Dr. Guillermo Compeán, Director
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
8901 La Jolla Shores Drive
La Jolla, California 92037-1508

Re: Observed oceanic whitetip shark and mobulid interactions with U.S. vessels

Dear Dr. Compeán:

This letter is submitted pursuant to Resolution C-11-10: Resolution on the Conservation of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries in the Antigua Convention Area and Resolution C-15-04: Resolution on the Conservation of Mobulid Rays Caught in Association with Fisheries in the IATTC Convention Area.

In 2016, there were three observed oceanic whitetip shark interactions with U.S. longline vessels fishing in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) recorded by NMFS observers. All were observed with deep-set longline gear. Two of the sharks were released alive and one was released dead. In 2017, there were 13 observed oceanic whitetip shark interactions with U.S. longline vessels fishing in the EPO recorded by NMFS observers. All were observed in deep-set longline gear. Ten were released alive and three were released dead.

In 2017, there were three observed mobulid interactions with U.S. longline vessels fishing in the EPO recorded by NMFS observers. All were observed in deep-set longline gear and all were released alive.

The IATTC maintains all observer information for U.S. purse seine vessels and as such already has access to observed interactions with oceanic white tips and mobulids in that fishery.

Please contact Taylor Debevec at 562-980-4066 or Taylor.Debevec@noaa.gov if there are any questions regarding the United States’ reporting under Resolutions C-11-10 or C-15-04.

Sincerely,

Heidi Taylor
Highly Migratory Species Branch Chief
cc: Barry Thom, U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
    David Hogan, Department of State
    Ryan J. Wulff, Alternate U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
    William Fox, Jr., U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
    Mike Thompson, U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
    Edward Weissman, U.S. Commissioner to the IATTC
    John Kelly, NMFS, Pacific Islands Regional Office