

MAKE OR BREAK TIME FOR MAKOS

After a decade of unheeded warnings, Atlantic shortfin mako sharks are now in an unprecedentedly dire state, requiring decisive ICCAT protections this year.

RAISE THE PRIORITY

Since the 2008 Ecological Risk Assessment, scientists have warned that shortfin mako sharks are exceptionally vulnerable to ICCAT fisheries. While ICCAT has since granted many other shark species prohibited status, makos have been passed over. ICCAT responses to scientific advice have been woefully inadequate, time and time again.

HEED THE ADVICE

The alarm bells around shortfin mako depletion have never been louder. For the seriously overfished North Atlantic population, the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) reports:

- Current fishing restrictions are insufficient to halt decline;
- Recovery would likely take ~25 years even if fishing mortality could be cut to zero (53% chance of rebuilding by 2045);
- Limiting catch (including discards) to 300t annually only offers a 60% chance of rebuilding the population over 50 years;
- Banning retention without exception is the most effective immediate step;
- Additional bycatch mitigation measures are also warranted.

USE CAUTION

The SCRS warns that South Atlantic makos are likely headed down the same path as those in the North. Banning take from this population is prudent in the face of uncertainty and enforcement challenges. Also, because longfin makos are similar in appearance, range, and vulnerability, mako retention bans should cover both species.

Shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)
• Age of maturity (♀): 18-21 years
• Length at 50% maturity (♀): ~275cm
• Gestation: 15-18 months
• Reproduction: 4-25 pups every 2-3 years
• Life span: ~32 years

IUCN: ENDANGERED
CMS: APPENDIX II
CITES: APPENDIX II

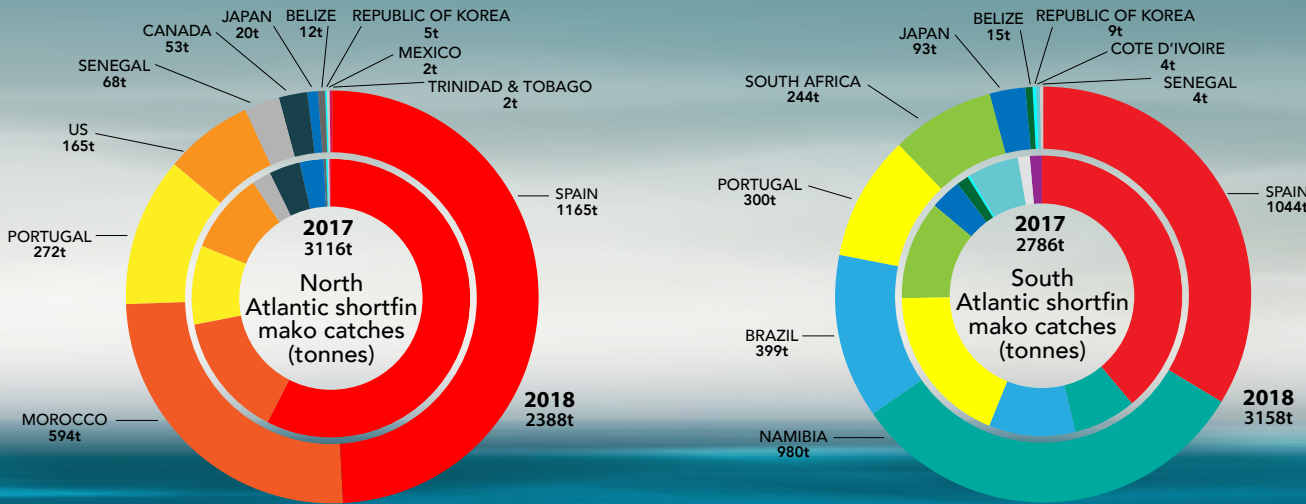
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FACE FACTS

Recent reductions in shortfin mako mortality by some Parties represent steps in the right direction, but it's simply too late for more half measures. Gear changes and size limits alone are wholly insufficient to reverse decline. Allowances to land dead makos create incentives for risky and/or irresponsible fishing practices. Retention bans shift the incentive to avoidance.

MAXIMISE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS

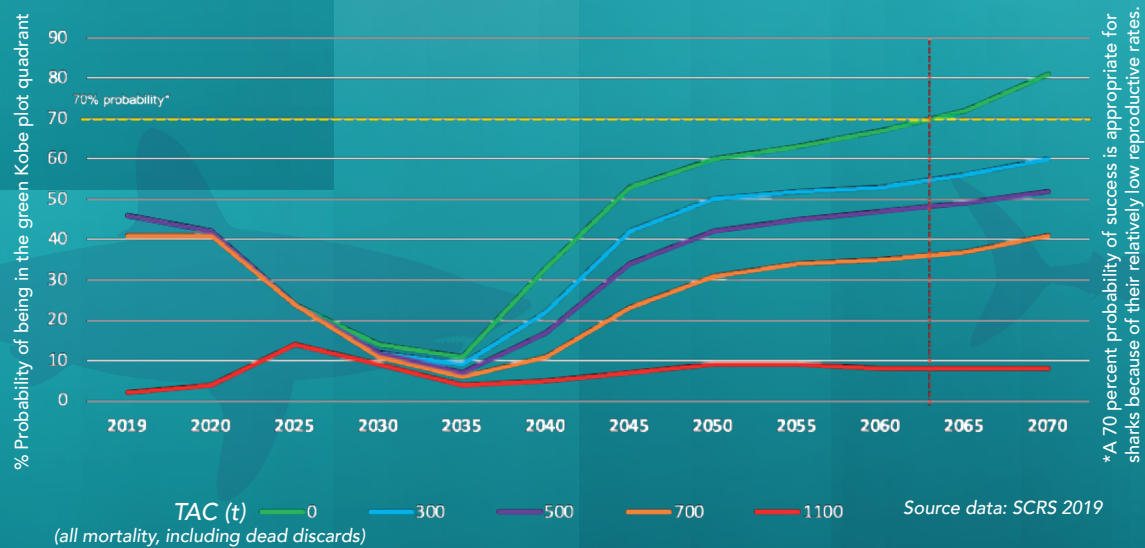
While shortfin makos are inherently vulnerable, the species has a relatively low rate of post-release mortality (studies show up to 77% survive). Retention bans coupled with proper handling techniques offer the best hope for achieving the dramatic mortality reductions that makos need.



