

# Shortfin Mako Sharks

*If you catch 'em alive, let 'em live.*

**Overfishing is occurring** on the population of shortfin mako sharks in the North Atlantic Ocean. This means that shortfin mako sharks are being harvested at a rate that could be damaging to the long-term sustainability of the population. If you catch a mako that is in good condition, releasing it alive reduces the number of sharks that are removed from the population by fishing. **By releasing shortfin makos, you can help maintain a healthy population for future generations.**

## Let's Take the Lead

While there is no new legal requirement for shortfin mako sharks, NMFS is asking for your help. You can help fight overfishing by releasing shortfin mako sharks that are alive and in good condition. Especially important is releasing sharks that are sexually immature and haven't had the chance to reproduce (males < 73" fork length (FL) and females < 108" FL).

**When releasing any shark, try to follow these steps to maximize their chance of survival and minimize injury.**

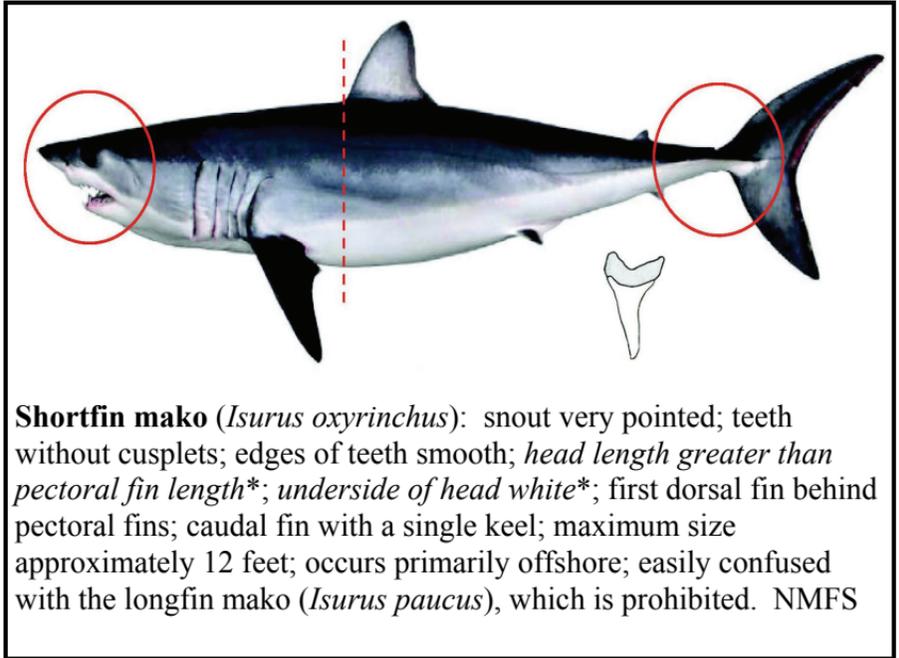
- Use non-stainless steel circle hooks
- Do not remove the shark from the water or gaff it.
- Remove the hook from the shark. Use a de-hooking device if available.
- If you can not remove the hook, cut the line as close to the hook as possible.

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/shortfinmako/index.htm>

# How to Identify a Shortfin Mako Shark

## If You're Going to Keep it, Keep it Real Big.

If you are going to keep a shortfin mako, target male sharks over 150 pounds (73" fork length). The bigger the shark, the more likely it has already had a chance to reproduce. Most makos at the current minimum size (54" fork length) are not sexually mature and have not contributed to the population. Big females are necessary for keeping the population strong.



**Shortfin mako** (*Isurus oxyrinchus*): snout very pointed; teeth without cusplets; edges of teeth smooth; *head length greater than pectoral fin length\**; *underside of head white\**; first dorsal fin behind pectoral fins; caudal fin with a single keel; maximum size approximately 12 feet; occurs primarily offshore; easily confused with the longfin mako (*Isurus paucus*), which is prohibited. NMFS

Interested in participating in shortfin mako tagging programs or sharing information on your shortfin mako shark releases? Please go to:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/shortfinmako/index.htm>