

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

94TH MEETING

Bilbao, Spain
22-26 July 2019

PROPOSAL IATTC-94 B-2A

**SUBMITTED BY BELIZE, COSTA RICA, GUATEMALA, EL SALVADOR,
NICARAGUA AND PANAMA**

**PROPOSED EXTENSION AND AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION C-16-06 ON
CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR SHARK SPECIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON
THE SILKY SHARK**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

In 2016, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission decided to adopt conservation measures for shark species, with special emphasis on the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), with the special merit of controlling bycatch mortality that, at the time, proved to be indispensable to protect this species. The provision was originally valid for 3 years, pending the progress of the studies the Commission carries out for better scientific advice. These studies are still in development.

The scientific staff has stated that there are limited data in the coastal countries, and that this is one of the reasons why it has not been possible to carry out a study with indicators for the silky shark stocks.

Due to the foregoing and given that the resolution mandates an evaluation of the measures in 2019, while the studies are in progress and in response to the mandate established by the Antigua Convention, it is appropriate to extend the effects of Resolution C-16-06 for an additional period for the Commission to decide at its 94th meeting.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Bilbao, Spain, on the occasion of its 94th Meeting:

Agrees as follows:

1. To extend Resolution C-16-02 in full for an additional ~~three~~one-year (12-month) period, which covers the years 2020 and, 2021 ~~and 2022~~.
2. This Resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2020, and shall be reviewed at the IATTC annual meeting in 2022.
3. Consequently, the new resolution will read:

RESOLUTION C-19-XX

**CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR SHARK SPECIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON
THE SILKY SHARK (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), FOR THE YEARS 2020 AND, 2021,
AND 2022**

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), gathered in Bilbao, Spain~~La Jolla, California (USA)~~, on the occasion of its 94~~40~~th meeting:

Considering that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f), of the Antigua Convention indicates that the Commission shall “adopt, as necessary, conservation and management measures and recommendations for species belonging to the same ecosystem and that are affected by fishing for, or dependent on or associated with, the fish stocks covered by [the] Convention”;

Recalling Article IV, paragraph 3, of the Antigua Convention, which states that “where the status of target stocks or non-target or associated or dependent species is of concern, the members of the Commission shall subject such stocks and species to enhanced monitoring in order to review their status and the efficacy of conservation and management measures, revising those measures regularly in the light of new scientific information available”;

Recognizing that silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) are the shark species most commonly caught as bycatch by purse-seine vessels in the Convention Area;

Recognizing that measures should be implemented to allow silky shark populations to rebuild in the Convention Area; and

Aware of the need to establish conservation measures for the protection of sharks, especially the silky shark;

Recalling that Resolution C-16-06 requires the IATTC scientific staff to develop complete assessments of the silky shark stocks, but that due to a lack of data it has not been possible to conduct these and thus have indicators of the status of these species.

Emphasizing the necessity of obtaining better data to achieve management measures in accordance with the variability of the fisheries, as well as to improve the understanding of fishing and pupping areas, catches and fishing effort that affect the fishing mortality of sharks by multi-species longline fleets, both artisanal and industrial, in the coastal countries.

Agrees as follows:

1. To continue the long-term sampling program in those shark fisheries related to tunas and tuna-like species in Central America with the goal of improving data collection for assessing indicators of silky shark stocks.
2. Members and Cooperating Non-Members (CPCs) shall prohibit retaining on board, transshipping, landing, or storing, in part or whole, carcasses of silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) caught by purse-seine vessels in the IATTC Convention Area.- CPCs shall require that their vessels release live silky sharks whenever possible. However, if silky sharks are caught and frozen accidentally during a fishing vessel’s operations, the vessel must surrender the whole silky sharks to the responsible governmental authorities at the point of landing. Silky sharks surrendered in this manner may not be sold or bartered, but may be donated for purposes of domestic human consumption.
- 4.3. CPCs shall require all longline vessels whose fishing licences do not include sharks as a fishing target but catch sharks incidentally, to limit bycatch of silky sharks to a maximum of 20% of the total catch by fishing trip in weight. The 20% limit is set as an interim limit in the absence of data and scientific analysis on which to base conservation and management measures, and will be revised, based on recommendations by the scientific staff, once improved species-level catch and composition data are available.

