

The **Special Survival Network (SSN)** Working Group is pleased to provide to you the Spring 2018 issue of SSN Sharks, a publication regarding the sharks, rays, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



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Introduction

The next meeting of CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP18) will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23 May to 3 June 2019. That may seem like it is still a long time in the future, but there are some critical deadlines coming up. Some are that this year –when many will be out of the office enjoying the holidays— so be sure to plan ahead!

Dear colleagues,

We are so sad to share the news that Jimmy Martinez passed away on June 4, 2018. Anyone who has worked with to protect sharks and sea turtles will know that he was as competent and committed as anyone in the field. Jimmy fought his battle with prostate cancer with determination, optimism and faith. Jimmy left behind his wife Shirley, son Jimmy Nery and daughter María de los Angeles.

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CANADA

Shark Fin Bill S-238 passes committee and moves to third reading in Senate.

8 February 2018. A Canadian private member's bill, Bill S-238, the *Ban on Shark Fin Importation and Exportation Act*, was passed unanimously by the Senate Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. The bill would, except under certain circumstances, prohibit the import or export, or attempt to import or export, into or from Canada shark fins or parts of shark fins that are not attached to a shark carcass, or any derivatives of shark fins. The committee's report will be presented to the entire Senate for adoption and third reading, after which it goes to the House of Commons.

<https://www.tribute.ca/news/shark-fin-bill-s-238-passes-committee-and-moves-to-third-reading-in-senate/2018/02/08/>

HONG KONG

Regulation of the trading of shark food products LCQ16.

7 February 2018. The Hong Kong Secretary for the Environment, Mr. Wong Kam-sing, responded to questions by the Hon Kenneth Leung regarding the implementation of the regulation of shark food products. The government reiterated its commitment to the implementation of CITES, including for CITES-listed shark species, through the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance.

<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201802/07/P2018020700663.htm?fontSize=1>

MOROCCO

UEA suspends shark fishing in its waters for 5 months.

31 January 2018. The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAEE) banned shark fishing during the shark breeding season, from February 1 to June 30. The ban is pursuant to Ministerial Decree No. 500 of 2014 on Regulating the Fishing and Trading of Sharks.

<https://www.emirates247.com/news/emirates/moccae-bans-shark-fishing-from-february-1-to-june-30-2018-01-31-1.664729>

UNITED STATES

ESA listing for the oceanic whitetip shark.

30 January 2018. In response to a petition by Defenders of Wildlife, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a final rule to list the oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharinus longimanus*) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).



CHILE

Shark fins on Vietnam Embassy roof.



19 January 2018. After complaints made via social media, which showed photos of dozens of shark fins on the roof of the Embassy of Vietnam in Santiago, Chile, SENAPESCA, the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Service, indicated that they had initiated a joint effort with the Chancellery to carry out an investigation to establish the origin of the fins.

<http://www2.latercera.com/noticia/investigacion-origen-aletas-tiburón-halladas-techo-embajada-vietnam-chile/>

Peruvian vessels captured for illegal fishing.

20 February 2018 The Chilean Navy reported having captured two Peruvian vessels that carried out illegal fishing in the Chilean Sea, and between them, stored five tons of blue and white sharks. The two ships were towed into Arica and banned from sailing.

<https://laprensaaustral.cl/nacional/pescadores-peruanos-fueron-sorprendidos-con-cinco-toneladas-de-tiburón-en-aguas-chilenas/>

CHINA

Enforcement agencies enhance their shark fin identification skills.

13 February 2018. More than fifty frontline enforcement officers from China's Fishery Department of the Ministry of Agriculture (FAD) attended the fin identification and shark trade workshop hosted in Beijing and organized by China's Management Authority and TRAFFIC.

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2018/2/13/chinese-enforcement-agencies-enhance-their-shark-fin-identif.html>

Reduction of demand for shark fin soup in China

21 February 2018. According to a report released by WildAid, consumption of shark fin soup in China is no longer the single greatest threat to sharks. Since consumers have changed their behavior in response to awareness campaigns and a government banquet ban, the demand for shark fin soup has been reduced by 80%.

