

Original: English

**DRAFT RECOMMENDATION BY ICCAT ON BLUE SHARK  
CAUGHT IN ASSOCIATION WITH ICCAT FISHERIES**

*(Proposal by the European Union and United States)*

*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 in accordance with ICCAT data reporting procedures;

*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,

*RECOGNIZING* that Atlantic blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) are caught in large numbers in association with fisheries managed by ICCAT;

*CONSIDERING* that the 2015 SCRS report states that despite the positive signs of the stock assessment of the North Atlantic stock of blue shark, a high level of uncertainty in data inputs and in model structural assumptions remains and, therefore, the possibility of the stock being overfished and overfishing occurring could not be ruled out;

*FURTHER CONSIDERING* that the 2015 SCRS report recommends that, given the uncertainty in stock status results for the South Atlantic stock of blue shark recent catch levels (e.g. 2009-2013) should not be increased;

*FURTHER NOTING* that, according to SCRS advice precautionary management measures should be considered for shark stocks for which there are few data and/or greater uncertainty in assessment results;

*FURTHER CONSIDERING* that in order to protect and manage blue sharks in a precautionary manner, an annual catch limit on both Northern and Southern Atlantic stocks of blue sharks, calculated on the basis of the average of catches on both stocks during the period 2009-2013, should be established.

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

1. Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities or Fishing Entities whose vessels catch blue sharks in association with ICCAT fisheries in the Convention Area shall implement multi-annual measures as follows to ensure the conservation of the stocks of North and South Atlantic blue sharks.

***Catch limits for Blue Shark***

2. The total allowable catches for blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) caught in association with ICCAT fisheries in the ICCAT Convention Area for 2016 and subsequent years are set at 36,860 t for the North Atlantic stock and 26,400 t for the South Atlantic stock.

3. If the total catch for any of the blue shark stocks exceeds in any year the TAC in paragraph 2, the Commission shall review these measures.

***Recording, reporting and use of the catch information***

4. Each CPC shall ensure that its vessels catching for blue shark in association with ICCAT fisheries in the Convention area record their catch in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Recommendation by ICCAT Concerning the Recording of Catch by Fishing Vessels in the ICCAT Convention Area* [Rec. 03-13].
5. CPCs shall implement data collection programmes that ensure the reporting of accurate blue shark catch, effort and size data to ICCAT in full accordance with the ICCAT requirements for provision of Task I and Task II.
6. CPCs shall include in their annual reports to ICCAT information on the actions they have taken domestically to monitor catches and to conserve and manage blue sharks.

***Research***

7. CPCs are encouraged to undertake research that would provide information on key biological/ecological parameters, life-history and behaviour of blue shark and report their results to the SCRS.
8. In the light of the results of the next stock assessment of blue shark, the SCRS shall provide, if possible, options of HCR with the associated limit, target and threshold reference points for the management of this species in the ICCAT Convention Area.