



27th Session of the Commission Opening Statement from Global Tuna Alliance to Panel 4:

Shortfin Mako (SMA) in the North Atlantic

Following Wednesday's discussion of [PA4-809](#) alternative versions for paragraph 2 bis presented by the EU and the USA (alternative), we would like to remind all parties that this stock will continue to decrease until 2035 even at the mortality of zero and that SCRS has advised that rebuilding of this stock with a high probability to B_{MSY} by 2070 and at least a 50% probability by 2045 requires limiting total mortality below 300 t. Therefore, at least a temporary retention ban until 2035, preferably 2045 would be needed to account *"for many of the uncertainties and increase the chances for successful implementation and rebuilding of the NA-SMA stock in accordance with the best available scientific information"* according to a [recently published legal opinion](#) for a *"precautionary approach in line with the UNFSA."* This is because of the extremely long time for rebuilding the stock due to the biological characteristics of SMA and the many uncertainties arising from such a long time frame.

While we appreciate the progress made over the last months, we want to highlight that none of the current proposals will provide the desired outcome. The proposed retention ban of 2 years in 2bis (alternative) is a good start but too short to stop the negative trend. All calculations for potential retention are premature in the face of the lack of robust mortality data from past years, with no discards reported by most CPCs.

Therefore, we urge all parties to reconsider the current proposal and agree on an extended period for a retention ban – ideally until 2035 but at least until new projections from a new stock assessment by SCRS are available. Throughout these years, improved data sets, including dead and live discards, could be collected, being essential for improved total mortality estimates as highlighted by the SCRS. This period could then be used to discuss the future approach and additional measures to reduce mortality, by effective avoidance strategies, and post-release mortality.

SMA in the South Atlantic

Landings in 2020 increased substantially, and most CPCs provided almost no data on dead and life discards. Therefore, we are concerned that the Commission still doesn't consider any precautionary measures to end potential overfishing, as warned of by SCRS since 2017.

This is the time for ICCAT to demonstrate leadership in sharks' sustainable management and make a real difference.

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