

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARGENTINA FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE CONCEPT NOTES OF THE INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES OF THE "UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14: CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT" (JUNE 27 - JULY 1, 2022, LISBON, PORTUGAL)**

**1) Addressing marine pollution.**

Argentina is committed to strengthening and reinforcing multilateral environmental forums, which from their different natures, approaches and perspectives are working in order to finish and comprehensively address the problem of pollution and marine litter and microplastics. One aspect on which it is necessary to continue advancing is to have long-term, sustainable, timely, predictable, adequate and accessible financing for all parties, accompanied by appropriate technical cooperation. This is a crucial issue to ensure proper management of plastics throughout their life cycle.

With regard to the regulatory framework that establishes rules to prevent damage to the environment from the activity of ships, it is worth mentioning the International Convention to Prevent Pollution by Ships (MARPOL), which is one of the main instruments on the matter, which covers all technical aspects of pollution from ships, except dumping of waste at sea, and applies to all types of ships. In this way, MARPOL contemplates specifications regarding the prevention of contamination by the ship's own mechanical operations as well as by the type of merchandise transported. In particular, it establishes rules to prevent hydrocarbon pollution (Annex I); noxious liquid substances transported in bulk (Annex II); harmful substances transported by sea in packages (Annex III); treatment of dirty water from ships (Annex IV); and ship garbage management (Annex V). The 1997P Protocol to MARPOL incorporates the VI annex that deals with atmospheric pollution caused by ships.

On the other hand, the London Convention completes the prevention scheme, contributing to the control of sea pollution by prohibiting the dumping of certain potentially dangerous materials into it, for which special prior permission is required. There, dumping is defined as any deliberate evacuation of waste or other materials into the sea from ships, aircraft, platforms or other constructions, as well as any deliberate evacuation of those ships or platforms themselves, in exact accordance with the definition provided by the Convention on United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

It remains to mention the International Convention on Cooperation, Preparedness and Response to Oil Pollution, 1990 (OPRC 90), whose purpose is to provide a global framework for international cooperation in the fight against major events or threats of pollution at sea, establishing that its Parties must take the necessary measures to deal with pollution incidents, either nationally or in cooperation with other countries. Vessels and companies operating offshore units that operate under the jurisdiction of the Parties are obliged to have emergency plans in the event of

contamination by hydrocarbons or other similar means, coordinated with national systems to respond promptly and effectively to oil pollution incidents.

It is worth noting the participation of Argentina as an associated country of the -recently put into execution- Glo-litter IMO-FAO cooperative project that aims to provide assistance to developing countries to prevent and reduce marine plastic garbage from the sectors of the maritime transport and fishing, as well as identifying opportunities to reduce the use of plastic in those industries.

Additionally, it is suggested that the elaboration of the conceptual note of this dialogue take into account the results of the 5th United Nations Assembly for the Environment (UNEA V), given that a resolution that addresses plastic pollution is expected to be adopted at that meeting.

## **2) Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems.**

The National Strategy on Biodiversity Action Plan (ENBPA) is a State policy, coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, which defines the main actions to promote greater knowledge and appreciation of our common goods and the ecosystem services that they provide. The fundamental basis of the construction process of the NBSAP is the broad participation of a set of governmental and non-governmental organizations at the national and provincial levels, as well as researchers and other civil society actors, who are directly or indirectly related to the biodiversity.

The protection of coastal marine ecosystems is an aspect of strategic prioritization of the objectives of the NBSAP, based on national needs, as a reflection of the consensus and synergy of various agencies. The articulation and joint work of these organizations enhance the actions that will be carried out to achieve the Goals.

In this sense, the conservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use incorporated in all State policies is a tool to advance in the same vision of inclusive development that has as its pillars the sustainable production and conservation of biodiversity on the basis of the integration of fair trade and the addition of local value.

In the specific case of Management, Protection, Conservation and Restoration of Marine and Coastal Ecosystems, Argentina carries out, among others, the following actions:

Marine Coastal Protected Areas (MCPA): Argentina has 52 MCPA, among which are: national parks, provincial and municipal reserves, Biosphere Reserves (MaB), Ramsar Sites, among others. The legal instruments for the creation of these areas are also diverse: municipal ordinances, provisions, resolutions, decrees and provincial laws, national laws and, in the case of Tierra del Fuego, the Provincial Constitution.

