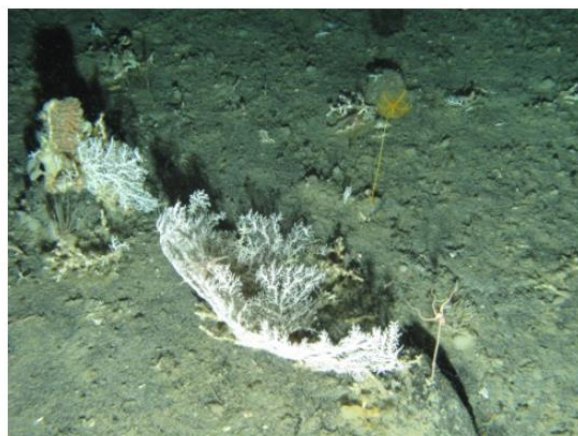


New paper looking at VMEs and high-seas fishing in the South Atlantic

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A new paper by SAERI has reported for the first time, predicted seabed distributions of VME (Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem) indicator species in the South Atlantic within the Falkland Islands Conservation Zones and on the adjacent high-seas areas. Also reported is the distribution of Patagonian toothfish deep-set longline fishing effort inside regulated fishing waters compared to fishing on the high-seas that may be impacting VMEs. Unlike other high-seas areas globally (so called Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction or ABNJ), high-seas fishing in the South Atlantic is completely unregulated by any Regional Fisheries Management Organisation or similar structure. The paper shows that impact of fishing on VMEs on the high seas may be significantly higher than the low levels of impact within Falkland waters. This raises concerns that such unregulated fishing could undermine strict fisheries management measures within regulated fisheries, and calls for greater regional high-seas governance and monitoring in the South Atlantic. More broadly, the paper recommends consideration for harmonized VME management globally where fishing straddles regulated and high-seas areas. The study was supported by Consolidated Fisheries Limited (CFL) and was carried out by researchers from SAERI, Falkland Islands Government Department of Natural Resources, and the University of Colorado Boulder. The study is published in the [ICES Journal of Marine Science](#).



Images of sea pens and coral gardens in the FOCZ from > 1000m depth.