

**UK STATEMENT TO PANEL 4, ROUND 2**

The UK would like to thank the Chair of Panel 4 for his efforts to mediate between the three proposals tabled this year relating to the northern Atlantic shortfin mako stock. We also thank CPCs for their contributions to the discussions so far. However, the UK is extremely disappointed that we have not yet been able to reach consensus in line with the scientific advice for this critical management measure.

The UK would like to reiterate the comments made in its previous statement on this matter (PA4-806). The only proposal which adheres to the clear advice provided by the SCRS - a full ban on retention - is that put forward by Canada, Senegal, Chinese Taipei, Gabon and the UK.

CPCs agreed at ICCAT last year (Rec. 19-06) that there is an urgent need to adopt a new management recommendation for this stock. In its 2019 updated assessment the SCRS stated that the stock will continue to decline until 2035, and that the exceptions that currently allow for the retention of some caught shortfin mako, if allowed to remain in place, mean the stock will not recover until at least 2070. Therefore, the most effective, simple and immediate measure to stop overfishing and achieve rebuilding (with over a 50% probability by 2040) is a complete prohibition of retention.

The UK notes the merit of additional measures that, on top of a retention ban, could further reduce incidental mortality, such as bycatch mitigation measures, gear restrictions, safe handling and best practice for the release of live shortfin mako. Acknowledging the different views among CPCs on the use of circle hooks, the UK suggests that a clear SCRS assessment of the impact and scale of their effects on shortfin mako capture and mortality would be helpful. As the current data is inconclusive, the UK cannot support their mandatory use at this stage. A similar assessment may be helpful with regard to wire leaders. However, the UK would again stress its view that agreeing any such additional measures should be separate to agreeing an immediate retention ban.

The UK believes there is still time to reach agreement as part of the current correspondence process. To that end the UK urges CPCs who supported the proposal for a retention ban last year to come forward once again and show their support, and appeals to all other CPCs who have not yet communicated their position on this issue to do so as soon as possible. To fail to act now would mean that the necessary protection, crucial to the long-term health of the northern Atlantic stock of shortfin mako, will not be in place for yet another year.