



Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

Best Handling & Release Practices for Sharks, Seabirds & Sea Turtles in IATTC Fisheries Mejores Prácticas De Manipulación Y Liberación de Tiburones, Aves Marinas, y Tortugas Marinas en la Pesca de IATTC

SAC-16-10, EB-03-05, EB-03-06

Outline

- Best Handling and Release Practice (BHRP) guidelines development workplan
- Engagement and identification of subject matter experts and industry representatives
- Sharks update (SAC-16-10)
- Sea turtles (EB-03-05)
- Seabirds (EB-03-06)



BHRP reduce mortality to incidental species

El MPML reduce la mortalidad de especies incidentales.

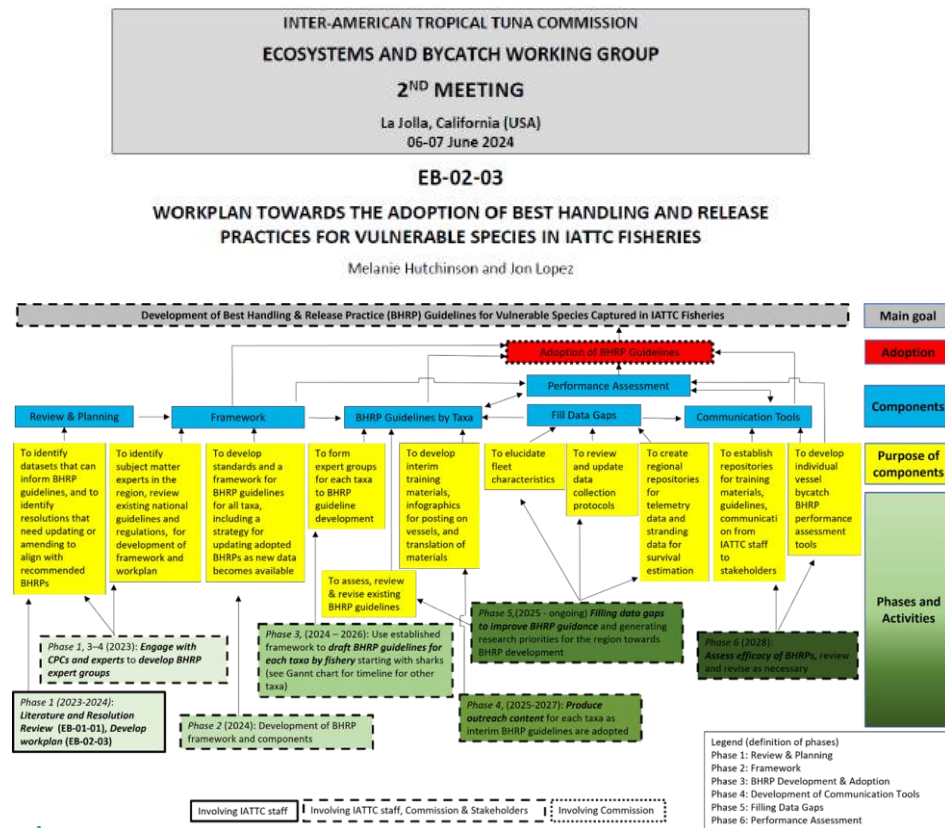
- No bycatch mitigation measure is perfectly effective
 - Post interaction the most effective method for reducing impacts and mortality are through careful handling and release
 - Relatively simple behavioral / procedural changes with measurable impacts on survival
-
- Tras la interacción, el método más eficaz para reducir los impactos y la mortalidad es una manipulación y liberación cuidadosas.
 - Cambios de comportamiento y procedimiento relativamente sencillos con efectos cuantificables en la supervivencia.



BHRP are the 'low hanging fruit'

MPML ESPECIES VULNERABLES PLAN DE TRABAJO EB-02-03

BHRP VULNERABLE SPECIES WORKPLAN OVERVIEW EB-02-03



6 Fases:

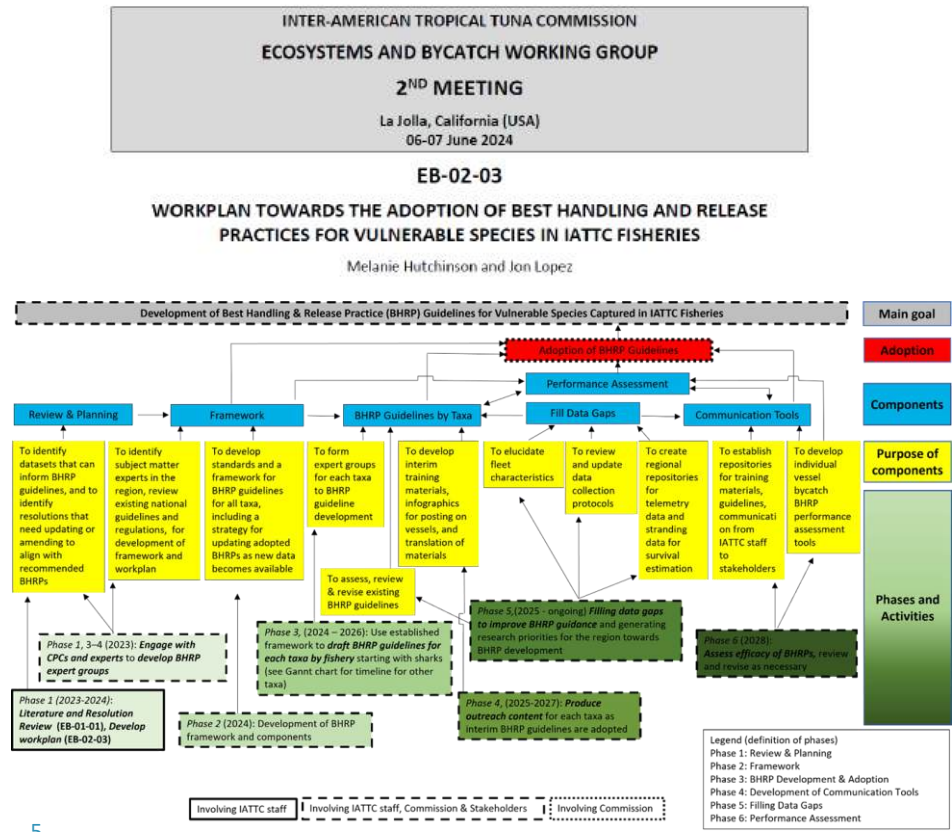
1. Revisión y planificación (EB-01-01)
2. Marco del BHRP (EB-02-03)
3. Desarrollo de directrices para cada taxón
4. Desarrollo de materiales de formación y educación
5. Rellenar lagunas de datos e investigación
6. Evaluación de resultados

6 Phases:

1. Review & planning (EB-01-01)
2. BHRP Framework (EB-02-03)
3. Guideline development for each taxa
4. Development of training & education materials
5. Filling data & research gaps
6. Performance assessment

MPML ESPECIES VULNERABLES PLAN DE TRABAJO EB-02-03

BHRP VULNERABLE SPECIES WORKPLAN OVERVIEW EB-02-03



2024



2025



2026



Fases, actividades y plazos de desarrollo del MPML

BHRP development phases, activities & timelines

Phases:

- ✓ 1. Review & planning / *Revision y planificacion*
- ✓ 2. BHRP Framework / *Marco de trabajo BHRP*
3. **Guideline development for each taxa / *Desarrollo de guias para cada taxa***
4. Development of training & education materials (\$requires funding\$) / *Desarrollo de material de entrenamiento y educacion (requiere fondos)*

formar grupos de expertos

Consulta, elaboración de directrices

EBWG -> SAC-> Commission

ID & Formation of SME groups

Consultation & writing guidelines

EBWG -> SAC-> Commission



Memorandums 0473-410 & 0610-410

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

MEMORANDUM

20 November 2024
Ref.: 0601-410

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

A. As a follow-up to memorandum ref. 0473-410, dated 26 September 2023, all CPCs are invited

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

MEMORANDUM

20 de noviembre de 2024
Ref.: 0601-410

Para: Comisionados y Jefes de Delegación
c.c.: Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia y Liberia
De: Arnulfo Franco, Director

Asunto: Directrices sobre las mejores prácticas de manipulación y liberación (MPML) de aves marinas, tortugas marinas, tiburones y rayas

A. Como alcance del memorándum ref. 0473-410, de 26 de septiembre de 2023, se invita a todos los CPC a:

1. **Proporcionar** a la Secretaría sus directrices y/o reglamentos existentes sobre las mejores

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

1. Proporcionar directrices y/o reglamentos existentes sobre las mejores prácticas de manejo y liberación
2. Proporcionar datos sobre SPL
3. Identificar y designar a los expertos en la materia que podrían colaborar en la elaboración de las directrices antes mencionadas para cada taxón y pesquería
4. Identificar y designar a los representantes de la industria

Responses to requests for engagement

2023

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

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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:



Responses to Memo 0473-410

(CAN, CHL, COL, ECU, EU, FRP, PER, USA)

2024

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

MEMORANDUM

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From: Arnulfo Franco, Director
Re: Guidelines for best handling and release practices (BHRP) of seabirds, sea turtles, sharks and rays

A. As a follow-up to memorandum ref. 0473-410, dated 26 September 2023, all CPCs are invited to:

1. **Provide the Secretariat** with their existing guidelines and or regulations on best handling and release practices for seabirds, sea turtles, sharks and rays for fisheries under the purview of the IATTC.



