

## UN World Oceans Day 2021

# SEVEN-POINT-STRATEGY FOR HEALTHY OCEANS

**2021 is a fateful year for marine protection: The European Union has announced its Green Deal and is presently working on its Biodiversity Strategy. In addition, crucial conferences on biodiversity and fisheries will be held in 2021. The EU is now setting course, how serious it is taking the conservation of marine biodiversity. We are calling on the EU to take the following urgent measures:**

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| <b>1</b> | <b>Stop harmful fisheries subsidies</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EU needs to take a strong and clear position during this year’s WTO negotiations, in order to achieve a global ban of harmful fisheries subsidies before end of 2021.</li> <li>• Should a ban not be achieved at WTO-level, the EU at least needs to ban all harmful subsidies for its own fishing fleet promptly, e.g., for fuel, vessel construction &amp; expansion of the fleet and its fishing capacities, as well as for harmful fishing methods.</li> <li>• Only subsidies for selective fishing gear, for the reduction of bycatch, and for sustainable small scale coastal fisheries should be granted by the EU to-be.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Transformation of EU industrial Fisheries into ecosystem-compatible Fisheries</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total ban for highly destructive fishing methods, such as bottom trawling, deep sea fisheries below 400 m, super trawlers, longlines with shark fishing wires</li> <li>• Strict requirements for using Fish Aggregating Device (related standards for FAD Management can be provided)</li> <li>• Minimization of bycatch via technical innovations and bycatch reduction strategies, e.g., by time and area closures</li> <li>• Ecologically sustainable fishing quotas, which enable an enduring and qualitative recovery of fish stocks – in line with the precautionary principle, to which the EU is bound by Article 191 of its Treaty</li> </ul>   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Immediate retention ban for the endangered mako shark</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since November 2019, mako sharks are listed in CITES Appendix II, which makes a Non-Detriment-Finding for introduction from the Sea mandatory. In December 2020, the CITES Scientific Review Group passed a Negative Opinion for the North Atlantic of mako sharks<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>• Since February 2021, Spain and Portugal have banned landing of mako sharks from high sea in their ports, while makos officially caught in EEZ are still being landed.</li> <li>• Already since 2017 the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) of the Fisheries Convention ICCAT is recommending a full retention ban for makos in the North Atlantic<sup>2</sup>. Nevertheless, the EU Commission (DG Mare) is still aiming a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 500 t for the North Atlantic (288 t of which for the EU fleet).</li> <li>• We therefore call on the EU to finally support at the crucial ICCAT meetings in July and November 2021 a full retention ban for the North Atlantic and a maximum TAC of 2001 t in the South Atlantic, in line with the scientific advice.</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>4</b></p> | <p><b>Complete shark-finning ban</b></p> <p>(by Revision of EU Council Regulation 605/2013)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2003, the EU banned shark finning by its Council Regulation (EC) 1185/2003. Since 2013, sharks must be only landed with their fins naturally attached to allow controls of number and species of landed animals. Nevertheless, until today the EU is among the biggest exporters of fins and a major transit hub for the global fin trade.</li> <li>• Loopholes in Council Regulation (EC) 605/2013 must be closed, controls must be improved, both on board (e.g., by 100% observer coverage on industrial fishing vessels, fleet-wide EMS) and in ports (check of all landings).</li> <li>• Amendments of 605/2013, securing such improved monitoring, are therefore overdue. Such amendments should a) prohibit the import, transit, and export of fins other than if naturally attached to the animal's body and b) also cover other Elasmobranchs, such as rays.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>5</b></p> | <p><b>Strong commitment against commercial hunting of whales &amp; small cetaceans</b></p>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the Moratorium on commercial whaling by the International Whaling Commission Norway<sup>3</sup> and Iceland are killing about 600 large whales per year. Although Iceland's whaling is temporarily on hold since 2019, it can be resumed at any time.</li> <li>• About 100,000 small cetaceans are annually killed in directed hunts around the world, mainly for food or as bait in shark fisheries<sup>4</sup>.</li> <li>• In 2021, like-minded IWC Member States are already coordinating their initiatives for the IWC meeting in October 2022. We call on the EU to initiate a Resolution against commercial whaling and to engage against the directed hunt on small cetaceans.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>6</b></p> | <p><b>Expansion of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the context of the CBD Conference in October 2021 and for the elaborateness of its Biodiversity Strategy the EU needs to insist on the expansion of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) achieving a coverage of 30 percent of oceans as fully or highly protected, in accordance with categories a) and b) of the UN and IUCN MPA Guide<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>• In MPAs, extractive or destructive activities must not be allowed (No-Take-Zones).</li> <li>• MPAs must be better connected (corridors) and should reflect and cover the diversity of marine ecosystems.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>7</b></p> | <p><b>Export ban for plastic waste</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the EU since 1 January 2021 has reduced its exports of plastic waste in accordance with the Basel Convention, this is insufficient.</li> <li>• Instead of exports of recyclable plastic waste, the EU needs to pass a full export ban – as postulated by e.g., the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development.</li> </ul>   |

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<sup>1</sup> [https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/a30daa66-704d-4160-a7fe-81948f22944b/92\\_summary\\_SRG.pdf](https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/a30daa66-704d-4160-a7fe-81948f22944b/92_summary_SRG.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sharkproject.org/presse/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.prowildlife.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Whaling-in-Norway\\_Briefing\\_March-2021\\_PW\\_final.pdf](https://www.prowildlife.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Whaling-in-Norway_Briefing_March-2021_PW_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.prowildlife.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/18-Small-Cetaceans-Report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [https://wdpa.s3.amazonaws.com/MPA\\_guide/MPAs\\_English\\_4pp.pdf](https://wdpa.s3.amazonaws.com/MPA_guide/MPAs_English_4pp.pdf)