



MarinTrust Standard V2

By-product Fishery Assessment Argentine hake (*Merluccius hubbsi*) in FAO 41, north of 41°S

MarinTrust Programme

Unit C, Printworks

22 Amelia Street

London

SE17 3BZ

E: standards@marin-trust.com

T: +44 2039 780 819

Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>)
	Geographical area:	FAO 41, north of 41°S
	Country of origin of the product:	Argentina Flag countries: Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina
	Stock:	Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in north of 41°S
Date	18 October 2023	
Report Code	ARG01	
Assessor	Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Argentina Flag countries: Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	NA	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Coomarpes Ltda, Agustiner SA			
Country: Argentina			
Email address:		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Trust Certification/ NSF	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Ana Elisa Almeida Ayres	Matthew Jew	0.5	Surveillance 2
Assessment Period	October 2023 – October 2024		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>)
Stock	Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in north of 41°S
Fishery Location	FAO 41, north of 41°S
Management Authority (Country/ State)	Federal Fisheries Council (CFP), Joint Technical Commission for the Maritime Front (CTMFM), Uruguayan Directorate of Aquatic Resources (DINARA), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing (Argentina), Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (Brazil)
Gear Type(s)	Demersal trawl
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with assessor's recommendation
Recommendation	APPROVED

Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
<p>If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species - IUCN's Red List, or if it appears in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora - CITES appendices, it cannot be approved for use as MarinTrust raw material. Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) is not categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN's Red List and does not appear in CITES appendices; therefore, Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) is eligible for approval for use as MarinTrust by-product raw material.</p> <p>The Joint Technical Commission of the Maritime Front - CTMFM ("<i>Comisión técnica mixta del frente marítimo</i>", in Spanish), a binational entity from Argentina and Uruguay, is responsible for establishing catch levels for Argentine hake within the Common Fishing Zone (ZCP) and distribute this determined value among both countries. The northern stock (north of 41°S) is distributed outside the ZCP and inside the exclusive economic zone of Argentina and Uruguay. CTMFM is also responsible for determining the limit and target reproductive biomass reference points for the stock. Thus, the stock is subject to a specific management regime and reference points are defined, therefore it was assessed under Category C.</p> <p>Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment, and it PASSES Clause C1.1. The stock is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have biomass above the limit reference point, it PASSES Clause C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO area 41 north of 41°S is APPROVED for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v2.3 by-products standard.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The assessor correctly classified Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO area 41 north of 41°S as Category C, the stock is subject to a specific management regime and reference points are defined.</p> <p>Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment process so the stock PASSES Clause C1.1. The Argentine hake northern stock is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point in multiple biomass models. Thus there is high confidence that the reproductive biomass (BR) is above LRP, so it PASSES Clause C1.2.</p> <p>Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO area 41 north of 41°S passes both clauses (C1.1 and C1.2) and therefore should be approved under the MarinTrust Standard v.2.3.</p>
Notes for On-site Auditor
N/A

Species Categorisation

NB: If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, or if it appears in CITES Appendix 1, it **cannot** be approved for use as a MarinTrust raw material.

IUCN Red list Category

By-product material from a species listed by IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature) under the Red List for the following categories shall immediately fail the assessment;

- EXTINCT (E) AND EXTINCT IN THE WILD (EW)
- CRITICALLY ENDANGERED (CR) facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.
- ENDANGERED (EN) facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.

By-product material may be used from the following categories provided that all clauses in the MarinTrust standard are passed.

- VULNERABLE (VU) facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.
- NEAR THREATENED (NT) does not qualify for above now, but is close or is likely to qualify for, a threatened category in the near future.
- LEAST CONCERN (LC) Widespread and abundant.
- DATA DEFICIENT (DD) and NOT EVALUATED (NE)

Table 3 Species Categorisation Table

Common name	Latin name	Stock	Management	Category	IUCN Red List Category ¹	CITES Appendix 1 ²
Argentine hake	<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>	Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO area 41, north of 41°S	Federal Fisheries Council (CFP), Joint Technical Commission for the Maritime Front (CTMFM), Uruguayan Directorate of Aquatic Resources (DINARA), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing (Argentina), Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (Brazil)	C	NE	No

¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

² <https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

CATEGORY C SPECIES

In a by-product assessment, Category C species are those which are subject to a species-specific management regime and are usually targeted species in fisheries for human consumption.

