

**RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC BLUE SHARK CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH ICCAT FISHERIES**

RECALLING that the Commission adopted the *Resolution by ICCAT on Atlantic Sharks* [Res. 01-11], the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Conservation of Sharks caught in association with fisheries managed by ICCAT* [Rec. 04-10], the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT concerning Sharks* [Rec. 07-06], including the obligation of CPCs to annually report Task I & II data for sharks in accordance with ICCAT data reporting procedures and the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Development of Harvest Control Rules and of Management Strategy Evaluation* [Rec. 15-07];

FURTHER RECALLING that the Commission has adopted management measures for shark species considered vulnerable to overfishing and caught in association with fisheries managed by ICCAT;

RECOGNIZING that Atlantic blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) are caught in large numbers in association with fisheries managed by ICCAT;

CONSIDERING that following the stock assessment undertaken in 2015, the SCRS report states that despite the positive signs of the stock status of the North Atlantic stock of blue shark, a high level of uncertainty in data inputs and in model structural assumptions remains and, therefore, the possibility of the stock being overfished and overfishing occurring could not be ruled out;

NOTING that, according to SCRS advice precautionary management measures should be considered for shark stocks for which there are few data and/or greater uncertainty in assessment results;

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT) RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. To ensure the conservation of the blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) stocks in the Atlantic Ocean, the following shall apply.

Catch limits for Blue Shark

2. If the average total catch of the North Atlantic blue shark in any consecutive two years from 2017 onward exceeds the average level observed during the period 2011-2015 (*i.e.* 39,102 t), the Commission shall review the implementation and effectiveness of these measures. Based on the review and the results of the next stock assessment scheduled for 2021 or at an earlier stage if enough information is provided to SCRS, the Commission shall consider introduction of additional measures.
3. Based on the results of the next stock assessment, the Commission shall consider measures necessary to sustainably utilize the South Atlantic blue shark stock.

Recording, Reporting, and Use of the Catch Information

4. Each CPC shall ensure that its vessels catching blue shark in association with ICCAT fisheries in the Convention area record their catch in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Recording of Catch by Fishing Vessels in the ICCAT Convention Area* [Rec. 03-13].
5. CPCs shall implement data collection programmes that ensure the reporting of accurate blue shark catch, effort, size and discard data to ICCAT in full accordance with the ICCAT requirements for provision of Task I and Task II.
6. CPCs shall include in their Annual Reports to ICCAT information on the actions they have taken domestically to monitor catches and to conserve and manage blue sharks.

Scientific Research

7. CPCs are encouraged to undertake scientific research that would provide information on key biological/ecological parameters, life-history, migrations, post-release survivorship and behavioural traits of blue sharks. Such information shall be made available to the SCRS.
8. In the light of the results of the next stock assessment of blue shark, the SCRS shall provide, if possible, options of HCR with the associated limit, target and threshold reference points for the management of this species in the ICCAT Convention area.