

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



Thirty-second meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 19 – 23 June 2023

Species specific matters

Aquatic species

SHARKS AND RAYS (ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.)

1. This document has been submitted by the Secretariat in relation to agenda item 37.
2. The Secretariat issued [Notification to the Parties No. 2023/027](#) on 16 March 2023 in accordance with Decision 19.222 paragraph a) inviting Parties to share new information related to shark and ray conservation management with a focus on the following topics:
 - A. the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs);
 - B. the making of legal acquisition findings (LAFs);
 - C. identification and monitoring of CITES-listed shark products in trade in source, transit and consumer Parties
 - D. recording of stockpiles of commercial and/or pre-Convention shark parts and derivatives for CITES Appendix-II elasmobranch species and controlling the entry of these stocks into trade; and
 - E. capacity building needs to assist developing countries and small island developing states with reporting requirements
3. The Notification further requested copies of NDFs and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade.
4. The Secretariat received information on NDFs and conversion factors from the following 24 Parties: Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, European Union, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Maldives, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. A response was also received from Wildlife Conservation Society.
5. This document provides an overview of the scientific aspects of the responses received to the Notification, specifically on making of NDFs, species identification, and scientific capacity needs highlighted by Parties.

Conservation and management measures

6. Several Parties reported on adherence to measures from regional fisheries management organizations, including Croatia, Italy, Japan, Mozambique, Nicaragua and Slovakia.
7. The United Kingdom shared that a Shark Fin Bill is currently progressing through Parliament, which would ban the import and export of shark fins which are not 'naturally attached' to the shark carcass and includes shark fins, parts of shark fins and all products containing shark fins.

8. Bangladesh, with its fisheries, wildlife, customs and law enforcement agencies, has developed a National Conservation Strategy and Plan of Action, taking into consideration recommendations from local fisheries stakeholders. Nicaragua has also developed an Action Plan for the Conservation and Management of Sharks in 2010.
9. Colombia reported adopting "Environmental Plan for the Protection and Conservation of Sharks, Rays and Chimeras", which prohibits import, export and re-export of sharks and rays and Honduras also reported a ban on fishing in its jurisdictional waters and declared the jurisdictional waters a "Shark Sanctuary".
10. Mozambique reported that the revised Maritime Fishing Regulation of Mozambique includes specific measures for sharks and rays.
11. Peru has two Ministerial Resolutions for establishing a catch limit for *S. zygaena* for 2023 and prohibiting the extraction, landing, transportation, retention, transformation and commercialization of Sawfish species.
12. The United States shared that a draft recovery plan for the Oceanic Whitetip Shark was published to solicit public comment and that the National Marine Fisheries Service determined that the shortfin mako shark was not warranted for listing as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act.

Non-detriment findings

13. Seven Parties shared a total of 15 NDFs on *Isurus oxyrinchus* (Brazil, European Union, Japan), *Mobula* spp. (Bangladesh), Glaucostegiidae and Rhinidae spp. (Bangladesh), *Carcharhinus falciformis* (Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Guatemala), *Sphyrna zygaena* (Bangladesh), *Alopias* spp. (Costa Rica, Guatemala), Sphyrnidae spp. (Indonesia), and *Isurus* spp. (Indonesia).
14. Peru shared that NDFs have been issued for *A. vulpinus*, *A. pelagicus*, *C. falciformis*, *I. oxyrinchus* in 2022, and *Lamna nasus* in 2023 and Panama reported an NDF for *S. lewini*. Mexico shared the methodology used for making NDFs, which included sustainable export volumes estimated from the ISC-SWG (2018) for *I. oxyrinchus* and catch reconstruction methods and catch-MSY for other species. Spain shared that for different stocks of *I. oxyrinchus* either national or EU NDFs are made.
15. Several Parties responded that the making of NDFs were in progress. Mozambique reported that NDFs has been drafted for *C. falciformis* and *S. lewini* but not yet finalized, the United Kingdom reported that a NDF is in progress for blue shark and Indonesia shared that NDFs are being developed for mobula rays and several species of Carcharhinidae spp. listed at CoP19. Panama shared plans of convening a workshop in 2023 to make NDFs and El Salvador shared that species of interest have been defined for the making of NDFs (*Carcharhinus* spp., *Alopias* spp. and *Sphyrna* spp.). Mozambique highlighted (*Isurus*.spp.), Requiem sharks including *Prionace glauca* as priority species for making NDFs.

Conversion factors

16. Conversion factors for *I. oxyrinchus*, *I. paucus*, *Sphyrna lewini*, *S. zygaena*, *S. mokarran*, *Carcharhinus longimanus*, *C. falciformis*, *Alopias vulpinus*, *A. pelagicus*, *A. superciliosus*, *Lamna nasus*, and *Prionace glauca* were received from Japan, Mexico, Spain and United States. Mexico also shared details on the methodology used to select the most accurate conversion factors for Mexico, which involves classifying conversion factors based on taxonomic accuracy, regional precision and sample size. Japan shared that the conversion factors were determined based on data collected by ICCAT observers and the United States shared that the conversion factors used matched the conversion factors used for ICCAT. The conversion factors submitted by Spain are also publicly available as they are published online by the Directorate General of Fisheries and Aquaculture Management.

Identification and monitoring of sharks in trade

17. Slovakia shared that there are difficulties in species identification of shark meat and cosmetics/nutritional supplements which includes parts and derivatives of shark (cartilage and/or fat). Also, in relation to derivatives from sharks, Sweden noted that guidance on products containing squalene from CITES-listed sharks would be useful.
18. Several Parties have conducted training or taken action to support identification of CITES-listed sharks including Mozambique, Panama, Bangladesh. Mozambique, supported by Wildlife Conservation Society, has also conducted genetic analysis for species identification for dried fins.

19. Peru, Mozambique and Indonesia noted the need for technical assistance on species identification, with Indonesia highlighting the need for assistance in identifying intact catches as well as parts and derivatives.

Capacity building

20. In addition to capacity needs for species identification mentioned in the above section, the need for stock assessments and data collection were highlighted by a number of Parties.
21. The Republic of Korea noted that there is insufficient information on biology, stock abundance, and status of certain species. Peru noted the need for population assessments of commercially traded shark species for NDFs, which was also highlighted by Indonesia and Mozambique.
22. EU noted that it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between CITES and relevant RFMOs to strengthen conservation of certain species, including developing appropriate consultation and coordination mechanisms for sharing data and relevant assessments.

Other information

23. Maldives submitted information on the implementation of the CITES Appendix II listing of *Carcharhinus longimanus* (Oceanic whitetip shark).