Argentina, through the National System of Marine Protected Areas (Law No. 27,037), establishes the management categories for the three protected areas created, called Namuncurá Banco Burdwood (Law No. 26,875), Yaganes and Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood II ( Law No. 27,490), as well as the proposal to establish new MPAs. All of them are aimed at protecting and conserving

representative maritime spaces of habitats and ecosystems and demonstrate a clear commitment to the Aichi objectives, in particular with Goal 11 of Strategic Objective C, to reach at least 10% of the maritime and coastal spaces under conservation and protection.

With the exception of the three Marine Protected Areas that are strictly marine, all the MCPAs are associated with coastal environments and their main objective is to protect breeding sites for birds and marine mammals and feeding and resting sites for migratory birds.

Spatial Marine Planning (PME): is a management and conservation tool based on a continuous and interactive process, which determines how, when and where activities will be carried out to meet the objectives proposed for a given area, respecting the uses of the space and integrating the demands of development with the need to conserve the environment. The application of the PME methodology provides environmental, social and economic benefits, substantially improving government management in maritime spaces.

The Federal Strategy for Integrated Coastal Management: with the aim of establishing consensus at the federal level that leads to sustainable management of coastal spaces, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, in agreement with COFEMA and with the environmental authorities of the five coastal-marine provinces of Argentina, carried out a strategic environmental assessment of the state of coastal management and the basic principles for integrated management. Based on the results, guidelines and directives agreed upon at the federal level were proposed to advance towards a Federal Integrated Coastal Management Strategy, for the sake of local initiatives with the fulfillment of international commitments. From 2017 to date, provincial workshops have been held to advance agreed guidelines regarding the definition and zoning of the area subject to management/integrated management and the institutionalization of a multisectoral group with interference at the level of each province.

This section should be complemented by an approach that contemplates the sustainable use of coastal ecosystems. From the perspective of biodiversity policies implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are two complementary strategies that feed each other. In this sense, conservation is only possible where there are communities that live in a natural environment if policies are implemented that enable and promote the sustainable use of biodiversity by these communities.

Recognizing that marine and coastal ecosystems are subject to multiple pressures and that, in some cases, they are in a delicate balance, alternatives that allow the conservation of ecosystems and the services they provide must be promoted together with measures that contribute to sustainable development. This must take place in a changing context in environmental, climatic and social terms.

### **3) Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming.**

In relation to this issue, the concern about the effects of climate change is highlighted, including the increase in sea temperature, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, sea level variation, changes in the cryosphere, coastal erosion and extreme weather events. For decades, Argentina has developed research and monitoring work both independently and jointly and collaboratively with third countries, addressing all these issues in the South Atlantic and Antarctica. Not only should efforts to observe, monitor and understand the different processes be strengthened, but also transformative solutions based on ocean science should be promoted.

It is noted that although in principle the topic of this Dialogue is derived from Target 14.3, other by-products of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have been included, in addition to ocean acidification. Deoxygenation, for example, although its main cause is the excess of nutrients from chemical products, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, coming from different industries, it is included here, too, because the absorption of carbon dioxide (one of the main GHGs ) by the oceans exacerbates the problem. In this regard, the report 'Ocean deoxygenation: everyone's problem', carried out by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and published within the framework of the 25th United Nations Conference on Climate Change ( COP25) (Madrid - December 2019), provided new data on the effects of climate change on the ecosystems of the seas.

Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention is the instrument that the IMO has to establish the rules aimed at preventing atmospheric pollution caused by ships in order to reduce the contribution of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) from maritime transport.

#### **4) Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.**

There are no comments to make at this stage.

#### **5) Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for small island developing States and least developed countries.**

We would like to highlight the importance of addressing under this dialogue the concepts of marine spatial planning, infrastructure adaptation measures, diversification of economic activities, promotion of clean energy and monitoring and control of carbon emissions.

#### **6) Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology.**

As a developing country, it is essential for Argentina that this dialogue addresses the development of capacities, especially through the promotion and cooperation in marine scientific research, training, access to international financing and the transfer of marine technology; all these fundamental aspects towards the achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Regarding the transfer of marine technology, it is emphasized that it should be understood in its broadest sense, including information, data, manuals, guidelines, equipment for observation and sampling, laboratory equipment, numerical models, specific knowledge and skills.

