



## MarinTrust Standard V2

# By-product Fishery Assessment Argentine hake (*Merluccius hubbsi*) in FAO 41, southwest Atlantic

**MarinTrust Programme**

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**Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome**

Fishery Under Assessment	Species:	Argentine hake, <i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>
	Geographical area:	FAO Area 41 (Southwest Atlantic)
	Country of origin of the product:	Argentina (Flag country: Argentina)
	Stock:	Southern stock: South of 41°S
Date	14 December 2022	
Report Code	ARG14	
Assessor	Matthew Jew	
Country of origin of the product - PASS	Argentina (Flag country: Argentina)	
Country of origin of the product - FAIL	NA	

Application details and summary of the assessment outcome			
Company Name(s): Agustiner S.A			
Country: Argentina			
Email address: sdalmasso@agustiner.com		Applicant Code:	
Certification Body Details			
Name of Certification Body:		Global Trust Certification	
Assessor	Peer Reviewer	Assessment Days	Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval
Matthew Jew	Léa Lebechnech	1 day	Initial
Assessment Period	To December 2022		

Scope Details	
Main Species	Argentine hake, <i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>
Stock	Southern stock: South of 41°S
Fishery Location	FAO Area 41 (Southwest Atlantic)
Management Authority (Country/ State)	<i>Instituto Nacional de Investigacion y Desarrollo Pesquero (INIDEP), Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca (Argentina).</i>
Gear Type(s)	Demersal trawl
Outcome of Assessment	
Peer Review Evaluation	Agree with the assessor's recommendation of approval
Recommendation	APPROVED

## Table 2. Assessment Determination

Assessment Determination
<p>If any species is categorised as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, or if it appears in the CITES appendices, it cannot be approved for use as Marin Trust raw material. Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) is neither listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered on IUCN’s Red List, nor listed in CITES appendices; therefore, Argentine hake is eligible for approval for use as Marin Trust by-product raw material.</p> <p>There are two stocks of Argentine hake in FAO 41 that are delineated by latitude 41°S. The northern stock (north of 41°S) occurs in Argentina and Uruguay’s respective EEZ and the Common Fishing Zone (ZCP) near the Rio de la Plata. The Joint Technical Commission of the Maritime Front (CRMFM), 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 southern stock (south of 41°S) is distributed outside the ZCP and completely inside of Argentina’s EEZ. Argentina <i>Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganaderia y Pesca</i> works with <i>Instituto Nacional de Investigacion y Desarrollo Pesquero</i> (INIDEP) to determine 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 in FAO Area 41 (Southwest Atlantic) is <b>APPROVED</b> for the production of fishmeal and fish oil under the current MarinTrust v 2.0 by-products.</p>
Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments
<p>The internal peer reviewer agrees with the assessor’s determination, who correctly assessed Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO 41 under Category C, as reference points are defined to assess status of stock relative to, and there is a specific management regime in place.</p> <p>Fishery removals are included in the stock assessment and the stock is considered, in its most recent assessment, to have biomass above the proxy biomass reference point, so it PASSES Clauses C1.1 and C1.2.</p> <p>Therefore, Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>) in FAO 41 is <b>APPROVED</b>.</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 <sup>1</sup>	CITES Appendix 1 <sup>2</sup>
Argentine hake	<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>	Southern stock: South of 41°S	<i>Instituto Nacional de Investigacion y Desarrollo Pesquero (INIDEP), Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca (Argentina).</i>	C	NE	No

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <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.

<b>Species Name</b>		<b>Argentine hake (<i>Merluccius hubbsi</i>)</b>	
<b>C1</b>	<b>Category C Stock Status - Minimum Requirements</b>		
	<b>C1.1</b>	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
	<b>C1.2</b>	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
			<b>Clause outcome: PASS</b>

**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 is assessed using two models: a statistical model structured by age (ECE) and the analysis of virtual populations with survivor estimate (SPV-XSA). Both models incorporate commercial landings into the model and forecast (Irusta et al. 2021). Long-term catch data are presented in Figure 1.

In order to sustain the recovery of the reproductive biomass of the southern hake stock in volume and composition, it is suggested that the Acceptable Biological Catch by 2022 is around 300,000 t (Santos and Villarino, 2021).

