

Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission



DIRECTRICES DE MEJORES PRÁCTICAS DE MANIPULACIÓN Y LIBERACIÓN DE TIBURONES EN LAS PESQUERÍAS DE LA CIAT

BEST HANDLING AND RELEASE PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR SHARKS IN IATTC FISHERIES

SAC-15-11

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15ª Reunión del Comité Científico Asesor - 10-14 de junio de 2024
15th Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee – 10-14 June 2024
La Jolla, California, USA-EE.UU.



Resolution C-23-07

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

101st MEETING

Victoria, B.C., Canada
7-11 August 2023

RESOLUTION C-23-07¹

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Victoria, B.C, Canada, at the occasion of its 101st meeting:

12. The IATTC scientific staff, in collaboration with the IATTC SAC and EBWG, shall develop and recommend to the Commission a set of best handling guidelines for the safe release of sharks for inclusion in this measure in 2024. In the meantime, CPCs may elect to, as appropriate, use the safe handling and release guidelines for purse seine vessels described in Annex 3.

COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DEL ATÚN TROPICAL

101^a REUNIÓN

Victoria, B.C., Canadá
7-11 de agosto de 2023

RESOLUCIÓN C-23-07¹

MEDIDAS DE CONSERVACIÓN PARA LA PROTECCIÓN Y ORDENACIÓN SOSTENIBLE DE LOS TIBURONES

La Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical (CIAT), reunida en Victoria, B.C., Canadá en la ocasión de su 101^a Reunión:

12. El personal científico de la CIAT, en colaboración con el CCA de la CIAT y el GTECI, desarrollará y recomendará a la Comisión un conjunto de mejores directrices de manipulación para la liberación segura de tiburones para su inclusión en esta medida en 2024. Mientras tanto, los CPC pueden optar por utilizar, según proceda, las directrices de manipulación y liberación seguras descritas en el Anexo 3.

‘the IATTC scientific staff, in collaboration with the IATTC SAC and EBWG, shall develop and recommend to the Commission a set of best handling guidelines for the safe release of sharks for inclusion in this measure in 2024’

Background: Memo 0473-410

COMISION INTERAMERICANA DEL ATUN TROPICAL (CIAT) INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION (IATTC)

MEMORANDUM

26 September 2023
Ref.: 0473-410

To: Commissioners and Heads of Delegation
c.c.: Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia, Liberia
From: Arnulfo Franco, Director
Re: Guidelines for best handling and release practices (BHRP)

A. As you may recall, the Permanent Working Group on Ecosystem and Bycatch (EBWG) at its first meeting and the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) at its 14th meeting ([IATTC-101-03](#)), both recognized the need to develop best handling and release practice (BHRP) guidelines for vulnerable bycatch species (seabirds, sea turtles, marine mammals, sharks and rays).

Accordingly, the SAC endorsed the EBWG recommendation that CPCs and other relevant stakeholders support the IATTC staff in a survey to gather details of national efforts or programs that can help elucidate post-release survival rates of vulnerable species captured in the various fisheries under the purview of the IATTC.

B. In accordance with the above, all CPCs are invited to:

1. Provide existing BHRP guidelines
2. Provide existing PRS data
3. Identify/designate subject matter experts (SME)

Shark BHRP Guideline Development Process

Responses to Memo 0473-410

- (Canada, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador, EU, French Polynesia, Peru, US)



