



CCSBT-ERSTech/2504/08

**Consideration for developing a list of non-target shark species  
to be covered by the ERS and Bycatch Action Plan  
(ERSTech Agenda Item 3)**

## 1. Purpose

This paper provides information for Members to consider the ERSWG 15 Workplan item “Develop a list of non-target shark species to be covered by the ERS and Bycatch Action Plan” (ERS Bycatch Plan).

The “list of non-target shark species” discussed here will be a direct input to the “Scope” section of the ERS Bycatch Plan for the CCSBT 32’s consideration.

## 2. Background

In 2024, the [15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ecologically Related Species Working Group](#) (ERSWG 15) agreed to recommend that CCSBT 32 (in 2025) adopt the draft ERS Bycatch Plan, which is shown in **Attachment A** of this paper.

This draft ERS Bycatch Plan was developed following the Action Plan of the “[Strategic Plan for the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna 2023 – 2028](#)” (hereinafter “Strategic Plan”), which includes an implementation plan of recommendations from the [2021 CCSBT Performance Review](#). A detailed background of the ERS Bycatch Plan was summarised in [CCSBT-ERS/2406/07](#).

At the ERSWG 15, Members noted that the ERS Bycatch Plan does not cover seabirds and should be seen as complementary to the already agreed [Multi-Year Seabird Strategy](#). In addition, in line with one of the proposed actions of the plan, Members committed to developing a list of non-target shark species to be covered by this plan (as specified in the ERSWG’s workplan for 2025 below).

Activity	Approximate Period	Resource
Develop a list of non-target shark species to be covered by the ERS and Bycatch Action Plan.	ERS Tech 2025	Members

To prepare the discussion on this task, Members were requested to provide this information to the Secretariat in time for consideration at the 2025 ERSTech meeting.

## 3. Active “list of shark species” currently used within CCSBT

Currently, Members submit data and information related to shark species bycatch to CCSBT through the [ERSWG Data Exchange](#) (EDE) and the ERSWG Annual Report.

The EDE requires CCSBT Members to provide ERS data following the agreed format for **Blue Shark, Shortfin Mako Shark, Porbeagle Shark and Other Sharks** (Table 3 of the EDE requirements, shown in **Attachment B** of this paper).

Although [the template for the ERSWG Annual Report](#) does not specify the list of shark species that should be reported, Members generally provide information in their annual report consistent with the EDE.

Based on the current practice, [Table 3 of the EDE requirements \(Attachment B\)](#) is the only “list of shark species” that is currently active within CCSBT.

#### 4. Previous discussions on “CCSBT relevant shark species”

In 2017, ERSWG 12 considered paper [CCSBT-ERS/1703/Info15](#), which provided an update of the status of sharks and rays under CMS-Sharks<sup>1</sup>. CMS-Sharks suggested that there were twelve (12) species that CMS-Sharks considered to be of relevance to the CCSBT based on the distribution of those species (**Attachment C**).

ERSWG 12 agreed that Members would be requested to provide information about the shark species caught in their fishing operations to the Secretariat (i.e. in shots in which SBT was targeted or caught by CCSBT authorised vessels), as specified in the ERSWG 12 workplan below.

Activity	Approximate Period	Resource
Provide details to the Secretariat on which of the 12 “CCSBT Relevant” sharks species in Table 2 of paper CSBT-ERS/1703/Info15 have been caught by the Member’s SBT fishery (i.e. in shots in which SBT was targeted or caught by CCSBT authorised vessels). Members may choose whether to provide presence/absence information or catch quantities. It is suggested that data be provided per year for at least the last 3 years. The Secretariat will compile this information for presentation to ERSWG 13.	3 months before ERSWG 13 (for the information provided to the Secretariat)	All Members and Secretariat

At the [ERSWG 13](#) in 2019, the Secretariat presented paper [CCSBT-ERS/1905/06](#) on shark species of relevance to the CCSBT, which summarised the information provided by Members and ERSWG Data Exchange following the ERSWG 12 workplan. The paper noted that all but 2 of the 12 species considered CCSBT relevant by CMS-Sharks are present in the SBT fishery, some were caught in substantial numbers while others were caught infrequently. Additional species were also identified as present in the SBT fishery using EDE data.

ERSWG 13 discussed what species should be considered as CCSBT relevant, the degree of monitoring required and whether to report all CCSBT relevant species to the EDE. It was noted that the three most commonly caught species (blue shark, shortfin mako shark and porbeagle shark) are already required to be reported as part of the EDE The ERSWG did not reach a consensus to expand the list of shark species in the EDE reporting template.

