

Northwest Atlantic



Fisheries Organization

Serial No. N5170

NAFO/FC Doc. 05/8

27TH ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2005

**Proposal for amendment of the Conservation and Enforcement Measures of NAFO
(by the European Union and USA) (ADOPTED)**

**CONCERNING THE CONSERVATION OF SHARKS AND PROHIBITION OF SHARK
FINNING**

Explanatory Memorandum

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action for Sharks calls on States, within the framework of their respective competencies and consistent with international law, to cooperate through regional fisheries organizations with a view to ensuring the sustainability of shark stocks as well as to adopt a National Plan of Action for the conservation and management of sharks.

The General Assembly of the United National has recently adopted resolutions calling on its members to ban shark fin fisheries and encouraging measures to reduce waste and fully utilise sharks.

The Convention on International Trade with Endangered Species (CITES) has in 2004 encouraged Parties and Regional Fisheries Organisations (RFOs) to develop, adopt and implement inter alia regional agreements for the conservation and management of sharks.

Other RFO:s such as the Inter American Tropical Tuna Convention (IATTC) and the International Convention on the Conservation on Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) have already adopted recommendations to conserve shark stocks and to prohibit so called shark finning.

It is recognised that many sharks are part of ecosystems in the NAFO Convention area and are often caught as by-catches in NAFO fisheries (such as Greenland shark and basking sharks). Already in 2004, NAFO adopted management measures for skate stocks in the Regulatory Area.

It would however be appropriate to adopt further measures destined in particular to collect data on the outtake of other shark species and to introduce a ban on shark finning in the NAFO Area.

Proposal

The following measures shall be added to Chapter I of the Conservation and Enforcement Measures of NAFO:

1. Contracting Parties shall report data for all catches of sharks, in accordance with the data reporting procedures laid down in Chapter III, including available historical data.
2. Contracting Parties shall ensure that fishing vessels fully utilize their entire catches of sharks. Full utilization is defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing.
3. Contracting Parties shall require their vessels not to have onboard shark fins that total more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard, up to the first point of landing.

Contracting Parties that currently do not require fins and carcasses to be offloaded together at the point of first landing shall take the necessary measures to ensure compliance with the 5% ratio through certification, monitoring by an observer, or other appropriate measures.

4. The ratio of fin-to-body weight of sharks described in paragraph 3 shall be reviewed by the scientific council and reported back to the Commission in 2006 for revision, if necessary.
5. Fishing vessels are prohibited from retaining on board, transshipping or landing any fins harvested in contravention of these provisions.
6. In fisheries that are not directed at sharks, Contracting Parties shall encourage the release of live sharks, especially juveniles, to the extent possible, that are caught as by-catches and are not used for food and/or subsistence.
7. Contracting Parties shall, where possible, undertake research to identify ways to make fishing gears more selective.
8. Contracting Parties shall when possible conduct research to identify shark nursery areas.