5.4. CPCs shall require their multi-species fisheries using surface longlines¹ to limit the catch of silky sharks

¹ For the purposes of this resolution, surface longlines are those in which the majority of hooks fish at depths shallower than 100 meters and target species other than swordfish.

of less than 100 cm total length to 20% of the total number of silky sharks caught during the trip.

~~6.5.~~ CPCs shall ensure compliance with the measures established in paragraphs 3 and 4 by means of control and inspection at a minimum through effective and significant inspections at the time of first unloading in port as a complement to the catch logbooks that will allow species identification, verification of size when caught, and prevention of entry into markets of product caught in violation of this measure. Data derived from these control and inspection measures shall be communicated to the Director.

~~7.6.~~ CPCs shall subject the fisheries referred to in paragraphs ~~32~~ and ~~43~~ to effective monitoring measures to determine if the 20% maximum is exceeded, such as through port inspections and review of observer data, and shall report to the Commission information on percentages reached, in accordance with IATTC data submission requirements.

~~8.7.~~ CPCs shall require vessels to not fish in silky shark pupping areas, as may be adopted by the Commission, in accordance with the recommendation of the IATTC scientific staff, in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC),

~~9.8.~~ For those multi-species fisheries using surface longlines that have captured more than 20% of silky sharks in weight on average, CPCs shall prohibit the use of steel leaders during a period of three consecutive months each year. The average proportion of silky sharks in the catch will be calculated from data of the previous calendar year. New vessels entering the multi-species fisheries affected by this Resolution and those for which no data are available from the period immediately prior shall be subject to the provisions of this paragraph.

~~10.9.~~ At the 96th meeting of the IATTC in the year 2021, the IATTC scientific staff shall present to, in coordination with the SAC, an analysis of the unloading, observer, and long-term sampling program data on the catches of sharks in the fisheries in central America with which they shall recommend a period of three months of prohibition (paragraph 7) and a revision of this Resolution. shall recommend the most appropriate period for the purposes of paragraph 6 on the basis of the analysis of the data provided by CPCs to be taken into consideration in the revision of this measure.

10. CPC shall endeavor that the closure period for not using leaders by their vessels subject to paragraph 7 coincide with the periods recommended by the Scientific Advisory Committee on the basis of the analyses indicated in paragraph 8.

11. Vessels of less than 12 m length overall using manually-operated fishing gear (*i.e.* without mechanical or hydraulic winches) and that do not deliver to motherships at any time during the fishing trip are excluded from the application of this resolution. For this excluded fleet, CPCs shall continue working with the Commission's scientific staff on the strengthening immediate establishment of data-collection programs, which shall be presented at the meeting of the SAC in ~~2017~~2020 and 2021.

12. CPCs shall notify the Director, before 1 October of ~~each year~~2020, the single period of restricted use of steel leaders referred to in paragraph ~~76~~ which will be observed for the ~~following~~ calendar year.

13. CPCs shall keep a record of the vessels and the period to which each vessel operator or owner has committed for the enforcement of this resolution.

14. CPCs shall require the collection and submission of catch data for silky sharks, in accordance with IATTC data reporting requirements. CPCs shall also record, through observer programs and other means, for purse-seine vessels of all capacity classes, the number and status (dead/alive) of silky sharks caught and released, and report it to the IATTC.

15. The Commission shall prioritize research by the scientific staff in the following areas:

- a. Identification of the pupping areas of the silky shark.
 - b. Mitigation of bycatch of sharks, especially in longline fisheries, and survival of sharks caught by all types of gears, giving priority to gears with significant catches. Survival experiments should include studies of the effects on survival of shorter sets and the use of circle hooks.
 - c. Improve handling practices for live sharks to maximise post-release survival.
 - d. Establish the appropriateness of the percentage limit on silky sharks catch established in paragraphs 2 and 3.
16. This Resolution shall be reviewed ~~annually by the scientific staff and~~ at the meeting of the SAC in 2020 and 2021, in order to evaluate the adequacy of the measures of this Resolution, notably those in paragraphs 2, 3 and 6.
- ~~17. This Resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2017, and shall be reviewed at the IATTC annual meeting in 2019.~~