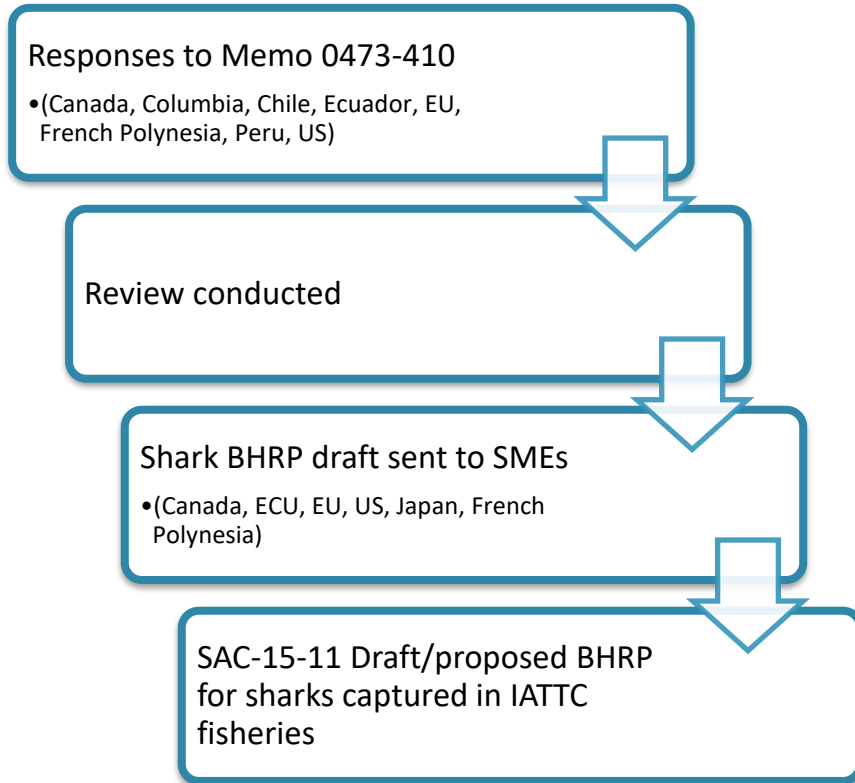
Review conducted

Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development				Shark												
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery							Shark									



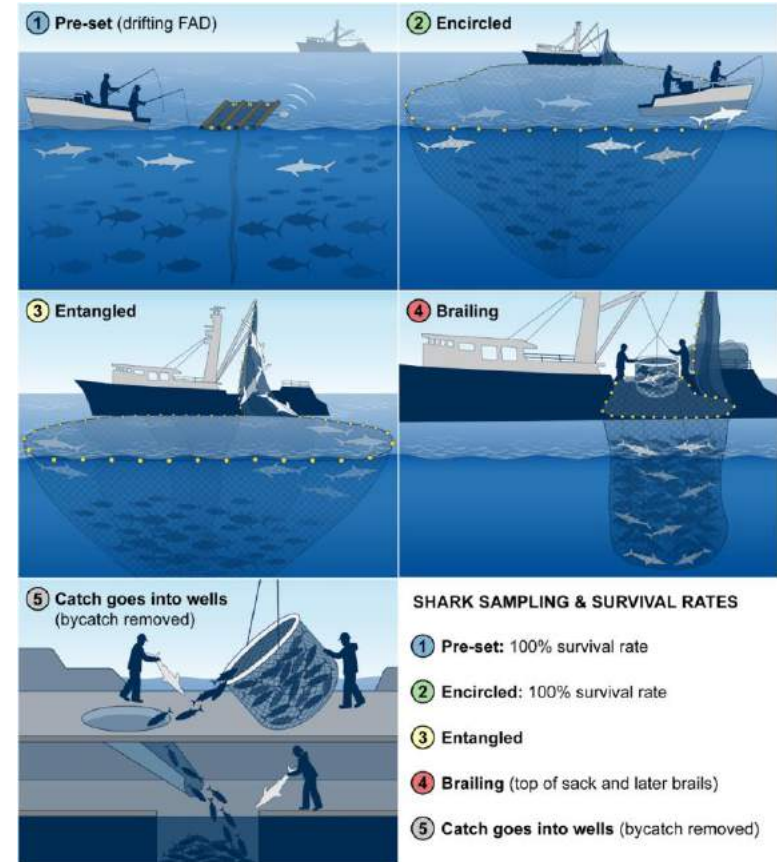
Shark BHRP Guideline Development Process