Responses to Memo 0610-410

(CAN, CHL, CHN, COR, ECU, EU, FRP, MEX, PER, SLV)

SAC-16-10: Tiburones MPML / Shark BHRP



Shark BHRP Guideline Development Process

Resolution C-23-07 Requested the staff develop BHRP for sharks

Responses to Memo 0473-410

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

Shark BHRP draft sent to SMEs

•(Canada, ECU, EU, US, Japan, French Polynesia)

SAC-15-11 Draft/proposed BHRP for sharks captured in IATTC fisheries

EBWG 2 Review -> SAC 15 Review -> Commission 102->C-24-05

- Draft guidelines are the result of a thorough review & consultation process
- Data driven -> recommendations have measurable impacts on survival
- Draft BHRP guidelines provided by fishery (purse seine, longline, gillnet) in Annex 1 (SAC-15-11)

Shark BHRP Guideline Development Process

COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DEL ATÚN TROPICAL

102ª REUNIÓN

Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá
2- 6 de septiembre de 2024

RESOLUCIÓN C-24-05¹

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

La Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical (CIAT), reunida en Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá, en la ocasión de su 102ª Reunión:

12. El personal científico de la CIAT, en colaboración con el CCA de la CIAT y el GTECI, desarrollará, tomando en cuenta la practicabilidad de los buques pesqueros, y recomendará a la Comisión un conjunto exhaustivo de mejores directrices de manipulación para la liberación segura de tiburones para su inclusión en esta medida en 2025.

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

102nd MEETING

Panama City, Panama
2-6 September 2024

RESOLUTION C-24-05¹

**CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Panama City, Panama, at the occasion of its 102nd meeting:

12. The IATTC Scientific Staff, in collaboration with the IATTC SAC and EBWG, shall continue to develop, taking into account the practicability for fishing vessels, and recommend to the Commission a comprehensive set of best handling and release practices for the safe release of sharks for inclusion in this measure in 2025.

Shark BHRP Guideline Development Process

Responses to Memo 0610-410 (Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, EU, French Polynesia, Mexico, Peru)

Review conducted -> draft guidelines developed

Shark BHRP draft sent to SMEs in March 2025 in English

Version 2 sent to SME in April in English and Spanish -> SAC-16-10

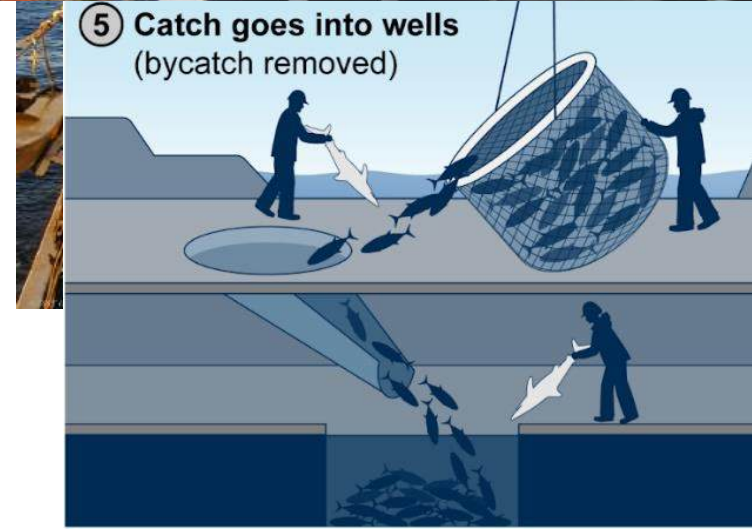
SAC-16-10 -> **EBWG Review** -> SAC Review -> Commission

- Draft guidelines are the result of a thorough review & consultation process
- Data driven -> recommendations have measurable impacts on survival
- Draft BHRP guidelines provided by fishery (purse seine, longline, gillnet) in SAC-16-10

SAC-16-10: Tiburon MPML/Shark BHRP

Pesquería cerquera/Purse seine

- Several studies on shark survival in purse seine fisheries across ocean basins
- High at vessel mortality and depends on when sharks are brought on board
- Survivorship is compromised once confined in the sack
- For sharks that are alive when brought on board, safe handling is very important and getting them back in the water as quickly as possible is key
- Survivorship is further compromised when they end up in the lower well decks



Tiburones enmallados en la red

Sharks entangled in the net

Sí se debe:

- Soltar la red para que el tiburón enmallado descienda hasta la cubierta y permitir que la tripulación corte la red de forma segura para liberar el animal.
- Colocar a los tiburones en una camilla/cuna o rampa inmediatamente y liberarlos por el lado del buque opuesto al de la red.

No se debe:

- Pasar los tiburones a través de la pasteca.
- Colgar a los tiburones por la cola.
- Arrastrar a los tiburones por la cubierta agarrándolos por la cola.

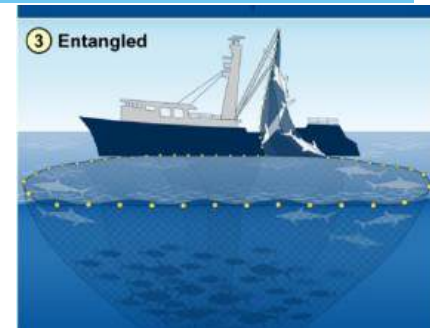


Do:

- Drop the net so the entangled shark is lowered to the deck to allow the crew to safely cut the net away from the animal
- Maneuver the animal into a stretcher/cradle or ramp and release it on the opposite side of the vessel from the net.

Do not:

- Roll sharks through the power block
- Hang sharks by the tail
- Drag sharks across the deck by the tail.



Al salabardear tiburones a bordo

When brailing sharks on board

Sí se debe:

- Priorizar la liberación de tiburones que sean visibles en la parte superior de la bolsa.
- Asegurar que los tiburones se separen en la cubierta principal/de trabajo y que no descendan por la escotilla de carga (Según las condiciones del buque, siempre que sea posible, usar dispositivos de reducción de captura incidental (por ejemplo: tolvas con puertas y rampas).



Do:

- Prioritize the release of sharks that are visible on top of the sack.
- Ensure sharks are sorted on the main/work deck and do not go down the loading hatch (According to the vessel's conditions, to the extent possible, use bycatch reduction devices, e.g., hoppers with doors and ramps)



Al salabardear tiburones a bordo

When brailing sharks on board

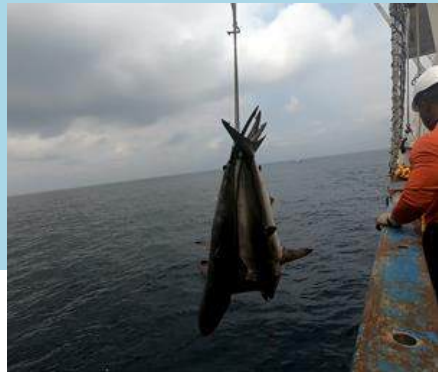
- Liberar al tiburón lo antes posible.
- Colocar inmediatamente a los tiburones en una camilla/cuna o rampa agarrándolos, sin suspenderlos, por el pedúnculo caudal y las aletas pectorales, y liberarlos en el lado opuesto del buque.
- En los casos en que no pueda evitarse el paso de los tiburones por la escotilla de carga, los tiburones deberían ser liberados lo antes posible (por ejemplo, a través de una canaleta de desechos/captura incidental, o utilizando camillas).
- Release the shark as soon as possible.
- Maneuver sharks into a stretcher/cradle or ramp immediately, by grabbing it, without suspending it, by the caudal peduncle and pectoral fins, and release it on the opposite side of the vessel from the net.
- In cases when the passage of sharks through the loading hatch can not be avoided, sharks should be released as quickly as possible (e.g. via a bycatch waste chute or using stretchers).

