

RESOLUTION REGARDING INTERNATIONAL FISHING LIMITS FOR SHORTFIN MAKO & BLUE SHARKS

American Elasmobranch Society
Spokane, Washington
July 2022

WHEREAS the U.S., Canada, and Mexico are Parties to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT);

WHEREAS the shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) has been ranked third among 20 pelagic elasmobranch stocks in terms of vulnerability to Atlantic longline fisheries in Ecological Risk Assessments conducted for ICCAT;

WHEREAS ICCAT shark scientists in 2019 found that the overfished North Atlantic shortfin mako population will decline for at least the next decade and needs substantial reductions in fishing mortality to begin rebuilding over a period of roughly 50 years;

WHEREAS ICCAT scientists have recommended a ban on retention of North Atlantic shortfin makos, along with bycatch mitigation, since 2017;

WHEREAS Canada, after several attempts, finally led ICCAT in 2021 to prohibit retention of North Atlantic shortfin makos, but the ban could be relaxed to allow some retention as soon as 2023;

WHEREAS ICCAT has yet to heed its scientists' repeated warnings that the South Atlantic shortfin mako population may be following along the same path as the North Atlantic population and that a total allowable catch (TAC) should be established; and

WHEREAS ICCAT's South Atlantic TAC for blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) has been exceeded, primarily because Parties have not been allocated quotas;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Elasmobranch Society urges the U.S., Canadian, and Mexican governments to work this year to prevent relaxation of ICCAT's new ban on retention of North Atlantic shortfin makos, secure a scientifically sound ICCAT limit for South Atlantic shortfin makos, and allocate the ICCAT South Atlantic blue shark TAC among ICCAT Parties.