

**The Pew Charitable Trusts’
Opening Statement to ICCAT Panel 4
November 2025**

The Pew Charitable Trusts recognizes the work conducted by Panel 4 and the SCRS throughout the intersessional period in 2025 and values the opportunity to offer input on the following matters:

Blue Shark MSE

This year, SCRS discussed the positive findings of the blue shark feasibility study requested by the Commission in 2023. Technical components for blue shark Management strategy evaluations (MSEs) are already in development. In keeping with this momentum, the Commission should adopt [PA4 813](#) to set management objectives to guide further MSE development in 2026 toward adoption of management procedures for both northern and southern stocks in 2027.

North Atlantic swordfish

To complete the [adoption of the north Atlantic swordfish MP](#), Panel 4 should now adopt the exceptional circumstances (ECs) protocol proposed in [PA4 816](#) to provide clear guidance on instances that may require reconsideration of the MP. The ECs - based on those adopted for north Atlantic albacore and Atlantic bluefin tuna - have been reviewed by SCRS and are now ready to be adopted at the 2025 Commission meeting.

Basking and White sharks

Pew welcomes the proposal - [PA4 812](#) - to ban retention of basking and white sharks in the Atlantic and urges Panel 4 to adopt it. Doing so will not only address the recommendation from the Subcommittee on Ecosystems and Bycatch but also align ICCAT with other international instruments, such as the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Marlin

According to the 2024 and 2025 assessments, both blue and white marlin continue to be classified as overfished. While the stocks are no longer subject to overfishing, their depleted status indicates that the ICCAT rebuilding plan implemented 25 years ago has still not achieved its intended recovery objectives. It is vital that ICCAT now consider stronger measures to meet the mandates set by the Convention, and any exemptions that could weaken the current measure should be rejected.