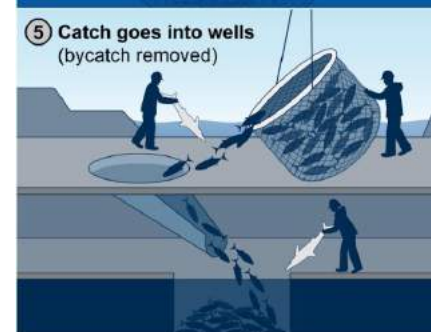
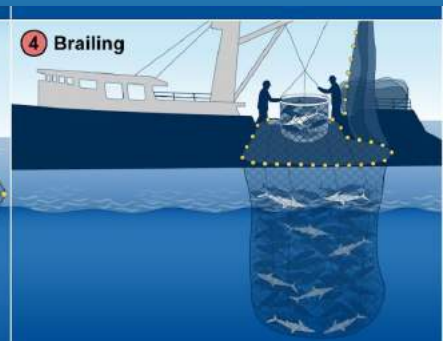
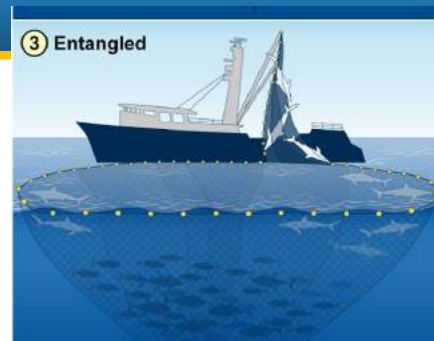
- Draft guidelines are the result of a thorough review & consultation process
- Data driven -> recommendations have measurable impacts on survival
- Provided by fishery (PS, Longline, gillnet)

Shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine

- Recommendations are specific to fishing stage, vessel configuration, BRDs
- Tools Required:
 - I. Bycatch sorting/releasing devices for working/main deck (e.g., hopper with a door, ramp)
 - II. Stretcher/cradle



Purse seine stages



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine (Entangled sharks)

Do:

- Drop the net to the deck and allow the crew to safely cut the net away from the animal.
- Maneuver the animal into a stretcher/cradle or ramp immediately and release it on the opposite side of the vessel.
- Use a stretcher or cradle to ensure the safety of the crew and the animal

Do not:

- Roll sharks and or any bycatch species with mandatory release requirements through the power block.
- Leave sharks on deck. Ensure that they are released immediately.



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine (Brailed sharks)

Do:

For sharks that are on top of the sack:

- When sharks are visible on top of the sack, the vessel should conduct a 'skimming scoop' to move as many sharks as possible from the sack to the sea (if possible) or the main deck for immediate release.



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine (Brailed sharks)

Do:

For sharks that are on top of the sack:

- When sharks are visible on top of the sack, the vessel should conduct a 'skimming scoop' to move as many sharks as possible from the sack to the sea (if possible) or the main deck for immediate release.

When brailing sharks on board:

- Utilize bycatch sorting devices (e.g., hoppers) to ensure sharks are sorted on the main deck and do not go down the loading hatch.
- Maneuver sharks into a stretcher/cradle or ramp immediately and release it on the opposite side of the vessel.
- Vessels should install a bycatch/waste chute on the lower decks to facilitate faster and safer release of sharks that were not sorted on the main/working deck.



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine (Brailed sharks)

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For sharks that are on top of the sack:

- When sharks are visible on top of the sack, the vessel should conduct a 'skimming scoop' to move as many sharks as possible from the sack to the sea (if possible) or the main deck for immediate release.

When brailing sharks on board:

- Utilize bycatch sorting devices (e.g., hoppers) to ensure sharks are sorted on the main deck and do not go down the loading hatch.
- Maneuver sharks into a stretcher/cradle or ramp immediately and release it on the opposite side of the vessel.
- Vessels should install a bycatch/waste chute on the lower decks to facilitate faster and safer release of sharks that were not sorted on the main/working deck.

