

14th Annual Meeting of the European Elasmobranch Association

10-12 November 2010
Galway, Ireland



RESOLUTION REGARDING THE EU BAN ON SHARK FINNING

Whereas the European Union (EU) is a leading contributor to the global trade in shark fins;

Whereas the effectiveness of the EU shark finning ban is undermined by the associated regulation which allows fishermen to land shark fins and carcasses separately in different ports and grants the highest fin-to-carcass weight ratio in the world (5% of whole weight);

Whereas shark scientists at a 2006 European technical workshop reviewed available data regarding EU shark fisheries and recommended improving the effectiveness of the finning ban by replacing the fin-to-carcass ratio with a requirement that sharks be landed with fins naturally attached;

Whereas the International Union for Conservation of Nature, at the 2008 World Conservation Congress, adopted a global policy against shark finning that calls on countries to require that sharks be landed only if their fins are naturally attached to their bodies (allowing for partial detachment of fins to permit efficient storage and species identification);

Whereas a fins-naturally-attached requirement is the most reliable and easily enforceable strategy for preventing finning and also stands to enhance the collection of species-specific catch data which are key for population assessment and management;

Whereas the European Commission pledged in February 2009 to strengthen the EU finning regulation and is expected to soon consult the public regarding a range of options to do so;

Therefore be it resolved that the European Elasmobranch Association urges the European Commission to strengthen the EU shark finning ban by proposing and promoting, without further delay, a prohibition on removal of shark fins at sea for all EU vessels and waters.

Adopted by the EEA Annual General Meeting