Al salabardear tiburones a bordo

When brailing sharks on board

No se debe:

- Permitir que los tiburones pasen por la escotilla de carga.
- No colgar a los tiburones por la cola utilizando una cuerda
- Arrastrar a los tiburones por la cubierta agarrándolos por la cola



Do not:

- Allow sharks to pass through the loading hatch
- Hang sharks by the tail using a rope
- Drag sharks across the deck by the tail



Tiburones ballena capturados en pesquerías de cerco

Whale sharks captured in purse seine fisheries



Sí se debe:

- Dejar a los tiburones ballena en el agua para su liberación.
- Liberar a los tiburones ballena.
- Si el tiburón ballena está al costado de la embarcación con la cabeza apuntando hacia la popa, la tripulación debería liberar al tiburón abriendo la red delante de la boca del tiburón.
- Si la cabeza del tiburón ballena apunta hacia la proa de la embarcación, la tripulación a cargo de la operación de adujado de la red puede maniobrar el malacate y cabrestante para acercar el tiburón al casco y luego colocar el animal sobre la red y empujarlo fuera del copo de la red.
- En el caso de tiburones ballena pequeños (< 3 m), puede utilizarse el salabardo para empujar al animal hacia arriba y por encima de la red de cerco.



whale sharks in the water for release.
If the head of whale sharks prior to brailing, if possible, is pointed towards the stern of the vessel.

If the whale shark is at the side of the vessel and its head is pointed towards the stern of the vessel, the shark should be released by opening the net in front of the shark's mouth.

- 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.
- For small whale sharks (< 3 m) the brailer may be used to push the animal up and over the purse net.

Tiburones ballena capturados en pesquerías de cerco

Whale sharks captured in purse seine fisheries

No se debe:

- Descargar un tiburón ballena en cubierta independientemente de su tamaño.
- Iniciar un proceso de salabardeo si pone en riesgo la supervivencia del tiburón ballena.
- Jalar o arrastrar a los tiburones ballena fuera de la red por la cola o el pedúnculo caudal.

Do not:

- Land or bring a whale shark on board the purse seine vessel regardless of size.
- Start a brailing process if it endangers the survival of the whale shark.
- Pull or drag whale sharks out of the net by the tail caudal peduncle.



Tiburones MPML: Pesquerías palangreras

Shark BHRP: Longline fisheries

- Survivorship is species specific and correlated to time on the line (soak times)
- Handling effects may compromise survival
- Survivorship is compromised when released with trailing gear

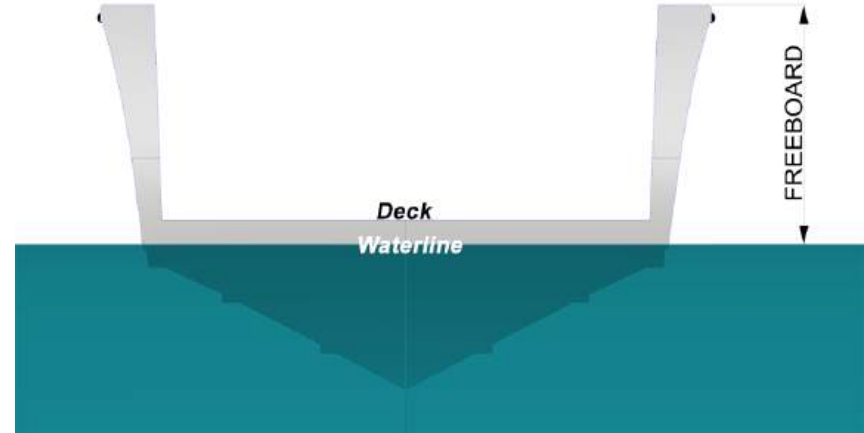


Tiburones MPML: Pesquerías palangreras

Shark BHRP: Longline fisheries

Freeboard = the distance between the waterline and the main deck of a ship and the waterline to the rail of a small boat.

El francobordo = la distancia entre la línea de flotación y la cubierta principal de un buque y entre la línea de flotación y la borda de una embarcación pequeña.



Tiburones MPML: Pesquerías palangreras

Shark BHRP: Longline fisheries

Do:

- Slow the vessel and line hauling rate (if applicable) to bring the sharks alongside for identification and removal of gear.
- Leave sharks in the water for gear removal, if possible.
 - If attempting to remove hooks, use pliers or dehookers, or long-handled de-hookers for vessels with high freeboards (i.e. > 1 meter)
 - When hooks are not removed, use line cutters to cut the line as close to the hook or mouth as possible, leaving no more than 1 meter of gear attached to the animal and ensuring that weights are removed.



Tiburones MPML: Pesquerías palangreras

Shark BHRP: Longline fisheries

Do:

If sharks are brought on board for gear removal:

- o Use a net or lasso to help lift them onboard
- o Use a stretcher or cradle for handling and restraint for the safety of the crew and to reduce injury to the animal.
- o Maneuver shark using manual restraint of the pectoral fins and the caudal peduncle (this may require two crew members depending on the size of the animals).
- o Return the animals to the sea as quickly as possible.



Tiburones MPML: Pesquerías palangreras

Shark BHRP: Longline fisheries

Do not:

- Use drag lines or lazy lines or drag sharks behind the vessel until the hook rips free of the jaw or until the animal is easier to handle
- **Electrocute or stun sharks prior to handling and release.**
- Lift sharks onboard without the use of a net and or second point of attachment to support the weight of the animal, noting it is not recommended to lift sharks onboard the vessel.
- Attempt to remove a hook from a live shark if the hook is not visible.
- Insert gaffs, hooks, or similar instruments into the bodies of live sharks
- Cut into or damage the jaw to remove hooks.
- Lift sharks onto the deck if possible
- Lift or maneuver sharks by the gill slits, or spiracles.
- **Lift and drop sharks from the vessel height on vessels with high freeboards (> 1m) to rip the hook from the shark's jaw.**



Herramientas: Pesquerías palangreras

Tools: Longline fisheries

- Red (longitud igual o superior al francobordo del buque)
- Desenganchador de mango corto (para tiburones subidos a bordo)
- Cortacabos capaz de cortar todas las líneas utilizadas en el aparejo
- Cortacabos de mango largo (de tamaño igual o superior al francobordo del buque), capaz de cortar todas las líneas utilizadas en el aparejo
- Desenganchador de mango largo (de tamaño igual o superior al francobordo del buque)
- Camilla/cuna (para tiburones subidos a bordo)
- Cortador de alambre/pernos capaz de cortar todos los anzuelos utilizados en el buque

- Net (equal or greater in length to the vessel's freeboard)
- Short handled de-hooker (for sharks brought on board)
- Line cutter – capable of cutting through all lines used in the gear
- Long-handled line cutter (equal or greater in length than the vessel's freeboard), capable of cutting through all lines used in the gear
- Long-handled de-hooker (equal or greater in length than the vessel's freeboard)
- Stretcher/cradle (for sharks brought on board)
- Wire/bolt cutter capable of cutting all hooks used on the vessel

Preguntas sobre MPML tiburones?

Questions on shark BHRP?



Thank you for the contributions from several CPCs including; Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, European Union, Guatemala, Peru, France (French Polynesia). We appreciate the time and expertise and critical feedback offered by subject matter experts; Bernal Chavarria, Kristen Cote, Nagore Cuevas, Javier Quiñones Davila, Jon Ruiz Gondra, Maitane Grande, David Itano, Antonio Carlos Vasquez Jovel, Yunkai Li, Jefferson Murua, Francois Poisson, Omar Santana, Robynn Smith Laplante, Enzo Acuna Soto, Yonat Swimmer. Muchas gracias to Paulina Llano, Barbara Cullingford and Marlon Roman for translation assistance.

EB-03-05: MPML recomienda cones sobre tortugas marinas / BHRP recommendations for sea turtles



EBWG Recommendations for sea turtles

GTECI Recomendaciones sobre tortugas marinas

El GTECI-02 recomienda que:

1.1. Se lleve a cabo un segundo taller sobre anzuelos circulares que cumplirá el mandato del párrafo 3(d)(i) Res C- 19-04

1.2. El taller brinde asesoramiento sobre los impactos de las operaciones de pesca en la forma y estructura (es decir, longevidad e integridad) de anzuelos circulares de diversos tamaños y de diferentes fabricantes.

1.3. El taller incluya el desarrollo de una tercera medida de mitigación como se describe en el Párrafo 3(d)(iii) del C-19-04 para flotas pequeñas de embarcaciones costeras multiespecíficas, así como mejores prácticas de manejo y liberación de tortugas marinas.

