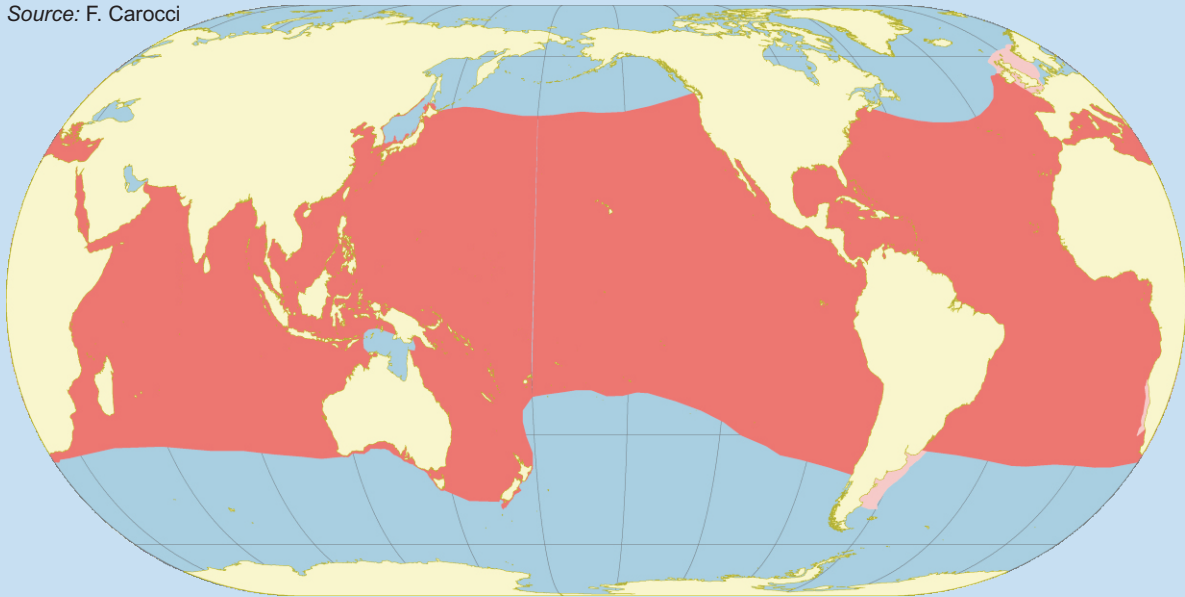


Shortfin mako shark *Isurus oxyrinchus*

Does Not Meet CITES Listing Criteria

Source: F. Carocci



Mako shark are a wide-ranging species whose global distribution remains unchanged. Stock assessments from the North Atlantic and North Pacific show population numbers of shortfin mako sharks in these regions to be in the millions.

Shortfin mako sharks are highly migratory and found throughout the world's oceans from 50°N to 50°S latitude. Recent ecological risk assessments in the Atlantic evaluated the available life history data and found that the shortfin mako shark is one of the least productive of the pelagic shark species. The Expert Panel thus confidently concluded that the species was of **low productivity**.

The Expert Panel reviewed stock status findings by ocean basin, i.e. North and South Atlantic, Mediterranean, Indian, and North and South Pacific oceans. Given the low productivity of the species, it follows that declines to <30% of historic levels (i.e. a decline of 80% or more allowing 10% buffer) would meet the criteria for listing.

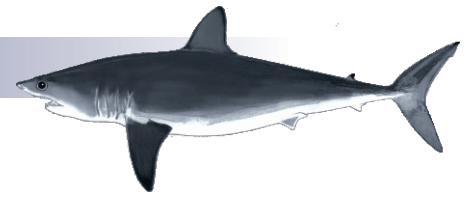
In the **North Atlantic**, the population has declined to about 50% of historic levels. Based on projections from stock assessments, the stock is not expected to meet the decline criteria in the next 10 years, but may be at risk of dropping below 30% of historic levels in the next few decades if catches are not decreased to well below recent levels. ICCAT has adopted a recommendation to reduce catches in the North Atlantic, which may in turn reduce further population decline.

In the **Mediterranean**, the population has declined, but the extent of this decline is not well determined.

For the **South Atlantic, Indian, North Pacific** and **South Pacific** oceans, the Expert Panel found no evidence that populations meet

the CITES criteria, whether based on historical extent of decline, recent rates of decline or these declines in combination.

Other modifying factors were considered by the Expert Panel. Mako sharks' lower productivity was considered as a factor that increased their vulnerability; however, the relatively data-rich assessments were a mitigating factor, as it strengthened confidence in stock abundance estimates. Viewed globally, and taking account of lower productivity and precautionary considerations, and the relatively good precision of estimates of status provided by the stock assessments, **there is not evidence that the species meets the CITES Appendix II listing criteria.**



Management

The FAO IPOA-Sharks underscores the responsibilities of fishing and coastal states for sustaining shark populations. This is now supplemented by the Port State Measures Agreement that requires verification inspections on fishing vessels entering ports to ensure they comply with measures adopted by RFMOs and international conventions. At a regional level, all Tuna RFMOs have adopted prohibitions on finning and encourage the release of live sharks where possible. ICCAT will

revisit their shortfin mako assessment in 2019 and a partial no-retention measure is in place in the North Atlantic.

In the Pacific Ocean, where stocks are not overfished, fishery bodies have a stock assessment scheduled for 2021.

In the Indian Ocean, the IOTC Scientific Committee has stated that the Commission should consider taking a cautious approach by implementing some management actions for

shortfin mako, and a stock assessment is planned for 2020.

In 2012, the GFCM banned finning in the Mediterranean and Black Sea and also prohibited the capture and sale of mako.

Nationally, fishing closures, e.g. three months every year in Mexico and some Central American countries, have been established to protect sharks, largely during their reproductive periods.

Trade

Mako sharks are largely caught during target fishing for tunas, mostly in longline fisheries. Retention, where permitted, is for domestic

consumption and international trade. Mako shark fins and meat are traded, however new austerity regulations in market states

have seen market declines in the fin trade e.g. volumes at about half of post-2003 levels.

Comments on technical aspects relative to management, trade and implementation

LIKELY EFFECTIVENESS FOR CONSERVATION

A CITES Appendix II listing, if implemented effectively, could act as a complementary measure for regulations implemented by fisheries management authorities.

The Expert Panel noted that previous shark listing decisions have taken some time to implement, with a lag of three or more years in preparing NDFs and the collection and transmission of trade data to the CITES Secretariat.

Administrations are also having to implement new procedures to provide and manage 'Introduction from

the Sea' certifications, to permit the landing of CITES listed species from high-seas fisheries. If these implementation hurdles can be overcome, a CITES Appendix II listing would be expected to result in better monitoring and reporting of catches entering international trade, that could enable enhanced assessments of stock status.

It should be noted that States' abilities to develop NDFs for highly migratory species is further limited in the absence of regional and global assessments, and that cargo separation

would be required to ensure that the product consigned with CITES export certification could be reconciled against certificates.

Under conditions that are currently in place, an Appendix II listing may also result in:

- trade in the species and its products being required to cease;
- trade continuing without proper CITES documentation (i.e. illegal trade); and/or
- trade continuing with inadequate CITES NDFs.