

Some of the resolutions reached by the Committee at their plenary sessions have been communicated to the Minister. Others, including some which require further consideration, will be forwarded for the Minister's decisions which will be promulgated in due course.

As we go to print the Minister has announced that he has accepted, in principle, a far-reaching recommendation that restrictions be imposed on the number of boats which will be permitted to fish for crayfish next year. The administrative details necessary to give effect to this decision have yet to be decided, but the Minister has announced his intention to restrict boat numbers to give all concerned due warning.

WHALES AND TUNA

We are indebted to C.S.I.R.O. whaling officer K. Godfrey for reports on whaling activities in this State. In common, he says, with most other countries which are members of the International Whaling Commission, a whale marking programme is being pursued in our waters. During the recent humpback season, two chasers of the Nor'-West Whaling Company worked on behalf of his Division and tagged 16 humpbacks. The principal targets were cows with calves, for they will give the most information in later years. Undersized males and females were also marked. Tagging of sperm whales is being continued on behalf of the Division by the Cheyne Beach Whaling Company, of Albany, and will continue until the season ends next December.

Tags Recovered

Mr Godfrey says that eight marks have been recovered from numbers 4 and 5 whaling stocks this year. Three were Australian marks which had been fired in local waters, while four were Russian and one a Japanese which, presumably, had been fired in the Antarctic. Tagging details have not yet been received.

Rare Whale Sighted

A specimen of a right whale of an estimated length of 70 feet, with a 20-foot calf, was sighted in the last week of August by chasers operating west of Bernier and Dorre Islands. This species is extremely rare and is usually classed as virtually extinct.

Tuna Sighted

Both 'planes and chaser vessels of the Nor'-West Whaling Company reported sighting reasonable schools of yellowfin and northern bluefin tuna during the humpback season. All the sightings were made within a radius of 150 miles from Carnarvon.

(192)

Concluding an interesting report, Mr Godfrey tells us that on his next visit to the Albany whaling station he will be accompanied by Professor N.F. Stanley, the authority on ARBOR virus diseases, who is interested in the possible use of sperm whale blood plasma in virus studies.