

SSN Sharks

Fall 2014, Issue 2



The Species Survival Network Shark Working Group is pleased to provide to you the second issue of SSN Sharks, a publication regarding sharks and rays and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Results from Our Latest International Workshops

Summary of Shark Implementation Workshop in Senegal:

On 12 – 14 August, Senegal hosted a workshop in Dakar to facilitate implementation of the recently adopted shark and ray listings in Appendix II of CITES. The workshop was held in collaboration with the government of Sierra Leone and with support from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Commission Sub-Régional des Pêches (CSRP). In addition to providing tools and training, including a [shark and ray guide](#) (also [available in French](#)), the workshop led to the adoption of an [action plan](#) (also [available in French](#)) that contains recommendations to address the priority needs of the West African region for implementation and enforcement of the CITES shark and ray listings.



Summary of Shark Implementation Workshop in India:

On 26 – 28 August, the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests hosted a workshop in collaboration with the C.P.R. Environmental Education Center in Chennai. The [outcomes of the meeting](#) include a regional plan developed by the delegates, and the delegates agreeing on the roles and responsibilities of national and regional stakeholders on the different elements of implementation of the CITES Appendix II shark and ray listings, such as coordination and communication, capacity-building, data collection, and the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs).



CITES Notification of Interest

No. 2013/054 concerning a [New section](#) on sharks and rays on the CITES website:

Beginning on 14 September 2014, Parties must regulate international trade in the oceanic whitetip shark (*C. longimanus*), scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*), great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*), smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zigaena*), porbeagle shark (*L. nasus*) and manta rays (*Manta* spp.). (22 November 2013).

[Useful link for the implementation of the shark and ray listings](#)

2014 CITES Calendar

13 – 16 October: 21st annual meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT), Auckland, New Zealand

4 – 9 November: 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), Quito, Ecuador

10 – 17 November: 19th special meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Genoa, Italy

25 – 27 November: International shark workshop: experiences and strategies for implementation of CITES Appendix II species listings, Santa Marta, Colombia

1-5 December: 11th regular session of the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Apia, Samoa

Results from the 27th CITES Animals Committee Meeting:

On 28 April – 3 May 2014 in Veracruz, Mexico, the Animals Committee established a working group to support the [implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.6 \(Rev. CoP16\) on Conservation and management of sharks](#), by reviewing information on shark trade provided by range States, and providing recommendations and guidance on implementation of the shark species listings, including making NDFs.

Germany presented a document on [NDFs for CITES-listed sharks and manta rays](#) as well as [Guidance for making NDFs for CITES-listed sharks](#) and the United Kingdom presented a [Report on the development of a rapid management risk assessment method for fish species through its application to sharks](#).

The working group made [sixteen recommendations to the Committee](#), all of which were adopted, including that: the Secretariat issue a Notification inviting Parties to submit new information on shark fishery management measures; the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) be encouraged to continue work on harmonized tariff codes for shark products; and the Parties be encouraged to improve collection of data at the species level, share NDFs made for shark species, and undertake broad consultation concerning the implementation of shark listings.

Results from the 65th CITES Standing Committee Meeting:

On 7 – 11 July in Geneva, Switzerland, the Standing Committee noted the capacity building activities related to the CITES listings of sharks and rays listed in [SC65 Doc. 20.2](#) and urged Parties to continue these.

The Committee also considered [SC65 Doc. 24.2 Annex 1](#) that included recommendations of the Animals Committee regarding reporting requirements under Resolution Conf 12.6 (Rev. CoP16). The Standing Committee agreed with the Animals Committee's recommendation to maintain these reporting requirements.

The Standing Committee also noted a [report from the Secretariat](#) regarding requirements in Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP16)

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Regulation Updates

CHINA:

Protections for five shark species on the way.

A [19 June 2014 article](#) reported that the Undersecretary of the Environment-Hong Kong, Christine Loh, said the government will establish restrictions on the five shark species added to CITES Appendix II.

NEW ZEALAND:

Government bans shark finning.

A [22 May 2014 article](#) reported that New Zealand's Conservation Minister, Nick Smith, announced the country will ban the practice of shark finning, effective this October, two years ahead of schedule. While New Zealand is one of the world's top 20 exporters of shark fins, increasing public discontent with shark finning has led businesses to ban sale of shark fins.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:

UAE increases shark conservation measures.

A [26 July 2014 article](#) reported that all three species of hammerheads, oceanic whitetip, and mantas are now fully protected in UAE waters, no shark products can be exported from sharks caught in UAE waters, all exports and re-exports of shark fins are banned from the UAE, and the fishing ban is now from February 1st to June 30th each year to ensure protection during the species' breeding season.

UNITED STATES:

First ever ESA listed sharks.

A [3 July 2014 article](#) reported that the federal government listed four distinct population segments of scalloped hammerhead sharks under the Endangered Species Act.

that the Secretariat to monitor discussions within the World Customs Organization regarding the development of a Customs data model, and the inclusion therein of a data field to report trade in sharks at species level, and to issue Notifications to the Parties concerning any significant developments.

The SC established a working group, chaired by Colombia with the [mandate as indicated in SC65 Doc. 46, paragraph 4 o\) and p\)](#), as follows:

- o) [...] to consider relevant matters relating to the implementation of shark listings, including the following:
 - i. New legislative issues that might arise in exporting, transit, and consumer countries;
 - ii. Issues pertaining to chain of custody, including where in the trade chain it is considered essential to be able to identify the products in trade;
 - iii. Issues pertaining to legality of acquisition and introduction from the sea;
 - iv. Existing catch documentation and product certification schemes that could assist in the implementation of Appendix II shark listings; and
 - v. The role of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations.
- p) Both the Standing Committee and the Animals Committee should review the requirements that have been developed for the trade in processed product types of Appendix II species such as crocodile skins, caviar, etc. and consider their applicability to shark products containing Appendix II species.

