

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

85TH MEETING

Veracruz Veracruz, (Mexico)
10-14 June 2013

PROPOSAL IATTC-85 E-1

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

**RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HAMMERHEAD
SHARKS (FAMILY SPHYRNIDAE) CAUGHT IN THE IATTC
CONVENTION AREA**

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Goal: Hammerhead sharks, caught mainly in the longline but also in purse seine fisheries, are among the top shark species caught in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). Since hammerhead species *Sphyrna lewini* and *Sphyrna zygaena* are among of the most vulnerable existing shark species and there is not enough knowledge or data currently available for these species, it is necessary to adopt a precautionary approach to its conservation through the prohibition of retaining hammerhead sharks on board of vessels and release them unharmed when possible.

New elements: this draft Resolution was already presented at the IATTC 2011 and 2012 Annual Meetings. However, considering the particular threat faced by these species, exceptions are no longer foreseen.

Rationale: the international scientific community points out that the hammerhead species *Sphyrna lewini* and *Sphyrna zygaena*: (a) are one of the species with the lowest productivity, (b) have been ranked as two of the five species with the highest degree of risk in an ecological risk assessment; (c) have high at-vessel mortality; (d) are very easily differentiated from other species of other families, but such differentiation may be difficult between species of the family Sphyrnidae ; (e) are a highly-valued species in the shark fin trade, and (f) that a significant proportion of the species catch is composed of juveniles, justifying a precautionary approach in their management.

Moreover, the Antigua Convention requires IATTC to adopt conservation measures for species associated with the main targeted stocks, these species being two of them.

IATTC RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF HAMMERHEAD SHARKS (FAMILY SPHYRNIDAE) CAUGHT IN THE IATTC CONVENTION AREA

The Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

CONSIDERING that hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* are caught as by-catch in the IATTC Agreement area;

NOTING that the international scientific community points out that the hammerhead sharks of the species *Sphyrna lewini* and *Sphyrna zygaena* are ranked among the species with the lowest productivity;

CONSIDERING that it is difficult to differentiate between the various species of hammerhead sharks without taking them on board and that such action might jeopardize the survival of the captured individuals;

Agrees that:

1. Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall prohibit retaining onboard, transshipping, landing, storing, selling, or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae*, taken in the IATTC Convention area.
2. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag to promptly release hammerhead sharks as soon as possible, and to do so in a manner that results in as little harm to the shark as possible
3. All hammerhead sharks taken in the IATTC Convention area during sport and recreational fishing shall be released alive as soon as feasible. In no circumstances shall specimens be retained on board, transhipped, landed, stored, sold or offered for sale. CPCs shall ensure that sport and recreational fishers carrying out fishing with a high probability of catching hammerhead sharks in the IATTC Convention area are equipped with instruments and instructions, including supplying species identification guides for their fleets and developing guidelines and training for the safe release of sharks, to increase the survivorship of released hammerhead sharks.
6. CPCs shall, where possible, implement research on hammerhead sharks taken in the IATTC Convention area in order to identify potential nursery areas and to address other outstanding research and data needs. Based on this research, CPCs shall consider time and area closures and other measures, as appropriate.
7. CPCs shall record through their observer programs the number of discards and releases of hammerhead sharks with indication of status (dead or alive) and report it to IATTC.
8. This resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2014.

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Deleted: <#>Hammerhead sharks of the family Sphyrnidae caught by developing coastal CPCs for local consumption and domestic trade are exempted from the measures established in paragraph 1, provided that these CPCs annually report data for catches, effort by gear type, landing and trade of sharks of the family Sphyrnidae, by species, in accordance with IATTC reporting procedures, including available historical data. ¶
<#>Developing coastal CPCs exempted from this prohibition pursuant to paragraph 4 shall not increase their catches of hammerhead sharks. Such CPCs shall take necessary measures to ensure that hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* will not enter international trade and shall notify IATTC of such measures.¶

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