

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



Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November - 1 December 2017

Species specific matters

SHARKS AND RAYS (ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.):  
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 17.209 – 17.216 on *Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)*, including Decision 17.216 directed to the Standing Committee, as follows:

***Directed to Parties***

17.209 *Parties are encouraged to:*

- a) *undertake broad national consultations with all stakeholders concerning the implementation of CITES provisions for trade in species of Elasmobranchii included in the CITES Appendices, including industries involved in the harvest, export or import of the listed species; and involve in relevant meetings, events and processes CITES officials and fisheries officials, and representatives of relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations/Bodies (RFMO/RFBs) wherever possible and where limited capacity on fisheries management exists in the CITES authorities;*
- b) *share experiences and examples of making non-detriment findings for trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays including, where appropriate, how artisanal fishing is taken into consideration, and communicate them to the Secretariat for publication on the CITES Sharks and Rays Portal (<https://cites.org/prog/shark>) in order to improve capacity and knowledge of national and regional harvest levels and management measures;*
- c) *strengthen the efforts of exporting Parties in developing non-detriment findings for sharks and rays by sharing good practise and providing financial and other assistance, and consider in this regard Germany's offer to support training workshops on the application of the Shark NDF Guidance developed by the German Scientific Authority and available on the CITES Sharks and Rays Portal (<https://cites.org/prog/shark>);*
- d) *continue improving the collection of fisheries and trade data at the species level, especially with respect to CITES-listed species;*
- e) *share experiences with, and knowledge of, forensic means to efficiently, reliably and cost-effectively identify shark products in trade; and*
- f) *provide funding for a dedicated marine officer position in the CITES Secretariat, and consider seconding, or externally funding, additional staff members with expertise in fisheries and the sustainable management of aquatic resources to the Secretariat.*

**Directed to the Secretariat**

17.210 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *make guidance materials available for the identification of CITES-listed sharks and rays, including fins and other products and derivatives, on the CITES Sharks and Rays Portal, and the sharing of genetic testing protocols and other forensic approaches; and*
- b) *remind Parties that CITES-listed Elasmobranchii occur in small scale fisheries and that NDFs will need to be made if the products of these fisheries enter international trade, and draw their attention in this regard to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)'s Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines), which offer principles and guidance for small-scale fisheries governance and development.*

17.211 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *issue a notification, requesting Parties to provide new information on their shark and ray conservation and management activities, including legislation, and make the responses available to the Animals Committee for its consideration; and*
- b) *provide a summary of information in the CITES trade database on trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2000 for consideration by the Animals Committee.*

17.212 *Recognizing the continued requests from Parties for assistance in implementing Appendix-II shark and ray listings, and the need for further capacity building activities in this regard, the Secretariat shall seek additional funding to address the capacity needs raised at regional implementation meetings (Casablanca, Dakar and Xiamen)<sup>1</sup> and identified in the course of the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project.*

**Directed to the Secretariat and to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

17.213 *The CITES and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Secretariats are invited to continue and expand their collaboration concerning the conservation of and trade in sharks and rays, in particular by:*

- a) *exploring options for using the existing iSharkFin tool for the identification of dried and skinned shark fins;*
- b) *working with the World Customs Organization to expand customs codes for shark and ray species and product categories;*
- c) *making relevant studies and information relating to the conservation and management of CITES-listed shark species available on the CITES sharks and rays portal;*
- d) *maintaining and improving the database of measures on conservation and management of sharks, with the aim to provide a user-friendly overview of stricter domestic measures adopted by CITES Parties for CITES-listed shark and ray species, the species that are covered in this way, the dates of these measures, and links to the measures, including:*
  - i) *Legal protection for CITES-listed shark and ray species;*
  - ii) *Zero quotas for CITES-listed shark and ray species;*
  - iii) *Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) that have agreed to protect CMS Appendix I species; and*

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex 1 of document AC28 Com. 9.

- iv) *Members of RFMOs with measures that prohibit retention, landing, or trade of CITES-listed species; and*
- e) *continuing to support the development and application of guidance and capacity building tools for making NDFs, in particular for situations where data availability is low, the fishery is mostly artisanal, sharks are caught as bycatch, or where catches concern sharks that are part of shared stocks, and, upon request, supporting Parties with targeted advice to ensure compliance with Article IV for trade in CITES Appendix-II listed sharks and rays.*

**Directed to Parties that are members of Regional Fisheries Organizations or Bodies**

17.214 *Parties that are also members of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations or Bodies (RFMOs/RFBs) are urged to:*

- a) *work through the respective mechanisms of these RFMOs/RFBs to develop and improve methods to avoid bycatch of sharks and rays, where retention, landing, and sale of these species is prohibited under RFMO requirements, and reduce their mortality, including by exploring gear selectivity and improved techniques for live release;*
- b) *encourage the RFMOs/RFBs to consider making CITES-listed species a priority for data collection, data collation and stock assessments among non-target species, and provide these data to their members; and*
- c) *cooperate regionally on research, stock assessments, data sharing and analysis to help Parties making legal acquisition findings and NDFs for shared stocks, and on training initiatives for CITES Authorities, fisheries staff and customs officers, in cooperation with the CITES and FAO Secretariats.*