Do not:

- Leave sharks on deck. Ensure that they are released immediately.
- Use gaffs, hooks, or similar instruments to punch holes or drag sharks.
- No shark may be lifted by the head, tail, gill slits, or spiracles, or by using bind wire against or inserted through the body, and no holes may be punched through the bodies of sharks (e.g., to pass a cable through for lifting the shark). Use a stretcher/cradle or ramp to ensure the safety of the crew and the animal.



Whale shark BHRP Guidelines: Purse Seine

Do not:

- Land or bring a whale shark on board the purse seine vessel regardless of size.
- Pull or tow a whale shark by the tail.

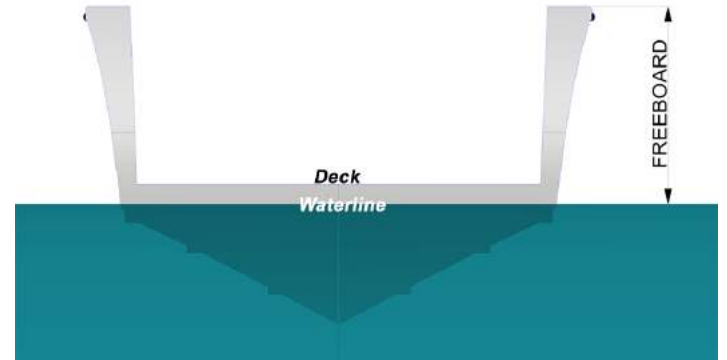
Do:

- Leave whale sharks in the water for release.
- Prioritize release of whale sharks prior to brailing.
- If the whale shark is at the side of the vessel and its head pointed towards the stern of the boat, a crewmember can cut a few meters of net in front of the shark's mouth to release it.
- If the head of the whale shark is pointed towards the bow of the boat, the crew in charge of the net hauling operation can maneuver the winch and the capstan to bring the whale shark close to the hull, then stand the animal on the net and to roll it outside the bunt.
- A rope placed under the animal and attached to the float line could help to roll the whale shark out of the net.



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Longline

- Recommendations are by vessel freeboard
- Freeboard = the distance between the waterline and the main deck of a ship and the waterline to the rail of a small boat.



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Longline > 2m freeboard

Do:

- Slow the vessel to bring the shark in
- Leave sharks in the water for gear removal.
- Use long handled de-hookers if attempting to remove hooks.
- Use long handled line cutters to cut the line as close to the hook (or mouth) as possible leaving no more than 1 meter of gear attached and ensuring that weights are removed.

Tools Required:

- Long-handled de-hooker
- Long-handled line cutter



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Longline < 2m freeboard

Do:

- Slow the vessel to bring the sharks in.
- Leave sharks in the water and remove gear.
- If animals are brought on board for gear removal use a dip net or lasso to help lift them onboard.
- If animals are brought on board for gear removal use a stretcher or cradle to improve safety of the crew and to reduce injury to the animal.
- If animals are brought on board for gear removal, sharks should be maneuvered using manual restraint of the pectoral fins and the caudal peduncle (this may require two crew members depending on the size of the animal).
- Return the animals to the sea as quickly as possible .

Tools Required:

- Dipnet
- Short handled de-hooker
- Pliers
- Line cutter
- Long-handled de-hooker
- Long-handled line cutter
- Stretcher/cradle



Shark BHRP Guidelines: Longline (all vessels)

Do not:

- Use drag lines or drag sharks behind the vessel until the hook rips free of the jaw.
- Use gaffs for lifting or maneuvering sharks.
- Lift and drop sharks from the vessel height to rip the hook from the shark's jaw.
- Lift sharks onto the deck without the use of a dipnet and or second point of attachment to support the weight of the animal.
- Lift or maneuver sharks by the gill slits, or spiracles.
- Attempt to remove a hook if it is not visible.
- Cut into the jaw for removal of the hook.

