

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



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 3 - 8 February 2025

Species conservation and trade

Fauna

Aquatic species

SHARKS AND RAYS (ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.)

Recommendations

1. Invite the Standing Committee to:

With regards to responsibilities of the exporting State

- a) propose option 1 in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 70.1 as the preferred amendment to Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) to the 20th meeting of the Conference of Parties (CoP20);
- b) invite the Secretariat to propose edits to wording in option 1 to be in line with UNCLOS to CoP20 noting that the intention of the working group is to refer to all areas that are not areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- c) note that certain Parties were in favor of option 2 in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 70.1;

With regards to the eNDF tool

- d) invite the Secretariat to propose draft decisions to host the eNDF tool on the CITES website with the most cost-efficient and effective method, which would be subject to external funding, to CoP20;

With regard to the addition of catch locations to reporting

- e) invite the Secretariat to propose the inclusion of catch location information, by expanding source code X for specimens taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any state and source code W for specimens taken from the wild, using FAO Major Fishing Areas in the Guidelines for preparation and submission of CITES annual reports;
- f) note that there are practical concerns regarding the implementation and certain Parties expressed preference for expanding source codes X and W using Ocean Basins; and

With regards to draft decisions

- g) submit the draft decisions in Annex 1 and 2 of the present document to CoP20.

CONSOLIDATED DRAFT DECISIONS ON SHARKS AND RAYS (*ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.*)

Changes are shown in manual track changes. Added text are underlined and deleted text are in ~~strike through~~.

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are encouraged to:

- a) in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on Conservation and management of sharks, provide brief information (with an executive summary not exceeding 200 words, if the report exceeds four pages) to the Secretariat, in particular on any national management measures, including new or updated national plans of action for sharks, that prohibit commercial take or trade;
- b) respond to the Notification called for in Decision 20.BB including sharing any non-detriment findings (NDFs) and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade, where available, ~~and~~ any other scientific information on sharks and rays and share their experience in implementing CITES provisions for listed shark and ray species, in particular current challenges;
- c) consider if they are likely to be key beneficiaries from the guidance document(s) reviewed under Decision 20.EE, paragraphs a) and c); if so, these Parties are strongly encouraged to participate in any Standing Committee working groups established to address Decision 20.EE; and
- d) seek external funding for a dedicated marine species officer and consider seconding staff members with expertise in fisheries and the sustainable management of aquatic resources to the Secretariat.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to:
 - i) in accordance with Resolution Conf 12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation and management of sharks*, provide concise (with 200 word executive summary, if the report exceeds four pages) new information on their shark and ray conservation and management activities, in particular:
 - A. the making of NDFs;
 - B. the identification of CITES-listed shark-products in trade;
 - C. the monitoring of export data of CITES-listed shark, parts and derivatives, and any suitable remedial measures applied to limit the export of specimens in order to maintain each species throughout its range at a level consistent with its role in the ecosystem;
 - D. capacity-building needs; and
 - ii) share with the Secretariat their non-detriment findings (NDFs) and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade, where available, and any other scientific information on sharks and rays, to post in the sharks and rays web portal;
 - iii) share with the Secretariat their experience in implementing CITES provisions for listed shark and ray species, in particular:
 - A. challenges related to CITES permitting process including but not limited to the making of non-detriment findings and legal acquisition findings; and

- B. challenges related to transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of fisheries management including the context of the provisions on introduction from the sea in Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16);
- b) provide information from the CITES Trade Database on commercial trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2010, sorted by species and, if possible, by product at the shipment level;
- c) invite non-Party, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organization observers to support Parties by providing concise information related to the above; and
- d) collate this information for the consideration of the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

20.CC Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) continue to provide capacity-building assistance for implementing Appendix-II shark and ray listings to Parties, especially developing countries and small island developing states, upon request;
- b) liaise with relevant Regional Fishery Bodies (RFB) including Regional Fisheries Management Organizations and Arrangements (RFMO/As) to identify opportunities for capacity-building with the same organizations, possibly in the form of attending meetings (where the RFB permits such attendance) or by directly liaising with the Secretariat of the organization to provide this information to its membership and/or the provision of training;
- c) collaborate closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to verify that information about Parties' shark management measures is correctly reflected in the shark measures database developed by FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en/>) and if not, support FAO in correcting the information;
- d) seek to collaborate with Parties and organizations to establish a repository to hold imagery under a Creative Commons license of wet and dried unprocessed shark, parts and derivatives (particularly, but not exclusively, those from CITES-listed species) along with related species level taxonomic information to facilitate refinement of automated species identification development through a range of novel technologies; and
- e) investigate mismatches and possible errors (e.g. differences in transactions reported by exporter/importer countries under the same permit; weights; species; etc.) in the CITES Trade Database and make corrections, where possible;
- f) communicate with Parties that do not appear to be reporting exports of sharks and rays despite available information showing otherwise (i.e., trade only reported by importing countries) to determine the reason for underreporting and provide necessary support to encourage reporting;
- g) explore opportunities for information exchange between fisheries researchers, fisheries authorities and CITES Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities, as appropriate, to facilitate efficient transport of biological samples for scientific and diagnostic purposes taking into consideration the discussions that occurred under Decision 19.160; and
- gh) bring the results of activities in this present Decision to the attention of the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.DD The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the information collated by the Secretariat under Decision 20.BB and the results of activities described under Decisions 20.CC; and
- b) make recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to Standing Committee

20.EE The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider if there is a need to develop new guidance or identify existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II;
- b) ~~consider review~~ the FAO's on-going guidance on Catch Document Schemes, Port State Measures and any other measures to reduce Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing;
- c) in consultation with the Animals Committee, review challenges and consider the need for the development of further appropriate mechanisms, including guidance, related to transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of fisheries management including the context of the provisions on introduction from the sea in Resolution Conf 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) and make recommendations to CoP21; and
- d) report its findings under the present Decision to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

20.FF The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the comments and recommendations provided by the Parties, the Animals Committee and the Secretariat under Decisions 20.AA, 20.BB, 20.CC and 20.DD; and
- b) prepare a report with any necessary recommendations for improving the implementation of the Convention for sharks and rays for consideration by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON THE *FEASIBILITY OF AN ADAPTED RST PROCESS FOR SHARKS AND RAYS*

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) draft a report that envisions an adapted Review of Significant Trade process for sharks and rays, which would:
 - i) select high priority species in international trade in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*;
 - ii) determine the stocks that are affected for the selected species; then
 - iii) identify range and fishing States with significant trade for the relevant stocks of concerns; and
- b) provide the Animals Committee with the report with the implications and feasibility of implementing such a process and any amendments that may be necessary to Resolution Conf 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.BB The Animals Committee shall review the report by the Secretariat under Decision 20.~~FF~~AA and make recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the recommendations by the Animals Committee under Decision 20.BB and report to CoP21.