

Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical  
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission



## PLAN DE TRABAJO HACIA LA ADOPCIÓN DE MEJORES PRÁCTICAS DE MANIPULACIÓN Y LIBERACIÓN DE ESPECIES VULNERABLES EN LAS PESQUERÍAS

## WORKPLAN TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF BEST HANDLING AND RELEASE PRACTICES FOR VULNERABLE SPECIES IN IATTC FISHERIES

**EB-02-03**

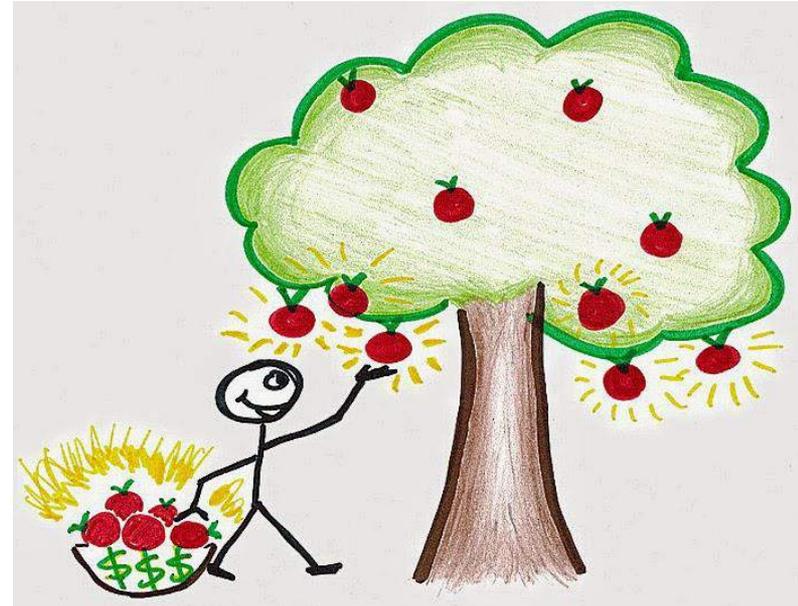
Melanie Hutchinson & Jon Lopez

15ª Reunión del Comité Científico Asesor - 10-14 de junio de 2024  
15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee – 10-14 June 2024  
La Jolla, California, USA-EE.UU.



# Reducing mortality to associated species

- Reducing the impacts of fishing on associated (non-target) species is a guiding principle under the UN LOS & Antigua Convention
- 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

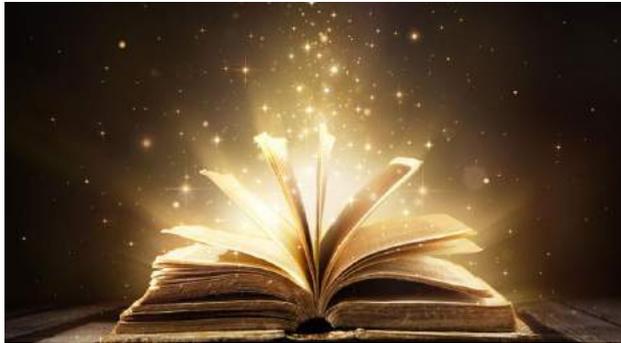


**TABLE 1. Active IATTC and AIDCP resolutions for vulnerable species that require no retention and or the use of best practices for release. PS = Purse seine fishery.**  
**TABLA 1. Resoluciones activas de la CIAT y el APICD para especies vulnerables que requieren la no retención y/o el uso de mejores prácticas de liberación. PS = Pesquería de cerco.**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Active Resolutions Requiring, ‘no retention’ and or ‘best practices’</b>	<b>Are BHRP Guidelines provided?</b>	<b>Recommendations to improve existing measures</b>
<b>Consolidated Resolution on Bycatch (all taxa)</b>	<b>C-04-05 (Rev 2)</b>	Yes, only for Sea turtles	Update with requirements for use of adopted BHRPs, update with practices that must be avoided (e.g., rolling animals through the power block in purse seine fisheries, mutilation of seabird bills, discarding animals with trailing gear).
<b>Cetaceans (Associated PS)</b>	<b>AIDCP Annexes II, III, IV, VII, and VIII</b>	Yes, for members of the family Delphinidae in PS fishery only	Develop BHRP guidelines for marine mammals not in the Delphinidae family accidentally encircled in the PS fishery and all marine mammals captured in longline and artisanal fisheries.
<b>Marine mammals (other than cetaceans under the AIDCP)</b>	<b>None</b>	NA	
<b>Seabirds</b>	<b>C-11-02</b>	No	Update with guidelines available in Annex 1 (EB-01-01) for longline and artisanal fisheries
<b>Sea Turtles</b>	<b>C-19-04</b>	Yes	Update some practices, add tools required
<b>Sharks</b>	<b>C-23-07</b>	Yes (Interim)	Update with adopted guidelines from SAC-15-11
<b>Whale Shark</b>	<b>C-19-06</b>	No	Update with requirements to adhere to adopted BHRP guidelines from SAC-15-11
<b>Oceanic Whitetip</b>	<b>C-11-10</b>	No	Update with requirements to adhere to adopted BHRP guidelines
<b>Conservation of Mobulid Rays</b>	<b>C-15-04</b>	Yes Annex 1 (PS only)	Develop BHRP guidelines for longline and update for PS.

