

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Twenty-first meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 20-25 May 2005

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS

1. This document has been prepared by the Dr. R. Hay, Animals Committee representative for Oceana.
2. Resolution Conf. 12.6 on Conservation and management of sharks includes the following paragraphs directed to the Animals Committee:

*DIRECTS the Animals Committee to continue activities specified under Decision 11.94 beyond the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and to report on progress at the 13th meeting of the Conference of Parties;*

*DIRECTS the Animals Committee to critically review progress towards IPOA-Sharks implementation (NPOA-Sharks) by major fishing and trading nations, by a date one year before the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES;*

*DIRECTS the Animals Committee to examine information provided by range States in shark assessment reports and other available relevant documents, with a view to identifying key species and examining these for consideration and possible listing under CITES;*

....

*DIRECTS the Animals Committee to make species-specific recommendations at the 13th meeting and subsequent meetings of the Conference of the Parties if necessary on improving the conservation status of sharks and the regulation of international trade in these species.*

3. The Animals Committee reported at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP13, Bangkok 2004) on its implementation of the Resolution and of its role in supporting the implementation of four Decisions. These Decisions were concerned with the following matters:
  - 11.151 Liaison with the World Customs Organization concerning tariff classifications for shark products;
  - 12.47 Liaison with FAO and reporting on progress with implementation of the International Plan of Action for Sharks (IPOA);
  - 12.48 Transmission to FAO of concerns regarding progress with the IPOA and encouraging States and regional fisheries management agencies in its implementation; and
  - 12.49 Encouraging Parties to obtain information on implementation of the IPOA and report progress at future meetings of Animals Committee.

4. The Conference adopted the following Decisions in response to the Animals Committee recommendations:

***Directed to Parties***

***13.42 Parties:***

- a) *should request, through their delegations to the 26th meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) that FAO consider convening a workshop or consultation on the conservation and management of sharks, in time for output to be considered at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, inter alia to:*
  - i) *consider and review progress with the implementation of the IPOA-Sharks; and*
  - ii) *assess the effectiveness and efficiency of current conservation and management measures for sharks and identify any improvements needed;*
- b) *are encouraged to improve their data collection and reporting to FAO of catches and landings of and trade in sharks, at the species level where possible, recognizing that inter alia this may be a first step towards the development and implementation of Shark Assessment Reports and National Plans of Action or other relevant national instruments;*
- c) *that require assistance to build capacity to manage their shark fisheries are encouraged to seek such assistance from FAO or other appropriate organizations; and*
- d) *should take note of the species-specific recommendations in document CoP13 Doc. 35 Annex 2 with a view to ensuring that international trade is not detrimental to the status of these species.*

***Directed to the Animals Committee***

***13.43 The Animals Committee, taking account of the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the conservation and management of sharks and on CITES implementation issues relating to listed marine species, shall:***

- a) *review implementation issues related to sharks listed in the CITES Appendices with a view inter alia to sharing experiences that may have arisen and solutions that may have been found;*
- b) *identify specific cases where trade is having an adverse impact on sharks, in particular those key shark species threatened in this way;*
- c) *prepare a report on trade-related measures adopted and implemented by Parties that are aimed at improving the conservation status of sharks; and*
- d) *report on the above at the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties.*

5. While the Animals Committee needs to note the recommendations directed to Parties and assist where appropriate, its primary mandate is determined by Decision 13.43. This requires consultation with FAO and a review of the implementation of the current listings of sharks in the Appendices, followed by an assessment of cases where trade is having an adverse effect on particular species. A report on these matters is required for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP14). While the time for CoP14 has not yet been set, these matters will be on the agenda for AC21 and AC22, and therefore approximately two years are available for the work to be completed.
6. It is noted that matters covered by Decision 13.42 were discussed at the recent meeting of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and that progress has been made towards convening a workshop as outlined in paragraph a) of that Decision. More information on the results of COFI discussions will be available at the present meeting.

7. Given that the listings for whale and basking sharks are only two years old and that for the great white shark only one year old, experiences and solutions are liable to be limited. Nonetheless, the Committee should consider drafting a Notification to the Parties in order to obtain consistent and useful information from Parties on challenges and solutions to the listings.
8. In order to fulfil paragraph b) of Decision 13.43, it may be necessary to appeal to National Fisheries Management Agencies (RFMO) and NGOs for the information that is needed. It is anticipated that FAO and the IUCN Shark Specialist Group will be a significant source of information additional to that also available Parties in response to the Notification mentioned in paragraph 7.
9. The report required for CoP14 will need to be comprehensive and hence well planned. A plan for its production will need to be developed during this present meeting.
10. While most of the work required by CoP13 was completed, some components of Decision 11.151 regarding WCO Customs codes were not. It is suggested that the Animals Committee continues this work under the general mandate concerning trade-related measures under Decision 13.43, paragraphs a) and c), but also in support of Parties' fulfilment of Decision 13.42 paragraph b).

#### Recommendations

- 11 It is recommended that the Committee:

**Consider** the tasks assigned to it under Decision 13.43 and the support that might be required to implement Decision 13.42;

**Develop and adopt** a work programme during the course of the present meeting and intersessionally to prepare a comprehensive report for CoP14;

**Establish** a process for consultation with FAO regarding convening a workshop on the conservation and management of sharks;

**Establish** a process to complete the work on WCO Customs codes for sharks;

**Convene** a working group to work intersessionally in order to oversee and complete the work; and

**Invite** the working group to report progress at AC22.