

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



Thirty-first meeting of the Animals Committee  
Online, 31 May, 1, 4, 21 and 22 June 2021

Species specific matters

ADDENDUM TO SHARKS AND RAYS (ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Implementation of Decision 18.220

2. The Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2020/16 on 28 February 2020 as outlined in paragraphs 5 to 7 of document AC31 Doc. 25 and published the responses received in Annex 2 to the same document. The Secretariat has now published a synthesis and summary of the responses in information document AC31 Inf. 9. The eight non-detriment findings (NDF) that were received as part of the responses (from Costa Rica, New Zealand, and the United States of America) were published on the CITES sharks and NDF webpages.
3. With regard to non-detriment findings (NDFs), the Secretariat reminds the Animals Committee that, in the context of the implementation of Decision 18.132, the Secretariat developed a project concept to address 10 priority gaps or weaknesses in existing NDF guidance. One such priority area is: "Applying adaptive management, the precautionary approach, and conditional NDFs, also in low data and low-capacity situations", which may be of relevance to NDF-making for trade in sharks and rays (AC31Doc.14.1/PC25Doc.17 Addendum).
4. Regarding paragraph b) of Decision 18.220, the Secretariat updated the analysis of data on trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2000 that was shown in paragraphs 8 to 15 of document AC31 Doc. 25. The updated analysis used a dataset downloaded from the CITES trade database on 2 May 2021 (contained as an annex to the addendum). The latest available data are from 2020 and include data on *Isurus oxyrinchus* which was listed on Appendix II in 2019.
5. The data were filtered and interpreted in the same manner as described in paragraph 9 of document AC31 Doc. 25. A total of 2,109 trade transactions involving sharks and rays have been reported in the CITES trade database. Of these, 800 transactions were in specimens of Appendix-III listed species. Of the remaining 1,309 transactions, 480 were reported as being traded for commercial purposes (Purpose code T). When confiscated and pre-Convention specimens are excluded, a total of 345 commercial trade transactions remain. Both exports and re-export transactions were retained and include some redundancies in the transactions.
6. Based on the number of trade transactions, *Sphyrna* spp. make up the largest portion of commercial trade in CITES-listed shark species since 2000, noting that they were only listed in 2014. *Sphyrna lewini* (72 entries) is followed by *Carcharhinus falciformis* (55 entries), *S. zygaena* (34 entries), *S. mokarran* (29 entries) and *Alopias pelagicus* (22 entries; see Figure 1).

