

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



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OCEANIC WHITETIP SHARK PROPOSAL
ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

This document has been submitted by Brazil, Colombia and the United States of America in relation to amendment proposal CoP16 Prop. 42 on the oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)*.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

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New information since the CoP15 FAO Expert Advisory Panel, IUCN-TRAFFIC, and the CITES Secretariat concluded that oceanic whitetip sharks met the Appendix II listing criteria has strengthened the CoP 16 proposal:

Most importantly, new information from the first-ever full stock assessment ([Rice and Harley 2012](#)) for oceanic whitetip shark for the Western and Central Pacific corroborated and reinforced this conclusion. There are three time series for the Indian Ocean, all of which demonstrate decline of this species.

[Dharmdi and Wiadnyana](#) (2012) identify oceanic whitetip shark as one of five most vulnerable sharks in the Indian Ocean.

A study by [Walsh and Clarke](#) (2011) shows continued and greater decline in the Hawaii-based pelagic longline fishery compared to their earlier study.

Based on this new information, the current [FAO Expert Advisory Panel](#) again concluded that, based on the available evidence, oceanic whitetip shark meets the biological criteria for listing in CITES Appendix II.

[IUCN/TRAFFIC](#) did an independent review of this proposal and also found that the oceanic whitetip shark meets the biological criteria for listing in CITES Appendix II.

The [CITES Secretariat](#) also concluded the oceanic whitetip shark meets the Appendix II listing criteria. According to the CITES Secretariat, it is evident that oceanic whitetip shark “is overexploited and there is evidence demonstrating declines to the level of meeting the listing criteria in almost all cases where the populations were monitored.”

Abundance trends for marine species are evidenced by catch data; standardized catch data are a robust indicator of low abundance of the species in its natural environment.

A paper published after the oceanic whitetip shark proposal for CoP16 was submitted (Clarke et al. 2012) shows 17% declines annually in the Western and Central Pacific. Likewise, the review of the proposal by IUCN/TRAFFIC included new information (will be published soon) showing less movement than previously assumed and thus higher potential for population fragmentation and local extirpation. These studies further reinforce the above conclusions

The trade data in the oceanic whitetip shark proposal comes from the best available scientific study. This study represents a robust and comprehensive analysis of the trade in shark fins. All anecdotal reports suggest that demand for this species has stayed stable and may have increased.

Shifts in the market from Hong Kong to other mainland China markets make repetition of this study difficult.

REFERENCES:

Clarke S.C., et al. (2012). Population trends in Pacific Ocean sharks and the utility of regulations on shark finning. *Conservation Biology*, DOI: 10.1111/j.1523-1739.2012.01943.x

Dharmdi, F. and N. Wiadnyana. 2012. Identification of vulnerable species and biological of sharks from the Indian Ocean (SEASTAR2000). Available at:

http://repository.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2433/154043/1/11thseastar_43.pdf

Rice and Harley (2012). Stock Assessment of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean Rev 1. Available online at: <http://www.wcpfc.int/doc/SA-WP-06/Stock-Assessment-Oceanic-Whitetip-Sharks-Western-and-Central-Pacific-Ocean>

Walsh, W.A. and Clarke, S. (2011). Catch Data for Oceanic Whitetip and Silky Sharks from Fishery Observers Document Changes in Relative Abundance in the Hawaii-based Longline Fishery in 1995–2010. WCPFC-SC7-2011/EB-WP-03. Available online at:

<http://www.wcpfc.int/doc/eb-wp-03/analyses-catch-data-oceanic-whitetip-and-silky-sharks-reported-fishery-observers-hawaii>

CITES Secretariat Assessment of CoP16 Proposals available online at:

http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/16/doc/Proposals_with_Secretariat_comments.pdf

IUCN-TRAFFIC Analyses of CoP16 Proposals available online at:

https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_traffic_analyses_of_proposals_cites_cop16_2012_1.pdf