

Is Your Country on the Map?

A Pledge and Path to Save Endangered Mako Sharks

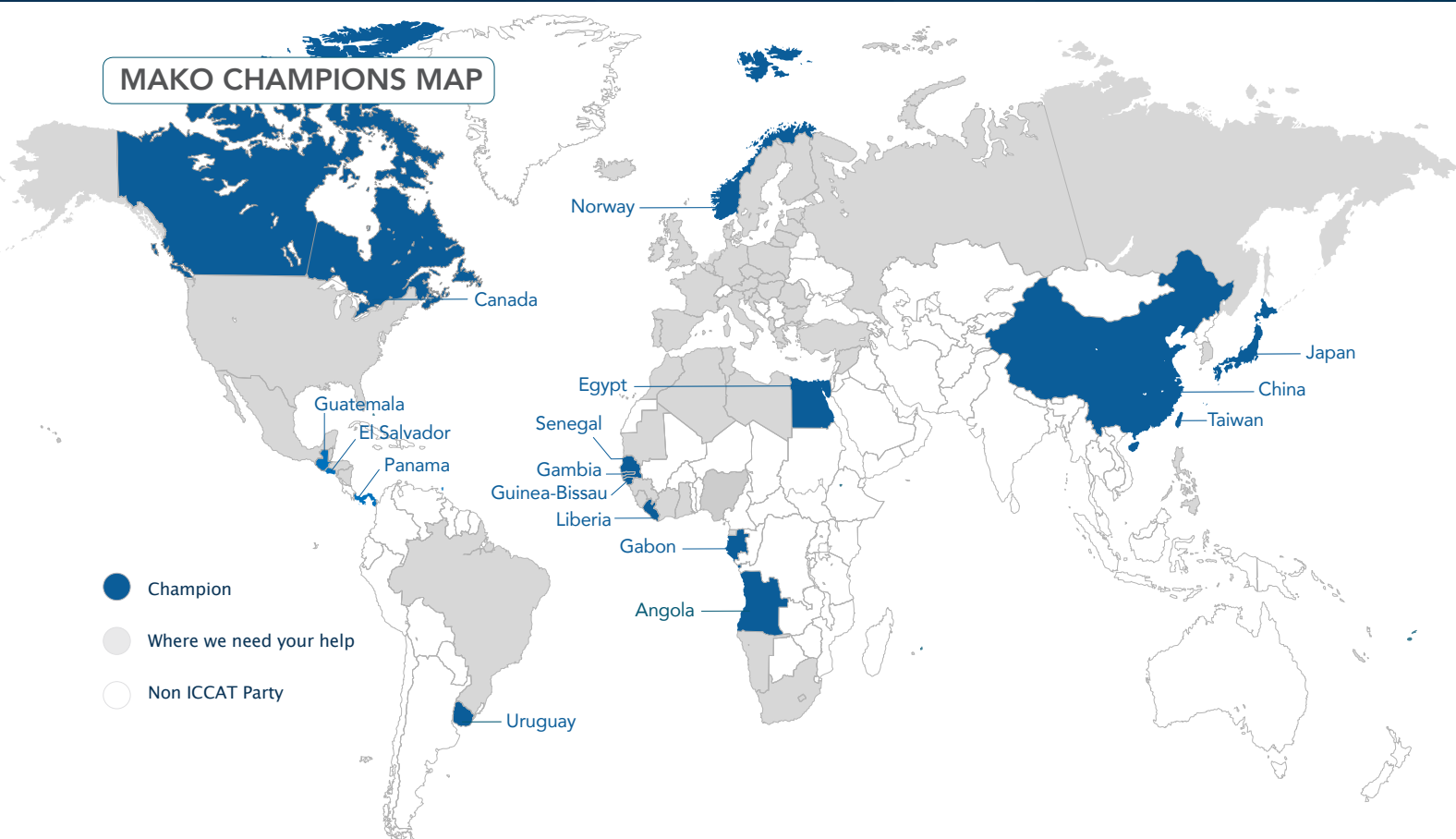


The Shark League is tackling one of the world's most pressing shark conservation crises: the dangerous decline of Atlantic shortfin makos. Throughout 2020, we're promoting and tracking support from Atlantic fishing nations for urgently needed, science-based catch limits to save this endangered species.

