

## Ocean Biodiversity: The Southwest Atlantic Ecosystem and Challenges in Its Sustainability

FARN, together with the Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina and the Foro del Mar Patagónico and its Areas of Influence coordinated this workshop, whose initial goal was **“How can we contribute to the ecosystemic process of ocean diversity? What challenges are presented regarding sustainability?”**

From there, they described the current problems that this challenge presents from the legal and institutional points of view, which FARN has been working on since 2004 together with the Proyecto Modelo del Mar (Sea and Sky Project) and later also with Foro del Mar Patagónico (Patagonian Sea Forum).

The project's conclusions will be presented before the end of the year, to which will be added those of different sectors and disciplines. They will continue work based on the following points:

- There are multiple jurisdictions in the Patagonian Sea.
- The multiple interests involved present an enormous challenge of finding space for coordination and conciliation to resolve problems and promote solid agreements, which makes it necessary to initiate and form processes of inter-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional dialogue.
- Existing legal framework promotes sustainable processes based on the ecosystem.
- Countries find compromises by agreements and initiatives for marine life conservation.
- The countries in the region have adhered to foundations and legal principles that must move towards wise marine progress.
- Application of legal framework is not effective and the actions of control are insufficient.
- Essential management agreement is missing.
- Legal institutions and tools designed for a transparent process of natural resources have a limited regional application.
- FAO's proposals to prevent and mitigate undesired effects of the fisheries in the Patagonian Sea have been applied.
- Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile are in different stages of developing and implementing their National Plans of Action.
- Protected coastal areas are a tool in the face of environmental overexploitation and degradation.
- Many protected coastal areas exist, some recently created.
- Protected coastal areas incorporate a minimum fraction of the sea.
- The group of currently protected coastal areas is insufficient for achieving protection of marine species and their environment.
- Protected coastal areas are often managed ineffectively.
- Initiatives exist to coordinate jurisdiction that show progress in the process of protected areas.
- The Areas Important for Avian Conservation (AICAs) are conservation tools that can be used to identify, protect, and manage the network of sites relevant to biodiversity.
- Identification and delimitation of AICAs marinas (coastal and archipelagic) in the Patagonian Sea is under way.
- Other zoning tools exist, in addition to protected areas, for marine resource management.

The workshop concluded with the following recommendations to encourage marine sustainability.

- To work with Argentine political authorities, to strengthen the regional situation.
- To mobilize regulation that is already in place.
- To rely on the information based on an attempt to work with the private sector, derived from studies developed by the Spanish government, INIDEP, and the existing information in the private sector of both countries (Spain and Argentina.)
- To think about ecosystem management, integrating all existing activities in the region. Said management should include different jurisdictions (Alta Mar and Zona Economica exclusive.)
- To use developing economic activities in the Patagonian Sea to develop financial and economic tools to generate mitigation mechanisms and/or funds for protected areas management.
- To promote the development of a vision and legal/administrative plan.
- Need to generate mechanisms of inter-jurisdictional work. (Co-management.)
- Recommendation: to try to generate consensus through less-confrontational politics
- To work with the European Union, through Spain's presence, to affect the political situation and management of the area.