



More than 50 representatives of the member organizations of the Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea and Areas of Influence, gathered in plenary session in Puerto Pirámides, Argentina (August 26-30, 2024), and in the framework of the celebration of its 20 years of work,

Declare and sustain the commitment to:

1. Continue working to raise awareness in society regarding the care of the oceans and the life forms it harbors.
2. Actively contribute to Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework that seeks to effectively conserve 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas by 2030.
3. Sustain efforts for the expansion and strengthening of marine protected areas in the seas of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil, where we reaffirm our commitment to:

The creation of the Albardão National Park in southern Brazil to protect marine ecosystems, biodiversity and local sustainable development. The creation process is in its final stages by the Brazilian Ministry of Environment (Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima).

The creation of the Agujero Azul Benthic Marine Protected Area in Argentina, which will help to protect seabeds with vulnerable marine ecosystems of high biodiversity and submarine canyons that favor carbon sequestration and contribute to climate change mitigation.

The creation of the Frente Valdés Marine Protected Area in Argentina, to conserve part of a productive tidal front of great value for the conservation of seabirds and marine mammals that breed and feed along the coasts and in the sea of the Southern Cone.

The implementation of a system of connected Marine Protected Areas in Antarctica, particularly in the Antarctic Peninsula (Domain 1), together with advances in the regulation of the krill fishery.

The creation in Chile of new protected areas in under-represented marine ecoregions that provide connectivity of key ecosystems and species and incorporate criteria related to the effects of climate change.

The effective implementation of the recently created Isla e Islote de Lobos and submerged environment Marine Park in Uruguay, as a fundamental strategy for the conservation of marine ecosystems and a key step to protect the continental margin and slope, including the headwaters of submarine canyons and coral mounds that have been prioritized in the country's national strategy.

4. Recognizing that goal 3 of 30x30 will only translate into positive changes if protected areas connect and safeguard representative samples of habitats and life forms, integrated into an equitably and effectively managed matrix, we sustain and reinforce our commitment to:

Promote and accompany marine spatial planning processes that allow us to strategically order the use of the seas of the Southern Cone, and ensure that human activities do not compromise the integrity of ecosystems and their biodiversity.

Support the creation of a network of marine protected areas, and the mitigation of negative impacts of coastal and offshore activities, ensuring the preservation of species and ecosystems.

Strengthen processes for the development of management plans and monitoring programs to ensure effective and inclusive implementation of protected areas.

5. Protect key environments and species for the ecological integrity of the Patagonian sea, recognizing that the advances of human activities without considering environmental damage represent an unacceptable threat in a context of global crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution and climate change. In this regard, we declare:

We are very concerned about the potential installation of a hydrocarbon loading terminal in Punta Colorada, San Matías Gulf, part of a key bio-region in Argentina. This project is moving forward after the modification of Law 3308 of the Province of Río Negro, which expressly prohibited any hydrocarbon activity in the San Matías Gulf, recognizing the value of the area and its biodiversity. We request that the modification to the law that enabled the advance of this work, which puts the gulf and its species at enormous risk, threatening

the surrounding coastal protected areas and the local communities that develop thanks to this healthy natural environment, be annulled.

Our rejection of offshore hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation activities in areas of outstanding value for the ecological integrity of the seas of the Southern Cone.

Our defense of marine protected areas free of industrial salmon farming in Chile, in any of its categories, and we reiterate the call to strengthen the actions of control and sanctions to respect and enforce environmental regulations.

Our rejection of the attempt to advance salmonid production in Argentina, where we reaffirm the defense that society showed by approving provincial law 1.355 that prohibits the cultivation and production of salmonids in jurisdictional waters of Tierra del Fuego.

Our commitment to support and promote the effective management of multiple-use MPAs where activities, such as industrial fishing, must be regulated. In these cases it is required to develop and implement a fisheries management plan based on the ecosystem approach, under a strict program of monitoring, inspection and control.

Our commitment to promote joint efforts on a regional scale, in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, for the conservation of the Franciscana dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*), an endemic species threatened by bycatch in artisanal fishing nets.

6. From a global perspective, it is vitally important to ratify the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity on Areas beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ), and we therefore call on the Southern Cone countries to:

Sign and ratify this priority treaty to implement area-based conservation measures and the sustainable and equitable use of genetic resources in the High Seas.

Support the proposal presented by the Government of Chile to establish the headquarters of the technical secretariat of the treaty in the city of Valparaíso, as the first UN headquarters in a South American country.

7. We uphold the importance of advancing the Global Plastics Treaty, which is fundamental to provide solutions to pollution in the sea and its impacts on the health of all forms of life.

8. Finally, and in the context of all these challenges, compliance with the Escazú Agreement is key to guarantee access to information, public participation and justice in environmental matters, as basic rights to promote the necessary changes in policies and effective, participatory and inclusive management of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in the region.

The Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea and Areas of Influence is an international coalition of 28 civil society organizations from four countries that was created to coordinate efforts for the preservation of the seas of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil (<http://marpatagonico.org>).