Organización de Productores de Buques Congeladores
de Merlúcidos, Cefalópodos y Especies Varias

Puerto Pesquero, Edificio "Ramiro Gordejuela", 36202 Vigo (España)
Tfno.: +34 986 433 844/E-mail: direccion@oppc3.com/ Web: www.oppc3.com

Fishing sector and science join forces to improve understanding of the *Illex argentinus* fishery

The 4th International Scientific Workshop on Argentine shortfin squid will bring together experts from Brazil, Uruguay, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), Spain, China and South Korea to build a regional database and improve scientific knowledge of the abundance, productivity and exploitation status of the *Illex argentinus* population.

Vigo, 25 Septembre 2026.

Scientists specialising in population dynamics, fisheries biology and fish-population assessment will meet in Vigo from **30 September to 2 October** for the 4th International Scientific Workshop on Argentine shortfin squid (*Illex argentinus*).

The meeting aims to advance the development of a regional database and the scientific assessment of the abundance, productivity and exploitation status of this species, which supports the fishery with the largest landed volume in the South Atlantic.

The workshop will bring together scientists from **Brazil, Uruguay, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), Spain, China and South Korea**, as well as independent experts who have been involved in the process since its first meetings. The initiative seeks to integrate the information available from the different fleets harvesting *Illex argentinus* in the Southwest Atlantic, from southern Brazil to Patagonia and in international waters.

The workshop is promoted and funded by the **Organization of Producers of Freezer Vessels for Hake, Cephalopods and Miscellaneous Species (OPPC3)**, with the facilitation support of **Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP)**.

The scientific process began with the first workshops held in Chile and Panama and subsequently continued with the scientific meeting in Bangkok. The Vigo meeting represents a further step towards consolidating cooperation between scientists and representatives of the fleets that depend on this fishery.

Cooperation between fleets as a priority

The *Illex argentinus* fishery takes place in a marine area shared by different countries and fleets, in a context where there is no fully operational regional governance framework to coordinate the assessment and management of the resource.

Against this background, the initiative seeks to promote greater direct cooperation between the fleets and business associations of the countries involved, facilitating the exchange of aggregated information, with confidentiality safeguards agreed by the parties.

Edelmiro Ulloa, Managing Director of OPPC3, said:
"*The sustainability of a shared fishery requires the fleets operating on the resource to cooperate in improving the information available. In the case of Illex argentinus, reducing uncertainty benefits everyone: companies, workers, public authorities and scientists. In the absence of a fully operational regional governance framework, cooperation among the fleets themselves can contribute to building a common knowledge base and advancing towards more responsible, predictable and sustainable management of the resource. At OPPC3, we believe that this scientific collaboration should not be understood as a threat to any fleet, but as an opportunity to protect the health of the fishery and safeguard the future of the economic activity and employment that depend on it.*"

The responsibility of science for a shared resource

The workshop will be scientifically chaired by **Rubén Roa-Ureta, Chair of the Scientific Group**, an independent expert in statistical modelling and fish-population assessment who has supported the development of this initiative from its early stages.

Illex argentinus is a species of enormous ecological, economic and social importance. Its fishery supports the activities of numerous fleets, companies, workers and communities in different countries. Improving knowledge of the population's abundance, productivity and exploitation status is therefore a priority for all stakeholders connected to the resource.

Rubén Roa-Ureta said:
"*Illex argentinus is a species of enormous ecological, economic and social importance. It is a shared population whose health affects numerous countries, fleets, communities and value chains. Precisely because of its importance, we need the best possible scientific assessment of its abundance, productivity and exploitation status.*"

"*As an independent scientist who neither belongs to nor represents any of the nations participating in this fishery, I believe that we have a professional responsibility to contribute to generating the best possible knowledge of the population. That responsibility must remain separate from any political or jurisdictional conflicts that may exist between the countries sharing the ecosystem. From a scientific and ecological perspective, conserving this population is a shared responsibility because it forms part of a shared ecosystem and requires the scientific community, the fishing sector and the relevant authorities to build a solid foundation of knowledge and cooperation.*"

The objective of the Scientific Group is for the work carried out in Vigo to contribute to consolidating a common technical basis for future assessments, improving understanding of population dynamics and identifying the main uncertainties that need to be addressed in order to advance towards a sustainable fishery.

Science as the basis for collaboration across the entire value chain

The economic and social importance of the *Illex argentinus* fishery extends beyond the companies and vessels directly involved in harvesting the species. A broad value chain has developed around this resource, encompassing port, logistics, industrial, commercial and

processing activities, as well as numerous jobs and communities that depend, directly or indirectly, on the continuity of the fishery.

For this reason, the workshop's promoters believe that all stakeholders connected to the fishery share responsibility for improving knowledge of the resource. Cooperation between fleets and the exchange of scientific and fisheries information can help reduce uncertainty about the state of the population, build trust among the parties and create the conditions needed to move progressively towards more effective management of the fishery.

The participation of the entire value chain is essential to this process. Vessel owners, producer organisations, processing and trading companies, workers and other stakeholders connected to the activity can contribute relevant perspectives and knowledge to the development of solutions that take into account both the health of the resource and the economic and social stability of the communities that depend on it.

The promoters therefore call on fleets, business organisations and other stakeholders across the value chain to become actively and continuously involved in this initiative. Stable scientific cooperation can help establish a common language, strengthen trust and facilitate dialogue on possible avenues of cooperation that can contribute to ensuring the sustainability of the fishery and the socioeconomic future of the activity surrounding it.

In this regard, **Pedro Ferreiro, Director of Fisheries Governance and Livelihoods at Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP),** said:

"*One of the aspects we value most about this initiative is that it does not seek to replace States or interfere with their competences, responsibilities or rights under international law. Its purpose is to contribute, through science and cooperation among economic actors, to generating the information and trust needed for stakeholders to engage in dialogue and jointly explore possible avenues of cooperation that could, in due course, contribute to regional management. Any progress in this direction must involve the participation and support of States, and respond appropriately to the shared interests of those who depend on this fishery.*"

The ultimate objective is for all countries, fleets and economic actors involved in the fishery to contribute to producing the best available information and to use it as a basis for future discussions. Safeguarding the health of the *Illex argentinus* population also means protecting the employment, economic activity and communities that depend on this resource.

About OPPC3

The Organization of Producers of Freezer Vessels for Hake, Cephalopods and Miscellaneous Species (OPPC3) represents companies and freezer vessels engaged in harvesting a range of fisheries resources, including cephalopods. Its objectives include promoting sustainable fishing activity, improving scientific knowledge and fostering cooperation among the different stakeholders involved in international fisheries.

About Sustainable Fisheries Partnership

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) is an organisation dedicated to improving fisheries and seafood supply chains through collaboration among companies, fishing organisations, scientists and other stakeholders. In this initiative, SFP acts as a facilitator, supporting coordination among the parties and helping to mobilise resources so that the scientific process can move forward.