

RESOLUTION REGARDING SHARKS AT ICCAT

American Elasmobranch Society

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St. Louis, Missouri

WHEREAS the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is capable of instituting restrictions on catches of Atlantic pelagic sharks;

WHEREAS the International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has recommended zero catch from the Northeast Atlantic porbeagle shark population as well as measures to reduce bycatch;

WHEREAS Canadian scientists have concluded that the Northwest Atlantic porbeagle population has declined to 12-15% of former levels and will require a century or more to recover from overfishing;

WHEREAS many Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) rejected a proposal to limit trade in porbeagle sharks based on a position that the responsibility for porbeagle conservation lies with ICCAT;

WHEREAS; ICCAT scientists have concluded that measures to reduce fishing mortality on North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks are necessary to improve the status of this population; and

WHEREAS shark scientists at a 2006 technical workshop examining shark fin removal issues concluded that requiring sharks be landed with their fins attached is the most effective method to ban finning and also improves species specific data collection, vital for assessments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Elasmobranch Society urges Parties to ICCAT to adopt a binding recommendation in 2007 to require that sharks be landed with their fins attached, all porbeagle sharks be carefully released, and fishing mortality on North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks be reduced.