

Development of a Comprehensive Shark CMM for the WCPFC

1. Background (1)

WCPFC adopted:

- CMM for Sharks (2010-07)
- CMM for Oceanic Whitetip Shark (2011-04)
- CMM for Protection of Whale Sharks from PS Fishing Operations (2012-04)
- CMM for Silky Sharks (2013-08)
- CMM for Sharks (2014-05)

1. Background (2)

WCPFC also adopted:

- Guidelines for the Safe Release of Encircled Whale Sharks
- Guidelines for Best Handling Practices for the Safe Release of Manta and Mobuild

WCPFC made decisions on:

- requirements for reporting shark catch data, standards for observer data collection on sharks
- process for designating key shark species.

1. Background (3)

WCPFC13 requested SC13 and TCC13 to work towards establishing a new CMM which would seek to:

- unify the WCPFC's existing shark CMMs
- take account of relevant national and international policies and measures
- provide a framework for adopting new components as needs and datasets evolve.

1. Background (4)

Elements that could be considered for the new CMM include:

- - policies on full utilization/prohibition on finning
- - no retention policies
- - safe release and handling practices
- - gear mitigation, size limits or closures
- - management plans/catch limits
- - key species and their assessment schedules
- - species-specific limit reference points
- - any data reporting requirements beyond those contained in “Scientific Data to be Provided to the Commission.”

2. Discussion at SC13

- SC13 recommends that TCC13 and WCPFC14 note the two options:
 - To simply collate the existing CMMs (a limited role for the SC)
 - to develop a framework for a comprehensive approach to shark CMM (a significant role for SC)
- SC13 agreed that only the Commission can decide on the extent to which a new shark CMM would modify existing requirements or add new elements.
- In case the Commission decides to pursue a more comprehensive approach, SC13 discussed some specific, science-related key issues.

3. Discussion at TCC13

- The discussions at TCC13 produced agreed language which could be used as terms of reference for intersessional work towards WCPFC15.
- The Secretariat was tasked with preparing such a draft TOR for further consideration by WCPFC14.

4. Decision of WCPFC14

- To task SC14 to develop proposed guidelines for safe release of rays and sharks with priority given to silky and oceanic whitetip sharks.
- To form an intersessional working group (IWG) to develop a draft comprehensive shark CMM for discussion at WCPFC15, which will primarily work virtually and will be chaired by Japan.
- The IWG Chair will codify WCPFC's existing shark measures and distribute the draft to IWG participants by the end of February.
- The IWG Chair will receive comments on the draft as well as contributions on new elements from IWG participants by the end of March.
- The IWG Chair will then produce a revised draft and send it to SC14 and TCC14 for their review and comments.

5. Processes completed and planned

1. Completed process

- Distribution of 1st draft on February 15
- Distribution of 2nd draft on April 6
- Distribution of 3rd draft on May 28
- Submission of 4th draft on July 13 to SC14

2. Future process

- Submission of 5th draft to TCC14 on ???
- Submission of 6th draft to WCPFC15 on ???

6. What is SC14 expected to do?

1. To look at the 4th draft, taking into the TOR, particularly para 6 (scientific issues to be considered), and provide comments and suggestions to Shark IWG Chair without delay
2. To develop proposed guidelines for safe release of rays and sharks, taking into account existing standards or guidelines adopted on other fora, with priority given to the development of guidelines for safe release of silky shark and oceanic whitetip sharks.