Commission for the Conservation of
Southern Bluefin Tuna

みなみまぐろ保存委員会

CCSBT–ERS/2603/09 (Rev.1)

Progress on the Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy
(ERSWG Agenda item 5.2.3 and 5.3)

1. Introduction

In 2025, following the Action Plan of the CCSBT Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2028, the Extended Commission (EC) adopted the Ecologically Related Species Bycatch Strategy (hereinafter "ERS Bycatch Strategy"), which focus on Ecologically Related Species (ERS) other than seabirds.

2. Scope and Objectives of the ERS Bycatch Strategy

The ERS Bycatch Strategy defines its scope as "*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 Table 1. 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.*"

Table 1. List of non-target shark species

Species
Prionace glauca (Blue shark)
Isurus oxyrinchus (Shortfin mako shark)
Lamna nasus (Porbeagle shark)

In addition, the ERS Bycatch Strategy set out its Objectives as below:

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.

3. Proposed actions by ERSWG 16 on the ERS Bycatch Strategy

The ERS Bycatch Strategy includes the "Actions to Achieve the Specific Objectives of the Plan", which specify the action items, responsibilities and the timing for implementation.

The Secretariat provided its preliminary assessments/comments on the progress and suggested actions, in **Attachment A**, for the ERSWG 16's consideration.

It is proposed for ERSWG 16:

(1) To review the Secretariat's initial comments and recommendations for each action in **Attachment A** of this paper and, when necessary, to consider updates to actions and timelines of the ERS Bycatch Strategy:

(2) To review the listed recent assessments for shark species by other tuna RFMOs in **Attachment B** of this paper to determine if Table 1 of the ERS Bycatch Strategy (list of non-target shark species to which this Strategy applies) needs to be updated:

(3) Where appropriate, reflect required actions into the ERSWG work program; and

(4) Where appropriate, refer actions to other CCSBT subsidiary bodies.

Prepared by the Secretariat

Attachment A

Actions to Achieve the Specific Objectives of the Plan (with Secretariat's initial comments and recommendations)

		Responsibility	Short Term 2024	Short Term 2025	Medium Term 2026	Medium Term 2027	Long Term 2028++	Secretariat's initial comments and recommendations
(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**	●	●				Completed at ERS Tech 2025.
ii.	Continue and improve ERSWG Data Exchange reporting.	**Members**	**Ongoing**					Ongoing, and continue the current practice.
iii.	Secretariat continues to submit its annual report on Members' implementation of ERS measures and performance with respect to ERS	**Secretariat**	**Ongoing**					Ongoing, and continue the current practice.
iv.	Secretariat to provide recent assessments of relevant bycatch species as information papers at future ERSWG meetings.	**Secretariat**			●		●	Recent assessments of shark species by ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC are listed in **Attachment B** of this paper.
v.	Have a standing agenda item at ERSWG on Climate Change.	**ERSWG**			●		●	A standing Agenda item on Climate Change is now included in the ERSWG Agenda. Members are encouraged to submit papers for this Agenda item for future ERSWG meetings.
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**					Ongoing. EC 32 confirmed CCSBT representatives will attend meetings of BBNJ, joint tRFMO meetings (MSE, stock assessment, EM Standard, EAFM) and FAO-COFI in 2026.

		Responsibility	Short Term		Medium Term		Long Term	Secretariat's initial comments
ii	Secretariat to share the Summary of Key Points from ERSWG meetings with other tRFMOs following on the agreed template (PR2021-06)	**Secretariat**	●		●		●	Completed in 2024 and continues the current practice.
(B) Governance Objective								
3 Commission Instruments								
i	Periodic review of this Action Plan to ensure effectiveness. (PR2021-20)	**ERSWG**					●	The Secretariat suggests reviewing this Action Plan at ERSWG 17 as part of the progress assessment and the update of this Strategy as a whole.
ii	Assess whether Convention should be amended to clarify the role and mandate of CCSBT with regards to non-target species. (PR2021-03)	**EC**					●	This item will be a part of EC's discussion under the CCSBT Strategic Plan.
(C) Effectiveness Objective								
4 Review of Existing Measures								
i	Advocate for strengthened CMMs on ERS at IOTC, ICCAT, and WCPFC. (PR2021-04)	**Members**	**Ongoing**					Ongoing, and continue the current practice.
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**	●		●		●	ERSWG 16 will consider the outcomes from CCSBT SEFRA in line with the Multi-Year Seabird Strategy. Shark species and other ERS matters will be considered under Agenda items 5.2 and 5.3.
5 Implementation								
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**					●	This item could be discussed at ERSWG 17, based on the outcomes of the above sections.