ACT NOW

Conservation action to prevent mako population collapse is long overdue and **urgent**. Ban retention for this exceptionally vulnerable species – *before it's too late*.

COMPREHEND THE TIMESCALE



STRENGTHEN ICCAT'S FINNING BAN

ICCAT's ban on shark finning (the wasteful practice of slicing off a shark's fins and discarding the body at sea) relies on a fin-to-carass ratio limit that is hard to enforce and exacerbates inadequacies in shark catch information.

Requiring that sharks be landed with their fins naturally attached can:

- ease enforcement,
- eliminate wiggle-room to fin sharks, and
- facilitate collection of species-specific catch data.

It is high time that ICCAT adopted this increasingly accepted best practice for effective finning ban enforcement.

ATLANTIC SHORTFIN MAKO OVERFISHING: A TIMELINE

More than a decade of warning signs met with inadequate responses



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A decade ago, the SCRS recommended conservation action for shark species with the greatest biological vulnerability, and retention bans as effective measures for species with high longline survivorship. Since then, ICCAT has prohibited retention of bigeye threshers, oceanic whitetips, most hammerheads, and silky sharks.

IT'S MY
TURN



Intrinsically vulnerable, even among sharks
Shortfin mako sharks ranked **first** among 20 pelagic shark stocks for vulnerability to ICCAT fisheries based on Euclidean distance, and **third** overall in the 2012 ICCAT Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA).

Stock	V ₁	V ₂	V ₃
Bigeye thresher	3	1	1
Longfin mako	5	3	2
Shortfin mako 	1	8	2
Porbeagle	2	7	4
Night shark	11	4	5
Silky shark South Atlantic*	12	5	6
Sandbar shark	15	2	6
Oceanic whitetip	4	13	8
Silky shark North Atlantic*	8	11	8
Thresher shark	9	14	11
Blue shark North Atlantic	6	19	10
Dusky shark	17	6	12
Great hammerhead*	14	10	13
Blue shark South Atlantic	7	20	14
Tiger shark	10	16	15
Pelagic stingray South Atlantic	18	9	16
Scalloped hammerhead North Atlantic*	16	12	16
Smooth hammerhead*	13	17	18
Scalloped hammerhead South Atlantic*	19	15	19
Pelagic stingray North Atlantic	20	18	20

Figure 2. Vulnerability ranks for 20 stocks of pelagic sharks calculated with three methods: Euclidean distance (v1), multiplicative (v2), and arithmetic mean (v3). A lower rank indicates higher risk. Stocks listed in decreasing risk order according to the sum of the three indices. Red highlight indicates risks scores 1-5; yellow, 6-10; blue, 11-15; and green, 16-20. Productivity values ranked from lowest to highest. Species in **bold** are prohibited. * Some exceptions apply

Unenforceable half-measures are not enough to save sharks!

The Shark League of the Atlantic & Mediterranean Urges ICCAT to:

- Ban mako shark retention
- Curb blue shark landings
- End at-sea shark fin removal

Introducir medidas deficientes y no aplicables en la práctica no bastará para salvar a los tiburones!

La Liga de tiburones para el Atlántico y el Mediterráneo insta a ICCAT a:

- Prohibir la retención a bordo de marrajos (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)
- Reducir los desembarques de tintoreras (*Prionace glauca*)
- Acabar con el aleteo de tiburones en el mar

Des demi-mesures inapplicables ne suffiront pas pour sauver les requins !

La Shark League for the Atlantic and Mediterranean demande à la CICTA :

- d'interdire la rétention à bord des requins-taupes bleus
- de limiter les débarquements de requins peau bleu
- de mettre un terme à la découpe des nageoires de requins en mer

التدابير المجتزأة غير القابلة للتنفيذ ليست كافية لإنقاذ القرش!

- ن رابطة القرش في الأطلسي والمتوسط تناشد اللجنة الدولية للحفاظ على أسماك التّن في الأطلسي (ICCAT):
- حظر الاحتفظ بقرش مako
- كبح تفريغ القرش الأزرق على اليابسة
- وضع حد لإزالة زعانف القرش في عرض البحر

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Partners

These groups, with support from the Shark Conservation Fund, formed the Shark League of the Atlantic and Mediterranean to advance responsible regional shark and ray conservation policies

Shark Advocates International is a project of The Ocean Foundation dedicated to securing science-based shark and ray policies.

Shark Trust is a UK charity working to safeguard the future of sharks through positive change.

Project AWARE is a global movement for ocean protection powered by a community of adventurers.

Ecology Action Centre promotes sustainable, ocean-based livelihoods, and marine conservation in Canada and internationally.

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Funded by the Shark Conservation Fund.



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2019 Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

A critical opportunity to safeguard vulnerable Atlantic sharks through sound fishing limits and best practices

