

14th Annual Meeting of the European Elasmobranch Association

10-12 November 2010
Galway, Ireland



RESOLUTION REGARDING GREENLAND SHARKS

Whereas the Greenland shark (*Somniosus microcephalus*) is a large shark thought to be extremely long-lived and slow-growing and therefore exceptionally vulnerable to overfishing;

Whereas the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies Greenland sharks as Near Threatened based on limiting life history characteristics and possible past population declines from targeted fishing in Norway, Iceland, and Greenland for liver oil;

Whereas the meat of Greenland shark is still considered a delicacy in Greenland and Iceland;

Whereas the Greenland shark is increasingly being promoted, particularly by businesses in Greenland, for high-fashion leather, shark fin soup, biofuel, and sport-fishing;

Whereas additional fishing mortality on Greenland sharks comes from bycatch in mixed trawl, gillnet and trap fisheries;

Whereas much remains unknown about the biology as well as past and current catches of Greenland sharks;

Whereas Greenland sharks would be protected based on their vulnerability under the European Commission's proposal to set 2011 and 2012 deep-sea shark catches at zero, but the species is unregulated in Iceland, Greenland and Norway;

Therefore be it resolved that the European Elasmobranch Association (EEA) urges the governments of Greenland, Iceland, and Norway to ensure improved catch monitoring and precautionary catch limits for Greenland sharks; the EEA further urges the European Commission to promote the study and conservation of Greenland sharks through the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations governing the North Atlantic.

Adopted by the EEA Annual General Meeting