Article 10

Accession

1. For the States listed in Article 9, paragraph 1 that have not signed this Agreement, and for the European Union if it has not signed this Agreement, this Agreement shall remain open for accession at any time.

2. After the entry into force of this Agreement, the Parties may invite other States with a real interest to accede to this Agreement.

Article 11

Entry into Force

1. This Agreement shall enter into force 30 days after the date of receipt by the depositary of all instruments of ratification, acceptance, or approval of, or accession to, this Agreement by those States and the European Union listed in Article 9, paragraph 1.

2. After entry into force of this Agreement, it shall enter into force for each State invited to accede pursuant to Article 10, paragraph 2 that has deposited an instrument of accession 30 days after the date of deposit of that instrument.

Article 12

Withdrawal

A Party may withdraw from this Agreement at any time by sending written notification of its withdrawal to the depositary through diplomatic channels, specifying the effective date of its withdrawal, which shall be at least six months after the date of notification. Withdrawal from this Agreement shall not affect its application among the remaining Parties or the duty of the withdrawing Party to fulfill any obligation in this Agreement to which it otherwise would be subject under international law independently of this Agreement.

Article 13

Duration of this Agreement

1. This Agreement shall remain in force for an initial period of 16 years following its entry into force.

2. Following the expiration of the initial period specified in paragraph 1 above, this Agreement shall remain in force for successive five-year extension period(s) unless any Party:

(a) presents a formal objection to an extension of this Agreement at the last meeting of the Parties that takes place prior to expiration of the initial period or any subsequent extension period; or

(b) sends a formal objection to an extension to the depositary in writing no later than six months prior to the expiration of the respective period.

3. The Parties shall provide for an effective transition between this Agreement and any potential new agreement establishing an additional regional or subregional fisheries management organization or arrangement for managing fishing in the Agreement Area so as to safeguard healthy marine ecosystems and ensure the conservation and sustainable use of fish stocks in the Agreement Area.

Article 14

Relation to Other Agreements

1. The Parties recognize that they are and will continue to be bound by their obligations under relevant provisions of international law, including those reflected in the Convention and the 1995 Agreement, and recognize the importance of continuing to cooperate in fulfilling those obligations even in the event that this Agreement expires or is terminated in the absence of any agreement establishing an additional regional or subregional fisheries management organization or arrangement for managing fishing in the Agreement Area.