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<sup>1</sup> The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks

## **5. CCSBT's current regime on bycatch shark species**

The CCSBT's current monitoring, reporting and management regime for shark species is summarised in Sections 2 and 3 of the draft ERS Bycatch Plan (**Attachment A**).

The latest advice from the ERSWG on sharks is shown in paragraph 75 of the ERSWG 15 report:

*“75. The meeting agreed that there were no specific or additional concerns about shark bycatch that warranted action by ERSWG 15. However, Members noted that significant gaps in observer coverage may be impacting ERSWG's ability to assess the impact of SBT Fisheries on sharks.”*

## **6. Suggested “list of non-target shark species” to be covered by the ERS and Bycatch Action Plan**

Members were asked to provide their responses related to non-target shark species by Monday 24 March 2025 (2 weeks before the ERS Tech Meeting starts).

The Secretariat will compile the Members' responses and provide a draft “list of non-target shark species” for the ERSTech's consideration as early as possible after the due date for the Members' responses.

## **7. Action required**

Noting sections 2 to 5 of this paper, Members are invited to consider a draft “List of non-target shark species” to be covered by the ERS Bycatch Plan.

The agreed “List of non-target species” will be incorporated into the draft ERS Bycatch Plan for the EC32's consideration.

The Secretariat notes that this List of non-target shark species may require review and updates to the ERSWG Data Exchange requirements and the ERSWG Annual Report template.

**Prepared by the Secretariat**

## Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy

### 1. Introduction

CCSBT adopted the “[Strategic Plan for the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna 2023 – 2028](#)” (hereinafter “Strategic Plan”), which includes an implementation plan of recommendations from the [2021 CCSBT Performance Review](#).

The Strategic Plan specifies “*Addressing the impact of SBT fisheries on non-target species that belong to the same ecosystem, in particular seabirds*” as one of the key challenges of CCSBT, and also specifies “*strategies concerning stock rebuilding, allocation and ecologically related species*” as one of the items under “Management of SBT” that is a part of the Vision and Goals of the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan, in its Action Plan, also specifies that “*Noting the Multi-year Seabird Strategy adopted at ERSWG 14, develop an **Ecologically Related Species and Bycatch Action Plan** based on the recommendations from the Performance Review.*”

### 2. Current Monitoring and Reporting of ERS (non-seabird)

The main ERS data that Members are required to provide to the CCSBT are the data specified in the annual [ERSWG Data Exchange](#) (EDE), which must be provided by 31 July each year. Compliance with EDE requirements is monitored and reported on annually as part of the Secretariat paper to the Compliance Committee on *Members’ implementation of ERS measures and performance with respect to ERS*<sup>2</sup>. The Secretariat paper also includes a raised mortality estimate for each of the species groups defined in the EDE broken down by individual Member.

Members’ annual reports to the Compliance Committee and the Extended Commission (Annual CC/EC Report) are also required to include information on:

Whether the IPOA-seabirds<sup>3</sup>, IPOA-sharks<sup>4</sup> and the FAO Guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality have been implemented;

- Whether all current binding and recommendatory measures of ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC aimed at the protection of ERS from fishing are being complied with;
- Whether data is being collected and reported on ERS in accordance with the requirements of ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC; and
- The methods used to monitor compliance with bycatch mitigation measures, including the level of coverage and the type of information collected.

The Secretariat also reports on whether Members have provided this information as part of its *Members’ implementation of ERS measures and performance with respect to ERS* paper to the Compliance Committee.

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<sup>2</sup> The latest available report is [CCSBT-CC/2310/05](#).

<sup>3</sup> International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries.

<sup>4</sup> International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks.

### 3. Current Measures Relating to ERS (Non-Seabird)

#### *Binding Measures*

At its 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in October 2018, the CCSBT adopted the “[Resolution to Align CCSBT Ecologically Related Species measures with those of other tuna RFMOs](#)” (the “ERS Resolution”). In accordance paragraph 2 of the ERS Resolution, each Member and Cooperating Non-Member shall ensure that such vessels flying its flag and fishing for SBT in IOTC<sup>5</sup>, WCPFC<sup>6</sup> and ICCAT<sup>7</sup>’s Area of Competence comply with all ERS Measures in force in that Area of Competence (whether or not the Member or Cooperating Non-Member is a Member of the tuna RFMO in which the ERS Measures were adopted).

