



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE**  
**Seventh Regular Session**

28 September - 4 October 2011  
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia

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**DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR THE RELEASE OF WHALE SHARKS FROM  
PURSE SEINE NETS**

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**WCPFC-TCC7-2011-IP/07**  
**30 September 2011**

**Paper prepared by Japan**

There are potentially three situations for safe and live release of encircled whale shark during purse seine operations. First of all, if fishermen found whale shark in the net, the net should be rolled up until whale shark cannot swim or move relatively freely.

➤ *remain in the net until rolling up the net*

- a. Fishermen attempt to lead the head to approach nearest corkline by rolling up the net under the ventral and tail side.
- b. Release cork rope of the head side.
- c. Roll up the net of the tail side to run the head on the corkline
- d. Control the net carefully to keep whale shark calm down because if they wriggle, their body could be entangled in the net.
- e. Wait for escaping from the net themselves (whale shark swim away from the net)

➤ *keep pushing the head to escape from the net*

Whale shark sometimes attempts to escape from the net and keep pushing the head to the net when the net is rolling up. In this case, fishermen swim and approach to whale shark along with the rope and cut off the net horizontally nearly from their lower jaw. They can escape easily from the cut off point. Fishermen must swim away as fast as possible after cutting off the net without touching its tail fin.

➤ *entangled in the net*

Whale shark sometimes is entangled in the net by swimming and twisting the body. If whale shark cannot escape from the net himself or herself, the net must be cut off by knife attached long pole or fishermen step down and cut off the net.