

Belgium and the Antarctic Treaty System

2022 Polar Symposium
Brussel 22nd September

Stephanie Langerock



The Antarctic Treaty System

- Antarctic Treaty
- Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
- Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals





Antarctic Treaty



- Signed in Washington in 1959
- Entry into force 1961
- Belgium 1 of 12 original signatories
- Exclusively for peaceful purposes
- Military activities are prohibited
- Freedom to conduct scientific research
- Promotes international scientific cooperation
- Results of research be made freely available
- Sets aside the potential for sovereignty disputes
- Prohibits nuclear explosions and the disposal of nuclear waste



Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting



- 55 Parties
 - 29 with consultative rights
 - Madrid Protocol
 - Committee on Environmental Protection
 - SCAR
 - COMNAP
-
- Four pillars: peace, science, putting aside the discussions on sovereignty and environmental protection
 - Different measures, recommendations, decisions and resolutions
 - ASPA, ASMA, ASPS



Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources



- Signed in Canberra in 1980
- Entry into Force 1982
- Belgium original co-signatory
- Objective: conservation of Antarctic marine living resources
- Term 'conservation' includes rational use
- Response to concerns on increasing krill catches in the Southern Ocean
- All Antarctic populations of finfish, molluscs, crustacean and sea birds found south of the Antarctic Convergence



Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources



- 26 Members
- 10 Acceding states
- Scientific Committee
- Eco-system based
- Conservation Measures
- Ross Sea MPA 1,57 mio km²
- IUU



Current challenges

- Increasing geo-political tension
- Undermining of scientific research
- Climate change impacts
- Impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity
- Tourism
- Bioprospecting





Role Belgium

In General

- Integrity of the Treaty and Conventions
- Cooperation
- Precautionary Principle
- Science-based policy/decision making
- Building bridges





Belgium in the ATCM



- Education and outreach
- ASPA Western Sor Rondane Mountains
- Conservation and protection
- Climate Change Response WG
- Intersessional work on tourism



Belgium in CCAMLR



- Co-sponsor East Antarctic and Weddell Sea MPAs
- Lead climate change resolution
- Conservation of biodiversity and marine ecosystems
- Southern Ocean Decade Action Plan



Any Questions?

