

**[U.S. Annual Report 2019
Resolution C-11-10
Oceanic whitetip sharks]**

Below is relevant information for U.S. deep-set and shallow-set longline fisheries under the respective elasmobranch resolutions. The IATTC maintains all observer information for U.S. purse seine vessels and as such already has access to reports of observed interactions with mobulids, oceanic white tip sharks, silky sharks, and hammerhead sharks caught in that fishery.

C-11-10

In 2019, NMFS observers recorded four oceanic whitetip sharks caught by U.S. deep-set longline vessels fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). Three were returned dead and one was returned alive.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
Sustainable Fisheries Division
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802

July 22, 2019

Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
8901 La Jolla Shores Drive
La Jolla, California 92037-1508

Re: Submissions under Resolutions Related to Elasmobranchs

Dear Dr. Compeán:

This letter and enclosed report are submitted pursuant to several resolutions, all of which pertain to data on elasmobranchs:

- Resolution C-05-03: *Resolution on the Conservation of Sharks aught in Association with Fisheries in the Eastern Pacific Ocean*
 - 2017 and 2018 information (2018 research updates will be sent separately)
- Resolution C-11-10: *Resolution on the Conservation of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries in the Antigua Convention Area*
 - 2018 information
- Resolution C-15-04: *Resolution on the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IATTC Convention Area*
 - 2018 information
- Resolution C-16-05: *Resolution on the Management of Shark Species*
 - 2018 information
- Resolution C-16-06: *Conservation Measures for Shark Species, with Special Emphasis on the Silky Shark, for the Years 2017, 2018, and 2019*
 - 2017 and 2018 information

Please contact Taylor Debevec at 562-980-4066 or Taylor.Debevec@noaa.gov if there are any questions regarding the United States' reporting under these resolutions.

Sincerely,

Rachael Wadsworth
Acting Highly Migratory Species Branch Chief

cc: Drew Lawler, Alternate U.S. Commissioner
David Hogan, Department of State
William Fox, Jr., U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
Mike Thompson, Alternate U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
John Zuanich, Alternate U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
Ryan J. Wulff, NMFS WCR
150413SWR2013SF00273:TD



Below is relevant information for U.S. longline fisheries under the respective elasmobranch resolutions. The IATTC maintains all observer information for U.S. purse seine vessels and as such already has access to observed interactions with oceanic white tips, mobulids, silky sharks, and hammerhead sharks caught in that fishery.

C-11-10

In 2018, there were two observed oceanic whitetip sharks caught by U.S. longline vessels fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) recorded by NMFS observers; one with shallow-set longline gear (returned dead) and one with deep-set longline gear (returned alive).

C-15-04

In 2018, there were no observed mobulid caught by U.S. longline vessels fishing in the EPO recorded by NMFS observers.

C-16-05

In 2018, there were two silky sharks caught by U.S. longline vessels fishing in the EPO recorded by NMFS observers; both with deep-set longline gear (one returned alive, one returned dead).

In 2018, there was one hammerhead (smooth hammerhead) caught by U.S. longline vessels fishing in the EPO recorded by NMFS observers; it was caught with deep-set longline gear and returned dead.

C-16-06

The United States observer program does not collect individual lengths or weights of fish and as such cannot report on the percent of silky sharks caught <100 cm total length by weight during trips. However, we can report here the percent of silky sharks observed caught (regardless of size) by number of individual fish caught by trip.

In 2017, twenty silky sharks were observed caught in nine deep-set longline trips:

Trip Number in 2017	Total number of fish caught on trip	Total number of silky sharks caught on trip	Percent of silky shark catch for trip, by number
1	768	1	0.13%
2	1,092	3	0.27%
3	1,037	1	0.10%
4	1,251	1	0.08%
5	663	1	0.15%
6	1,325	1	0.08%
7	943	5	0.53%
8	906	4	0.44%
9	1,066	3	0.28%

As mentioned under C-16-05, in 2018, two silky sharks were observed caught. They were caught on two different deep-set longline trips:

Trip Number in 2018	Total number of fish caught on trip	Total number of silky sharks caught on trip	Percent of silky shark catch for trip, by number
1	827	1	0.12%
2	908	1	0.11%

U.S. REGULATORY CHANGES IN 2017 AND 2018

Petition to List Oceanic Whitetip Sharks¹ Under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)

NMFS received a petition from Defenders of Wildlife on September 21, 2015, to list the oceanic whitetip shark as threatened or endangered throughout its entire range, or to list two distinct population segments (DPS) as described in the petition as threatened or endangered. They also petitioned to designate critical habitat for the oceanic whitetip. NMFS announced the results of its 90-day finding (81 FR 1376, January 12, 2016) that the petitioned action of listing the species range-wide may be warranted.

After the 90-day finding was published, NMFS initiated status review and sought scientific and commercial information about oceanic whitetips. On December 29, 2016, NMFS announced its finding and availability of status review report (81 FR 96304). In summary, NMFS found that based on the best scientific and commercial information available, including the status review report (Young *et. al.*, 2016), and after taking into account efforts being made to protect these species, that the oceanic whitetip is likely to become endangered throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the foreseeable future and proposed listing it as threatened.

U.S. West Coast States Updates

California

California adopted new rules in 2018 including the drift gillnet transition program (SB1017), and the Ocean Protection Council White Shark Population Monitoring and Beach Safety (AB2191).

Oregon

Late in 2017, new rules became effective for certain sharks and rays. These changes are the result of a ballot measure to ban wildlife trafficking, and subsequently modified by the state legislature. These rules became effective by temporary rule on July 1, 2017, but are now permanent. This history and the changes are described on the state's website².

¹ <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/oceanic-whitetip-shark#management>

² https://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/wildlife_trafficking_commercial_fisheries.asp