# Reducing mortality to associated species

- BHRP Guidelines for sharks, rays, sea turtles, seabirds & marine mammals captured by various fishing gears under the IATTC
- Build a living document of BHRPs

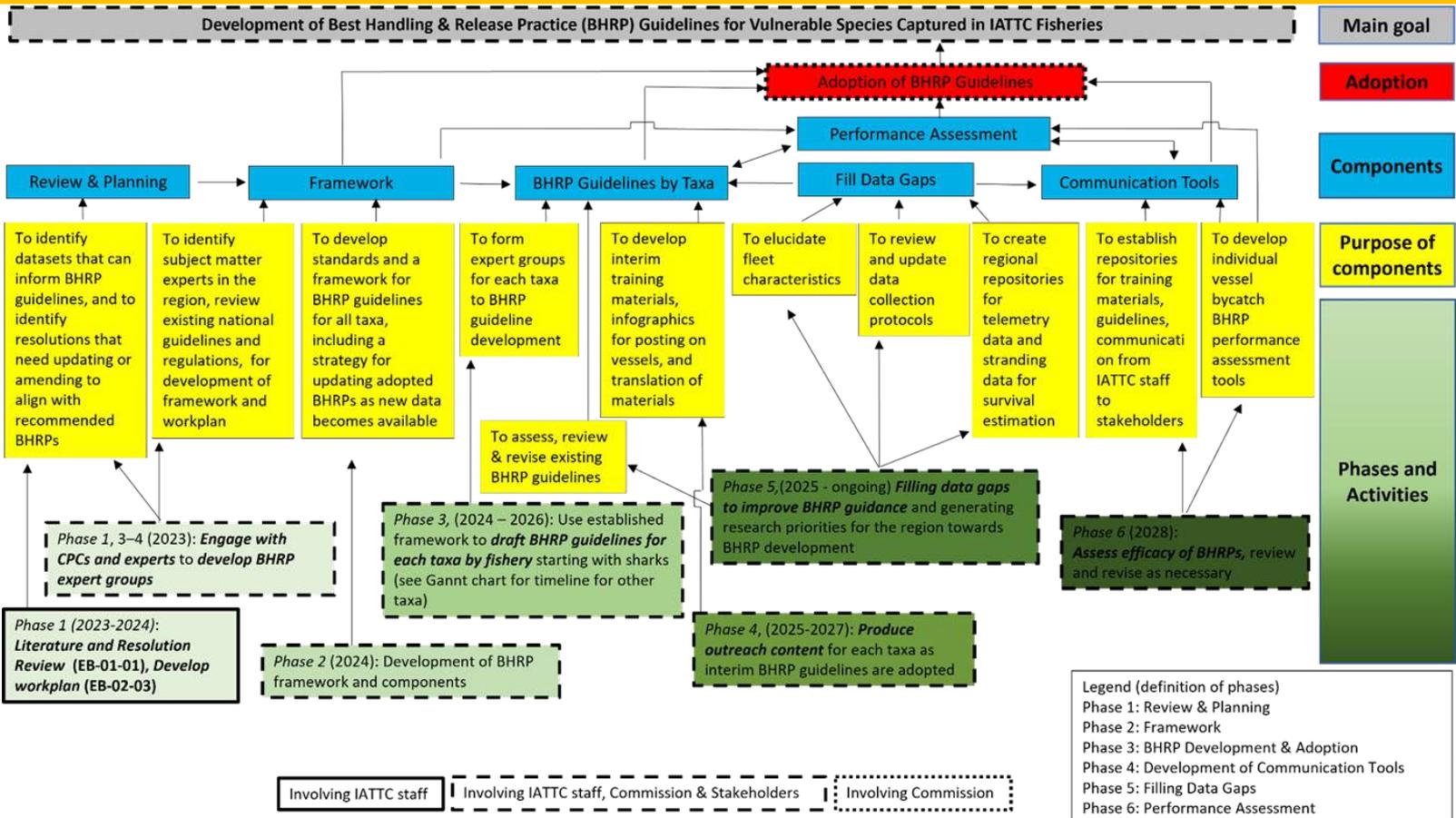


Photos: ©M Hutchinson NOAA



# PLAN DE TRABAJO EB-02-03

## WORKPLAN OVERVIEW EB-02-03



# Workplan phases, activities & timelines

## 6 Phases:

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



Photos: ©M Hutchinson NOAA

# Phase 1: Review & Planning

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
<b>1) Review &amp; Planning (COMPLETED)</b>	Review of data availability and gaps for all vulnerable species (EB-01-01)	█	█														
	Review of Resolutions for all vulnerable species (EB-01-01)	█	█														
	SAC/Commission Meeting: Request support for development of BHRP		█	█													
	Request BHRP guidelines, regulations, identification of SMEs from CPCs (Memorandum 0473-410)			█	█												
	Develop workplan proposal (EB-02-03)					█	█										

# Phase 2: Develop Framework for BHRP Guidelines

The 14<sup>th</sup> SAC requested the staff generate a framework outlining the required components for BHRP guidelines for vulnerable species.

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
<b>2) Framework</b>	Develop a framework for BHRP																
	Develop strategy for updating adopted BHRP																
	SAC/Commission Meeting: Share/adopt -BHRP framework																



# Draft framework

- I. Define & adopt high level 'good practices'
- II. Identify & ban 'harmful practices'
- III. Define & adopt specific practices for each fishing gear & individual fleet
- IV. Define & adopt the tools that are required
- V. Guidelines are legally binding w/ requirements for training, monitoring & enforcement
- VI. Produce dissemination/outreach/training materials
- VII. Strategy for reviewing & updating guidelines when necessary

# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development											Marine Mammals					
									Seabird								
											Rays						
														Sea turtle			
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery											Marine Mammals					
									Shark								
											Seabird						
													Rays				
																ST	
																MM	



# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development											Marine Mammals					
									Seabird								
											Rays						
														Sea turtle			
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery											Marine Mammals					
									Shark								
											Seabird						
