

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

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PROPOSAL IATTC-83 E-1

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

IATTC RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HAMMERHEAD SHARKS (FAMILY *SPHYRNIDAE*) CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHERIES IN THE IATTC CONVENTION AREA

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Goal: Hammerhead sharks, caught mainly in the longline but also in purse seine fisheries, are among the top shark species caught in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). Since hammerhead sharks is one of the most vulnerable existing shark species and there is not enough knowledge or data currently available for this species, it is necessary to adopt a precautionary approach to its conservation through the prohibition of retaining hammerhead sharks on board of vessels and release them unharmed when possible.

New elements: this draft Resolution was already presented at the IATTC 2011 Annual Meeting. In order to reply to the needs of developing coastal CPCs, it has been improved and updated with an exception for developing coastal CPCs for catches intended for local consumption and domestic trade complemented with their best endeavours not to increase current catches of hammerhead sharks. It also foresees the possibility to envisage nursery areas in the future.

Rationale: the international scientific community points out that the hammerhead species *Sphyrna lewini* and *Sphyrna zygaena*: (a) are one of the species with the lowest productivity, (b) have been ranked as one of the five species with the highest degree of risk in an ecological risk assessment; (c) have high at-vessel mortality and constitute a small portion of the shark catch; (d) are one of the easiest shark species to identify; and (e) that a significant proportion of the species catch is composed of juveniles, justifying a precautionary approach in their management.

Moreover, the Antigua Convention requires IATTC to adopt conservation measures for species associated with the main targeted stocks, this species being one of them.

IATTC RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HAMMERHEAD SHARKS (FAMILY *SPHYRNIDAE*) CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHERIES IN THE IATTC CONVENTION AREA

The Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC),

CONSIDERING that hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* are caught as by-catch in the IATTC Agreement area;

NOTING that the international scientific community points out that the hammerhead sharks of the species *Sphyrna lewini* and *Sphyrna zygaena* are ranked among the species with the lowest productivity;

CONSIDERING that it is difficult to differentiate between the various species of hammerhead sharks without taking them on board and that such action might jeopardize the survival of the captured individuals;

Agrees to adopt the following Resolution in conformity of Article IX of the IATTC Convention:

1. Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall prohibit retaining onboard, transshipping, landing, storing, selling, or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae*, taken in the IATTC area of competence.
2. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag, to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, hammerhead sharks when brought alongside the vessel for taking on board.
3. All hammerhead sharks taken in the IATTC area of competence during recreational and sport fishing shall be released alive. In no circumstances specimen shall be retained on board, transhipped, landed, stored, sold or offered for sale. CPCs shall ensure that both recreational and sport fishermen carrying out fishing with high probability of catching hammerhead sharks in the IATTC area of competence are equipped with instruments suitable to release alive the animals.
4. Hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* caught by developing coastal CPCs for local consumption and domestic trade are exempted from the measures established in paragraph 1. Developing coastal States CPCs shall submit data on hammerhead species caught by their fleets in the IATTC area of competence according to the provisions of Resolution C-05-03 on the Conservation of Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.
5. Developing coastal CPCs exempted from this prohibition pursuant to paragraph 4 should endeavour not to increase their catches of hammerhead sharks. Such CPCs shall take necessary measures to ensure that hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* will not enter international trade and shall notify IATTC of such measures.
6. CPCs shall, where possible, implement research on hammerhead sharks taken in the IATTC area of competence in order to identify potential nursery areas. Based on this research, CPCs shall consider time and area closures and other measures, as appropriate.
7. CPCs shall record through their observer programs the number of discards and releases of hammerhead sharks with indication of status (dead or alive) and report it to IATTC.
8. This resolution shall enter into force on 1st January 2013.