Argentina would like to highlight the importance of strengthening research and development of monitoring systems in the South Atlantic Ocean. Our country is committed to promoting international cooperation on scientific marine research, in order to generate updated and relevant scientific information, which will in turn be the basis for the design and implementation of public policies in the sector.

Argentina is adopting policies to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources for human development. The conviction that political decisions need to be made based on a solid scientific base is reflected in the re-launch of "Pampa Azul", a strategic and multidisciplinary initiative of Argentina, which brings together the authorities of seven ministries with the national scientific community and other relevant actors and is aimed at promoting scientific knowledge, promoting technological innovations that contribute to the strengthening of industries linked to the sea and the economic development of the Argentine maritime regions, among other objectives.

Pampa Azul also seeks to strengthen and increase international cooperation on marine scientific research and innovation, with a view to generating up-to-date scientific information that is relevant to expand the global understanding of oceans and their sustainability. Although the main focus of attention is the South Atlantic, Pampa Azul initiative is intended to promote research with a global and regional perspective as well. Thus, the goals and challenges related to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are taken into account.

The strengthening of marine observation networks is a challenge of great relevance not only on global scales but in particular in the South Atlantic region. In this sense, we would like to mention the Pampa Azul Network of Networks. In order to strengthen the capacities of the scientific-technological system to contribute to public policies related to the sea, Pampa Azul promotes a systematic approach for the definition and implementation of an observation system in Argentina, which allows the development of continuous monitoring of the conditions of the oceanic environment, including the coasts and transition zones. In this first stage, the Network of Networks modality aims to integrate the infrastructure of observation and management of the available information and the creation of new networks. It also contributes to coordinate efforts to strengthen and expand the capacities for generating information on the ocean environment. A complete value chain perspective of the observations is proposed, which facilitates the adequate use of the information to generate the expected impacts in different areas of application. As a cross-cutting issue, the Network seeks to develop technical capacities, as well as the generation of institutional capacities and instruments for the sustainability of the system. The implementation of this system of observation networks includes tools aimed at ensuring the quality and traceability of the measurements, recording of metadata and regular calibration of instruments. The Pampa Azul network of networks has a design based on criteria accepted by the scientific community. It also promotes monitoring of biological, biogeochemical, physical and hydrometeorological variables, among others, and integrates information provided by coastal marine observation networks and projects already established and/or being created.

"Pampa Azul" also includes a transversal axis for the empowerment of women in science, particularly in ocean sciences, with a view to a science in which development and knowledge go hand in hand with integrating and inclusive policies. It also promotes a greater awareness in society about its oceanic heritage and the sustainable use of its vast resources. In this sense, it collaborates with the "Blue Schools" initiative, an educational program to promote school projects that seek to generate new learning experiences on the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, the seas and their resources, based on links with the scientific community, a greater access to information and networking to develop local and community experiences.

Another example of joint work and inter-institutional commitment at the governmental level is the creation and implementation of the National System of Marine Protected Areas (SNAMP), in whose Permanent Advisory Committee the national agencies with competence in the matter are represented. Within this framework, the creation and adaptation to the SNAMP of the Marine Protected Areas "Namuncurá-Banco, Burdwood", "Yaganes"; and "Namuncurá/ Banco Burdwood II" made it possible to significantly increase knowledge of these strategic marine spaces, through at least sixteen national research campaigns and the creation of a geoportal to systematize the information, integrated into the Naval Hydrography Service Portal, that allows visualizing sampling stations, campaign reports and sampling arts, among others. This system is a pioneer in promoting sustainable fisheries with an ecosystem approach.

Also noteworthy is the selection of Argentina as the site of a new UNESCO Specialized Center for Ocean Sciences, within the framework of the OTGA (Ocean Teacher Global Academy) program of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC). The creation of this Center, dedicated to capacity building and training in ocean sciences in the countries of the region, is consistent with Argentina's active role in the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and contributes to the implementation of the Objectives of the Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, as well as the Sustainable Development Goal 14. Likewise, it is considered pertinent to highlight that Argentina also actively contributes to the Decade of Ocean Sciences for Development Sustainable as Champion of the Action Plan of the International Seabed Authority in support of the Decade. In this role, our country has agreed to contribute and work together with the Authority to promote the objectives of the Decade, especially those related to the promotion of marine scientific research in the Area, equitable access to its results and the participation of developing States in the activities carried out there, always respecting the principle of the common heritage of mankind of its resources and the protection of the marine environment.

