

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION**90TH MEETING****La Jolla, California (USA)****27 June-1 July 2016****PROPOSAL IATTC-90 C-6****SUBMITTED BY COSTA RICA, BELIZE, NICARAGUA, EL SALVADOR,
GUATEMALA, PANAMA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION****AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-05-03 ON THE CONSERVATION OF
SHARKS CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHERIES IN THE EASTERN
PACIFIC OCEAN****EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

The sustainable utilization of species of fisheries interest is one of the basic objectives of fisheries management. Although sharks in the fisheries for tunas and tuna-like species are frequently subject to the rules on bycatch, generating over time an important interaction with catches; which, under the auspices of the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries must be managed with caution, in order to achieve the full utilization of catches and eliminate discards.

In this context, the IATTC issued in the year 2005 Resolution C-05-03 with the stated objective of fighting against the finning of sharks by means of the establishment of a weight relationship between fins and body or carcass of the shark, given that this practice not only violates the concept of full utilization of catches, but also promotes the indiscriminate catching of sharks, which makes effective management of these stocks impossible. Over time various countries developed efficient alternatives to guarantee the eradication of the practice of finning, abandoning the practice of the weight relationship to use a more effective control mechanism, conceived as the natural attachment of the fins with partial cuts which, without separating the fins and body, to allow proper handling and quality of the meat, by means of prompt and timely bleeding, in conjunction with removing the animal's head and gutting it.

Currently, the Central American countries in the framework of OSPESCA adopted regulation OSP-05-11 by which the partial cutting the fins and the maintenance of natural attachment is regulated, it having been shown that the mechanism adopted is useful, viable, objective, transparent and demonstrable for eradicating finning.

Additionally, during the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee held both in May 2015 and from 09 to 14 May 2016, the delegation of Costa Rica reiterated how important the practice of making it obligatory to unload sharks with the fins attached to the bodies has been, in order to achieve the full utilization of the catches of sharks.

The aim of this proposal is that the countries subject to IATTC regulations adopt the mechanism of fins attached naturally with partial cuts; it recognizes the merit of implementing the regulations contained in resolution C-05-03, for which reason what is intended with this proposal is the substitution of the mechanism that allows fins to be separated from the carcass, provided the weight of the fins is not exceed 5% of the weight of the shark carcasses on board, in favor of the practice of fins attached to the body of the sharks naturally, with partial cuts.

Costa Rica's intention is that this proposal for amendment be discussed, and substantive improvements

to resolution C-05-03 be introduced, which is achieved by means of this proposal, by means of the modification of the Resolution, substituting paragraph 4 and 5 of that Resolution so that in the future it will read:

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission:

Resolves as follows:

[...] Paragraphs 4 and 5 are replaced by the following paragraphs:

4. CPCs shall require their vessels that all the shark fins kept on board shall remain naturally attached to the corresponding carcasses up to the first point of landing onshore. To facilitate storage and post landing processing, partial longitudinal cuts in the muscle area adjacent to the fins of the shark and partially in the keel or caudal peduncle, might be allowed so that fins may be detached at the point of unloading.
5. CPCs, shall have a period of two years, from the adoption of this Resolution, to take the necessary measures that will ensure compliance with this practice for transporting and landing sharks and their respective fins naturally attached.

[...]

Paragraph 8 is replaced by the following paragraph

8. CPCs shall, where possible, undertake research to: identify ways to make fishing gears more selective.
 - a. identify ways to make fishing gears more selective, where appropriate, including research into the effectiveness of prohibiting wire leaders;
 - b. improve knowledge on key biological/ecological parameters, life-history and behavioural traits, migration patterns of key shark species;
 - c. identify key shark mating, pupping and nursery areas; and
 - d. improve handling practices for live sharks to maximise post-release survival.

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