advice for the management of South Africa's major fisheries.

Starting on 1 December 2014, the review workshop, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the National Research Foundation, takes place at the University of Cape Town and concludes with a presentation by the six-member panel of their findings and recommendations at 15h30 on Friday, 5 December 2014.

The scientists making up the review panel are:

- ❖ Alistair Dunn (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, New Zealand);
- ❖ Jason Link (National Marine Fisheries Service, USA);
- ❖ André Punt (University of Washington, USA);
- ❖ Tony Smith (Panel Chair, Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation, Australia);
- ❖ Gunnar Stefansson (University of Iceland); and
- ❖ Robin Waples (National Marine Fisheries Service, USA).

This year's discussions will focus on hake, which is South Africa's most important and valuable fishery, upon which thousands of jobs in the Western Cape depend. The group will review research related to the possible sharing of hake populations with Namibia, and the implications that might have for joint decision making for hake resources in the region.

The other major fishery that will come under consideration is that for sardine and anchovy. Firstly, there is the question of how the management of the sardine resource can be improved, given that it probably consists of a west and a south-coast stock, rather than comprising a single unit as previously supposed. Secondly,

there are also associated implications for the recovery of the African penguin population, which has decreased rapidly since the turn of the century, being currently at its lowest recorded abundance, and which relies primarily on sardine and anchovy for food. The panel will review results from an initiative involving closures to purse-seine fishing in the vicinity of islands containing penguin breeding colonies, which aims to ascertain whether this assists penguin recovery.

Technical documents that will be considered at the workshop can be found at <http://www.mth.uct.ac.za/maram/publications.php?year=2014&class=ws>.

Times & venue details

The review workshop takes place in Room M212, Mathematics Building, Upper Campus, from 9h00 to 17h30 daily, except on Thursday, 4 December 2014, when the discussion will end at 12h30 to give the panel time to prepare their report. While most discussions will be fairly technical, the panel's presentation at 15h30 on Friday, 5 December 2014, will be on a lay level. This presentation takes place in Room M304, also in the Mathematics Building.

For enquiries: Please contact Di Loureiro at 021 650 2340 (until 14h00) or di.lapidoloureiro@uct.ac.za, or Riana Geldenhuys at 021 650 4846, 082 460 5554 or riana.geldenhuys@uct.ac.za. During the course of the workshop itself, any enquiries relating to the penguin discussions should be made directly to the panel chair (Tony Smith) during meeting breaks.

About the review panel

Alistair Dunn is a Principal Scientist in stock assessment modelling at the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) in New Zealand. He leads NIWA's Fisheries Assessment and Monitoring Programme, and coordinates NIWA's Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries project under the Fisheries Impacts Programme. He is also an active contributor to fisheries assessments in the Antarctic through the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

Jason Link is a Senior Scientist for Ecosystem-based management at the National Marine Fisheries Service in the USA. He is the agency's most senior authority on ecosystem science, conducting research and coordinating activities of science support for effective ecosystem-based management. He is a recipient of the Fisheries Society of the British Isles Medal and has written one of the leading books on dealing with trade-offs in marine fisheries.

A UCT alumnus, **André Punt** heads the world's leading Fisheries Science Department at the University of Washington in the USA. He is a recipient of prestigious awards from both the Australian Society for Fish Biology and the American Fisheries Society for his contributions to fisheries science.

Tony Smith was recently appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (the country's third-highest national honour) for his contribution to fisheries

management. He is also a longstanding member of the Marine Stewardship Council's technical advisory panel.

Gunnar Stefansson has been Iceland's leading fisheries assessment scientist for a long period, and has also played a major role in European fisheries. He is the scientific leader of the MareFrame project, one of the largest European Union marine fisheries research programmes which aims to implement an ecosystem approach to fisheries in European waters.

Robin Waples is internationally recognised for applying the concept of evolutionarily significant units to real-world problems in conservation, and for using evolutionary principles to inform conservation of marine and anadromous species. His work on conservation has been recognised by major awards from the Society for Conservation Biology and the American Fisheries Society, and by election to the Washington State Academy of Sciences in the USA.

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Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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