

**DRAFT INTERVANTION OF 34th COFI - ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA  
“Developments in global and regional processes related to fisheries and aquaculture”**

Our delegation would like to thank the support and advice provided by FAO in various international processes linked to fisheries and aquaculture. We noted that the document COFI/2020/8 invites Members to “provide guidance on FAO’s role and participation in discussions on the implementation of a new legally binding international instrument withing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction”. In this regard, first we would like to note that Argentina firmly supports the negotiations known as “ABNJ” that are taking place within the UNGA scope and in which it actively participates.

It should be recalled that in those negotiations FAO within its mandate participates as an observer, providing technical advice. However, it is necessary to clarify that ABNJ is not about a negotiation on sustainable fisheries, but the conservation and sustainable use of all marine biodiversity in maritime spaces outside national jurisdiction. Therefore, the activities undertaken by the FAO Secretariat must be limited to accompanying the negotiation process, collaborating with those aspects of its competence that are required according to its framework duly agreed in the UNGA Resolutions. In this regard, our delegation is concerned that the initiatives previously mentioned by some delegations on the sustainable fisheries Working Group in the scope of ABNJ negotiation could interfere with the ABNJ of other delegations. This concern was duly transmitted to the FAO Secretariat in May of last year. While the value of official efforts to move forward in the ABNJ discussion, such efforts should be channeled by relevant actors. In addition, it should be also borne in mind that given the multidisciplinary approach that involves ABNJ, the elaboration process on national position includes diverse State bodies, which must have been consulted in order to coordinate different negotiation aspects.

Thank you.