<https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3368395>

COSTA RICA

Fish, drugs and murder.

12 December 2017. Costa Rica's police forces are overwhelmed by a flood of drugs and organized crime. Foreign purse seiners have imperiled the country's marine life, and local fishermen say they are unable to compete with Taiwanese and other foreign vessels. Since there are too many local fishermen chasing after so few fish, many along the coast are drawn into a cocaine trafficking, a flourishing – criminal enterprise that has nearly tripled over the past three years.

<https://www.hakaimagazine.com/features/fish-drugs-and-murder/>

Letter to President Guillermo Solis.

14 February 2018. INCOPESCA, the Costa Rican Fishery authority, has maintained a stockpile of at least 10 tons of hammerhead shark fins since March 2015, when Costa Rica banned hammerhead exports. INCOPESCA is preparing a report on whether exporting the fins would be detrimental to the population, but in a letter dated February 19, 2018 signed by 12,000 people and many international NGOs, Isabel Naranjo, president of Costa Rican NGO CREMA, has asked President Solis to issue a Presidential Decree permanently banning the export of hammerhead shark fin stockpiles.



<https://www.costaricantimes.com/costa-rica-prepares-to-export-10-tons-of-hammerhead-shark-fins/59434>

ECUADOR

Ecuador's sharks face threats from within.

24 November 2017. Foreign fleets operating in and adjacent to Ecuador's exclusive economic zone are a threat to sharks, but so is Ecuador's artisanal longline fleet. Ecuador's artisanal fishing fleet, made up more than 45,000 vessels, is allowed to land sharks as 'by-catch' and its vessels are not required to carry automatic tracking systems.

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/358/6366/1009>

DNA lab for sharks.

29 January 2018. WWF-Ecuador and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the Ecuador Ministry of Aquaculture and Fisheries, carried out a project aimed to equip a laboratory and train authorities in the application of genetic identification techniques for shark species in trade. The laboratory will assist in compliance with international CITES commitments, and will support research, regulation, monitoring and control activities as part of the National Action Plan for the conservation and management of sharks in Ecuador.

<http://www.wwf.org.ec/?uNewsID=322111>

SSN SHARKS NEWSLETTER



HONG KONG

Shark fin still on most Hong-Kong restaurant menus for Lunar New Year banquets.

8 February 2018. Survey results released by the Hong Kong Shark Foundation found that 85% of Lunar New Year banquet menus in Chinese restaurants offered dishes made from shark fin. Only half of the restaurants offered shark-free options for consumers, and some even charged extra to remove shark fin from set menus. The Foundation called on Chinese restaurant groups to stop promoting shark fin products and to set targets to reduce sales of such dishes.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/economy/article/2132595/shark-fin-still-most-hong-kong-restaurant-menus-lunar-new>

Green groups urge restaurants to stop selling shark fin soup in protest of Maxim's.

8 February 2018. WildAid sent a petition signed by 60,000 people to the CEO of Maxim's Caterer's Limited, Michael Wu, asking Maxim's restaurant to remove blue shark fin from all of its menus. Also, WildAid is planning a protest at the University of Hong Kong demanding that the university terminate its relationship with the restaurant, since the unsustainable and environmentally damaging dish clashes with the university's sustainability policy.

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2018/02/08/green-groups-urge-hong-kong-restaurants-stop-selling-shark-fin-soup-protest-planned-maxims/>

NGO says blue sharks face extinction as 'unscrupulous' Maxim's restaurant refuses to scrap shark fin soup.

Around 50 green activists held a protest outside Maxim's at the University of Hong Kong to protest the restaurant chain's offering of shark fin soup.

<https://www.hongkongfp.com/2018/02/12/ngo-says-blue-sharks-face-extinction-unscrupulous-maxims-restaurant-refuses-scrap-shark-fin-soup/>

Shark fin imports down 50%.

