3.4 STATE OF MARINE RESOURCES

3.4.1 Hake

The spawning biomass of hake was estimated at 1.3 million tonnes and the allocated TAC for the 2004/5 fishing season was 195,000 tonnes.

In addition, the research survey conducted in January/February 2004 estimated very high recruitment (2 year-old fish, spawned during 2002). This suggests that a strong cohort is expected to recruit to the fishable component of the commercial fishery during the 2005/6 fishing season, which gives reason for future optimism.

3.4.2 Monkfish

Four dedicated monkfish biomass surveys have been conducted since 2000. The monkfish stock is surveyed annually at the end of each year. The fishery Catch per Unit Effort and surveys data indicate that there is a downward trend in the biomass of monkfish and that catches have to be slightly reduced to counter for this. The stock assessment model estimate for the fishable biomass in 2004 at around 35,000 tonnes.

3.4.3 Horse mackerel

The 2004 acoustic abundance survey estimate this resource at 1.4 million tonnes, comprising of 47% juvenile and 53% adult fish. The size distribution ranged from 5 to 43 cm with the majority of fish between 10 and 24 cm total length. The distribution pattern was similar to that of previous years with fish occurring mainly north of 21°00’ South latitude. Adult fish were found mostly offshore, while juveniles were found in inshore waters.

3.4.4 Pilchard

During the October 2004 stock survey, pilchard were found in patchy aggregations in central Namibia extending into southern Angola. The proportion of the stock found in southern Angola had increased to 35% of the total biomass. The pilchard stock was estimated at approximately 327,000 tonnes. The stock was composed of two age classes, adults and juveniles. The adult stock decreased from 320,000 tonnes estimated in October 2003 to 147,000 tonnes in a period of one year. Despite this decrease, recruitment from the 2003/2004 spawning season was very good and the juveniles (with a modal length at 17 cm) accounted for about 60% of the total biomass estimated in October 2004. A TAC of 25,000 tonnes was granted for 2004.
3.4.5 Orange roughy

In July 2004 a biomass assessment survey of the Johnies and Frankies Quota Management Areas was conducted. The survey covered the spawning period of orange roughy, during which time orange roughy aggregate, thus increasing the probability of surveying a larger proportion of the spawning (mature) biomass.

The acoustic survey of Frankies indicated a biomass of 4,070 tonnes, which was slightly lower than in 2003. The swept area survey of Johnies estimated the biomass at 5,870 tonnes, which is six times higher than in 2003.

3.4.6 Deep sea red-crab

The estimated total biomass of deep-sea red crab during 2004 was between 10,000 and 13,000 tonnes. The biomass of this species has remained relatively stable since 1993. The allocated TAC for the 2004 season was increased from 2,000 tonnes in 2003 to 2,200 tonnes in 2004. The annual deep-sea red crab survey of 2004 included the Angolan stock. This will allow an assessment of the combine Angolan and Namibian stock in future.

3.4.7 Rock lobster

The Namibian rock lobster is shared with South Africa. The two countries share a common larval pool, since adult lobsters do not tend to migrate along the shore. Stock assessment is based on commercial catch and effort data as well as lobster length frequencies, and annual recruitment surveys. During the 2003/2004 commercial season the lobster fishing fleet again did not succeed in filling the lobster TAC, similar to the previous three seasons. This was again mainly due to high swell conditions (and possibly also due to the high bottom dissolved oxygen levels, resulting in adult lobsters having migrate to deeper waters and thus out of reach of the fleet). Catch per unit effort was lower to that of the previous season, and about one half of the TAC remained uncaught.

Cape fur seals

During 2004, a rolling TAC was set for the period 2004-2006. The harvesting TAC was set at 60,000 pups and 5,000 bulls.

The harvest figures for the 2004 sealing season was 28,496 pups and 3,415 bulls.