

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

89TH MEETING

**Guayaquil (Ecuador)
29 June – 3 July 2015**

PROPOSAL IATTC-89 A-4

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES

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

The Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

NOTING that hammerhead sharks of the family *Sphyrnidae* are part of the pelagic ecosystems in the IATTC 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 international scientific community has identified the scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*) as among the shark species with the lowest productivity, the species is considered heavily exploited throughout its range in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), and is considered endangered by the IUCN;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that it is difficult to differentiate between the various species of hammerhead sharks without taking them onboard and that such action might jeopardize the survival of the captured individuals;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the IATTC scientific staff have shown declining trends in commercial purse seine catch of hammerhead sharks and that there is a lack of data for artisanal fisheries that target hammerhead sharks;

EMPHASIZING that CPCs are to provide catch information to the Director on an annual basis for all of their vessels fishing for species under the purview of the Commission, in accordance with Resolution C-03-05 on Data Provision and paragraph 11 of Resolution C-05-03 on Conservation of Sharks.

Agrees that:

1. For the purpose of this Resolution, hammerhead shark means species of hammerhead shark of the family *Sphyrnida*.
2. Members and Cooperating Non-Members (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall prohibit vessels flying their flag that do not target hammerhead sharks from retaining onboard, transshipping, landing, storing, selling, or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of hammerhead sharks caught in the IATTC Convention Area.
3. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag that do not target hammerhead sharks to promptly release hammerhead sharks caught in the IATTC Convention Area as soon as possible after the shark is caught and brought alongside the vessel, and take reasonable steps for its safe release, without compromising the safety of any persons.
4. For fisheries that target hammerhead sharks, CPC's shall declare that they have targeted fisheries, and develop a management plan for fisheries that target hammerhead sharks that includes specific authorisations to fish such as a licence and a total allowable catch (TAC) along with other measures to limit the catch of hammerhead sharks to sustainable levels. These management plans must be developed and submitted to the Director by 1 March 2016. The IATTC scientific staff in coordination with the Scientific Advisory Committee shall review the plans and provide an assessment for consideration by the Commission at its next annual meeting. Targeted fishing for hammerhead sharks by vessels of CPCs that have not declared that they have targeted fisheries in accordance with this paragraph shall be prohibited.
5. CPCs shall, where possible, conduct 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, and shall, as practicable, report the results of such research to the Scientific Advisory Committee. Based on this research, CPCs in their individual capacity and the Commission shall consider time and area closures and other measures, as appropriate.
6. Observers shall be allowed to collect biological samples from hammerhead sharks caught in the IATTC Convention Area that are dead on haulback in the EPO, provided that the samples are part of a research project approved by the Scientific Advisory Committee. In order to get approval, a detailed document outlining the purpose of the work, number of samples intended to be collected and the spatio-temporal distribution of the sampling effect must be included in the proposal. Annual progress of the work and a final report on completion will be presented to the Scientific Advisory Committee.
7. CPCs shall require the collection and submission of catch data for hammerhead sharks and shall submit to the IATTC in accordance with IATTC data reporting requirements. CPCs shall also record, through their observer programs and other means, the number of discards and releases of hammerhead sharks, including the status upon release (dead or alive), and report this information to the IATTC.
8. CPCs and the scientific staff of the IATTC shall continue work on bycatch mitigation measures and live release guidelines to avoid the initial catch of this species wherever possible, and maximize the number of incidentally caught individuals that can be released alive.
9. As appropriate, the Commission and its CPCs should, individually and collectively, engage in capacity building efforts and other cooperative activities to support the effective implementation of this Resolution, including entering into cooperative arrangements with other appropriate international bodies.
10. This measure shall be amended, if appropriate, at future Commission meetings taking into account the results of stock assessments when available.
11. This resolution shall enter into force on 1 January 2016.