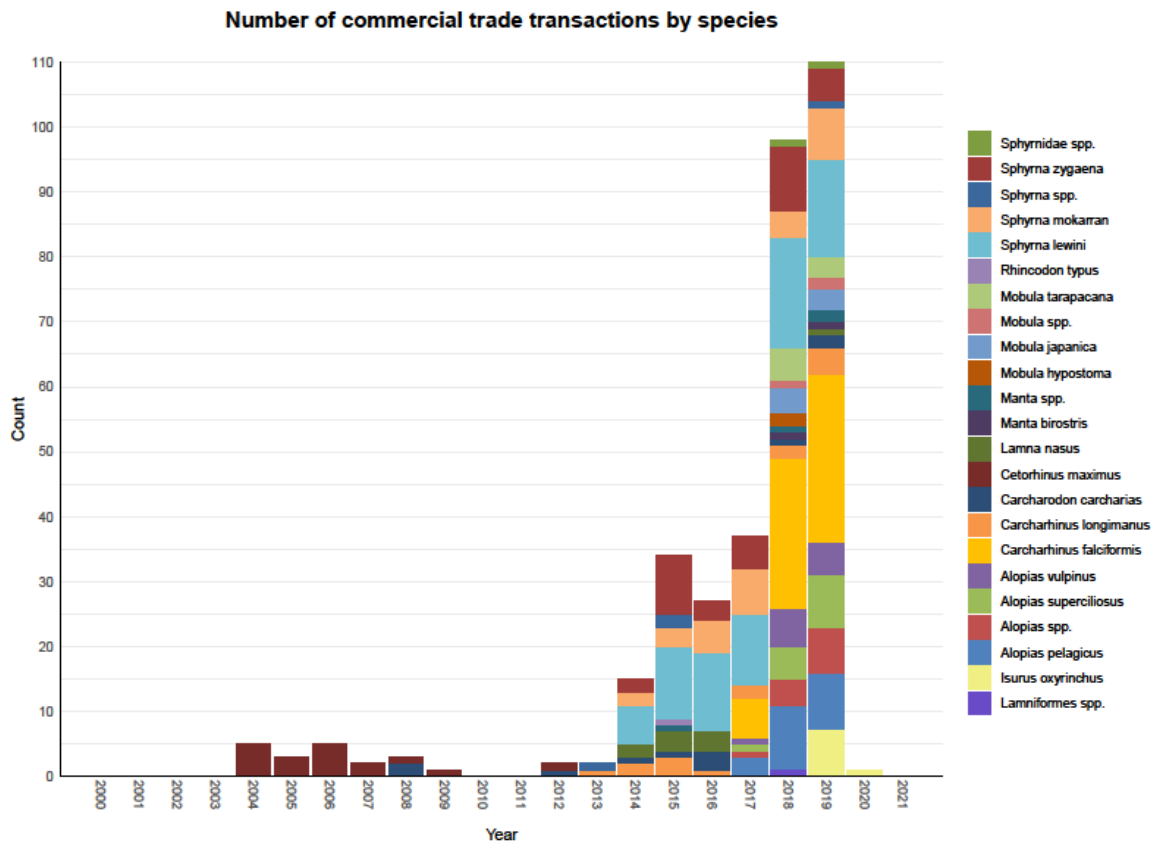


Figure 1. Number of recorded commercial trade transactions (including re-exports) in species of sharks and rays listed in CITES Appendix II (CITES trade database, May 2021).

