# MarinTrust Standard V2

# By-product Fishery Assessment

# ARG01 – Argentine hake in FAO 41 North of 41°N

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# Table 1 Application details and summary of the assessment outcome

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Fishery Under Assessment | Species: | Argentine hake (*Merluccius hubbsi*) |
| | Geographical area: | FAO 41 |
| | Country of origin of the product: | Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina |
| | Stock: | FAO 41 North of 41°N |
| Date | October 2024 | |
| Report Code | ARG01 | |
| Assessor | Sam Peacock | |
| Country of origin of the product - PASS | Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina | |
| Country of origin of the product - FAIL | n/a | |

| Application details and summary of the assessment outcome | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Names: Agustiner SA, Coomarpes Ltda | | | |
| Country: Argentina | | | |
| Email address: | | Applicant Code: | |
| Certification Body Details | | | |
| Name of Certification Body: | | LRQA | |
| Assessor | Peer Reviewer | Assessment Days | Initial/Surveillance/ Re-approval |
| Sam Peacock | Sam Dignan | 0.2 | Re-approval |
| Assessment Period | October 2024 – October 2025 | | |

| Scope Details | |
|---|---|
| Main Species | Argentine hake (*Merluccius hubbsi*) |
| Stock | FAO 41 North of 41°N |
| Fishery Location | FAO 41 |
| Management Authority (Country/ State) | Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil |
| Gear Type(s) | Demersal trawl |
| Outcome of Assessment | |
| Peer Review Evaluation | Approve |
| Recommendation | Approve |

# Table 2. Assessment Determination

| Assessment Determination |
| --- |
| Argentine hake has not been categorised by the IUCN Red List, and it does not appear in the CITES appendices. It is managed using regular stock assessments relative to established target reference points, and was therefore assessed under Category C.<br><br>Regular stock assessments are conducted by the Argentine Instituto Nacional de Investigacion y Desarrollo Pesquero (INIDEP). The most recent of these which is available was carried out in 2022, using all international landings data. The assessment report indicates that two of the three stock assessment models estimated SSB to be above the limit reference point. For these reasons the byproduct meets the MT requirements and should be re-approved for use as a raw material. |
| **Fishery Assessment Peer Review Comments** |
| I appreciate the amendments made by the Assessor in response to my initial review. On balance, while Model 1 has stock biomass comfortably above the specified limit, Model 2 below and Model 3 marginally, the overall picture appears to be one of a stock which is recovering (or at least flat) but not decreasing. I therefore now concur with the Assessor's determination that continuing approval be awarded and have no further comments. |
| **Notes for On-site Auditor** |
| |

# 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 an 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 | *Merluccius hubbsi* | FAO 41 North of 41°N | Yes | C | Not Assessed | No |

[1] https://www.iucnredlist.org/
[2] https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php

# CATEGORY C SPECIES

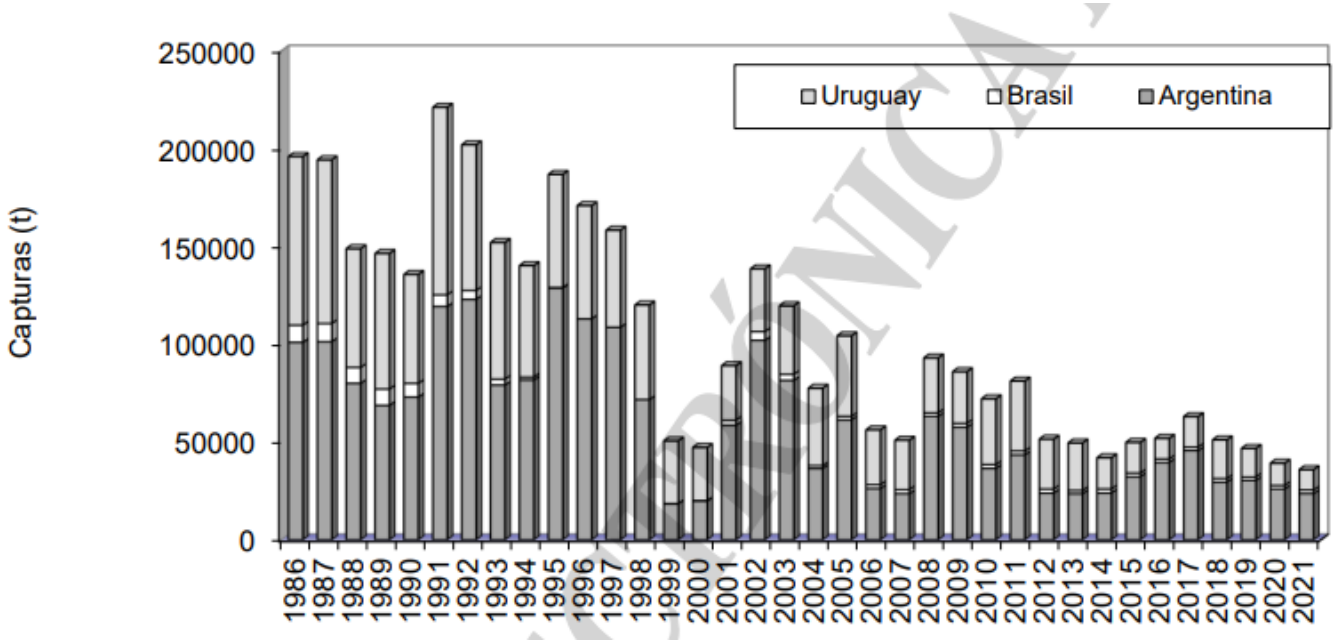
In a by-product assessment, Category C species are those which are subject to a species-specific management regime and are usually targeted species in fisheries for human consumption.