There is a strategic need to promote and strengthen ocean sciences for sustainable development. Transformative solutions in ocean science can be achieved through the improvement of international cooperation, including regional and south-south cooperation in marine research and innovation, and raising the quality of knowledge for its application for sustainability. In these challenging times, and in the context of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, strengthening and expanding ocean science collaboration to collectively address the urgent demands of our society are key issues.

There are many challenges to achieve the essential scientific knowledge that serves as a basis for decision-making and the development of policies in each of our countries. The costs of marine exploration, the development of equipment and the preparation of professionals are not within everyone's reach. Argentina is convinced that binational, multinational, triangular and South-South cooperation is a necessary path, and works together with other countries and scientific and academic entities, in projects where each party contributes from its knowledge and specific capacities for the construction of a common knowledge.

The limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have not stopped scientific activity in the South Atlantic and the Antarctic Sector, but the usual way of working has been reviewed, the research, analysis, training and technological development work continued, new tools were incorporated, including research vessels for different national scientific institutes, and the participation of our experts in the different international and regional forums on the subject also continued, limiting the activities that had to be rescheduled to a minimum.

## **7) Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.**

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out, including for the conservation and sustainable management of marine living resources, marine biodiversity and the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

In particular, Part XII on the Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment, assigns States the obligation and responsibility to protect and preserve the marine environment and requires them to adopt the necessary measures to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment. So much so that article 192 is understood to be binding on the international community as a whole, regardless of whether or not they are part of UNCLOS, since it is an imperative of customary international law, the obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment.

Achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda, and specifically the protection of oceans and seas, will require transformational change from key marine industries. In the case of the maritime industry, this conversion is underway with the support of the IMO regulatory framework, but the change requires innovative and larger-scale forms of investment and strengthened partnerships in the framework of a sustainable and inclusive ocean economy. Accordingly, the world maritime theme for the year 2022 is: "New technologies for greener shipping" reflecting the need to support a green transition of the global shipping industry to a sustainable future and the need to rebuild the post-pandemic world.

In relation to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdictions, negotiations towards the conclusion of a treaty on this matter within the framework

of the "BBNJ" process, in which Argentina actively participates, advocating for the elaboration of a universal, balanced and effective treaty that allows closing the gaps that currently exist in the protection of the marine environment.

#### **8) Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.**

The link between SDG 14 and the remaining sixteen goals is clearly recognized. The articulation between objectives must be a goal consistent with the implementation and development of the plan established for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

It is important that this concept note recognizes the indivisibility of the sustainable development goals in their social, economic and environmental dimensions. It should be noted that numerous developed countries indicate that compliance with objectives of an environmental nature is a prerequisite for complying with those of an economic and social nature. From a developing country perspective, the reasoning must often be the other way around, with compliance with certain economic and social development standards being necessary in order to later be able to implement better environmental policies. In this sense, it should be recognized that development and the eradication of poverty are the priorities of developing countries, as recognized in the preamble of the Convention on Biological Diversity, of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, among others.

In particular, it is worth mentioning that many of the IMO instruments that play a role in meeting SDG 14 also have an impact on the achievement of other SDGs. Thus, for example, the International Convention to prevent pollution from ships (MARPOL Convention), the London Convention and Protocol (LC/LP), among others, which have to do with reducing marine pollution (Goal 14.1 ), not only help protect marine and coastal ecosystems (Target 14.2), but also contribute to food security (SDG 2), the health and well-being of the population (SDG 3) and sustainable water management (SDG 6).

This can be explained by the negative impact that microbial contamination and anthropogenic chemical contamination have on the supply of water and seafood. The second, in particular, has led to the entry of high levels of heavy metals and polyaromatic hydrocarbons in the marine food chain.

Likewise, through the reduction of marine pollution, the aforementioned instruments contribute to decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), because employment in sectors such as tourism depends on having clean seas, and adaptation to climate change (SDG 13), given that the removal of the stressor of pollution can increase the resilience of marine ecosystems in the face of this threat.

The reduction of waste generation, both operational waste from ships (MARPOL Convention) and waste dumping as provided in the LC/LP, also contributes to the achievement of SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production. In this regard, it is worth recalling that the MARPOL



Convention requires port States to provide adequate reception facilities for the safe and proper management of waste.

On the other hand, air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by ships are regulated by Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention, whose implementation contributes to the achievement of SDG 7, regarding energy efficiency, and SDG 13. on adaptation to climate change.