Results from the 87th IATTC Meeting:

On 14 – 18 July 2014 in Lima, Peru, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) considered but rejected a proposal by the European Union to prohibit the removal of shark fins at sea and to require that all sharks be landed with their fins naturally attached.



National News



CANADA:

Porbeagle shark's endangered status reconfirmed.

A [9 May 2014 article](#) reported that Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans estimates that the Northwest Atlantic porbeagle shark population size is one quarter the 1960 population size. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada reviewed and determined the porbeagle shark remains endangered, with devastating bycatch in Canadian and international waters. The North Atlantic population of porbeagle sharks numbers 300,000, but shark researcher and scientist, Steven Campana, says, "numbers should be twice as high."

AUSTRALIA:

Disconnect between location of research and threats.

A [15 May 2014 article](#) reported that the countries with the most shark landings, primarily Indonesia, India, Taiwan, and Spain, have little to no research concerning shark conservation while the U.S. and Australia, which land relatively few sharks, publish the most research, indicating that the most heavily fished species are the least studied.

CHINA:

Shark fin imports and sales drop significantly.

A [6 August 2014 article](#) and an [8 September 2014 article](#) reported that due to public awareness and anti-corruption campaigns, 85% of Chinese consumers have given up shark fin soup, according to a WildAid Survey. This decrease in demand has led to an 82% drop in sales of shark fins in Guangzhou, and a 90% drop in Hong Kong's re-export shark fin market. In Beijing, 19 of 20 restaurants surveyed reported a significant decline in consumption of shark fin soup over the past several years.

North Korea pays top dollar for Hong Kong shark fins.

A [26 May 2014 article](#) reported that Hong Kong re-exported 5 kg of shark fin to North Korea at a price of HK\$3,200, the second highest price ever paid per kg for premium fin after China.



National News

PHILIPPINES:

Shark skins confiscated in Zamboanga.

A [9 August 2014 article](#) reported that the Zamboanga Coast Guard confiscated 200 kg of shark skin from a cargo vessel at the seaport and turned it over to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Airline goes shark free.

A [23 April 2014 article](#) reported that Philippine Airlines has adopted a policy not to ship shark fins.

Hammerheads, other sharks hunted in the Philippines.

A [30 April 2014 article](#) reported that endangered hammerheads remain unprotected under local Philippine ordinances.



UNITED STATES:

Coast Guard seizes illegally fished sharks.

A [15 August 2014 article](#) reported that the Coast Guard seized 200 sharks from Mexican fishermen off the Texas coast, where illegal fishing is commonplace, and shark populations have declined by 90%. As apex predators, essential to the balance of the ecosystem, a shortage of sharks leads to more rays, and more rays mean fewer oysters in the Gulf for the seafood industry.

Shark populations and nurseries continue to decline.

A [13 August 2014 article](#) reported that fishermen are killing 6.5-8% of sharks each year, totaling about 100 million sharks, which in turn hurts scallop and lobster populations. Diminishing sea grass habitat also reduces the viability of shark nurseries in Florida lagoons.

Great white sharks increasing.

[22 June](#) and [14 July 2014 articles](#) reported that great white shark populations are increasing in the western North Atlantic and eastern North Pacific oceans.

UNITED KINGDOM:

UK supports sustainable catch limits for shark conservation.

A [2 July 2014 article](#) reported that George Eustice, the UK fishing minister, supports the Shark Trust's "No Limits No Future" campaign to set sustainable catch limits on over-exploited shark species, which are widely fished by the EU fleet.

Migrating sharks and fishing vessels overlap in EU.

A [21 May 2014 article](#) reported that a study, which tagged and tracked 100 sharks and 200 long-line vessels in the North Atlantic, found the sharks' range overlapped with the boats by 76%. Sharks typically migrate towards highly productive waters, where warm and cool currents meet and where fish congregate, which also attracts fishing vessels. Due to this overlap, EU fleet landings of blue sharks have tripled since 2003, 80% from Spanish vessels.



International News

Shark species proposed for listing under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

A [13 June 2014 article](#) reported that the CMS has received listing proposals for the great hammerhead shark, scalloped hammerhead shark, silky shark, three species of thresher shark, the reef manta ray, nine *Mobula* ray species, and five species of sawfishes. The 120 CMS Parties will decide which species to protect under its two Appendices when the meeting of the Conference of the Parties occurs on 4-9 November in Quito, Ecuador, the first CMS meeting in the Americas.

UN issues guide to improve identification of deep-sea sharks.

A [28 May 2014 article](#) reported that the FAO issued a series of shark identification guides to improve reporting on catches. In 2011, only 36% of global deep-sea catches of sharks, rays, skates, and chimaeras were identified at a species or genus level, compared to more than 75% for bony fish. This discrepancy leads to data deficiency, which impedes the sustainable management of fisheries. By increasing the accuracy of reporting catches, [FAO's International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas](#) will be more effective.



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Useful Websites

[Species Survival Network](#)

[CITES](#)

[CITES Sharks & Manta Rays](#)

[IUCN Red List](#)

[Convention on Migratory Species \(CMS\)](#)

[International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas \(ICCAT\)](#)

[Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission \(IATTC\)](#)

[Indian Ocean Tuna Commission \(IOTC\)](#)

[Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission \(WCPFC\)](#)

[Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna \(CCSBT\)](#)