

To:

Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Legal Counsel

Dear Mr. Serpa Soares,

On behalf of the Argentine-Uruguayan Comisión Técnica Mixta del Frente Marítimo (CTMFM-Joint Technical Commission of Maritime Front) I have the pleasure to inform that Division on recent progress achieved by our Organization in relation with the implementation of some specific provisions of the UNGA Resolution 73/124.

The CTMFM, the only standing regional fishery body in the SW Atlantic, is an intergovernmental organization established for over 40 years with a mandate to promote the conservation, preservation and adopt measures for the rational exploitation of live resources and the protection of the marine environment in waters of mutual interest for Argentina and Uruguay. In exercise of the regulatory powers conferred to the organization, the CTMFM establishes science based management and conservation measures. In addition the Commission sponsors scientific workshops, symposia and training courses as well as fishery and oceanography surveys to monitor trends in abundance of commercial and non-commercial species and conduct supplementary ecosystem studies.

With reference to paragraph 185 (Section IX, Marine Environment and Marine Resources) the CTMFM, in compliance with Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has adopted a set of management rules for the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources of the area. At present over 90% of the fishery resources caught in the Argentine-Uruguayan Common Fishing Zone (CFZ) are regulated by specific management measures applying ecosystem approaches to avoid overfishing. The analyses of the state of these populations indicate that 70 % of the assessed stocks are already being fished within biologically sustainable levels. A very successful recovery plan for the hake resource of the area, a population overexploited in the past, was launched in 2013.

Under the same section, with reference to par. 209 *et seq.* we are pleased to communicate that our organization has reassumed in 2017 the activities of the Marine Environment Working Group with specific instructions to develop a multidisciplinary research program, involving several scientific institutions of the region, to address environmental concerns such as pollution including microplastics, climate change, loss of biodiversity, etc. Environmental surveying of the CFZ has been reassumed and included in the stock assessment scientific cruises systematically carried out every year on board research the vessels of both countries.

With reference to par. 252 (Section X, Marine Biodiversity) in June 2018 the CTMFM has approved and adopted a Regional Plan of Action for the conservation and sustainable use of sharks in the SW Atlantic. The CFZ is a relevant area for sharks and rays biodiversity and endemism. Over a hundred species have been cited for the area, out of which 50% are found permanently in the area. As part of the activities included in the plan taxonomic keys and field

identification guides have been prepared to assist in the differentiation and classification of the sharks and rays of the CFZ. These tools proved to be very useful in the task to exchange and disseminate knowledge with fishermen and raise community awareness in relation with the conservation and sustainable use of these species.

In relation to the support given by the CTMFM to the conservation of biodiversity and, in particular, in the field of marine taxonomy, we are also pleased to communicate the publication of an annotated catalogue and bibliography of the crabs, shrimps and lobsters of the SW Atlantic. Volume 26 of the CTMFM publication FRENTE MARITIMO includes color plates illustrating 68 out of 211 species of decapod crustaceans listed for the area.

Finally, with reference to par. 335 (Section XIII, Regional Cooperation) the CTMFM informs of a series of regional capacity building initiatives carried out through international cooperation in 2017 and 2018, in relation with the sustainable use of fish resources including methods to evaluate and apply management strategies for data-limited fisheries.

This is, in brief, a summary of the recent contributions of our organization to the implementation of UNGA Resolution 73/124,

Yours sincerely,

Ambassador Roberto García Moritán
President of the CTMFM