



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/B2/XV (2021)

Dear Mr Pavón,

Subject: Your letter regarding measures for the Protection and Conservation of Mako Sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)

Thank you for your letter of 15 June 2021 with the recommendations of the CCRUP in relation to measures for the protection and conservation of Mako Sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in view of the intersessional meeting of Panel 4 of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), held on-line on 6-8 July 2021. We appreciate the recommendations that were considered as part of our preparations for the Panel 4 meeting.

We share your concern about the status of this stock and the need to find agreement at ICCAT on conservation and management measures that will ensure the protection and conservation of this sensitive stock.

The matter was discussed at length during the Panel 4 intersessional meeting and despite some continuing disagreement on the precise way forward, it was actually possible to make substantial progress on a range of measures aiming to reduce mortality levels and to start working on a common text. The most contentious issue remains whether or not a full retention ban should be a main feature of the rebuilding plan.

Having agreed on the need to end overfishing immediately and a target recovery date by 2070, the discussions shifted towards what the level of probability for achieving the objectives of the rebuilding plan should be. Once agreement has been reached on the probability required, the scientific advice will indicate the options for fisheries managers for reaching B_{MSY} by the target date in order to complete the rebuilding plan. In that context, I would note that if one operates within the range of probabilities that have been used up to now for successful rebuilding plans in RFMOs it is clear from the scientific advice that a full retention ban is not the only and not necessarily the best option available.

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At the meeting the EU Delegation also raised an important issue in relation to a recent analysis indicating that the parameters used for the stock assessment may have resulted in underestimation of the stock biomass, and we urged the Standing Committee for Research and Statistics (SCRS) to look at this during the Species meeting and report back to the Commission.

The discussions on the management of Shortfin Mako in the North Atlantic will continue between the parties taking as the point of departure the proposal made by the Chair (document Doc. No. PA4-20rev2 /i 2021). As a next step, the Chair of the Commission will explore the possibility for organising an additional intersessional meeting to further discuss some of the remaining and more contentious issues.

Decisions are expected to be taken during the 27th Regular Annual meeting of the ICCAT Commission scheduled for 15-22 November.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward them to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

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