The EBWG-02 recommends that:

1.1. A second circle hook workshop be conducted that will fulfill the mandate of paragraph 3(d)(i) of Res. C-19-04.

1.2. Advice be provided by the workshop on the impacts of fishing operations on the form and structure (i.e., longevity and integrity) of circle hooks of various sizes and from different manufacturers.

1.3. The workshop include development of a third mitigation measure as described in Paragraph 3(d)(iii) of C-19-04 for small coastal multi-species vessel fleets as well as best handling and release practices for sea turtles.

Res C-19-04 BHRP/MPML

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

94TH MEETING

Bilbao, Spain

22-26 July 2019

RESOLUTION C-19-04

RESOLUTION TO MITIGATE IMPACTS ON SEA TURTLES

1. Los Miembros y no Miembros Cooperantes de la CIAT (CPC) deberán:

a. Requerir de los armadores/ operadores/ tripulantes de buques que pescan especies abarcadas por la Convención liberar con prontitud, en la forma que cause el menor daño posible, en la medida que sea factible, todas las tortugas marinas, sin arriesgar la seguridad de cualquier persona.

b. Asegurar que los operadores y/o al menos un tripulante a bordo de buques que pesquen especies abarcadas por la Convención en pesquerías que hayan reportado interacciones con tortugas marinas, en particular los que no cuenten con observador, estén capacitados en técnicas de manipulación y liberación de tortugas marinas para mejorar la supervivencia después de la liberación

1. IATTC Members and Cooperating Non-Members (“CPCs”) shall:

a. Require owners/operators/vessel crew on vessels targeting species covered by the Convention to promptly release, in a manner that causes the least harm to the extent practicable, all sea turtles, without compromising the safety of any persons.

b. Ensure that vessel operators and/or at least one crew member on board of vessels targeting species covered by the Convention in fisheries that have reported sea turtle interactions, and particularly those without observers, are trained in techniques for handling and release of sea turtles to improve survival after release.

Res C-19-04 BHRP/MPML

Los CPC con buques que pesquen especies abarcadas por la CIAT en el Área de la Convención deberán:

a. Requerir de los armadores/ operadores de buques de cerco y palangreros llevar a bordo, y utilizar cuando proceda, **herramientas de manipulación segura** para la liberación segura de tortugas marinas (por ejemplo, desenganchadores, cortacabos y salabardos).

b. Requerir de los armadores/ operadores/ tripulantes de los buques tomar todas las medidas razonables, según proceda, para garantizar la liberación segura de todas las tortugas capturadas incidentalmente, **siguiendo las directrices de manipulación y liberación en el Anexo, y de forma consistente con las "Mejores prácticas para la manipulación y liberación de tortugas marinas" de las Directrices para reducir la mortalidad de las tortugas marinas en las operaciones de pesca de la FAO.**

CPCs with vessels fishing for species covered by the IATTC in the Convention Area shall:

a. Require owners/operators of purse seine & longline vessels to carry on board, and employ when appropriate, **safe-handling tools** for the safe release of sea turtles (e.g. de-hookers, line cutters, and dip nets).

b. Require that owners/operators/vessel crew of vessels take all reasonable steps, as appropriate, to ensure the safe release of any incidentally-caught sea turtles by **following handling and release guidelines in the Appendix, and consistent with the FAO "Best practices for sea turtle handling and release."**

Longline/Buques de palangre:

Annex - Res C-19-04 BHRP/MPML

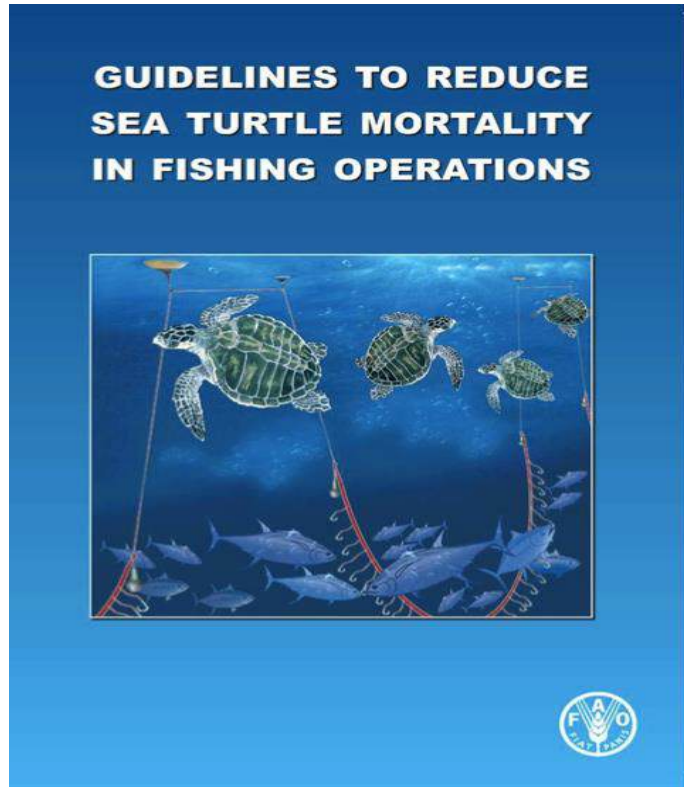
2. MANIPULACIÓN Y LIBERACIÓN SEGURAS EN BUQUES PALANGREROS

- a. Cuando sea práctico, y cuando el operador o tripulación estén capacitados, las tortugas marinas comatosas deberían ser subidas a bordo inmediatamente.
- b. Si una tortuga marina es demasiado grande o está enganchada de tal manera que impide subirla a bordo sin causar más daños o lesiones a la tortuga, se deberían usar cortacabos para cortar la línea y retirar la mayor cantidad de línea posible antes de liberar a la tortuga.
- c. Si se observa que una tortuga marina ha sido enganchada o enmallada por un arte de palangre durante las operaciones de cobrado, el operador del buque debería cesar inmediatamente las operaciones de cobrado hasta que la tortuga haya sido separada del arte de palangre o subida a bordo del buque.
- d. Si el anzuelo se enganchó externamente o está plenamente visible, debería ser extraído de las tortugas marinas lo más rápida y cuidadosamente posible. Si un anzuelo no puede ser extraído de una tortuga (por ejemplo, ingerido o en el techo de la boca), la línea debería ser cortada lo más cerca posible del anzuelo.
- e. Las tortugas vivas deberían ser devueltas al mar después de su manipulación:
 - i. Poniendo el motor del buque en punto muerto de modo que la hélice quede desacoplada y el buque se detenga, y liberando la tortuga lejos de las artes caladas; y
 - ii. Observando que la tortuga esté a salvo lejos del buque antes de acoplar la hélice y continuar las operaciones.
- f. Si la tortuga subida a bordo del buque y está comatosa o inactiva, se debería intentar resucitarla (párrafo 3).

2. LONGLINE SAFE HANDLING AND RELEASE

- a. When practicable, and when operator or crew on board are trained, comatose sea turtles should be brought on board immediately.
- b. If a sea turtle is too large or hooked in such a manner as to preclude safe boarding without causing further damage/injury to the turtle, line clippers should be used to clip the line and remove as much line as possible prior to releasing the turtle.
- c. If a sea turtle is observed to be hooked or entangled by longline gear during hauling operations, the vessel operator should immediately cease hauling operations until the turtle has been removed from the longline gear or brought on board the vessel.
- d. If hooked externally or hook is fully visible, hooks should be removed from sea turtles as quickly and carefully as possible. If a hook cannot be removed from a turtle (e.g., ingested or in roof of mouth), the line should be cut as close to the hook as possible.
- e. Live turtles should be returned to the sea after handling:
 - i. By putting the vessel engine in neutral gear so that the propeller is disengaged, and the vessel is stopped, and releasing the turtle away from deployed gear; and
 - ii. Observing that the turtle is safely away from the vessel before engaging the propeller and continuing operations.
- f. If the sea turtle brought aboard the vessel is comatose or inactive, resuscitation should be attempted (paragraph 3).

FAO (2009) BHRP/MPML



- FAO (2009) BHRP follows the United States Government protocol for handling and releasing sea turtles caught in pelagic longline gear.
- The list of United States Government-approved equipment for turtle handling and release.
- US Guidelines were updated in 2019

- El MPML de la FAO sigue el protocolo del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos para la manipulación y la liberación de tortugas marinas capturadas en artes de pesca de palangre pelágico.
- Lista de equipos aprobados por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos para la manipulación y la liberación de tortugas
- Las directrices estadounidenses se actualizaron en 2019.