To ensure SBT vessels comply with the latest ERS measures, paragraph 6 of the ERS Resolution tasks the Secretariat to annually update the list of ERS Measures contained in Annex I of the Resolution before the annual EC meeting according to any decisions taken on ERS at the annual meetings of the ICCAT, IOTC, and WCPFC.

#### *Voluntary Measures*

In accordance with CCSBT’s [Recommendation to Mitigate the Impact on Ecologically Related Species of Fishing for Southern Bluefin Tuna](#), Members will, to the extent possible, implement the International Plan of Action for Reducing Incidental Catches of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries (IPOA-Seabirds), the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks), and the FAO Guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations (FAO-Sea turtles), if they have not already done so.

This recommendation also states that the EC and/or its subsidiary bodies as appropriate will undertake an assessment of the risks to ERS posed by fishing for SBT. The EC will consider how these risks are mitigated by the adoption of the “*Resolution to Align CCSBT Ecologically Related Species measures with those of other tuna RFMOs*”, and will consider whether any additional measures to mitigate risk are required. The Seabird Strategy includes a component to assess the risk to seabirds, however, there is no planned review to look at non-seabird ERS risks.

### 4. Current Status of (Non-Seabird) ERS

ERS catch information collected as part of the EDE represents only a subset of the total captures of those species and therefore cannot be used in isolation to determine the overall status of the stock or species. CCSBT’s ERS bycatch information can potentially highlight year to year trends from individual Member fleets but even this level of analysis is problematic given the recent gaps in observer data that arose during the pandemic.

CCSBT typically relies on the stock status assessments of third parties (e.g. other tuna RFMOs, ACAP, ABNJ, etc) for ERS. This approach is not unique to CCSBT. For example, the IOTC provides its Members with the IUCN threat status for marine turtles given that it has not undertaken its own assessment.

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<sup>5</sup> Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

<sup>6</sup> Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean

<sup>7</sup> International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

### ***Scope:***

The Bycatch Action Plan applies to sea turtles, marine mammals and non-target shark species. The non-target shark species to which the Bycatch Action Plan applies are listed in ...[to be developed]. The Bycatch Action Plan does not apply to other shark species. The Bycatch Action Plan does not apply to seabirds, which are covered under the complementary Multi-Year Seabird Strategy.

The Bycatch Action Plan will be implemented in collaboration with other tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and other relevant organisations and institutions.

### **Overall objective**

This Bycatch Action Plan's overall objective is to reduce or eliminate bycatch of ERS including sea turtles, marine mammals, and non-target sharks, such that SBT fisheries do not impose a significant adverse impact on these species.

### **Specific objectives**

To achieve the overall objective, the following specific objectives have been developed:

#### ***Objective 1: Information objective***

*CCSBT's assessment of the impacts of SBT fisheries on ERS is based on the best available information, includes assessment of uncertainty, and highlights information gaps.*

#### ***Objective 2: Governance objective***

*CCSBT's governance arrangements ensure it effectively manages the impacts of SBT fisheries on ERS.*

#### ***Objective 3: Effectiveness objective***

*To provide advice, developed in collaboration with industry and other relevant organisations and institutions, on bycatch mitigation technologies and techniques, which are practical, cost-effective and safe.*

#### ***Objective 4: Education & Outreach***

*To enhance education and outreach programs highlighting the importance of mitigating ERS interactions while fishing, and advocating effective implementation of mitigation measures.*

### **Actions to achieve the specific objectives**

The following actions will be undertaken against each of the specific objectives.

### Actions to Achieve the Specific Objectives of the Plan

			Responsibility		Short Term 20242025		Medium Term 20262027		Long Term 2028++		
(A) Information Objective											
1 Data Collection and Information Sharing											
i.	Confirm species/species groups relevant to Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) fisheries to be covered by this Bycatch Action Plan.				ERSWG		●		●		
ii.	Continue and improve ERSWG Data Exchange reporting.				Members		Ongoing				
iii.	Secretariat continues to submit its annual report on Members’ implementation of ERS measures and performance with respect to ERS				Secretariat		Ongoing				
iv.	Secretariat to provide recent assessments of relevant bycatch species as information papers at future ERSWG meetings.				Secretariat				●		
v.	Have a standing agenda item at ERSWG on Climate Change.				ERSWG				●		
2 Collaboration											
i	Collaborate with other RFMOs on their activities related to the forecasting of the likely impacts of climate change on tuna ecosystems, SBT, ERS, and their productivity, distribution, and resilience. (PR2021-06)				Secretariat		Ongoing				
ii	Secretariat to share the Summary of Key Points from ERSWG meetings with other tRFMOs following on the agreed template (PR2021-06)				Secretariat		●		●		

