Southern hake

**IDENTIFICATION**

**SCIENTIFIC NAME**

*Merluccius australis*

**SPECIES NAME(S)**

Southern hake

**COMMON NAMES**

Merluza austral (Spanish), Merluza del sur

**STOCK IDENTIFICATION**

Within the Patagonian distribution of the species, a distinct stock is described from the Chilean coast down to the southern tip of the continent, corresponding to regions of Los Lagos, Aysén and Magallanes (IFOP 2018). As only a small portion of its distribution lies within the Argentinian EEZ, the stock is managed and assessed by Chile.

**RELATED LINKS:**

- Consejo Federal Pesquero (CFP)
- Fisheries Development Institute (Chile) (IFOP)

**ASSESSMENT**

**Strengths**

- This is a discrete population with clear boundaries that mostly don't go outside of the Chilean jurisdiction, which facilitates the management of this fishery.
- There is a management plan in place since 2016 with clear management objectives.
- There is a plan for the reduction of discards and bycatch in place since 2017, and good information on bycatch levels, especially in the industrial fisheries.
- There is a seasonal fishing ban in August every year.

**Weaknesses**

- The resource is officially recognized as overexploited.
- The advisory board CCT-RDZSA (Scientific and Technical Committee for the Demersal Resources Zone South and Austral) recognized in the last advice (2017) that F should be reduced below Ftarget given the current status of the stock, but this proposal could not be adopted because the conditions of the Management Plan are binding. And the plan doesn't forecast a reduction of F at current levels of SSB (31% of SSB0).
- Illegal and unreported fishing is officially recognized as a real problem for the stock by Subpesca (Subsecretary of Fisheries), the Management Authority.
- Fishing mortality rates have been above the recommended FMSY.
- There is no detailed information on the impact of the fishing gears used to harvest southern hake on bottom habitats, although it is supposed to be low.

**SCORES**

**Management Quality:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Strategy</th>
<th>Managers Compliance</th>
<th>Fishers Compliance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>&lt; 6</td>
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**Stock Health:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Health</th>
<th>Future Health</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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**FIPS**

No related FIPs

**MSC**

No related MSC fisheries

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN**

- Engage with authorities in prompt implementation of the approved management plan for the fishery.
- Ensure adequate reporting of catches (landing and discards) and bycatch, especially from the artisanal fleet operating in the fishery.
- Improve the regulatory compliance of the fishery to eliminate all IUU fishing, especially unreported landings by the artisanal fleet.