

November 9, 2016

Morley Knight  
Regional Director General, Maritimes Region  
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans  
1 Challenger Drive  
Dartmouth, NS  
B2Y 4A2



Dear Morley Knight:

Based on our concern over the lack of science-based fishing quotas and poor compliance with best practices that leave inherently vulnerable Atlantic sharks in a precarious state, we urge Canada to help ensure that 2016 meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) results in more responsible shark fisheries management.

**Specifically, we urge Canada to assist other Parties in establishing at this year's ICCAT meeting:**

- **A prohibition on removing shark fins at sea, and**
- **Precautionary catch limits for blue sharks.**

We were delighted in September when Canada finally changed its position and helped the US, EU, Norway and Cuba to secure a requirement that sharks be landed with fins naturally attached (the best practice for finning ban enforcement) under the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO). We are eager for Canada to implement its new national "fins-attached" policy, including through co-sponsorship and promotion of the proposal **ban on at-sea shark fin removal** at ICCAT. Such a ban would bolster efforts to prevent this wasteful practice throughout the Atlantic and set a key precedent for the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

We are disappointed that ICCAT has yet to establish limits for heavily fished **blue sharks** (*Prionace glauca*). We maintain that immediate blue shark landings caps are supported by scientific advice from the Standing Committee for Research and Statistics (SCRS), the precautionary approach, and the benefits of consistent action across the Convention Area. We urge Canada to work with other ICCAT Parties to propose and secure blue shark limits at levels at or below recent landings, as a matter of priority.

We are hopeful that -- with Canada's help -- ICCAT will soon take these groundbreaking conservation steps.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Schleit  
Senior Campaign Coordinator  
Ecology Action Centre

Ali Hood  
Director of Conservation  
Shark Trust

Ania Budziak  
Associate Director, Programs  
Project AWARE

Sonja Fordham  
President  
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