Clause C1 should be completed for each Category C species. If there are no Category C species in the fishery under assessment, this section can be deleted. Where a species fails this Clause, it should be assessed as a Category D species instead.

Species Name		Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>)	
C1	Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements		
	C1.1	Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	Yes
	C1.2	The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy), OR removals by the fishery under assessment are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.	Yes

Clause outcome: Pass

C1.1 Fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process, OR are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.

The stock assessment was performed using statistical catch of age models with the platform AD- Model Builder. Catches of Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina are represented in Figure 1.

Joint Technical Commission for the Maritime Front - CTMFM (*“Comisión técnica mixta del frente marítimo”*, in Spanish), advises that the catch for this stock does not exceed 60,700 tonnes in 2023 to allow for reproductive biomass recovery to the limit reference point of 150,000 tonnes in mid-term (Irusta et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the Federal Fisheries Council (CFP) established a total allowable catch (TAC) of 37,000 tons for the stock in 2023 (Boletín Oficial, 2022).

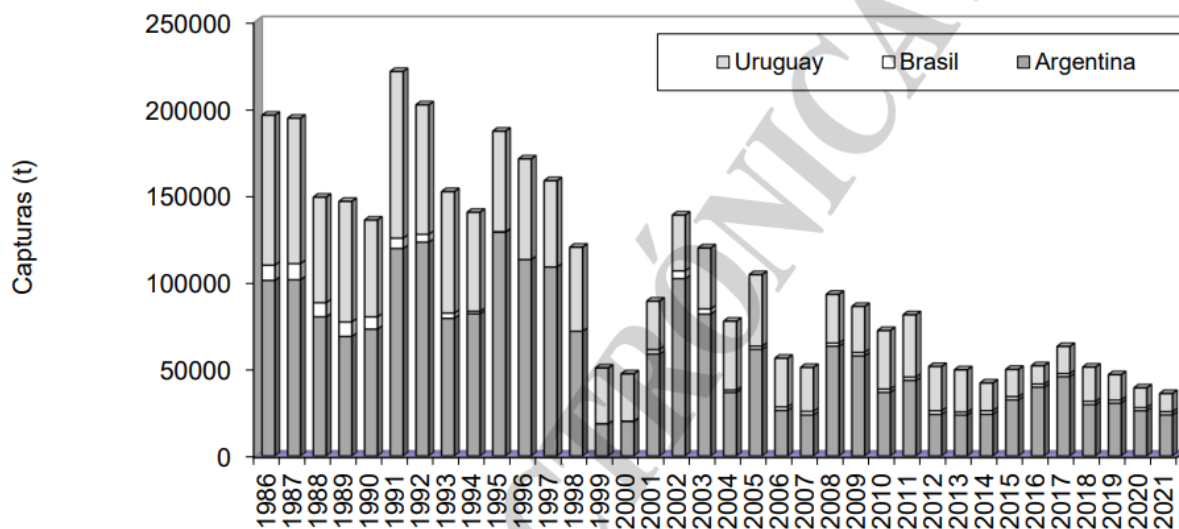


Figura 1. Capturas declaradas de merluza por Argentina, Uruguay y Brasil en el período 1986-2021, correspondientes al efectivo norte de 41° S.

Figure 1. Commercial catches from 1986 to 2020 for each flag state for the hake stock north of 41°S (Irusta et al., 2022).

Therefore, fishery removals of the species in the fishery under assessment are included in the stock assessment process. The fishery PASSES clause C1.1.

C1.2 The species is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference point (or proxy), OR removals by the fishery under assessment are considered by scientific authorities to be negligible.

CTMFM established a reproductive biomass-specific limit reference point (LRP) of 150,000 tonnes and target reference point of 230,000 tonnes. Models 2 and 3 indicate that the reproductive biomass (BR) is below the target reference point and very close to the LRP. While model 1 is above the LRP and target reference point (Irusta et al. 2022; Figure 2).