		Responsibility	Short Term 2024	2025	Medium Term 2026	2027	Long Term 2028++
<b>(B) Governance Objective</b>							
<b>3 Commission Instruments</b>							
i	Periodic review of this Action Plan to ensure effectiveness. (PR2021-20)	ERSWG					●
ii	Assess whether Convention should be amended to clarify the role and mandate of CCSBT with regards to non-target species. (PR2021-03)	EC					●
<b>(C) Effectiveness Objective</b>							
<b>4 Review of Existing Measures</b>							
i	Advocate for strengthened CMMs on ERS at IOTC, ICCAT, and WCPFC. (PR2021-04)	Members	Ongoing				
ii.	ERSWG to consider whether the risks to ERS are sufficiently mitigated by the adoption of the “Resolution to Align CCSBT Ecologically Related Species measures with those of other tuna RFMOs”, and provide advice to EC on whether any additional actions are required.	ERSWG	●		●		●
<b>5 Implementation</b>							
i	Explore the potential for an incentivised mechanism to combat an increase in bycatch and address the impact of fisheries on living marine resources and the ecosystem. (PR2021-27)	ERSWG					●

[Note] Yellow highlight in the table above are made by the Secretariat for this paper’s purpose.



## ERSWG Data Exchange (Extract)

Table 3: Minimum taxonomic level at which information should be reported in Table 2 (providing that such taxonomic detail is available)<sup>8</sup>. Information should be provided to species level where this is practical. Reporting of any of the following species and/or groups within table 2 should include an appropriate stratification of the data.

Species/Species Group	Comments
Sharks	
Blue Shark	
Shortfin Mako Shark	
Porbeagle	
Other sharks	
Turtles	For sea turtles, the number of species is small (approximately 7), so it is feasible to report data by stratum for each species.
Species specific	<i>Data should be provided separately for each species</i>
Seabirds	For seabirds, there are a large number of species and it is often difficult to separately identify species by pictures only. Reporting of seabird data by species would contain identification errors.
Large albatrosses	<i>Including: Wandering, Tristan, New Zealand, Antipodean, Southern Royal, and Northern Royal</i>
Dark coloured albatrosses	<i>Including: Sooty and Light-mantled</i>
Other albatrosses	<i>Including: Black-browed, Campbell, Grey-headed, Atlantic yellow-nosed, Indian yellow-nosed, Buller's, Shy, Salvin's, Chatham and White-capped</i>
Giant petrels	<i>Including: White-chinned petrel, Grey petrel, Flesh-footed shearwater etc.</i>
Other seabirds	<i>Including: Skua etc.</i>

[Note] Red highlights in the table above are made by the Secretariat for this paper's purpose.

<sup>8</sup> The minimum taxonomic level will be subject to improvement (become more species specific) in future. Furthermore the ERSWG might recommend specific species to be reported based on risk assessments or based on advice it may seek from organisations with the necessary expertise.

**Extract of CCSBT-ERS/1703/Info15:**  
**Information about the conservation of shark and ray species under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (UNEP/CMS) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU)**

**Table 2: Shark and ray species that are included in CMS Appendices and Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU**

Family	Species	CMS Appendix I	CMS Appendix II	Sharks- MOU Annex I	CCSBT relevant <sup>9</sup>
Squalidae	<i>Squalus acanthias</i> <sup>10</sup>		x	x	
Rhincodontidae	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>		x	x	x
Lamnidae	<i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Isurus paucus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Lamna nasus</i>		x	x	x
Alopiidae	<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Alopias vulpinus</i>		x	x	x
Cetorhinidae	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	x	x	x	x
Carcharhinidae	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>		x	x	x
Sphyrnidae	<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>		x	x	
Pristidae	<i>Anoxypristis cuspidata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis clavata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis pectinata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis zijsron</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis pristis</i>	x	x	x	
Myliobatidae	<i>Manta alfredi</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Manta birostris</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>Mobula mobular</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula japanica</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula thurstoni</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula tarapacana</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula eregoodootenkee</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula kuhlii</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula hypostoma</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula rochebrunei</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula munkiana</i>	x	x	x	

[Note] Red highlights in the table above are made by the Secretariat for this paper's purpose.

<sup>9</sup> Relevance for CCSBT was based on the occurrence of the species in the CCSBT convention area in accordance with IUCN Red List distribution maps.

<sup>10</sup> Northern hemisphere populations