

Implementation of paragraphs 113, 117 and 119 to 124 of resolution 64/72 and paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of resolution 66/68, addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks

Report of Chile

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The General Fisheries and Aquaculture Law prohibits extractive fishing activities with gear, equipment and other fishing implements, which affect the seabed, in the territorial sea within a strip of the first sea mile from the coast and in inland waters. The Law also states that no bottom fishing will be allowed on seamounts, unless there is scientific research that demonstrates that the fishing activity does not generate adverse effects on the vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) present in the area. In order to implement these provisions of the General Fisheries and Aquaculture Law, a regulation is being developed to address issues related to VME: a VME Operational Protocol and the VME Evidence Protocol; the definition of species that constitute VME and the related threshold values; and the requirements for conducting research activities on seamounts and in areas subject to the VME Operational Regime.

In regard to the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME), a ban on bottom fishing activities was established in 2015 on the 117 seamounts within Chilean jurisdictional waters, covering an area of 68,065 km².

In addition, Chile has created four large-scale marine protected areas, containing no-take areas larger than 100,000 km², which includes several seamounts: Motu Motiro Hiva Marine (150,000 km²), Nazca-Desventuradas Marine Park (297,518 km²), Juan Fernandez Marine Park created in February 2018 (262,000 km²) and Diego Ramirez Islands-Drake Passage Marine Park created in January 2019 (144,390 km²).

Chile, as Member of CCAMLR and SPRFMO, fully implements their conservation and management measures for bottom fishing. Chile currently authorizes one fishing vessel for toothfish in CCAMLR subarea 48.3 and during 2019, authorized a fishing vessel to undertake exploratory fishing on toothfish in Ross Sea subareas 88.1 and 88.2. During 2020, a Chilean flagged fishing vessel will undertake an exploratory fishing on toothfish in four blocks of the SPRFMO Convention area, in Southeast Pacific. This exploratory fishing will last 3 years, according to SPRFMO Conservation and Management Measure 14d-2020, and among other, will provide information on the bathymetry of the fishable area.