Sea turtle BHRP

Tortugas marinas MPML

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

2ND CIRCLE HOOK WORKSHOP

by videoconference
17-19 March 2025

DOCUMENT HKS-02-01

SEA TURTLE CIRCLE HOOKS AND BYCATCH MITIGATION WORKSHOP
BACKGROUND

Workshop
Review hook and
line BHRP (HKS-
02-01)

BHRP (All
Fisheries) Review
& Consultation
(CPCs, SME)

EB-03-05 for
EBWG-03 Review

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
ECOSYSTEM AND BYCATCH WORKING GROUP

3RD MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)
26-27 May 2025

EB-03-05

BEST HANDLING AND RELEASE PRACTICES FOR SEA TURTLES CAPTURED IN IATTC
FISHERIES

Melanie Hutchinson, Mariluz Parga, Marlon Roman, Jon Lopez

BHRP All Fisheries

Review &
Consultation (SME
& CPCs)

Workshop (hook &
line fisheries)



EB-03-05: Pesquerías cerqueras / Purse seine fisheries

Entangled in FADs

In the rare event that a sea turtle is observed entangled in a FAD, they must be rescued/released as required by Resolution C-19-04 which states, in paragraph 2:

c. Require owners/operators/vessel crew of purse seine vessels to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, all sea turtles observed entangled in fish-aggregating devices (FADs).

If a sea turtle is seen entangled in a drifting FAD-

Do:

- Endeavor to free the sea turtle from the FAD. This may require purse seine vessels to launch a small boat or speed boat to facilitate the rescue (as recommended by the FAO (2009) guidelines).
- Fishers should carefully cut any entangling gear, netting, or other fishing gears off the animal and carefully return them to the sea, supporting the weight of the animal from the carapace (not manipulating the sea turtle using the flippers).
- If the sea turtle is comatose, it should be brought aboard the purse seine vessel for resuscitation (see section 2.4).

EB-03-05: Pesquerías cerqueras / Purse seine fisheries

Sea turtles observed encircled by the purse seine

Do:

- All reasonable efforts should be made to facilitate the rescue and release of encircled sea turtles prior to them becoming entangled in the net and to sacking up, including if necessary, launching small boats
- If the sea turtle is comatose, it should be brought aboard the purse seine vessel for resuscitation

If sea turtles become entangled in the net during net haul

Do:

If a turtle is entangled during net roll, the net should be hauled over the turntable to a height of about 2 meters, the main boom should be moved to starboard or to port (depending on the vessel's direction) and the net should be rolled back, so that the crew can release the turtle from the netting as soon as possible, and return it to the sea over the starboard or port side if it is active.

- If a turtle is brought aboard the vessel and is comatose or inactive, resuscitation should be attempted (section 2.4).
- Net roll should not start again until the turtle has been disentangled and released.
- Release the sea turtle as soon as possible according to the guidelines in section 2.4.2

If sea turtles are brought onboard during brailing operations

Do:

- Ensure sea turtles are sorted from the catch on the main/working deck.
- If a turtle is brought aboard the vessel and is comatose or inactive, resuscitation should be attempted (section 2.4).
- Brailing should not start again until the turtle has been released.
- Release the sea turtle as soon as possible according to the guidelines in section 2.4.2

EB-03-05: Pesquerías cerqueras / Purse seine fisheries

Do not:

- Allow sea turtles to be rolled through the power block.
- Allow sea turtles to go down the hatch to the wet/well decks.
- Maneuver or manipulate sea turtles by the flippers, head or tail.
- Place turtles upside down on deck
- Leave the turtle on deck in the sun



EB-03-05: Pesquerías palangreras/ Longline fisheries



From Blades et al. 2019. ESR. (Photo by E. Czuchnicki)

- High proportion of sea turtles are alive at haul-back -> using BHRP is imperative for reducing impacts on the population
- Many injuries recorded in stranding centers were due to poor handling, gear removal and release practices
- Una alta proporción de tortugas marinas están vivas al ser rescatadas -> es imprescindible utilizar el MPML para reducir el impacto sobre la población
- Muchas de las lesiones registradas en los centros de rescate se debieron a una manipulación inadecuada, a la extracción incorrecta de los aparejos y a prácticas inadecuadas de liberación

Longline/Buques de palangre:

FAO (2009) BHRP/MPML

GUIDELINES TO REDUCE SEA TURTLE MORTALITY IN FISHING OPERATIONS

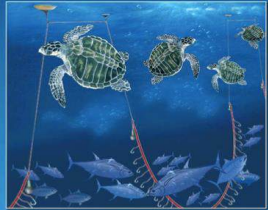
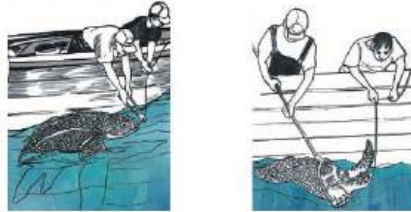


Figure 24. Best practices for (a) retrieving and (b) de-hooking turtles captured in pelagic longlines. (After Beverly, Chapman and Sokim, 2003).



a) Retrieving a sea turtle

Assess the turtle's size, then release it or bring it on board. If the turtle is too large to bring on board, bring it as close to the boat as possible without putting too much strain on the line, then cut the line as close to the turtle as practical. If the turtle is small, use a dip net to lift the animal on board. DO NOT use a gaff and DO NOT pull on the line or grasp the eye sockets to bring the animal on board.



b) De-hooking a sea turtle

Place a piece of wood in the turtle's mouth so it cannot bite, then cut the hook or line. If the hook's barb is visible, use bolt cutters to cut the hook in half, and remove the two parts separately. If the hook is not visible, remove as much line as possible without pulling too hard on the line, and cut it as close to the turtle as practical.



FAO (2009) BHRP follows the United States Government protocol for handling and releasing sea turtles caught in pelagic longline gear protocols is divided into three parts:

- (i) Part 1: Vessel's responsibilities upon sighting a sea turtle;
- (ii) Part 2: Sea turtles not boated; and
- (iii) Part 3: Sea turtles boated.

El MPML de la FAO sigue el protocolo del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos para la manipulación y la liberación de tortugas marinas capturadas en artes de pesca de palangre pelágico. El protocolo se divide en tres partes:

- i) Parte 1: Responsabilidades del buque al avistar una tortuga marina;
- ii) Parte 2: Tortugas marinas no subidas a bordo;
- y
- iii) Parte 3: Tortugas marinas subidas a bordo.

When a sea turtle is seen entangled in fishing gear or hooked on a line

Cuando se ve una tortuga marina enredada en un aparejo de pesca o enganchada en un sedal



Do:

- Bring the vessel to a stop and slow the hauling of the gear.
- Minimize tension on the line the turtle is captured on.
- Slowly maneuver the vessel towards the animal. Put the vessel in neutral once the sea turtle is brought alongside.
- If all fishing gear is going to be removed, determine whether or not the animal can safely be brought onboard. Ideally hooked sea turtles will be brought onboard to remove all fishing gear.
 - o A sea turtle can 'safely' be brought on board either by using a net or other approved lifting device to support its weight or manually by supporting its weight on the carapace.
 - o If a sea turtle is too large or hooked in such a manner as to preclude safe boarding without causing further damage/injury to the turtle, leave the sea turtle in the water for gear removal.
 - o If sea turtles are not hooked but are entangled, cut all gear away from the animal.

Do not:

- Haul animals onboard using the line they are hooked on or entangled in.
- Haul animals onboard using their head, tail, flippers or flippers.

For sea turtles safely brought on board: Para tortugas marinas subidas a bordo de forma segura:

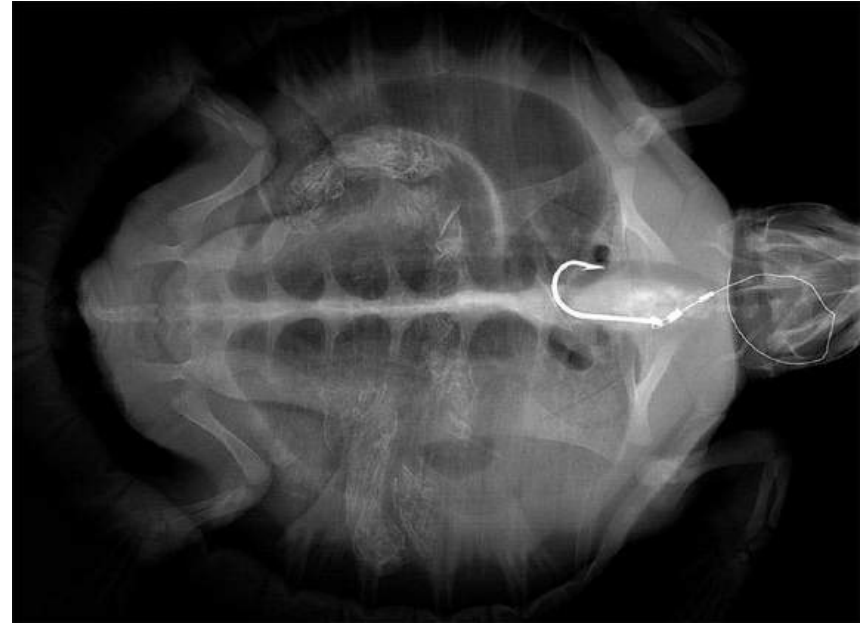
Do:

If the hook is inside the mouth or has been partially swallowed but the insertion point is visible:

- o Using the tools available to open the mouth (listed below), have one crew member hold the mouth open (using the tools described below) while another crew assesses whether the hook can be removed without further injury. If the insertion point of the hook is visible and is in the tongue or esophagus and can be backed out without tearing tissue, remove the hook.