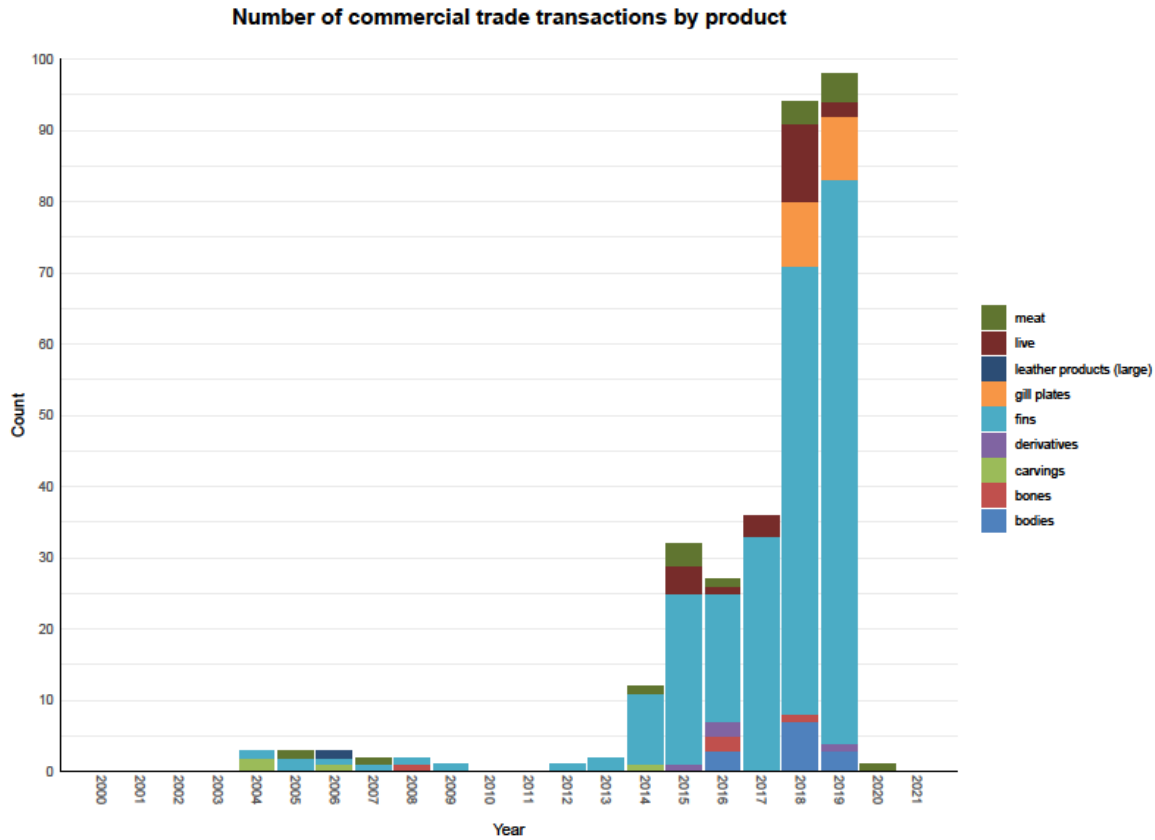


Figure 2. Number of recorded commercial trade transactions (including re-exports) in products of shark and ray species listed in CITES Appendix II (CITES trade database, May 2021).

7. The number of trade transactions involving shark fins (in particular from hammerhead sharks, genus *Sphyrna*, and silky shark, *Carcharhinus falciformis*) has continued to increase, with the addition of *Alopias* spp. fins since the genus was listed on Appendix II in 2017 (see Figure 2).
8. The greatest volume of trade recorded in kilograms was in specimens of *Carcharhinus falciformis*, followed in order of volume by *Alopias pelagicus*, *Isurus oxyrinchus*, *Sphyrna zygaena*, and *Sphyrna lewini*, with each species recording a total volume of greater than 100,000 kg over the entire trade history (Figure 3). *Isurus oxyrinchus* was listed in Appendix II in 2019 and a total of 191,489 kg of trade was recorded in the same year.