8 March 2018. According to the latest figures from the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, the volume of shark fin imported into Hong Kong has declined from 10,210 tonnes in 2007 to 4,979 in 2017. The import decline is due both to a decline in shark fin passing through Hong Kong and the amount consumed.

https://www.wwf.org.hk/en/news/press_release/?20540/Press-Release-Hong-Kong-Shark-Fin-Imports-Down-50

INDONESIA

Fishermen turn to shark finning to satisfy demand for soup

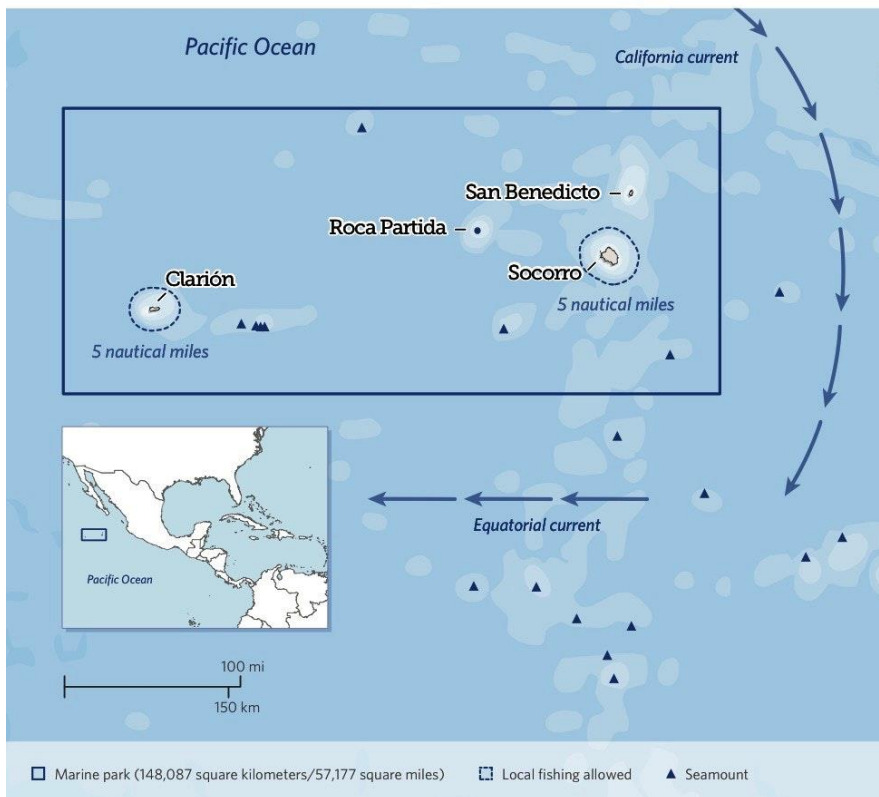
15 April 2018. Although shark finning is illegal in Indonesia, the activity is widespread. Indonesia is reportedly the biggest exporter of shark fin. The lack of enforcement by local authorities is the main reason shark finning still occurs. However, fishermen are feeling the impact of the diminishing number of sharks and they need to go further out to sea to find fish.

<http://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/article/2141537/indonesias-fishermen-turn-shark-finning-satisfy-demand-sharks-fin-soup-and>

MEXICO

Mexico's 'Galapagos' to become largest fully protected Marine Park

Revillagigedo Archipelago National Park



24 November 2017. Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto signed an order to create what would become the largest fully protected marine reserve in North America. The campaign to create the reserve was led by a number of Mexican environmental groups with support of international non-profits. The marine park expands the existing protected area around the Revillagigedo islands in the tropical Pacific Ocean, which were deemed a United Nations World Heritage site in 2016 and have been called 'Mexico's Galápagos'.

https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/executive-summaries/2017/11/24?utm_campaign=97b92f8cb3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_11_22&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Oceans+Deeply&utm_term=0_dfde037196-97b92f8cb3-117768381

TANZANIA

Sea Shepherd launches Operation Jodari.