													Rays				
																ST	
																MM	



2024 Sharks (Resolution C-23-07)



# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development											Marine Mammals					
									Seabird								
											Rays						
														Sea turtle			
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery											Marine Mammals					
									Shark								
											Seabird						
													Rays				
																ST	
																MM	



2024 -25 Seabirds (EB-02-03 Annex 1)



# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development												Marine Mammals				
								Seabird									
												Rays					
																Sea turtle	
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery												Marine Mammals				
								Shark									
												Seabird					
													Rays				
															ST		
															MM		



2025 Rays



# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development											Marine Mammals					
									Seabird								
											Rays						
															Sea turtle		
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery													Marine Mammals			
									Shark								
												Seabird					
														Rays			
																ST	
																MM	



2026 Sea turtles

# Phase 3: Development & Adoption of BHRP by Taxa

Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups				Shark												
								Seabird									
								Rays									
													Sea turtle				
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development											Marine Mammals					
									Seabird								
											Rays						
															Sea turtle		
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery													Marine Mammals			
									Shark								
												Seabird					
														Rays			
																ST	
																MM	



2026 Marine Mammals



# Phase 4: Development of training/outreach materials

Phase	Activities	2025				2026				2027				2028				
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
4) Development of BHRP training materials	Sharks	Shark																
	Seabird	Seabird																
	Rays					Rays												
	Sea turtles									Sea turtles								
	Marine Mammals									Marine Mammals								

Resolution C-04-05 Rev 2 [8.b. & c.] requests the IATTC staff to ‘educate fishermen through information dissemination activities, including distributing informational materials and organizing seminars on, inter alia, reducing bycatches of sea turtles and safe handling of incidentally caught sea turtles to improve their survivability’.