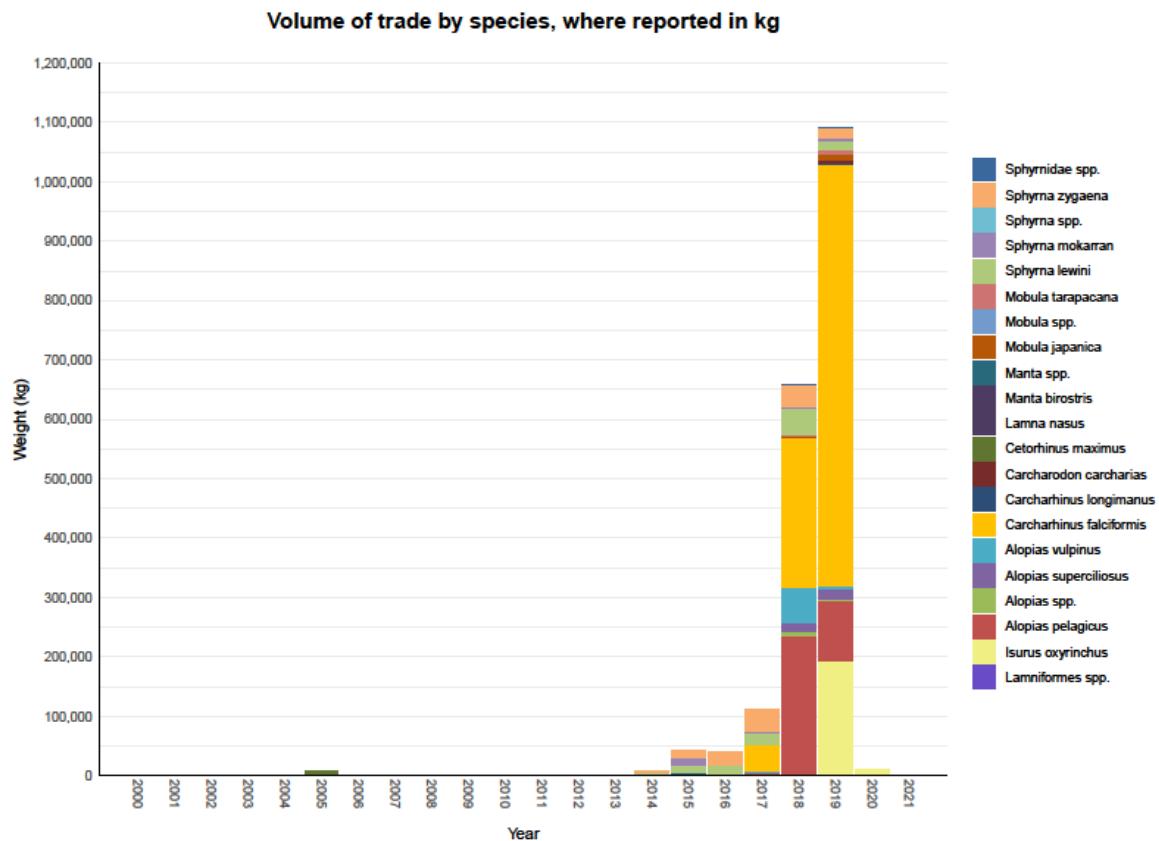


Figure 3. Volume of commercial trade transactions that was recorded in kg (including re-exports) in species of sharks and rays listed in CITES Appendix II (CITES trade database, May 2021).

9. The volume of trade reported in kilograms has increased since the last analysis of 2020, with a total volume of over 1 million kg being recorded in 2019. The largest recorded volume of product is fins, but trade in meat and bodies have also increased (Figure 4). A large volume of bodies is recorded, but consists of only nine separate transactions, seven in 2018 and two in 2019 with bodies of *Carcharhinus falciformis* making up 94 per cent of the trade.

