



**HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**

**HSI Report to the Eleventh meeting of the
Ecologically Related Species Working Group
Tokyo, Japan 3-6 March 2015**

Humane Society International (HSI) is pleased to provide the following report of recent activities since ERSWG10 in August 2013. HSI is represented at the CCSBT ERSWG by its Australian office.

HSI has been working both internationally and in Australia on ecologically related species issues. The following is a brief report of our recent activities, from our Australian office and internationally:

Internationally

- Strongly advocated at every opportunity for the necessity that appropriate best-practice line weighting regimes be recognised as the mandatory backbone of ERS mitigation for pelagic longline fisheries, rather than sub-optimal optional use as per measures now adopted in other tuna RFMOs.
- Participated in Compliance Committee and Extended Commission meetings of CCSBT 20 in October 2013 and CCSBT 21 in October 2014 and the CCSBT Seabird Mitigation Measures Technical Working Group (SMMTWG) in November 2014.
- Continue to point out that increasing quotas for longline fisheries as TACs will result in more seabirds being killed for as long as CCSBT fails to adopt and ensure compliance with effective mitigation measures.
- Participated in the 32nd and 33rd meetings of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), in Hobart, Australia where a comprehensive scientific observer programme, and reporting requirements that are complied with, is allowing ERS measures to be relaxed while still delivering near-zero seabird bycatch with a high degree of confidence.
- Participated in meetings of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) where we serve on the International Review Panel.
- Continued to promote our tuna bycatch compendium of conservation and management measures, a joint NGO initiative to assist tuna RFMOs in managing and addressing the full suite of ERS bycatch issues (ERSWG10 Inf Doc 9).
- Participated in the ACAP Advisory Committee meeting as well as the Population and Conservation Status Working Group and Seabird Bycatch Working Group in Uruguay in September 2014, providing technical input.
- Participated in the 11th Conference of Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species in Quito, Ecuador in November 2014 where 21 shark and ray species were included in the CMS Appendices and where several key resolutions including one supporting consideration of social biology in conservation and another aimed at addressing marine debris were concluded.
- Continued to participate in artisanal fisheries seabird bycatch mitigation through the development of practical solutions and provision of ongoing advice to fishers and NGOs working in the region in Ecuador in September 2014.
- Collaborated with the governments of Brazil, Colombia, Senegal, India and the United States on regional workshops on implementation of the CITES



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shark and ray listings (from the March 2013 CITES CoP16) in advance of the September 2014 implementation deadline.

- Participated in meetings of the UNs Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ) in April and June 2014 and January 2015. Our aim is to secure a Working Group recommendation to the UNGA to initiate negotiation of a new UNCLOS implementing agreement aimed at delivering the necessary commitment and coordination to ensure sectoral management bodies, including RFMOs like CCSBT, effectively contribute to delivering the biodiversity conservation commitments of the international community.
- Following advocacy by HSI, in August 2013 India's Ministry of Environment and Forest brought into force a "fins naturally attached" policy, effectively prohibiting shark finning India.
- Following advocacy by HSI and others, in September 2013, the Hong Kong government announced that it will not serve shark fins at any official functions and will instruct governmental employees not to consume shark fins at external functions as well.
- Following international campaign efforts Air Mexico and Eva Air both stopped shipping shark fin on both passenger and cargo flights, and Hilton Worldwide announced that, from 1st April 2014, they would stop serving shark fin dishes and accepting new orders for shark fins.
- Coordinated and acted as the convenor of two intersessional workshops of the International Whaling Commission on the effects of marine debris on cetaceans – the first in May 2013 and the second in August 2014 on the 'Mitigation and Management of the Threats Posed by Marine Debris to Cetaceans'.

United States

- Continue to serve on the General Advisory Committee to the US government for the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.
- Following our advocacy the sale of shark fins was banned in the states of Maryland, Delaware and New York, and the California ban was maintained in spite of legal challenges.
- The U.S. government examined and then decided not to pre-empt shark fin ban bills in multiple states.
- Continue to serve on federally mandated panels charged with enacting measures to reduce excessive fishery-related mortality for a variety of species including false killer whales, humpbacks, right whales, various dolphin species, pilot whales and harbor porpoise.

Australia

- As a member of Australia's threat abatement team HSI has been instrumental in developing seabird mitigation requirements for Australian fisheries and provided comment on the revised version of the threat abatement plan published in August 2014 (*Threat Abatement Plan 2014 for the incidental catch (or bycatch) of seabirds during oceanic longline fishing operations*). HSI continues to serve on the threat abatement team.
- Continued to comment on the ongoing reform of federal environmental legislation, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, relevant particularly as a number of threatened seabird species are impacted by fisheries.
- Commented on a number of fisheries assessments under federal environmental legislation which impact upon ERS.



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- Continue to lobby Australian fishing industry and Government for the need to address unacceptably high incidences of albatross mortality in the SE Australian trawl fishery and monitor mitigation measures put in place.
- Actively engaged in the campaign to stop the supertrawler FV Margiris from fishing in Australian waters due to concerns with bycatch including threatened seabirds and cetaceans.

Humane Society International
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