Attachment B

List of Recent Assessments by ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC on Bycatch Shark Species

1. Background

Item 1(iv) of the ERS Bycatch Strategy Action Plan specifies that, in 2026, the Secretariat "*to provide recent assessments of relevant bycatch species as information papers at future ERSWG meetings*".

At ERSTech2025, Members discussed a list of non-target shark species to be covered by the ERS Bycatch Strategy. While three species (Blue shark, Shortfin mako shark and Porbeagle shark) were considered the default species to which the Bycatch Action Plan applies, Members also reviewed Table 2 of CCSBT-ERS/1703/Info15, which had been proposed by UNEP-CMS as possible CCSBT-relevant shark species, and one Member suggested considering all these species as non-target shark species under the ERS Bycatch Strategy. ERSTech2025 noted that "*Members will facilitate closer engagement between CCSBT and other tuna RFMOs, especially by ensuring analyses and assessments from other tuna RFMOs are available for discussion by ERSWG, starting in 2026*".

In recent three years (2022-2024), some bycatch mortalities of "Other sharks" have been reported by Members, and no mortalities of other ERS (including turtles, whales or marine mammals) have been reported through the ERSWG Data Exchange[1].

Taking these points into account, it would be appropriate to start this practice with the Shark species reviewed at ERSTech2025.

2. Recent Assessments of Relevant Bycatch Species

Based on the above background, the Secretariat compiled recent assessment results of relevant bycatch species by other tuna RFMOs.

Within the table below, yellow-highlighted species are those to which the ERS Bycatch Strategy applies.

Input from Members is welcome regarding species that should be added to this table, and the more appropriate documents for each species.

No.	Species	ICCAT	IOTC	WCPFC
1	*Prionace glauca* (Blue shark)	2023 ICCAT Blue Shark Stock Assessment	IOTC-2025-WPEB21AS-30_BlueSharkAssessment_SS3.pdf	~~SC17-SA-WP-03~~ WCPFC-SC17-2021/SA-WP-03
2	*Rhincodon typus* (Whale shark)	-	IOTC-2011-WPEB07-INF19.pdf	-
3	*Carcharodon carcharias* (Great white shark)	-	-	-
4	*Isurus oxyrinchus* (Shortfin mako shark)	Report of the 2025 Shortfin Mako Shark Stock Assessment Meeting	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES20_SMAE.pdf	SC18-SA-WP-02

[1] See Attachment 3 of CCSBT-CC/2510/05 (Rev.2) - Annual Report on Members' implementation of ERS measures and performance with respect to ERS.

5	*Isurus paucus* (Longfin mako shark)	-	-	-
6	*Lamna nasus* (Porbeagle shark)	ICES-ICCAT Benchmark Workshop Report (2022)	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES24_PORE.pdf	~~SC13-SA-WP-12_rev1~~ WCPFC-SC13-2017/SA-WP-12(rev. 2)
7	*Alopias pelagicus* (Pelagic thresher shark)	-	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES23_PTHE.pdf	-
8	*Alopias superciliosus* (Bigeye thresher shark)	-	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES22_BTHE.pdf	SC13-SA-WP-11
9	*Alopias vulpinus* (Common thresher shark)	-	-	-
10	*Cetorhinus maximus* (Basking shark)	-	-	-
11	*Carcharhinus falciformis* (Silky shark)	-	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES21_FALE.pdf	SC20-SA-WP-04
12	*Sphyrna lewini* (Scalloped hammerhead)	-	IOTC-2025-SC28-ES19_SPLE.pdf	-
13	*Manta birostris* (Manta ray)	-	-	-
14	*Carcharhinus longimanus* (Oceanic whitetip shark)	-	-	WCPFC-SC21-2025/SA-WP-08-Rev1