- o If the hook is deeply embedded in the esophagus, in the glottis or in the papillae do not remove the hook. If it cannot be removed, cut as much of the hook out as possible and ensure all line has been removed from the animal.

- Return the animal to the sea as soon as possible following the resuscitation and release guidelines



For sea turtles safely brought on board: Para tortugas marinas subidas a bordo de forma segura:

continued:

- Determine whether or not the hook should be removed and remove as much gear as possible.
- If the hook point is visible:
 - o Place a piece of wood or other mouth opener carried onboard in the turtle's mouth so that it cannot bite, then proceed with inspection and hook and line removal
 - o If the hook's point and barb are visible, use bolt cutters to cut the point of the hook and remove the hook. If the hook point cannot be cut, depress the barb prior to backing the hook out. Or use a dehooker or pliers to back the hook out without injuring the fragile tissues (I.e. glottis and papillae) in the mouth and esophagus.
 - o If the hook cannot be removed, cut all trailing gear off the hook and cut any portion of the hook that can be cut off and removed from the animal.



For sea turtles safely brought on board:

Para tortugas marinas subidas a bordo de forma segura:

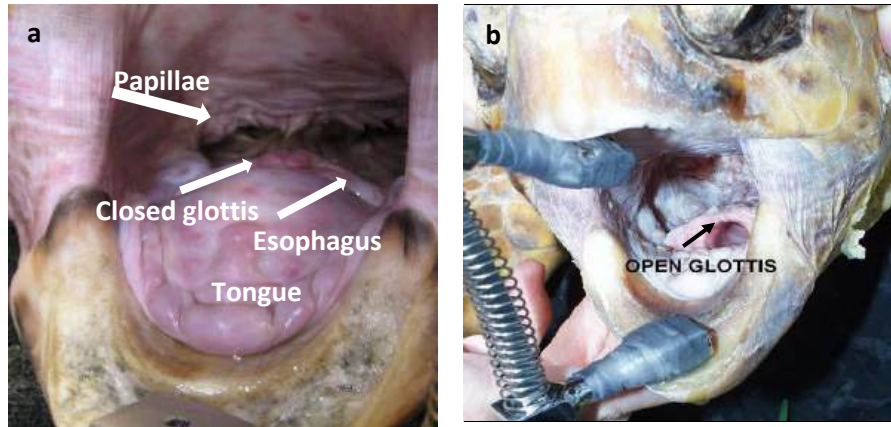


Figure 1 a and b. Sea turtle oral cavity anatomy (a) closed glottis, tongue, esophagus and papillae; (b) open glottis (Taken from Stokes and Bergmann (eds) 2019. NMFS/ Southeast Fishery Science Center photos).

Do not:

- Attempt to remove an embedded hook without first determining the point of insertion.
- Remove hooks that are embedded in the glottis or deeply within the esophagus, or if the point of insertion is not visible.
- Release turtles with more than 5 cm of fishing line still attached to the hook or entangling the turtle.
- Place upside down for extended periods of time.
- Leave in the sun or exposed to the elements during resuscitation.

For sea turtles that cannot safely be brought on board and must remain in the water
Para las tortugas marinas que no pueden ser trasladadas a bordo de forma segura y deben permanecer en el agua

Esto se aplica a las tortugas marinas que son demasiado grandes para subir a bordo y a aquellas situaciones en las que los buques no disponen de las herramientas adecuadas para subir a bordo tortugas marinas más pequeñas.

Qué hacer:

- Si el anzuelo es visible:
 - Si el animal está enredado y enganchado, retire primero el anzuelo. A continuación, una vez retirado el anzuelo, proceda a retirar todo el sedal.
 - Utilice un desenganchador para retirar los anzuelos incrustados externamente en el animal.
 - Si no se puede retirar el anzuelo, utilice cortadores de línea de mango largo para cortar la línea lo más cerca posible del anzuelo, dejando no más de 5 cm de aparejo en el anzuelo.
- Si la punta del anzuelo no es visible:
 - Corte la línea lo más cerca posible de la boca, dejando no más de 5 cm de aparejo.

This applies to sea turtles that are too large to bring onboard and those situations when vessels are not carrying the appropriate tools to bring smaller sea turtles onboard.

Do:

- If the hook point is visible:
 - If the animal is entangled and hooked, remove the hook first. Then, after the hook is removed, proceed to remove all line.
 - Remove externally embedded hooks from the animal.
 - If the hook cannot be removed, use long handled line cutters to cut the line as close to the hook as possible, leaving no more than 5 cm of trailing gear on the hook.
- If the hook point is not visible:
 - Cut the line as close to the mouth as possible – leave no more than 5 cm of trailing gear.

Cutting the line

Cortar la línea



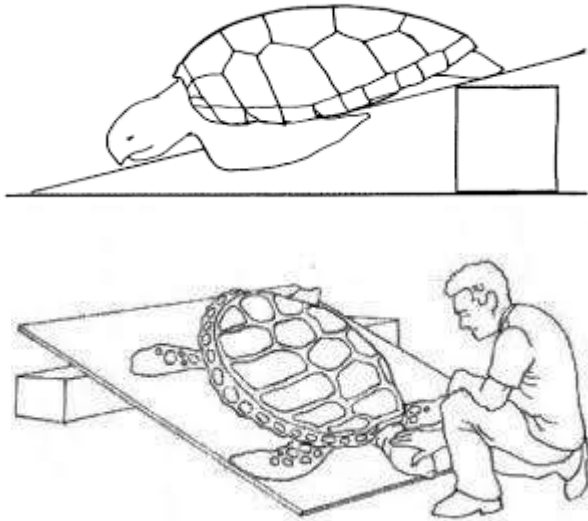
- When the hook cannot be completely removed:
 - As much of the hook that can be cut away from the animal should be, including any or all line attached to the hook.
 - When sea turtles must remain in the water, it is imperative that all line is cut away from the hook



- Cuando no se puede retirar el anzuelo por completo:
 - Se debe cortar todo el anzuelo que se pueda del animal, incluyendo cualquier parte del sedal que esté unida al anzuelo.
 - Cuando las tortugas marinas deben permanecer en el agua, es imprescindible cortar todo el sedal del anzuelo.

Resuscitation

Reanimación



Comatose sea turtles need time to recover on deck – a comatose sea turtle will drown if released

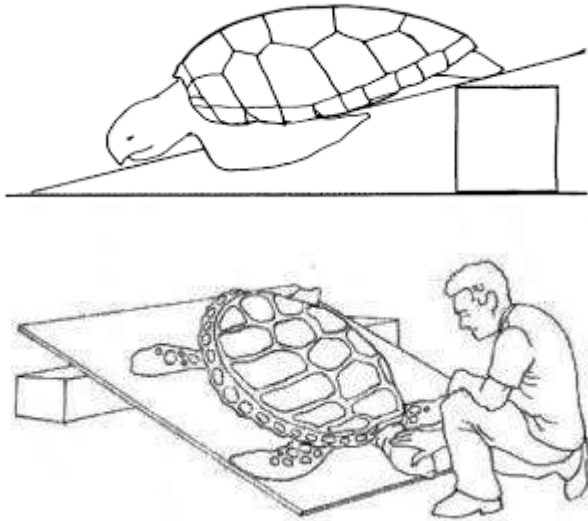
Do:

If a sea turtle appears dead, comatose, or otherwise inactive, take the following actions:

- Bring the animal onboard safely by supporting its weight manually on the carapace or by using a net.
- Place the turtle on its belly and elevate its hind end at least 6 inches (15 - 20 cm).
- Administer a reflex test at least once every 3 hours or until the turtle is moving.
- Keep the turtle shaded and in warm weather over 24°C keep the turtle moist with a wet towel on the shell and flippers. In cold weather (below 10°C), keep recovering turtles in an ambient temperature above 14°C.