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 (*Merluccius hubbsi*)** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **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. | PASS |
| | **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. | PASS |
| | | **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 assessor was not able to find any more recent stock assessment report than the one identified in the previous MT assessment of this byproduct, and therefore the conclusions of that assessment are repeated here. A regular stock assessment is conducted by all three participating states – Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina – using a statistical catch-at-age model. The assessment incorporates all international landings. C1.1 is met.

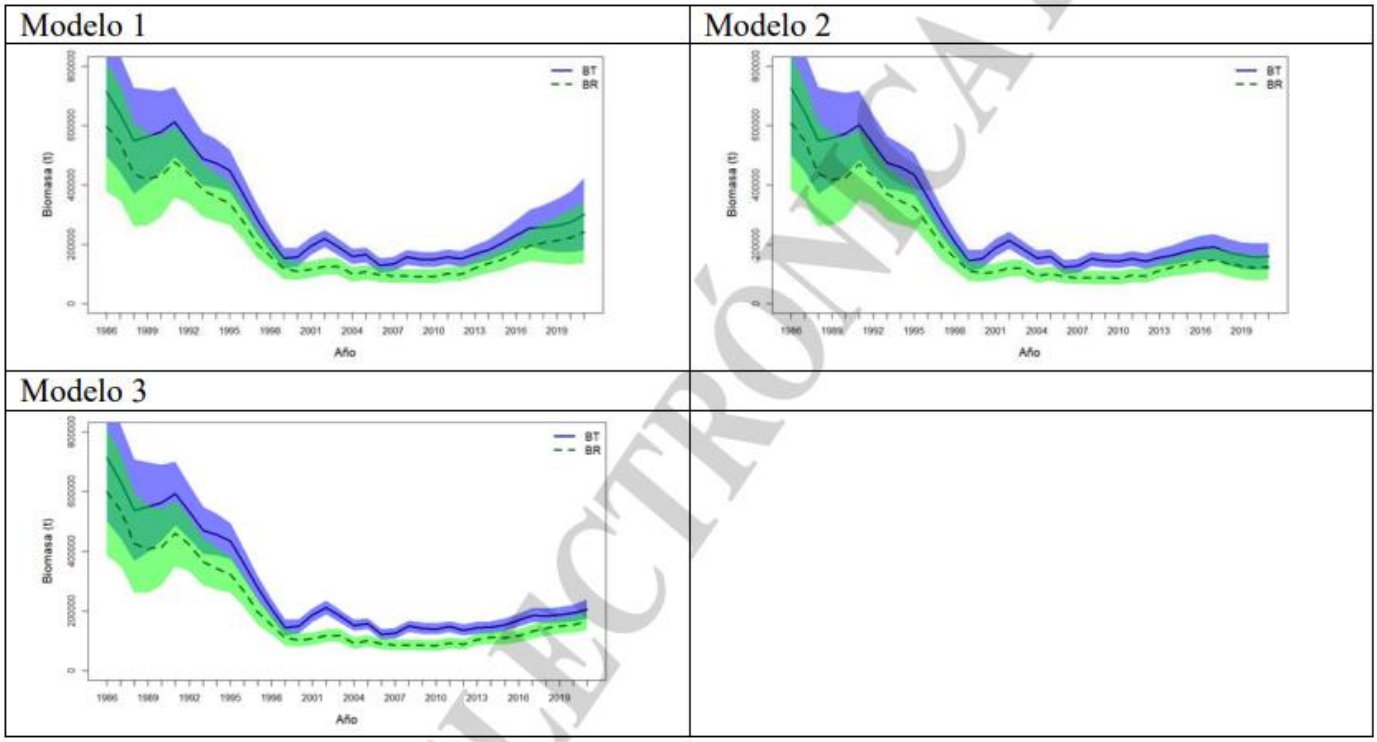



Argentine hake North of 41°S, catches by country (INIDEP 2022)

**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.**

Biomass-based reference points have been established for the stock. The target reference point is set at 230,000t. The limit reference point is set at 150,000t. The outputs of the three stock assessment models estimated SSB to be 240,485t, 123,142t and 165,980t respectively – two estimates above the limit reference point and one below. As a matter of pragmatism and to

ensure alignment with the previous MT assessment of this byproduct – which used the same report as its basis – the stock is considered to meet C1.2, as two of the three model outputs estimate SSB to be above the limit reference point.




