

November 10, 2015 (11:40 AM)

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**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON THE CONSERVATION
OF THRESHER SHARKS CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION
WITH FISHERIES IN THE ICCAT CONVENTION AREA**

(Proposed by the European Union)

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 by ICCAT to Amend Recommendation 04-10 Concerning 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] and the *Recommendation by ICCAT on the Conservation of Thresher Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries Managed in the ICCAT Convention Area* [Rec. 09-07],

FURTHER RECALLING that Recommendation 09-07 states that ‘CPCs should strongly endeavour to ensure that vessels flying their flag do not undertake a directed fishery for species of thresher sharks of the genus *Alopias* spp.’,

CONSIDERING that thresher sharks of the family Alopiidae are caught as by-catch in the ICCAT Convention area,

FURTHER CONSIDERING that it is difficult to differentiate between the various species of thresher sharks without taking them on board and that such action might jeopardize the survival of the captured individuals,

NOTING that at its 2009 Meeting the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) recommended that the Commission prohibit retention and landings of bigeye thresher shark (*Alopias superciliosus*),

FURTHER NOTING the continued vulnerability ranking of thresher sharks in the 2008 and 2012 Ecological Risk Assessments,

FURTHER NOTING that ICES advice for the North-East Atlantic stock of common thresher shark (*Alopias vulpinus*) and bigeye thresher shark (*Alopias superciliosus*) recommended on the basis of the precautionary approach that fishing mortality should be minimized and no targeted fisheries should be permitted,

ACKNOWLEDGING that all species of thresher sharks of the genus *Alopias* spp have been listed on the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) Appendix II requiring international conservation efforts,

RECALLING the need to annually report Task I and Task II for catches of sharks in conformity with the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Conservation of Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries Managed by ICCAT* [Rec. 04-10],

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

1. Contracting Parties, and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities (hereafter referred to as CPCs) shall prohibit, retaining onboard, transshipping, landing, storing, selling, or offering for sale any part or whole carcass of thresher sharks (*Alopias* spp) in any fishery with exception of a Mexican small-scale coastal fishery with a catch of bigeye thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*) less than 110 fish.
2. CPCs shall require vessels flying their flag to promptly release unharmed, to the extent practicable, thresher sharks when brought along side for taking on board the vessel.
3. CPCs should strongly endeavour to ensure that vessels flying their flag do not undertake a directed fishery for species of thresher sharks of the genus *Alopias* spp.
4. CPCs shall require the collection and submission of Task I and Task II data for *Alopias* spp in accordance with ICCAT data reporting requirements. The number of discards and releases of *Alopias* spp must be recorded with indication of status (dead or alive) and reported to ICCAT in accordance with ICCAT data reporting requirements.
5. CPCs shall, where possible, implement research on thresher sharks of the species *Alopias* spp in the Convention area in order to identify potential nursery areas. Based on this research, CPCs shall consider time and area closures and other measures, as appropriate.
6. Recommendation by ICCAT on the Conservation of Thresher Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries Managed in the ICCAT Convention Area [Rec. 09-07] is superseded by this Recommendation.