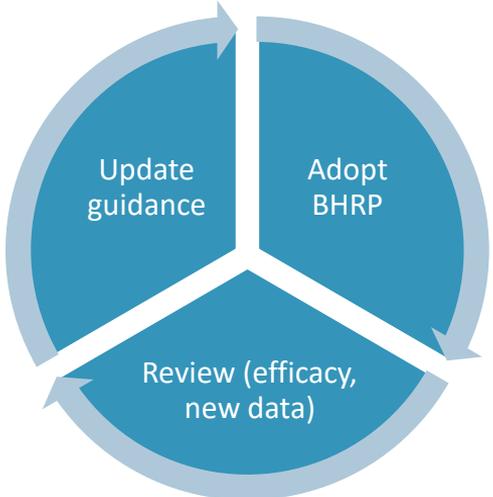


# Phase 5: Filling data gaps

Phase	Activities	2025				2026				2027				2028			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
5) Filling Data Gaps	Generate fleet characteristic data																
	Review existing IATTC and external data collection processes to ensure relevant data is collected																
	Update observer data collection protocols, forms, databases																
	Develop regional telemetry database that houses relevant data																
	Generate regional repository for stranding information																
	Prioritize research – (Completed)																

# Phase 6: Performance assessment

Phase	Activities	2025				2026				2027				2028			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
6) Performance Assessment	Assess efficacy of BHRP guidelines																
	Review and revise as necessary																
	Develop communication tools																
	Develop BHRP performance assessment tools																



# Proposed BHRP workplan summary

- A process & timeline to the development and adoption of BHRP guidelines for each taxa has been created
- All BHRP guidelines will identify harmful practices that must be avoided and practices that are safe
- All BHRP guidelines will also list the tools that are required/necessary
- BHRP guidelines should be legally binding with training requirements for fishers
- IATTC staff will produce dissemination materials for outreach, training & posting on vessels (requires an approved budget)
- IATTC staff will work with CPCs to improve data collections
- BHRP guidelines are iterative & must be reviewed and revised as new data becomes available
- IATTC staff will work on BHRP performance assessment tools

# Staff BHRP Recommendations to the Commission

## **Specifically on sharks:**

1. Adopt the shark BHRP guidelines described in SAC-15-11.

## **Specifically on Seabirds:**

2. Adopt interim best handling and release practice guidelines available in Annex 1 EB-02-03.

## **Regarding the nature of BHRP guidelines for vulnerable species:**

3. The Commission, in addition to endorsing the development of the guidelines and adopting them, should consider making their content legally binding, in part or in whole, through their incorporation in appropriate instruments, such as, among others, a general resolution with annexes covering all BHRPs, or individual resolutions on specific BHRPs.

## **Regarding the collection of data to support development of BHRP guidelines for vulnerable species:**

4. CPCs support the staff in the collection of all relevant information on, among others, vessel and gear configuration details by target species and fishing gear, ongoing PRS studies, stranding networks, or other relevant activity.

# Preguntas – Questions?



Phase	Activities	2023				2024				2025				2026				
		Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	
1) Review & Planning (COMPLETED)	Review of data availability and gaps for all vulnerable species (EB-01-01)																	
	Review of Resolutions for all vulnerable species (EB-01-01)																	
	SAC/Commission Meeting: Request support for development of BHRP																	
	Request BHRP guidelines, regulations, identification of SMEs from CPCs (Memorandum 0473-410)																	
	Develop workplan proposal (EB-02-03)																	
2) Framework	Develop a framework for BHRP																	
	Develop strategy for updating adopted BHRP																	
	SAC/Commission Meeting: Share/adopt -BHRP framework																	
3) Adoption of BHRP under current state of knowledge	Identification of subject matter experts (SME) for each taxa & formation of SME groups																	
	Consultation with SME groups for BHRP development																	
	Commission Meeting: Adoption of interim BHRPs for each taxa and fishery																	



