

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

82ND MEETING

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA (USA)
4-8 JULY 2011

PROPOSAL IATTC-82-H-2

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

**IATTC RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF OCEANIC
WHITETIP SHARKS CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHERIES IN
THE IATTC CONVENTION AREA**

Explanatory Memorandum

The international scientific community points out that: (a) the oceanic whitetip shark has been ranked as one of the five species with the highest degree of risk in an ecological risk assessment; (b) it has high at vessel survival and constitutes a small portion of the shark catch; (c) it is one of the easiest shark species to identify; and (d) that a significant proportion of the species catch is composed of juveniles, justifying a precautionary approach in their management.

In addition, it must be noted that a minimum size length should be implement to protect juveniles but a limitation in the size length may cause enforcement difficulties and that such action might jeopardize the survival of the captured individuals.

In addition, the Antigua Convention requires IATTC to adopt conservation measures for species associated with the main targeted stocks, this species being one of them.

Also considering that IATTC has not run stock assessments on sharks so far and that therefore not enough knowledge or data is currently available for this low-productivity species, it is the necessary to adopt a precautionary approach to its conservation through the prohibition of retaining oceanic whitetip sharks on board of vessels and release them unharmed when possible.

The Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

CONSIDERING that oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) are caught as by-catch in the IATTC area of competence,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that (a) the oceanic whitetip shark has been ranked as one of the five species with the highest degree of risk in an ecological risk assessment; (b) it has high at-vessel survival and constitutes a small portion of the shark catch; (c) it is one of the easiest shark species to identify; and (d) that a significant proportion of the species catch is composed of juveniles,

FURTHER CONSIDERING that a minimum size length should be established to protect juveniles but a limitation in the size length may cause enforcement difficulties,

Agrees to adopt the following Resolution in conformity of Article IX of the IATTC Convention:

1. Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall prohibit retaining onboard, transshipping, landing, storing, selling, or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of oceanic whitetip sharks in any fishery.
2. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag, to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, whitetip sharks when brought alongside the vessel.
3. CPCs shall record through their observer programs the number of discards and releases of oceanic whitetip sharks with indication of status (dead or alive) and report it to IATTC.
4. This Resolution shall enter into force on 1st January 2012.