



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

CMM 2023-14

(Entered into force 26 July 2023)

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURE ON SHARKS

The North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC),

Recognizing the biological importance of sharks in the marine ecosystems as a key predatory species of the North Pacific Ocean, and the need to promote their long-term conservation;

Concerned with vulnerability of certain shark species to exploitation given their low biological productivity and complex spatial structures, and especially mindful that vulnerable species of sharks are more susceptible to overfishing even at low levels of fishing mortality;

Greatly troubled by the observed incidental catch of sharks by fishing vessels, and practice of shark finning on board fishing vessels engaging in fishing activities in the Convention Area;

Mindful of the lack of knowledge on sharks in the North Pacific Ocean because of the lack of available data on catch, effort, landings, and trade, and the consequent need to adopt a precautionary approach to fisheries management;

Recalling Article 7(1)(c) of the Convention which states that the Commission shall adopt, where necessary, conservation and management measures for species belonging to the same ecosystem or dependent upon or associated with the target stocks;

Recalling further Article 21(2) of the Convention which states that the Commission shall take into account the conservation and management measures or recommendations adopted by other regional fisheries management organizations that have competence in relation to areas adjacent to the Convention Area or in respect of fisheries resources not covered by this Convention, species belonging to the same ecosystem or dependent upon or associated with the target stocks, and that have objectives that are consistent with and supportive of the objective of this Convention;

Adopts the following:

Definitions

1. This measure shall be interpreted in accordance with the Convention.
2. For the purpose of this measure, the following definitions apply:
 - a) “shark” includes any species of shark, skate, ray, or chimaera (class Chondrichthyes), either in whole or in part; and
 - b) “shark finning” refers to the practice of removing a shark’s fin from the corresponding shark and discarding the remainder of the shark prior to the point of first landing.

Scope

3. This measure applies to all fishing vessels included in the NPFC Vessel Registry in the Convention Area not otherwise registered and operating within the area of competence of another regional fisheries management organization.

Shark Conservation and Management

4. Recognizing there are no directed shark fisheries currently managed by the Commission, Commission Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties shall ensure that any directed shark fishing follow the process outlined in Article 3(h) of the Convention.
5. For greater clarity, paragraph 4 does not apply to fishing vessels authorized to engage in shark fisheries managed by another regional fisheries management organization.

Prohibition on Shark Finning

6. No fishing vessel shall engage in shark finning.
7. No fishing vessel shall:
 - a) retain on board, or otherwise possess or control, a shark fin that is not naturally attached to the corresponding shark; or
 - b) transship, or land, a shark fin that is not naturally attached to the corresponding sharkunless the fishing vessel complies with paragraph 8.
8. A fishing vessel may only remove a shark fin from the corresponding shark if the shark is incidentally caught, taken, or harvested, and if:
 - a) the shark fin and the corresponding shark can be readily identified; and

b) one of the following methods is used:

- i) the shark fin is stored in the same bag, preferably a biodegradable one, as the corresponding shark;
- ii) the shark fin is bound to the corresponding shark using rope or wire; or
- iii) the shark fin and the corresponding shark are identically, uniquely, and numerically tagged in a manner that an authorized inspector can readily identify the matching of the shark fin to the corresponding shark.

On-Board Record of Interactions with Sharks

- 9. A fishing vessel shall record, and maintain a record of, any shark catch in the Convention Area, to the extent possible by species, in its logbook on board the fishing vessel.
- 10. A Commission Member, or Cooperating non-Contracting Party, shall annually report all shark catches, to the extent possible by species, from their fishing vessels to the Secretariat.
- 11. The requirements contained in paragraph 9 will come into effect 1 January 2024.