

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON PORBEAGLE
CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH ICCAT FISHERIES**

(Proposal by the European Union and Canada)

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 *Recommendation of ICCAT to amend the Recommendation 04-10 on the Conservation of Sharks caught in association with the fisheries managed by ICCAT* [Rec. 05-05], the *Supplemental Recommendation by ICCAT concerning Sharks* [Rec. 07-06], including the obligation of CPCs to annually report Task I & II data for sharks; the Resolution by ICCAT on Porbeagle Shark (*Lamna nasus*) [Res. 08-08], and the Recommendation by ICCAT on Compliance with Existing Management Measures on shark Conservation and Management [Rec. 12-05];

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, including Bigeye Thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*) [Rec. 09-07], oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) [Rec. 10-07], hammerhead sharks (family *Sphyrnidae*) [Rec. 10-08] and silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) [Rec. 11-08];

NOTING that in 2009, SCRS attempted an assessment of the four porbeagle stocks in the Atlantic Ocean (northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast) and concluded that data for southern hemisphere porbeagle stocks were too limited to provide a robust indication on the status of the stocks and allow definition of sustainable harvest levels, whereas recovery of the northern hemisphere stocks to B_{MSY} under no fishing mortality could take from 15 to 34 years for the northeast Atlantic stock and from 20 to 60 years for the northwest Atlantic stock (depending on the stock and model considered);

FURTHER NOTING that the 2008 and 2012 Ecological Risk Assessments undertaken by the SCRS concluded that porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*) was among the most vulnerable shark species which makes it more susceptible to overfishing even at low fishing mortality levels;

CONSIDERING that the report of 2015 meeting of the Standing Committee for Research and Statistics (SCRS) estimates that the biomass of northwest Atlantic and northeast Atlantic porbeagle shark is depleted to well below B_{MSY} , but recent fishing mortality is below F_{MSY} ;

FURTHER NOTING that ICES advice for the North-East Atlantic stock in 2015 recommended on the basis of the precautionary approach that no fishing for porbeagle should be permitted and that landings of porbeagle should not be allowed;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) adopted Recommendation [2015-7] on Conservation and Management Measures for Porbeagle in the NEAFC Regulatory Area and agreed that no directed fishery for porbeagle shall be undertaken in the Regulatory Area until end 2015;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) has adopted Recommendation GFCM/36/2012/3 prohibiting to retain on board, transship, landing, transfer, storage, selling or displaying or offering for sale porbeagle specimens caught in the Mediterranean;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that in 2014, porbeagle shark was added to Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species;

FURTHER NOTING that, according to SCRS advice precautionary management measures should be considered for shark stocks where there is the greatest biological vulnerability and conservation concern and for which there are few data and/or greater uncertainty in assessment results.

ACKNOWLEDGING that the 2015 SCRS advice recommended that porbeagle shark retrieved alive should be released alive, and all catches be reported;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the 2015 SCRS advice also recommended that porbeagle fishing mortality should be kept to levels in line with scientific advice and with catches not exceeding the current level.

FURTHER NOTING the intention of the SCRS to undertake, in partnership with International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, a joint stock assessment of northwest and northeast Atlantic porbeagle shark in 2019;

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

1. Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall require vessels flying their flag to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, porbeagle sharks when brought alive alongside for taking on board the vessel.
 2. CPCs shall ensure the collection of Task I and Task II data for porbeagle sharks and their submission in accordance with ICCAT data reporting requirements. The number of discards and releases of porbeagle sharks shall be recorded with indication of status (dead or alive) and reported to ICCAT in accordance with ICCAT data reporting requirements.
 3. In the event that catches of porbeagle caught in association with ICCAT fisheries increase beyond 2014 levels, the Commission will consider additional measures on a stock by stock basis, taking into account the overall trend in biomass.
 4. CPCs are encouraged to implement the research recommendations of the joint 2009 ICCAT-ICES inter-sessional meeting. In particular, CPCs are encouraged to implement research and monitoring projects at regional (stock) level, in the Convention area, in order to close gaps on key biological data for porbeagle and identify areas of high abundance of important life-history stages (e.g. mating, pupping and nursery grounds). SCRS should continue joint work with ICES Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes.
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5. This recommendation shall be reviewed after the next stock assessment of porbeagle shark stocks that will be performed by the SCRS or other recognized scientific organizations.