**Development of Best Handling & Release Practice (BHRP) Guidelines for Vulnerable Species Captured in IATTC Fisheries**

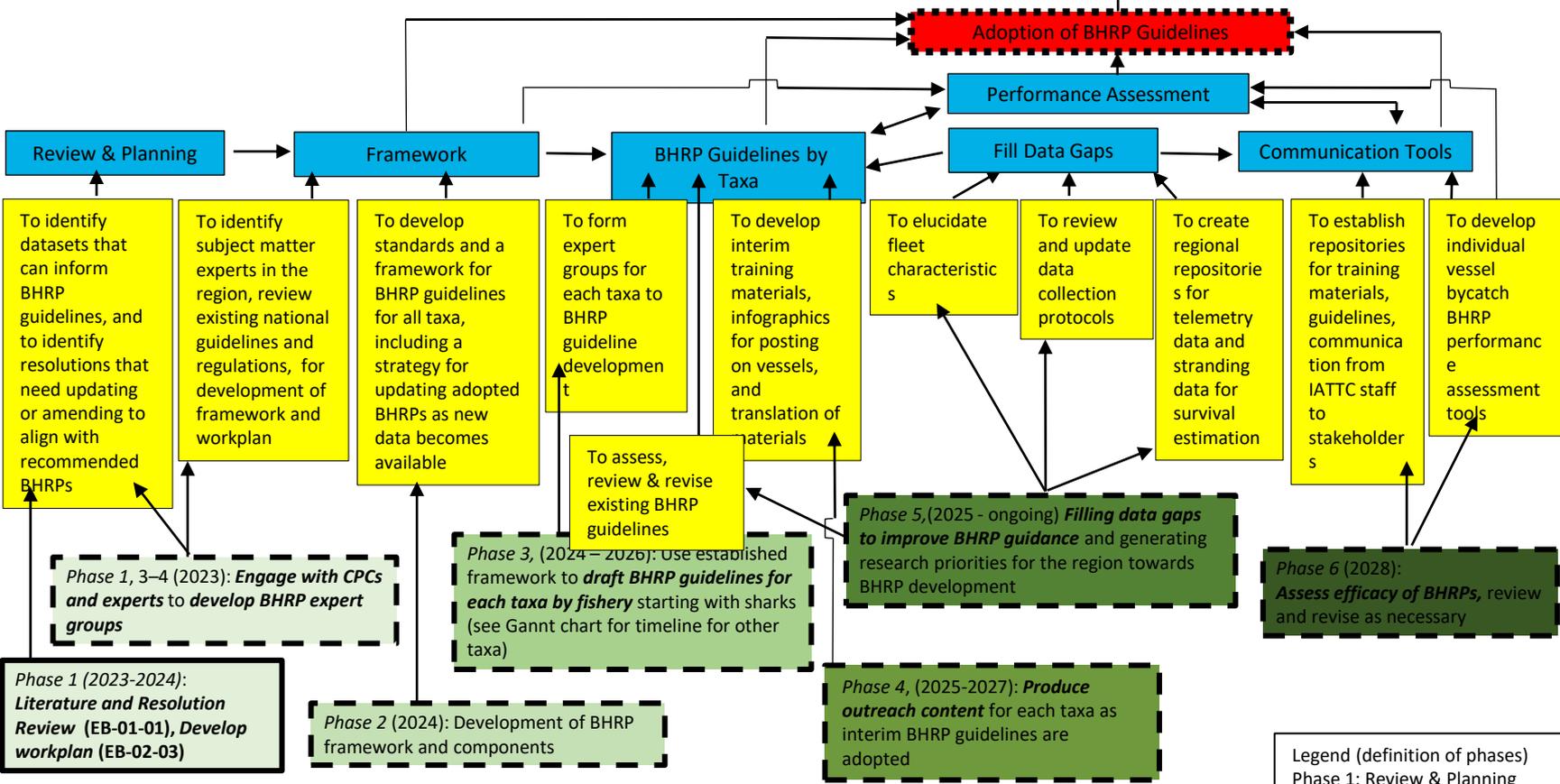
**Main goal**

**Adoption**

**Component**

**Purpose of component**

**Phases and Activities**



*Phase 1, 3-4 (2023): Engage with CPCs and experts to develop BHRP expert groups*

*Phase 1 (2023-2024): Literature and Resolution Review (EB-01-01), Develop workplan (EB-02-03)*

*Phase 2 (2024): Development of BHRP framework and components*

*Phase 3, (2024-2026): Use established framework to draft BHRP guidelines for each taxa by fishery starting with sharks (see Gantt chart for timeline for other taxa)*

*Phase 5, (2025 - ongoing) Filling data gaps to improve BHRP guidance and generating research priorities for the region towards BHRP development*

*Phase 4, (2025-2027): Produce outreach content for each taxa as interim BHRP guidelines are adopted*

*Phase 6 (2028): Assess efficacy of BHRPs, review and revise as necessary*

Involving IATTC staff

Involving IATTC staff, Commission & Stakeholders

Involving Commission

**Legend (definition of phases)**  
 Phase 1: Review & Planning  
 Phase 2: Framework  
 Phase 3: BHRP Development & Adoption  
 Phase 4: Development of Communication Tools  
 Phase 5: Filling Data Gaps  
 Phase 6: Performance Assessment