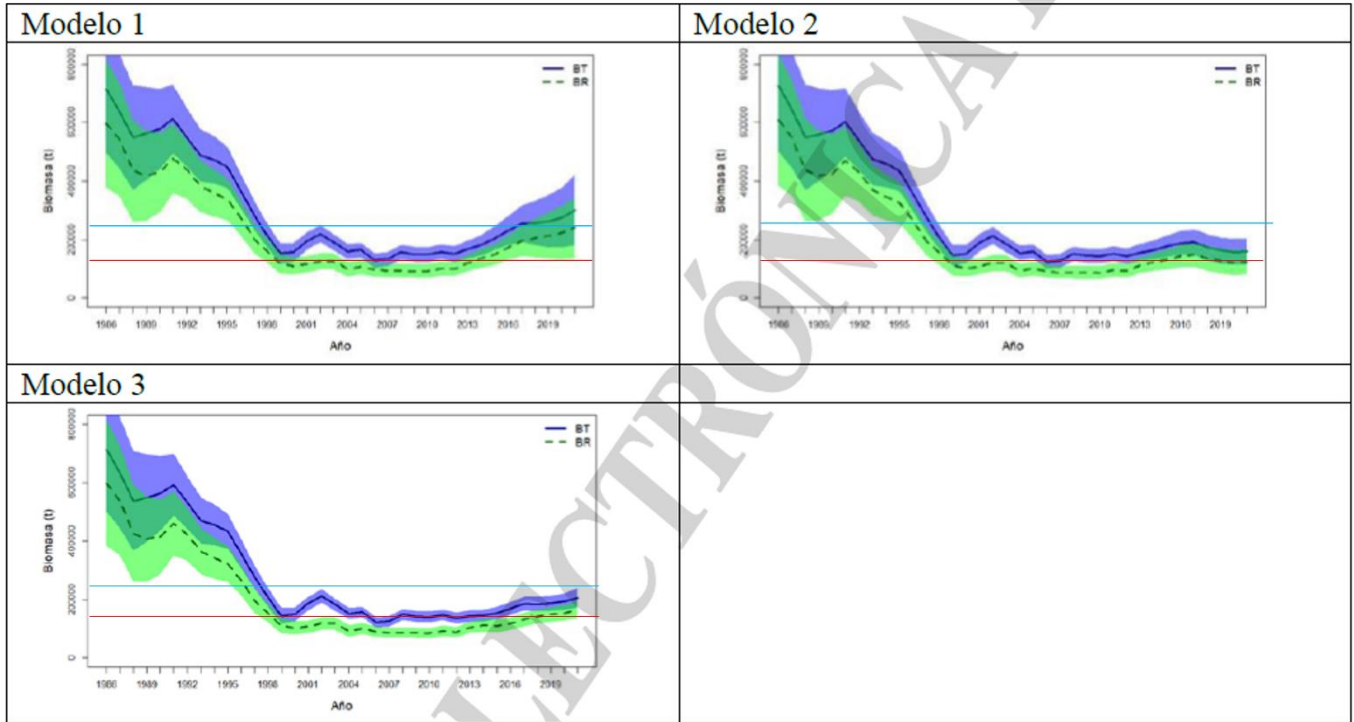


Figura 15. Biomasa Total y Reproductiva del período 1986-2021 estimada por los modelos. Merluza efectivo norte de 41° S.

Figure 2. Long term trends for total biomass (BT) and reproductive biomass (BR) from 1986 to 2021. The horizontal lines represent the limit reference point (LRP) [red; 150,000 tonnes] and target reference point (blue; 230,000 tonnes) for the reproductive biomass indicators. Adapted from Irusta et al (2022).

Therefore, the stock is considered, in its most recent stock assessment, to have a biomass above the limit reference points (or proxy). Thus, the fishery PASSES clause C1.2.

References

Boletín Oficial. 2022. Resolución 21/2022. <https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/277612/20221213>
 Irusta, C.G., Di Marco, E. y Wohler O.C. 2022. Evaluación de la abundancia del efectivo Norte de 41° S de la merluza (*Merluccius hubbsi*). Estimación de la captura biológicamente aceptable para el año 2023. Informe Técnico Oficial. N°54/2022. <https://marabiertonew.inidep.edu.ar/server/api/core/bitstreams/e51159d9-ea68-4921-b954-21224cb7e949/content>

Links

MarinTrust Standard clause	1.3.2.2
FAO CCRF	7.5.3
GSSI	D.3.04, D5.01