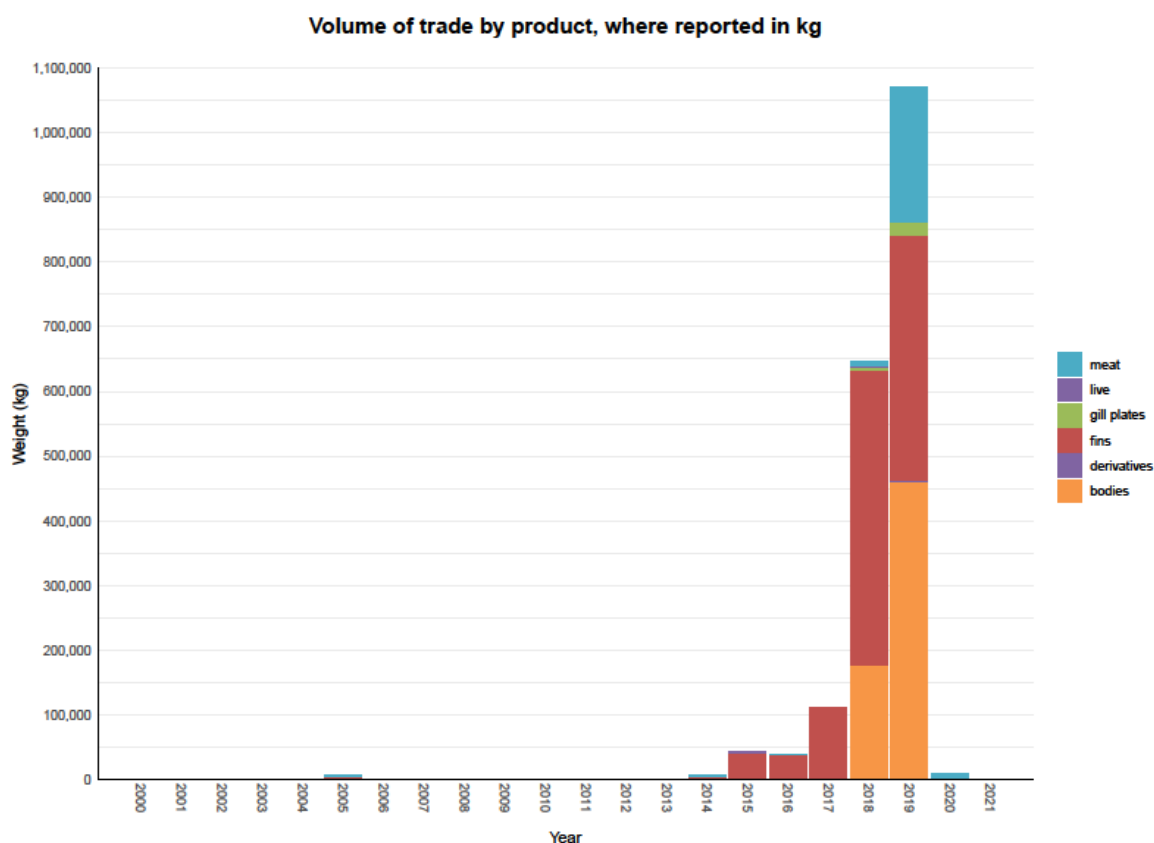


Figure 4. Volume of commercial trade transactions that was recorded in kg (including re-exports) in products of shark and ray species listed in CITES Appendix II (CITES trade database, May 2021).

10. Since the publication of document AC31 Doc. 25 in June 2020, several additional documents have become available that can support the Parties in their implementation of Resolution Conf .12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation and management of sharks*.
11. The South-East Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC) published the second volume of [Identification Guide To Sharks, Rays, Skates And Chimaeras Of The Southeast Asian Region](#) in 2020.
12. The report resulting from the expert workshop organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in February 2020, [Implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora through national fisheries legal frameworks: a study and a guide](#), and a publication of 2021 that contains chapters on sharks and rays, entitled *CITES and the sea*, are available on the FAO website. A new version of the shark fin identification software, iSharkFin 1.4, published in April 2021, is also available on the FAO website and includes identification capabilities for 13 shark and one ray species currently listed in the CITES Appendices.
13. The review of shark and ray species by Species360 and the University of Southern Denmark (SDU), referred to in paragraph 21 of document AC31. Doc. 25, entitled “Standardized data to support conservation prioritization for sharks and batoids (Elasmobranchii)”, has been published.<sup>1</sup>

#### Implementation of Decision 18.224

14. Regarding Decision 18.224 directed to the Standing Committee, the Secretariat published [Notification to the Parties No. 2020/081](#) of 22 December 2020, inviting Parties and observer organizations to join an intersessional working group on sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) to implement Decision 18.224, paragraphs a) and b). The mandate of the working group is to take into consideration the responses to the Notification in Annex 2 of document AC31 Doc. 25 and develop guidance on the making of legal acquisition

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352340920312300>

findings and 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.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.225

15. Decision 18.225 envisaged that, with the support of the Secretariat, the Animals and Standing Committees prepare a joint report for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19) on their implementation of Decisions 18.221 and 18.222. This joint report will have to be produced after the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee and prior to the deadline for the submission of document to CoP19, i.e. within a relatively short time frame. The Animals Committee may therefore wish to agree on a process concerning the joint reporting, for example by asking the Chair of the Animals Committee and the Chair of its shark and rays working group to contribute to this reporting on behalf of the Animals Committee.

#### Revised recommendations

16. With regard to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev.CoP18) and Decisions 18.223, paragraph a) and 18.225, the Secretariat invites the Animals Committee to:
  - a) establish an in-session working group on sharks and rays with the following mandate to:
    - i) consider document AC31 Doc. 25 and its addendum and examine the responses from Parties in Annex 2 and the summary in information document AC31 Inf. 9, the non-detriment findings made available on the CITES sharks webpage, and any other relevant information;
    - ii) identify Decisions on sharks and rays (Decisions 18.218 to 18.225) that may merit a renewal or extension; and
    - iii) draft recommendations directed to the Conference of the Parties for the Animals Committee to consider; and
  - b) agree on recommendations for submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19) and on the organization of the joint reporting with the Standing Committee to CoP19, as per Decision 18.225.