

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Hon. Francisco Sagasti Hochhausler  
President  
Republic of Peru

Dear Mr. President:

We, the members of Oceana's International Board of Directors, wish to express our alarm at the inclusion of fishing for Patagonian toothfish in the Dossier supporting the proposed Nasca Ridge National Reserve and the draft Supreme Decree, both posted for public comment on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Should this provision be included in the final designation of the Nasca Ridge National Reserve, it will be deemed a "paper park" which Oceana will not support.

The inclusion of bottom longline fishing on seamounts within the Reserve's Strict Protection Zone is clearly inconsistent with the conservation objective of the proposed area, reverses what we understood was the agreement achieved early in the process through broad public consultation, and is against Peruvian protected area law.

Furthermore, such activity is also inconsistent with globally-accepted IUCN guidelines for protected areas, and would thus render the Nasca Ridge a "paper park" – again, an activity Oceana will not support.

Peru currently protects less than 0.5% of its ocean, a number that is well below Peru's international commitments, and far below the protection level that neighboring countries have for their oceans (Ecuador currently protects 13% of its marine surface, and Chile, a world leader, has reached 42%). Your government inherited this situation, and you have the opportunity to take a large step in correcting it. The Nasca Ridge National Reserve, properly protected, would ensure the protection of almost 8% of Peru's oceans, and could be the environmental legacy of your administration.

For the past two years, as part of the legal process to create the Nasca Ridge Reserve, Oceana has contributed to dozens of meetings and workshops and the required stakeholder consultation and validation. The process has included expert scientific advice and through it, a balanced, equitable and technically solid proposal had been reached. We stood ready to celebrate the designation of the Nasca Ridge National Reserve as a globally important achievement.

Unfortunately, in recent days, last-minute changes were introduced that, if left, would foreclose on our ability to celebrate this achievement with you and your government. This change to include a provision that would allow for the fishing of Patagonian toothfish within the reserve was added at the last minute. Furthermore, this type of fishing had been earlier ruled out, precisely because it uses a type of gear that is harmful to seamounts.

Mr. President, you have the opportunity to correct this mistake. We sincerely hope we may celebrate with you the designation of the Nasca Ridge National Reserve as an historic, global conservation achievement.

Dr. Patricia Majluf, Oceana's Vice President for Peru, is available to discuss this further with you or your team at your convenience.

Sincerely,

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