

Science, Service, Stewardship



Implementation of ICCAT Recommendation 11-08 on Silky Sharks

Highly Migratory Species
Management Division
NMFS/NOAA

**NOAA
FISHERIES
SERVICE**

July 2012



Overview

- The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Recommendation 11-08
- Need for Action
- Alternatives
- Request for Public Comments



ICCAT and ATCA

- ICCAT is responsible for the conservation of tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean
- ICCAT recommendations are binding on Contracting Parties; the United States is a Contracting Party
- U.S. Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species are managed under the dual authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA)
- ATCA authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations to implement ICCAT Recommendations as necessary and appropriate



Recommendation 11-08

- Recommendation by ICCAT on the Conservation of Silky Sharks Caught in Association with ICCAT Fisheries
 - “Shall require fishing vessels flying their flag and operating in ICCAT managed fisheries to release all silky sharks whether dead or alive, and prohibit retaining on board, transshipping, or landing any part or whole carcass of silky shark.”



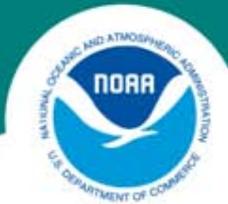
Need for Action

- This proposed action is necessary to:
 - Implement ICCAT recommendations in the U.S. Atlantic tuna and tuna-like fisheries
 - Reduce mortality of silky sharks
- No requirement for additional action in the recreational fishery, as silky sharks are already prohibited
- No requirement for action in other commercial fisheries (e.g., bottom longline, gillnet, etc.) as these are not ICCAT-managed fisheries; commercial vessels using other authorized gears would still be authorized to retain silky sharks subject to existing commercial regulations



Alternatives

- A1 -- No Action. Maintain the status quo; would not implement ICCAT Recommendation 11-08
- A2 -- Implement ICCAT Recommendation 11-08 in the commercial pelagic longline fishery for tuna and tuna-like species
- A3 -- Implement ICCAT Recommendation 11-08 and additional prohibitions against the storing, selling, or purchasing of silky sharks in the commercial pelagic longline fishery for tuna and tuna-like species – *Preferred Alternative*



Alternative 1 (No Action)

- **Commercial Fishery:** Silky sharks are caught incidentally when targeting tuna and swordfish in the HMS commercial pelagic longline fishery and would continue to be retained in the pelagic longline fishery
- **Recreational Fishery:** Silky sharks are already prohibited and would continue to be prohibited in the recreational fishery
- **Anticipated Impacts**
 - **Ecological:** Minor, adverse impacts. 60 silky sharks retained and 1,417 discarded per year
 - **Socioeconomic:** Minor, beneficial impacts. Average annual revenue per pelagic longline vessel = \$485



Alternative 2

- Would prohibit the retention of silky sharks on vessels targeting tuna and/or swordfish with pelagic longline gear onboard
- Anticipated Impacts
 - **Ecological**: Minor, beneficial impacts. Would increase the number of sharks released alive
 - **Socioeconomic**: Minor, adverse impacts. Minor reduction of revenue generated from silky sharks. Average estimated annual losses per pelagic longline vessel = \$485



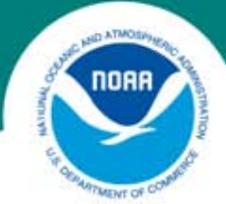
Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative)

- Would implement the provisions of ICCAT Recommendation 11-08, which prohibits retaining on board, transshipping, or landing any part or whole carcass of silky shark caught in association with ICCAT-managed fisheries
- Would prohibit the storing, selling or purchasing any part or whole carcass of silky shark caught in association with ICCAT-managed fisheries
- These prohibitions would provide consistency with current regulations for oceanic whitetip and hammerhead (except for *Sphyrna tiburo*) sharks in the commercial pelagic longline fishery for tuna and tuna-like species



Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) (continued)

- Anticipated Impacts
 - **Ecological**: Same as impacts of Alternative 2
 - **Socioeconomic**: Same minor, adverse impacts due to minor reduction of revenue as those economic impacts of Alternative 2. Additionally, minor, beneficial impacts due to consistency with past regulations for oceanic whitetip and hammerhead sharks
 - Adding the prohibitions against storing, selling and purchasing silky sharks would, by making the regulations consistent with those in place for oceanic whitetip and scalloped, smooth and great hammerhead sharks, make them easier to remember and thus, would help fishermen and dealers and improve compliance. Also, allows for enforcement of the prohibition even in cases where the violation is not detected at sea or during landing



Request for Comments

Please submit comments to:

<http://www.regulations.gov>

Keyword - “NOAA-NMFS-2012-0116”

Comment period closes on July 23, 2012

Comments can also be submitted via fax:

301-713-1917, *Attn:* Karyl Brewster-Geisz

Or Mail:

NMFS SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Please identify comments with 0648-BB96

For more information go to: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>