



2005 Market Street, Suite 2800, Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077 P +1.215.575.9050 F +1.215.575.4939
901 E Street NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20004 P +1.202.552.2000 F +1.202.552.2299
Avenue des Arts 40, 1040 Brussels, Belgium P +32.2.274.1620 F +32.2.274.1630
The Grove, 248A Marylebone Road, London, NW1 6JZ P +44 (0) 20.7535.4000

The Pew Charitable Trusts' Final Statement to Panel 4 December 2020

The Pew Charitable Trusts thanks the Chair of Panel 4 for his continued efforts in trying to reach consensus on a measure to manage and conserve the shortfin mako shark and to the various CPCs and NGOs for engaging in the discussion, despite the unique format. Pew commends the United Kingdom, Chinese Taipei, and Gabon in joining Canada and Senegal as co-sponsors to PA4_806 in support of no retention of shortfin makos in the north Atlantic and management in the south, in line with the scientific advice. However, Pew is highly concerned that this urgent issue didn't result in the adoption of a science-based plan, instead allowing the population to continue to decline by rolling over an already inadequate measure.

Since 2017, the SCRS has been recommending that ICCAT adopt a no-retention policy for the north Atlantic stock. Over the last four years, the advice has only become clearer, with the updated stock assessment concluding that no retention with no exceptions is the first step to recover the north Atlantic population. As other NGOs and CPCs have noted, additional mitigation measures, such as time and area closures and gear modifications, as well as safe handling measures, will also be needed to reduce bycatch and improve post release survival.

Between now and the proposed intersessional meeting in July 2021, CPCs have a window of opportunity to work together to adopt a plan that would provide the north Atlantic shortfin mako population a real chance of recovery. However, all Parties should be clear that if they choose to continue to delay action in 2021, they will be setting the longline industry up for much more disruptive and costly actions in the future in order to curb further decline of makos in line with the ICCAT mandate and Commission obligation. Those actions could potentially include the need for an Atlantic-wide closure of longline fishing. With seafood buyers and retailers increasingly demonstrating interest in management decisions at other RFMOs and having already highlighted Atlantic mako recovery as a top priority, there is the potential threat of market action as well.

Pew urges governments to urgently prevent mako from being a "choke species" for management of Atlantic longline fisheries and to assure buyers that they are committed to sustainably manage longline gear in a way that allows mako sharks to rebuild and to thrive.