5 February 2018. After completing a 20-day patrol resulting in the arrest of three vessels for fisheries crime, the Sea Shepherd vessel M/Y Ocean Warrior arrived in Dar es Salaam to officially launch Operation Jodari, a campaign in partnership with the government of the United Republic of Tanzania to tackle illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing in the Western Indian Ocean region. Operation Jodari also trains Tanzanian officers in monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of fishing activities.

<https://www.seashepherdglobal.org/latest-news/jodari-launch-three-arrests/>

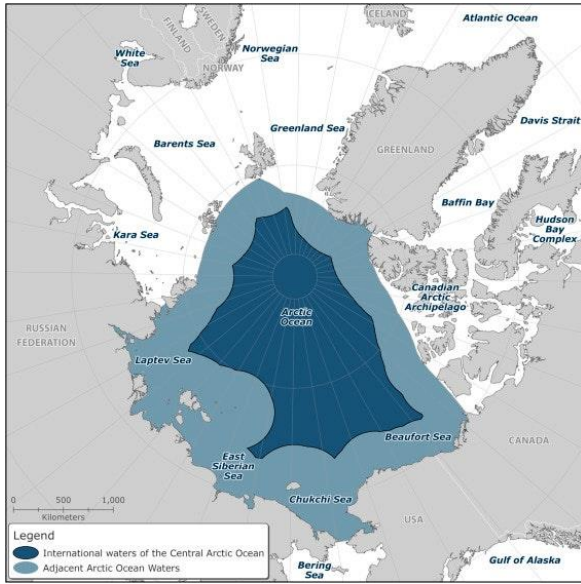


CITES NOTIFICATION OF INTEREST

- No. 2017/072: 18th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23 May-3 June 2019.
- No. 2018/025: Australia's stricter domestic measures for trade in CITES species (whales and dolphins).
- No. 2018/028: 30th meeting of the Animals Committee will be held from 16-21 July 2018. On 20-21 July, the meeting will be held jointly with the 24th meeting of the Plants Committee.
- No. 2018/030: Implementation of Decision 17.297 on Tortoises and freshwater Turtles (Testudines spp.).
- No. 2018/034: Requesting the Parties that are not cooperating with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) to submit a report regarding trade in toothfish.
- No. 2018/037: Nomenclature and identification of CITES-listed corals in trade.

CITES CALENDAR 2018

- 9 April-22 June 2018: UNIA Master's Course in Management and Conservation Species in Trade: the International Framework (13th edition).
- 17 May 2018: Deadline for submission of working documents for the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee.
- 21 May 2018: Deadline for submission of working documents for the 24th meeting of the Plants Committee.
- 22-25 May 2018: Strengthening national frameworks for the effective implementation of CITES in Central Asia, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.



Multinational Accord bans fishing in Central Arctic Ocean

4 December 2017. Officials from 10 nations finalized a historic accord in Washington D.C. that will prohibit commercial fishing in the high seas of the central Arctic Ocean for at least 16 years. One of the key components of the agreement is the establishment of a multinational scientific effort to gather more data about the region, which until recently was largely inaccessible to scientists.

[https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/12/04/international-accord-bans-fishing-in-central-arctic-ocean-spurs-science?utm_campaign=3188588208-](https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/12/04/international-accord-bans-fishing-in-central-arctic-ocean-spurs-science?utm_campaign=3188588208-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_07&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Oceans+Deeply&utm_term=0_dfde037196-3188588208-117768381)

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_07&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Oceans+Deeply&utm_term=0_dfde037196-3188588208-117768381](https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/12/04/international-accord-bans-fishing-in-central-arctic-ocean-spurs-science?utm_campaign=3188588208-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_07&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Oceans+Deeply&utm_term=0_dfde037196-3188588208-117768381)

Shortfin mako sharks threatened by inaction.

23 March 2018. The 2017 ICCAT stock assessment confirmed that the North Atlantic is overfished and recommended reducing annual mako shark catch to 500 tons or less (from the 3300 tons annually) to prevent future declines. However, ICCAT member nations did not agree to a quota to limit mako catches; instead ICCAT recommended a compromise in which sharks brought alongside vessels should be released. Nevertheless, research indicates that 60-80% of longline-hooked makos reach vessels alive and about 30% are likely to die after release. Therefore, action taken so far by ICCAT will not halt the decline.