To turn the tide, we need your help to get International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Parties on the Map of Mako Champions!



© Doug Perrine / Naturepl.com



Is your country missing from the map? You can help change that!

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FROM FISHERIES AGENCIES:

Let us know if your country supports science-based ICCAT limits for makos, and what your government will do to help ensure they get adopted this year.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FROM ENVIRONMENT AGENCIES:

Remind your fisheries counterparts of your country's CITES obligations toward preventing unsustainable mako trade, and encourage them to declare full support for the catch limits advised by ICCAT scientists.

NGO REPRESENTATIVES, SCIENTISTS, AND CONCERNED CITIZENS:

Urge officials from your government's fisheries and environment agencies to actively and publicly support science-based ICCAT measures for makos, as proposed by Senegal and others.

An Urgent Problem

The inherently vulnerable, ecologically vital, and economically valuable shortfin mako is classified by IUCN as Endangered and listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). These highly migratory sharks are fished by many countries for meat, fins and sport, and are in dire need of international catch limits. For three years running, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) has failed to act on clear and urgent scientific advice to ban retention of seriously overfished North Atlantic shortfin makos. The continuation of intense and practically unlimited fishing on this slow growing, declining population represents a conservation emergency that will already take decades to repair. Atlantic fishing countries must act now to prevent an even greater disaster.

The Remedy

ICCAT can adopt, either by consensus or vote, the advice its scientists have given for preventing the collapse of North Atlantic shortfin makos: completely prohibit retention and work to minimize post-release mortality. ICCAT scientists also advise establishing a 2001t shortfin mako catch limit for the South Atlantic to prevent a similar crisis there. With intersessional negotiations on mako policy cancelled, the next opportunity to agree this course of action is through annual negotiations taking place virtually over the coming months.

In the meantime, CITES Parties (including all ICCAT Parties) are required to demonstrate that mako exports and landings from the high seas are sourced from legal, sustainable fisheries.

The Champions



At the ICCAT 2019 annual meeting last November, Senegal and Canada led an initiative to establish the science-based shortfin mako limits advised by scientists.



Their proposal was co-sponsored by the Gambia, Gabon, Panama, Liberia, Guatemala, Angola, El Salvador, and Egypt.



The joint, science-based mako proposal was supported at the 2019 ICCAT annual meeting through floor statements by Norway, Guinea Bissau, Uruguay, Japan, China, and Taiwan.

The Obstacles



The joint, science-based mako proposal was opposed in 2019 by the European Union (EU), United States (US), and Curaçao. These Parties pushed exceedingly complex counter-proposals that fell far short of scientific advice, allowing hundreds of tons of makos to be landed.

The US-Curaçao proposal even permitted continued killing of makos that make it to the boat alive.

EU fishing vessels are responsible for most of the reported catches of Atlantic shortfin makos. Spain is the world's top country for mako landings. The EU co-sponsored the proposal to list mako sharks under CITES, but has yet to impose mako catch limits on its vast shark fishing fleets.

The Wild Cards

Each and every ICCAT Party, regardless of its mako landings, is important for securing an ICCAT agreement stringent enough to save makos. The following ICCAT member countries have yet to announce a position on the science-based ICCAT mako limits proposed in November by Senegal and others: South Africa, Ghana, France (Saint Pierre et Miquelon), Brazil, Morocco, Korea,

Côte d'Ivoire, Russia, Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Venezuela, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Guinea, The UK, Libya, Tunisia, Trinidad and Tobago, Namibia, Barbados, Honduras, Algeria, Mexico, Vanuatu, Iceland, Turkey, Philippines, Nicaragua, Belize, Syria, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Nigeria, Albania, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Grenada.

Funded by the Shark Conservation Fund (SCF)

www.sharkleague.org – info@sharkleague.org



sharkadvocates.org



sharktrust.org



projectaware.org



ecologyaction.ca