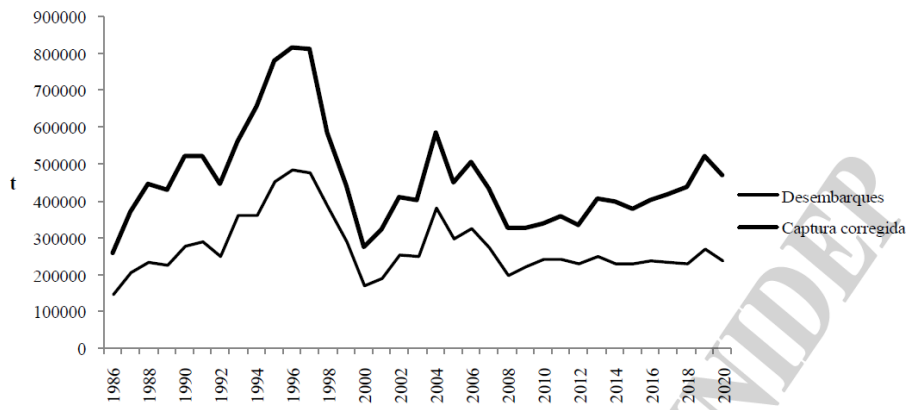


Figure 1. Total catches from 1986 to 2020 for the hake stock south of 41°S. Bold line represents landings and non-bold line represents corrected catch.

Source: Santos and Villarino, 2021

**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.**

There are two Objective Biological Points (PBO) established for the southern stock. The first is where reproductive biomass is greater than or equal to 600,000 t (LRP), which was the estimate stock biomass in the 1990’s. The second PBO is where reproductive biomass is greater than or equal to 800,000 t, which is closer to what would be found in the population when

fishing on this stock began. The most recent stock assessment indicates that reproductive biomass (BR) is below the second PBO but above the LRP (Santos and Villarino, 2021; Figure 2).

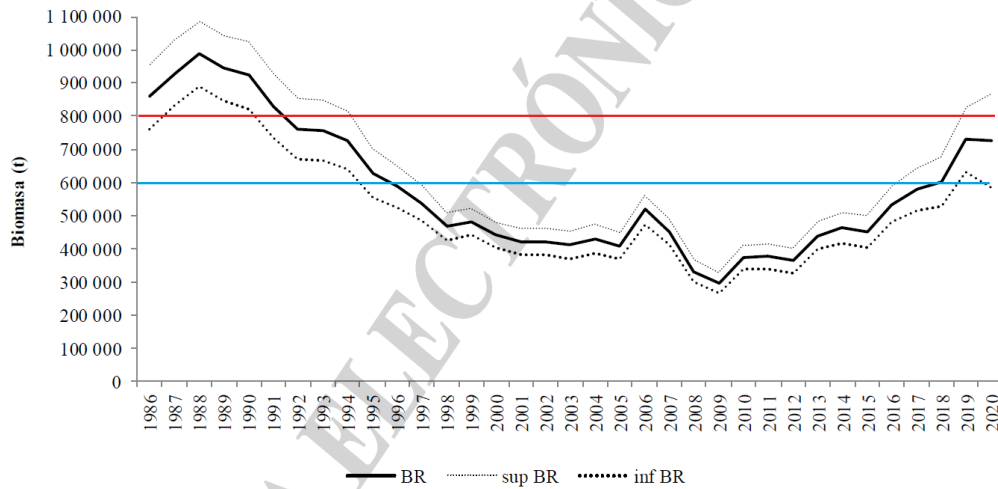


Figure 2. Long term trends for reproductive biomass (BR) and 95% confidence interval from 1986 to 2020. The horizontal lines represent the LRP (blue; 600,000 tonnes) and target reference point (red; 800,000 tonnes) for the reproductive biomass indicators.

Source: Santos and Villarino, 2021

**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

Santos BA, Villarino MF. 2021. *Evaluación del estado de explotación del efectivo sur de 41° S de la merluza (Merluccius hubbsi) y estimación de la captura biológicamente aceptable para 2022*. INIDEP Informe Técnico Oficial 041/2021. Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca: Available by request: <https://www.iniddep.edu.ar/solicitud-de-informes-catalogo.html>

Froese, R. and D. Pauly. Editors. 2022. FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication. [www.fishbase.org](http://www.fishbase.org), (06/2022). <https://www.fishbase.se/summary/Merluccius-hubbsi.html>.

#### Links

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