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/359/6382/1342.1>



Countdown to CoP18

The next meeting of CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP18) will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 23 May to 3 June 2019.

- 27 June, 2018 is the deadline for submission of proposals to amend the Appendices which involve ranching or an absence of consultation with range States, for consideration at CoP18 [Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) or Resolution Conf. 8.21 (Rev. CoP16) apply] <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2017-072.pdf>
- 24 December, 2018 is the deadline for submission of working documents, including proposals to amend the Appendices, for consideration at CoP18. <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2017-072.pdf>
- 31 December 2018 for applications for sponsorship for delegates to attend CoP18 under the Sponsored Delegates Project. For more information: <https://cites.org/eng/notif/2014.php>

If you have any questions about these, feel free to reach out to us. We at SSN are also always happy to help when we can.

CANADA

Devil rays facing threats to survival

15 March 2018. In addition to the danger from the effects of climate change and ocean pollution, the devil ray (*Mobula mobular*) now risks being driven to extinction by unregulated fisheries because of its reputation among Asian consumers worldwide as a medicine. Research led by Dirk Steinke, from the University of Guelph in Canada, reveals that fishing for the ray's distinctive gill plates has caused its population to shrink between 56-86% in Indonesia and Mozambique over the past eight years. Their notoriety is believed to have turned dried gill plates into a much sought-after health product in Asia.

<https://cosmosmagazine.com/biology/scientists-not-afraid-to-speak-of-the-devil>












UNITED STATES

Giant Manta Ray is Listed as Threatened under the U.S. Endangerment Species Act.

22 January 2018. The National Marine Fisheries Service protected the giant manta ray as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The decision recognized threats from overfishing, climate change and lack of international procedures. The listing responds to a petition from Defenders of Wildlife, with support from the Center for Biological Diversity, seeking protection of giant and reef manta rays. However, the federal government denied the listing of reef mantas last year.

https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2018/giant-manta-ray-01-22-2018.php

-  October 2017. *Species composition of the international shark fin trade assessed through a retail-market survey in Hong Kong.* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/cobi.13043>
-  October 2017. *Cetacean bycatch in small scale gillnet fisheries.* https://www.mmc.gov/wp-content/uploads/SMM-Biennial-2017_Bycatch-Workshops-Report-1.pdf
-  November 2017. *More than a third of Hong Kong shark fin products are from threatened species, study reveals.* <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2117831/how-many-hong-kongs-shark-fin-products-are>
-  November 2017. *Pregnant sharks and rays likely to abort their young if captured.* https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/nov/02/pregnant-sharks-and-rays-likely-to-abort-their-young-if-caught?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
-  November 2017. *Grim findings for shark fin research.* <http://www.thestandard.com.hk/section-news.php?id=189136&sid=4>
-  November 2017. *Fishing for answers: How marine wildlife and commercial fishing overlap.* <http://usa.oceana.org/publications/reports/fishing-answers-how-marine-wildlife-and-commercial-fishing-overlap>
-  December 2017. *How sharks rule coral reefs through fear – and why that matters.* https://www.newsdeeply.com/oceans/articles/2017/12/05/how-sharks-rule-coral-reefs-through-fear-and-why-that-matters?utm_campaign=3188588208-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_12_07&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Oceans+Deeply&utm_term=0_dfde037196-3188588208-117768381
-  January 2018. *Shark, rays and abortion: The prevalence of capture-induced parturition in elasmobranchs.* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320717303634?via%3DiHub>
-  March 2018. *Shark baselines and the conservation role of remote coral reef ecosystems.* <http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/4/3/eaag0333>

DATES OF INTEREST

21-25 May 2018: 22nd Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, Thailand

16-30 August 2018: IATTC and AIDCP Annual Meetings

12-19 November 2018: 21st Special Meeting of the ICCAT Commission, Croatia

14-16 November 2018: Sustainable Ocean Summit, Hong Kong



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 \(CCSBT\)](#)

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