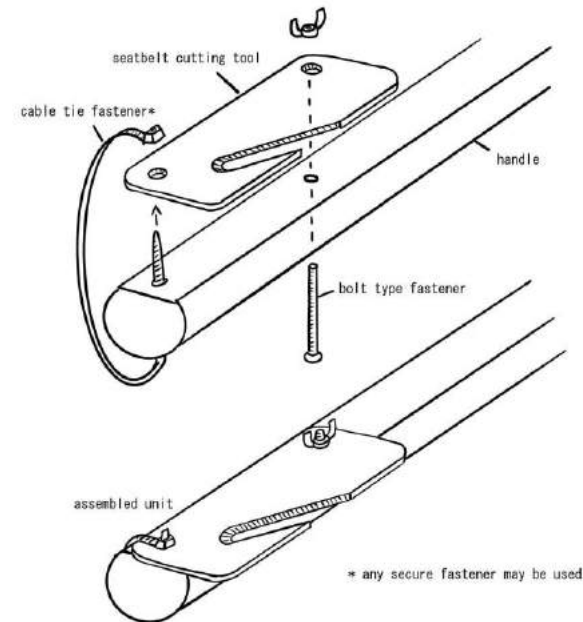


Annex 2. Example Specifications for select Recommended Tools

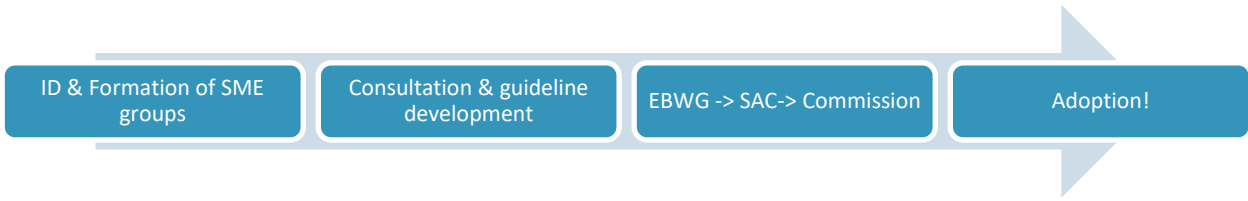
Long-handled line cutter

The minimum design standards are as follows:

1. A protected cutting blade. The cutting blade must be curved, recessed, contained in a holder, or otherwise afforded some protection to minimize direct contact of the cutting surface with animals or users of the cutting blade.
2. Cutting blade edge. The blade must be capable of cutting 2.0-2.1 mm monofilament line and nylon or polypropylene multi-strand material commonly known as braided mainline or tarred mainline.
3. An extended reach holder for the cutting blade. The line clipper must have an extended reach handle or pole of at least 6 ft (1.82 m).
4. Secure fastener. The cutting blade must be securely fastened to the extended reach handle or pole to ensure effective deployment and use.



Next steps: Development of training/outreach materials



Phase	Activities	2025				2026				2027				2028				
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
4) Development of BHRP training materials	Sharks	Shark																
	Seabird				Seabird													
	Rays				Rays													
	Sea turtles								Sea turtles									
	Marine Mammals								Marine Mammals									

- Infographics
- Training materials (powerpoints, videos, handouts)
- Participate in / co-organize training workshops
- Produce placards/posters for vessels



Summary: Shark BHRP Guidelines (SAC-15-11, ANNEX 1)

- BHRP guidelines in Annex 1 are data driven, underwent review by SMEs
- This exercise provides an effective & integrative process and validates the protocol for other taxa BHRPs
- Shark BHRP guidelines are fishery specific and vessel size specific
- CPCs must ensure fleets are aware of the adopted guidelines and trained on their use (IATTC staff will develop materials, coordinate trainings as BHRP are adopted)
- CPCs must ensure that fleets carry the required BHRP tools (review Annex 2 for design specifications)
- Invite discussion on the guideline text -> Draft guidelines for SAC 15

Preguntas – Questions?