Resuscitation

Reanimación



Do not:

- Handle, manipulate, maneuver or pick the sea turtle up by its head, tail, flippers or flippers.
- Leave recovering (resting) sea turtles exposed to the sun or elements – they must be kept shaded and moist with a wet cloth or towel
- Place turtles upside down (on its back) during resuscitation– this inhibits breathing capacity

Releasing a sea turtle

Do:

- Place the vessel engine in neutral gear so that the propeller is disengaged, and the vessel is stopped.
- Release the turtle away from any deployed fishing gear, at a location on the vessel closest to the water line.
- Place the animal's head at a 45-degree angle towards the water and release gently.
- Observe that the turtle is safely away from the vessel before engaging the propeller and continuing operations.

Tools required

Herramientas necesarias



Figure 26. Equipment used to handle and release sea turtles. The United States National Marine Fisheries Service requires this equipment to be carried on board United States Atlantic longline vessels (after U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, 2004).



Line clipper capable of cutting fishing line or leaders within 5 cm of the eye of an embedded hook, or as close to the mouth as possible if the hook was ingested.

Net (equal or greater in length from the gunwale to the waterline)

Dehooker (equal or greater in length from the gunwale to the waterline)

Short-handled dehooker

Long-nose or needle-nose pliers

Wire or bolt cutters capable of cutting through any of the hooks on the vessel

At least two mouth openers and gags:

Old tire or block or a similar object for elevating the tail of sea turtles during hook removal and resuscitation.

-Cortador de línea capaz de cortar el hilo de pescar o los sedales a menos de 5 cm del ojo de un anzuelo clavado, o lo más cerca posible de la boca si el anzuelo ha sido ingerido.

-Red (igual o mayor en longitud desde la borda hasta la línea de flotación)

-Desenganchador (igual o mayor en longitud desde la borda hasta la línea de flotación)

-Desenganchador de mango corto

-Alicates de punta larga o de punta fina

-Cortadores de alambre o pernos capaces de cortar cualquiera de los anzuelos del buque

-Al menos dos abridores de boca y mordazas:

-Neumático viejo o bloque u objeto similar para elevar la cola de las tortugas marinas durante la extracción del anzuelo y la reanimación.

Outreach & training

- Outreach, education and training are essential components of the successful implementation of BHRP
 - Resources are required for generating outreach materials and for training
 - Workshops are opportunities for knowledge exchange
- La divulgación, la educación y la formación son componentes esenciales para la implementación exitosa del BHRP
 - Se necesitan recursos para generar materiales de divulgación y para la formación
 - Los talleres son oportunidades para el intercambio de conocimientos



Preguntas – Questions?



We would like to thank the very helpful content and reviews from subject matter experts that greatly improved the content of this document (Miguel Herrera Armas, Kristen Cote, Maitane Grande, Nagore Cuervas, Mauricio Jaime Ulloa Encina, Nicole Nasby-Lucas, Alessandro Luccheti, Jefferson Murua, Brian Stacy, Yonat Swimmer). We are indebted to Dr. Mariluz Parga and Dr. Brian Stacy, two wildlife veterinarians, for providing us with their table on the risks to sea turtles from several interaction scenarios (Table 1.) and to Sandra Andraka for reviewing the best handling and release practice guidance for longline fisheries in HKS-02-01. We thank IATTC staff; Christine Patnode for help with formatting, Barbara Cullingford, Marlon Roman, Salvador Siu and Paulina Llano for help with the translation to Spanish.

EB-03-06: Aves marinas / Seabirds

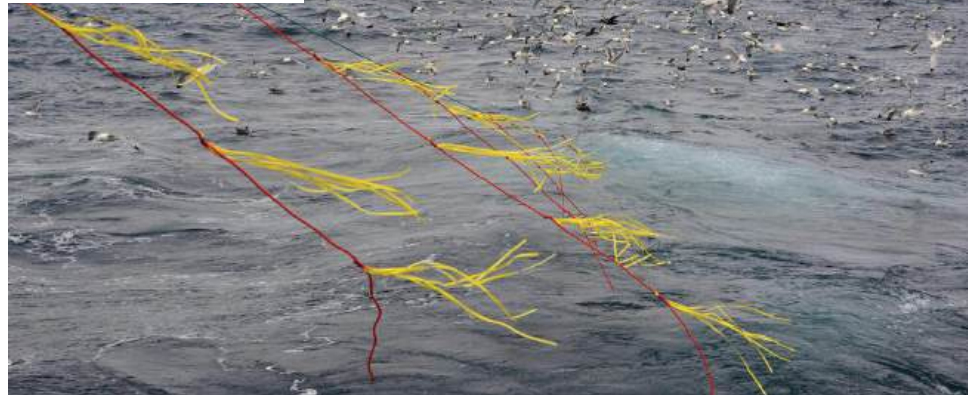
**INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION
ECOSYSTEM & BYCATCH WORKING GROUP**

3RD MEETING

**La Jolla, California (USA)
26-27 May 2025**

DOCUMENT EB-03-06

SEABIRD BEST HANDLING AND RELEASE PRACTICE GUIDELINES



Seabird BHRP Guideline Development Process

Responses to Memo 0610-410 (Canada, Chile, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, EU, French Polynesia, Mexico, Peru).

Review conducted -> draft guidelines developed

Seabird BHRP draft sent to SMEs in February 2025 (in English)

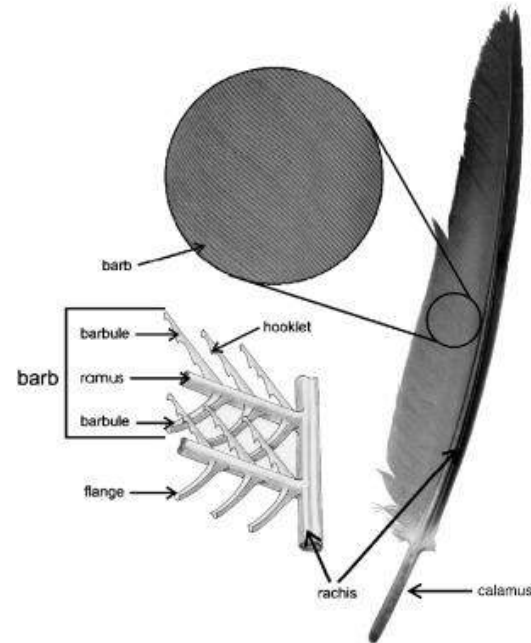
Version 2 sent to SME in March in English and Spanish -> EB-03-06

EB-03-06 -> **EBWG Review** -> SAC Review -> Commission

- Draft guidelines are the result of:
 - Inter-sessional workshop in January 2025 where participants requested that handling and hook removal be in alignment with ACAP practices
 - Annual PS skipper workshop (Jan 2025)
 - Consultation with industry & SMEs, and review of information provided by CPCs
- Draft BHRP guidelines provided by fishery (purse seine, longline, gillnet) in EB-03-06

For All Fisheries

- In addition to incidental captures seabirds may also seek refuge on any vessel
- When a bird is exposed to grease or oil, feather structure and waterproofing is compromised. Inhibiting flight, risking hypothermia and drowning.
- Even a small amount of oil (no larger than a coin) can be fatal.
- Very important to keep seabirds away from grease or oil on deck.



For all fisheries

Do:

- Use PPE when handling seabirds.
- Gently fold wings or flippers (penguins) towards the body to prevent injury during handling and maneuvering seabirds.
- Hold seabirds against your body near the waist to keep them safe and their beaks away from your face.
- Keep the bird's bill away from your face to avoid injury.
- Allow birds to remain on the vessel to recover and follow the resuscitation and release guidelines below.

Do not:

- Restrict the bill or legs with tape, rope or bands.
- Cover the nostrils of seabird species like albatrosses, petrels, and shearwaters (allowing it to breath).
- Completely close the bill in seabirds without nostrils like pelicans, boobies, and cormorants (allow it to breath through an open mouth).
- Lift or handle seabirds by the wings or flippers (penguins) as this can break delicate bones or dislocate joints.
- Intentionally maim or disfigure the bill or any other body part of the seabird.

For all fisheries: Resuscitation

Do:

- Remove all or as much entangling fishing gear as possible.
- If birds are wet and exhausted, place them in a box with airholes for ventilation or a clean, dry, safe area to recover.
- Make sure the bird does not come into contact with oil or grease on deck. Seabirds cannot fly if their wings become waterlogged (exacerbated by contact with oils).
- Follow the release guidelines below, ensuring they meet the 'release criteria' prior to release.

