

RESOLUTION 10/12

ON THE CONSERVATION OF THRESHER SHARKS (FAMILY ALOPIIDAE) CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHERIES IN THE IOTC AREA OF COMPETENCE

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC),

RECALLING that the IOTC Resolution 05/05 concerning the conservation of sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by IOTC;

CONSIDERING that thresher sharks of the family Alopiidae are caught as by-catch in the IOTC Agreement area;

NOTING that at its 2009 Meeting of the Working Party on Ecosystem and Bycatch recognized that full stock assessments on sharks may not be possible because of data limitations and that it is essential that some stock assessment evaluation should be carried out;

NOTING that the international scientific community points out that the bigeye thresher shark (*Alopias superciliosus*) is particularly endangered and vulnerable;

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

ADOPTS, in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, paragraph 1 of the IOTC Agreement, the following:

1. This measure shall apply to all fishing vessels on the IOTC Record of authorised Vessels.
2. Fishing Vessels flying the flag of an IOTC Member and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) are prohibited from retaining on board, transshipping, landing, storing, selling or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of thresher sharks of all the species of the family Alopiidae.
3. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, thresher sharks when brought along side for taking on board the vessel.
4. CPCs shall encourage their fishermen to record incidental catches as well as live releases. These data will be then kept at the IOTC secretariat.
5. Recreational and sport fishing shall release alive all caught animals of thresher sharks of all the species of the family Alopiidae. In no circumstances specimen shall be retained on board, transshipped, landed, stored, sold or offered for sale. The CPCs shall ensure that both recreational and sport fishermen carrying out fishing with high risk of catching thresher sharks are equipped with instruments suitable to release alive the animals.
6. CPCs shall, where possible, implement research on sharks of the species *Alopias* spp, in the Convention area in order to identify potential nursery areas. Based on this research, CPCs shall consider time and area closures and other measures, as appropriate.
7. The Contracting Parties, Co-operating non-Contracting Parties, especially those directing fishing activities for sharks, shall submit data for sharks, as required by IOTC data reporting procedures (including estimates of dead discard and size frequencies), in advance of the 2011 Scientific Committee meeting.