

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

90TH MEETING

La Jolla, California (USA)

27 June-1 July 2016

RESOLUTION C-16-05

RESOLUTION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SHARK SPECIES

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Noting that sharks are part of the pelagic ecosystems in the IATTC Convention Area and are caught by vessels fishing for tunas and tuna-like species and in fisheries targeting sharks;

Recalling that under the Antigua Convention, “fish stocks covered by this Convention” means “stocks of tunas and tuna-like species and other species of fish taken by vessels fishing for tunas and tuna-like species in the Convention Area”, and that under Article VIII, paragraph 1 (c), the Commission shall “adopt measures to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fish stocks covered by this Convention”;

Further recalling that Article VII, paragraph 1 (f) of the Antigua Convention establishes 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, with a view to maintaining or restoring populations of such species above levels at which their reproduction may become seriously threatened”;

Recognizing that the [IATTC Fishery Status Reports](#) show the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) and the hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna spp.*) as the shark species most frequently caught by purse-seine vessels fishing for tuna in the Convention Area,

Further recognizing that the [Specifications for data provision](#)¹ circulated by the Director on 25 March 2016 identify silky and hammerhead sharks as among the “principal species known to be caught by vessels and gears fishing for species under the purview of the Commission in the Convention Area”;

Noting the commitments that IATTC Members have made regarding shark conservation in other IATTC resolutions, including Resolution [C-11-10](#) on the conservation of oceanic whitetip sharks and Resolution [C-05-03](#) on the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries in the Convention Area; and

Further noting the IATTC staff’s [2016 conservation recommendations](#) for the release of sharks caught by purse-seine vessels and for prohibiting the use of shark lines by longline vessels;

Agrees that:

1. The IATTC scientific staff shall develop a workplan, with a timeline to share with the Commission in advance of the meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in 2017, for completing full stock assessments for the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) and hammerhead sharks (*i.e.*, *Sphyrna lewini*, *S. zygaena* and *S. mokarran*). The workplan shall clearly identify any data requirements needed to complete the stock assessments for these species and the action plan for meeting the timelines in the workplan.
2. CPCs shall require their fishers to collect and submit catch data for silky and hammerhead sharks, and shall submit the data to the IATTC in accordance with IATTC data reporting requirements. CPCs shall also record, through observer programs or other means, for purse-seine vessels of all capacity

¹ <http://www.iatcc.org/PDFFiles2/Misc/Data-provisions-requirements-2016ENG.pdf>

classes, the number and status (dead/alive) of silky sharks and hammerhead sharks caught and released, and report it to the IATTC.

3. CPCs shall require purse-seine vessels flying their flag to follow safe release requirements for all sharks, except those retained aboard the vessel. Any shark (whether alive or dead) caught in the Convention Area that is not retained must be promptly released unharmed, to the extent practicable, as soon as it is seen in the net or on the deck, without compromising the safety of any persons. If a shark is alive when caught and is not retained, the shark must be released by using the following procedures, or equally effective means:
 - a. Sharks must be released out of the net by directly releasing them from the brailer into the ocean. Sharks that cannot be released without compromising the safety of persons or the sharks before being landed on deck must be returned to the water as soon as possible, either utilizing a ramp from the deck connecting to an opening on the side of the vessel, or through escape hatches. If ramps or escape hatches are not available, the sharks must be lowered with a sling or cargo net, using a crane or similar equipment, if available.
 - b. The use of gaffs, hooks, or similar instruments is prohibited for the handling of 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).
 - c. No whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) may be towed out of a purse-seine net, *e.g.*, using towing ropes.
4. CPCs shall prohibit longline vessels flying their flag and targeting tuna or swordfish in the Convention Area from using “shark lines” (individual lines attached to the floatline or to the floats directly, and used to target sharks; Figure 1).
5. This Resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2018.

Figure 1. Schematic diagram of a shark line.