Do not:

- Try to feed them or give them water during resuscitation.



For all fisheries: Release

A seabird can be released to sea surface when the following criteria are met:

- i. Feathers are dry. (Approximately 1/2 to 4 hours), and;
- ii. Bird is alert and head is erect, and;
- iii. Breathes without difficulty and/or noise, and;
- iv. Wings can flap and retract onto back, and;
- v. Stands on both feet with toes forward.

For all fisheries: Release



Do:

- Slow or stop vessel for the release.
- Set the bird on the deck railing, facing against the prevailing wind direction and when wings open, allow it to fly off.
- If it does not fly off on its own, gently lower it over the side of the vessel by hand if you can reach the water surface or with a net if you cannot. For vessels with a very high freeboard (i.e. > 5 m, such as on purse seine vessels) release birds using the small boats (skiff or speedboat), while they are in the water.

For dead, moribund or seriously injured seabirds, follow your local guidelines for transport to a rehabilitation facility or for proper storage or discard.

For all fisheries: Tools required

- Clean towel or blanket
- Line cutters
- Ventilated box or bin
- Net with a handle equal in length to the distance the waterline from the deck (longline & gillnet)
- Bolt cutters (longline only)
- Pliers (longline only)



Purse seine fisheries

For seabirds that have become entangled in the net

Do:

- Stop the net roll and allow the crew to disentangle the animal or cut the net away from the seabird.
- Follow the resuscitation and release guidelines

Do not:

- Allow the seabird to be rolled through the power block.



Recommended method for the proper handling of pelicans (© C.G. Suazo)

Longline fisheries

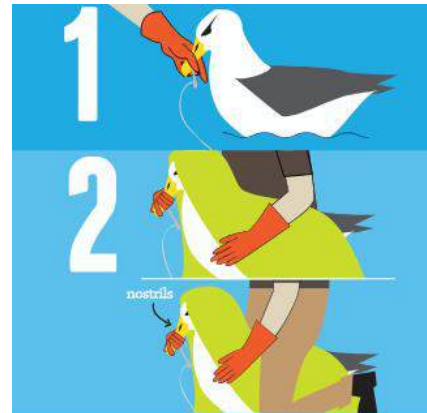
Bring seabird aboard

Do:

- Bring it onboard the vessel using a net to support its weight.
- Carefully fold the wings into the natural position on the bird's body.
- Wrap the bird in a towel/blanket (not too tightly).
- Cover the bird's eyes and head with a loose cloth to help calm it, making sure to keep nostrils exposed. For gannets, which do not have nostrils, allow the bill to stay slightly open.
- For crew safety, hold the bill while assessing if gear removal is possible. If the bird vomits, loosen grip on bill so the bird does not suffocate.

Do not:

- Pull the bird up on the line it is captured or entangled in, as this may cause further injury.
- Do not handle birds by wingtips as it can break the wing.



Hook removal

HOOK REMOVAL FROM SEABIRDS

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

For more information visit:
www.acap.aq



Release Kit



Do:

If the hook is visible

- With one crew member holding the bird, another crew member can detach the fishing gear from the animal.
- Use pliers or bolt cutters to cut through the hook shaft and pull hook out of the bird. Flatten the barbs with pliers or cut off barbs with bolt cutters, if it is necessary to pull the hook through tissue to remove it.

If the hook is swallowed and removal is possible

- With one crew member holding the bird, another crew member can look for the hook and if they can find the hook position in the neck and it is possible, push the hook tip through the skin and remove it.

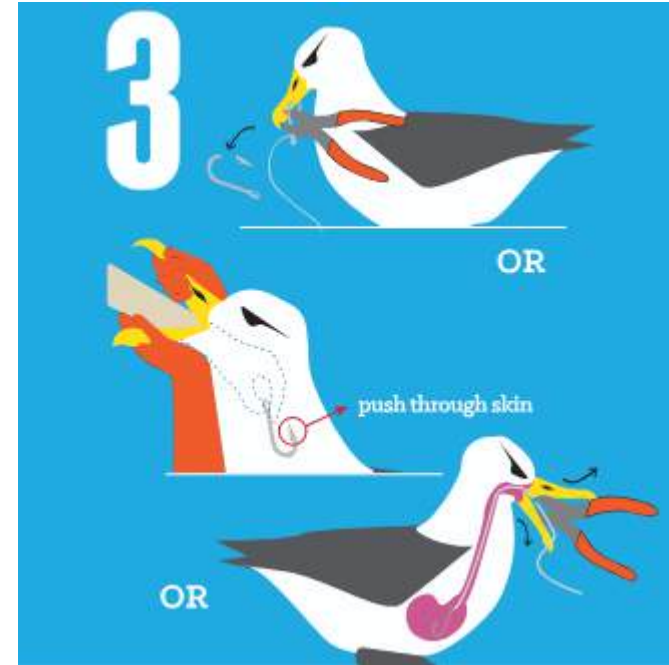
If hook removal is not possible

Either because removing the hook will cause further damage to the bird or the hook is too deeply ingested,

- Cut the line as close to the hook as possible and leave the hook in the bird.
- Untangle and cut away any line caught around the bird's wings, body or legs.

Do not:

- Extract the hook backwards.
- Do not try and pull or rip the hook out from inside the bird.



HOOK REMOVAL FROM SEABIRDS

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

For more information visit:
www.acap.aq



Release Kit



Towel /
Blanket



Pliers /
Bolt cutters



Net



Box / Bin



Gloves

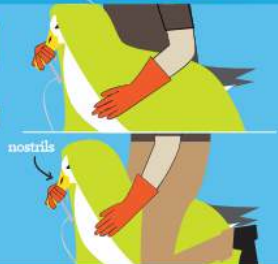
1



Bring bird aboard

If possible, slow or stop hauling and slow or stop vessel to release line tension. If practical, use a landing net to lift small birds on board, otherwise retrieve the bird on the line as safely and quickly as possible. When within reach, grab it by the bill. **Never grab the wing.**

2



Restrain bird and hold securely

Carefully fold the wings into the bird's body. Wrap the bird in a towel/blanket (not too tightly). Make sure the bird doesn't come into contact with oil on deck.

For large birds that you cannot manage under your arm, restrain the bird securely between your legs without squeezing. Hold the bill gently shut but **do not cover the nostrils.**

If the bird vomits, loosen hold on bill so the bird does not suffocate.

3



Remove the hook

If the hook is visible

Use pliers (or bolt cutters for large hooks) to cut through the hook shaft (or to flatten the barb). Pull the hook back out of the bird.

If the hook is swallowed and removal is possible

A second person can find the hook position externally by feeling along the neck or internally by following the line to the hook. Gently force the tip of the hook so that it bulges under the skin of the bird (for **large birds**, this may be easier if you reach down the bird's throat and hold the hook). If you can get a good grip on the hook, push the tip of the hook through the skin and remove.

Never try to extract the hook backwards.

If hook removal is not possible

Either because removing the hook will cause further damage to the bird



Staff recommendations for sharks, sea turtles & seabirds

Currently there are no single mitigation measures that are 100% effective in eliminating shark bycatch in purse seine, longline or gillnet fisheries. Therefore, on those occasions when sharks are captured it is important that crews are aware of, and correctly implement, the approved BHRP guidelines to improve the post release survival outcomes of shark bycatch. As requested by the Commission at it's 102nd meeting in Panama that the IATTC scientific staff, in collaboration with the SAC and EBWG, continue to develop, taking into account the practicability for fishing vessels, and recommend to the Commission a comprehensive set of BHRP guidelines for the safe release of sharks for inclusion in Resolution C-24-05 in 2025, this document, prepared by the IATTC staff in consultation with CPCs, industry personnel and external experts has compiled BHRP guidance and the required tools for safely removing sharks from fishing gears used under the purview of the IATTC.

Therefore, the IATTC staff recommends that:

Consider updating Resolutions C-24-05 (sharks), C-19-04 (sea turtles) and C-11-02 (seabirds) with the inclusion of the BHRP guidelines outlined herein for all IATTC fisheries.

Staff recommendations for sharks, sea turtles & seabirds

Thus, the IATTC staff believes that support to create and deliver standardized “train-the-trainer” curricula is desirable. These programs can empower regional trainers, fisheries observers, and enforcement personnel with the knowledge and tools to ensure proper training on BHRP to fishing crews and vessel operators, further enhancing capacity building and promotes ownership and understanding of existing conservation measures. Therefore, the IATTC staff recommends that:

The Commission ensures the necessary funding to support capacity building, the development of training materials for BHRP and a range of education and outreach activities (unfunded project Q.3a)