Argentine hake North of 41ºS, estimated biomass based on three stock assessment models (INIDEP 2022)

**References**

INIDEP (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 |

# CATEGORY D SPECIES

Category D species are those which are not subject to a species-specific management regime. In the case of mixed trawl fisheries, Category D species may make up the majority of landings. The comparative lack of scientific information on the status of the population of the species means that a risk-assessment style approach must be taken.

| D1 | Species Name | n/a | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Productivity Attribute** | **Value** | **Score** |
| | Average age at maturity (years) | | |
| | Average maximum age (years) | | |
| | Fecundity (eggs/spawning) | | |
| | Average maximum size (cm) | | |
| | Average size at maturity (cm) | | |
| | Reproductive strategy | | |
| | Mean trophic level | | |
| | | **Average Productivity Score** | |
| | **Susceptibility Attribute** | **Value** | **Score** |
| | Availability (area overlap) | | |
| | Encounterability (the position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear) | | |
| | Selectivity of gear type | | |
| | Post-capture mortality | | |
| | | **Average Susceptibility Score** | |
| | | **PSA Risk Rating (From Table D3)** | |
| | | **Compliance rating** | |
| | **Further justification for susceptibility scoring (where relevant)**<br>*For susceptibility attributes, please provide a brief rationale for scoring of parameters where there may be uncertainty affecting your decision* | | |
| **References** | | | |
| *Standard clauses 1.3.2.2* | | | |

# Table D2 - Productivity / Susceptibility attributes and scores.

| Productivity attributes | High productivity (Low risk, score = 1) | Medium productivity (medium risk, score = 2) | Low productivity (high risk, score = 3) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Average age at maturity | <5 years | 5-15 years | >15 years |
| Average maximum age | <10 years | 10-25 years | >25 years |
| Fecundity | >20,000 eggs per year | 100-20,000 eggs per year | <100 eggs per year |
| Average maximum size | <100 cm | 100-300 cm | >300 cm |
| Average size at maturity | <40 cm | 40-200 cm | >200 cm |
| Reproductive strategy | Broadcast spawner | Demersal egg layer | Live bearer |
| Mean Trophic Level | <2.75 | 2.75-3.25 | >3.25 |

| Susceptibility attributes | Low susceptibility (Low risk, score = 1) | Medium susceptibility (medium risk, score = 2) | High susceptibility (high risk, score = 3) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Areal overlap (availability) Overlap of the fishing effort with the species range | <10% overlap | 10-30% overlap | >30% overlap |
| Encounterability The position of the stock/species within the water column relative to the fishing gear, and the position of the stock/species within the habitat relative to the position of the gear | Low overlap with fishing gear (low encounterability). | Medium overlap with fishing gear. | High overlap with fishing gear (high encounterability). Default score for target species |
| Selectivity of gear type Potential of the gear to retain species | a Individuals < size at maturity are rarely caught | a Individuals < size at maturity are regularly caught. | a Individuals < size at maturity are frequently caught |
| | b Individuals < size at maturity can escape or avoid gear. | b Individuals < half the size at maturity can escape or avoid gear. | b Individuals < half the size at maturity are retained by gear. |
| Post-capture mortality (PCM) The chance that, if captured, a species would be released and that it would be in a condition permitting subsequent survival | Evidence of majority released post-capture and survival. | Evidence of some released post-capture and survival. | Retained species or majority dead when released. |

| D3 | | Average Susceptibility Score | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 - 1.75 | 1.76 - 2.24 | 2.25 - 3 |
| Average Productivity Score | 1 - 1.75 | PASS | PASS | PASS |
| | 1.76 - 2.24 | PASS | PASS | TABLE D4 |
| | 2.25 - 3 | PASS | TABLE D4 | TABLE D4 |

| D4 | Species Name | n/a | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Impacts On Species Categorised as Vulnerable by D1-D3 - Minimum Requirements | | |
| | D4.1 | The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts. | |
| | D4.2 | There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species. | |
| | | Outcome: | |

**Evidence**

**D4.1: The potential impacts of the fishery on this species are considered during the management process, and reasonable measures are taken to minimise these impacts.**

**D4.2 There is no substantial evidence that the fishery has a significant negative impact on the species.**

**References**

| Links | |
|---|---|
| MarinTrust Standard clause | 1.3.2.2, 4.1.4 |
| FAO CCRF | 7.5.1 |
| GSSI | D.5.01 |