



Global Tuna Alliance ICCAT Panel 4 Statement

The Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) is an independent group of retailers and tuna supply chain companies, who are committed to realising harvest strategies for tuna fisheries, avoidance of IUU products, improved transparency and traceability as well as environmental sustainability, and progressing work on human rights in tuna fisheries.

It is clear that the impacts of COVID-19 have presented challenges to regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in conducting meetings and addressing important conservation and management issues in 2020. In the case of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), it has led to the cancellation of the its annual commission and science (SCRS) meetings.

We do not believe current circumstances should prevent ICCAT from taking action to ensure the uninterrupted, sustainable management of the tuna stocks and marine ecosystems under its purview. In particular, with regards to the Panel 4 agenda, CITES App. II listed shortfin mako sharks require immediate attention by the Commission in 2020.

Shortfin mako is classified by IUCN as Endangered and listed under CITES. Recovery will likely take ~25 years even if fishing mortality could be cut to zero (53% chance of rebuilding by 2045). The ICCAT Science Committee recommended a ban on retention of North Atlantic shortfin makos and 2001t shortfin mako catch limit for the South Atlantic, but in 2019 the EU, US, and Curaçao offered complex counter proposals that fell far short of scientific advice and would allow hundreds of tons of North Atlantic makos to continue to be landed.

The GTA welcomes the proposal from Canada for a retention ban of mako sharks in the North Atlantic but are concerned that the proposals made by the EU and USA are in contradiction to the scientific advice, and proposing TACs for the North Atlantic that will not allow stock rebuilding by 2045.

The GTA requests that ICCAT should agree to protect shortfin mako sharks by heeding scientists' warnings about North Atlantic depletion and South Atlantic imminent risk. Specifically:

- Immediately prohibit all shortfin mako retentions.
- Ensure specific scientific advice for minimizing incidental mortality is developed and implemented as a matter of urgency.