**Directed to Parties that are also Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and/or the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (CMS Sharks MoU)**

17.215 *Parties that are also Parties to CMS and/or the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (CMS Sharks MoU) are urged to work through the mechanisms of CMS and the Sharks MoU to develop and improve methods for conservation of sharks and rays.*

**Directed to the Standing Committee**

17.216 *On the basis of information provided by the Secretariat and the Animals Committee, the Standing Committee shall consider issues concerning the conservation and management of sharks and rays, and provide guidance as appropriate, pertaining to:*

- a) *legislative matters that might arise in exporting, transit or consumer countries, and those relating to legality of acquisition and introduction from the sea;*
- b) *identification and traceability, taking into consideration requirements that have been developed for the trade in specimens of other Appendix-II species, and their applicability to specimens of CITES-listed sharks and rays in trade;*
- c) *conservation and management measures for sharks and rays taken by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations; and*
- d) *coherence of CITES provisions concerning sharks and rays with conservation and management measures of other relevant multilateral environmental agreements;*

*The Standing Committee shall report on the implementation of this decision, with recommendations as appropriate, at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. At CoP17, Parties further agreed to include thirteen additional species of Elasmobranchii in Appendix II. The listing of *Mobula* spp. (nine species) entered into force on 4 April 2017. The listings of all species of *Alopias* spp. (three species) and *Carcharhinus falciformis* entered into force on 4 October 2017. The delayed entry

into force of the listings by six and 12 months respectively was to allow time for Parties to resolve related technical and administrative issues.

#### Implementation of capacity-building activities and related Decisions on sharks and rays by the Secretariat

4. Since the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013) when several species of Elasmobranchii that are commonly caught as by-catch and sometimes targeted catch in fisheries were listed on CITES Appendix II, there has been a concerted effort by a large number of stakeholders to assist Parties, in particular developing countries, in implementing CITES provisions for these species. The work of the CITES Secretariat and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in this regard has been recognized in the United Nations General Assembly annual resolution on sustainable fisheries (e.g. [A/RES/71/123](#)).
5. Within the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project “Strengthening capacity in developing countries for sustainable wildlife management and enhanced implementation of CITES wildlife trade regulations, with particular focus on commercially exploited aquatic species”, generously funded by the European Union, that concluded in March 2017, the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO and other stakeholders, implemented 19 different activities to address identified capacity needs. For many of these, factsheets are available on the CITES shark portal (<https://cites.org/eng/prog/shark>). The project and ensuing cooperation with FAO, RFMOs/RFBs further allowed awareness building of CITES provisions at eight RFMO/RFB meetings and four regional and national capacity development workshops on the Port State Measures Agreement.
6. The CITES Secretariat organised a workshop with participants from FAO, selected RFMOs and RFBs shortly before the project ended in March 2017 to enable the implementing partners of these activities to exchange views on successes, lessons learned and future opportunities for cooperation on the implementation of CITES for marine species. The meeting also allowed for the discussion of common approaches to implement the measures agreed at CoP17 concerning sharks and rays. The outputs of the workshop further inform the planning of future capacity-building activities pursuant to Decision 17.212 (see paragraph 8).
7. FAO is also currently in the process of publishing “A country and regional prioritisation for supporting implementation of CITES provisions for sharks”, which includes an updated, detailed needs assessment based on the 2014 study “[Assessment of the capacity of selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to implement the new CITES listings of Sharks and Manta Rays](#)”. The research for both studies was also funded through the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project and will provide additional background information pertinent to the implementation of several of the Decisions on sharks and rays, including Decision 17.216, directed to the Standing Committee.
8. On future capacity-building activities and the implementation of Decision 17.212, the Secretariat is pleased to announce that the European Union has confirmed its financial support for a project entitled “Implementation of CITES CoP17 Resolutions and Decisions”, which includes resources for capacity-building activities to assist Parties with the implementation of CITES provisions for sharks and rays. The Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude to the European Union for its continued generous support.
9. With regard to Decision 17.209, paragraph f), the CoP17 project further included funding for the position of a dedicated marine officer for six months, which in combination with co-funding generously provided by Germany within the framework of the “Junior Professional Officer” (JPO) Programme, allows the extension of the position of the current Marine Species Officer (JPO) until March 2019. The Secretariat is further happy to report that the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey has generously seconded a Fisheries Support Officer to the CITES Secretariat for a period of 12 months (January-December 2017).
10. The Secretariat, in close collaboration with FAO, has started developing new capacity-building activities, guided by the experiences from the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project, and the needs identified during regional implementation meetings held in 2013 and 2014. The planned activities will contribute to the implementation of several CoP17 Decisions on sharks and rays, and provide additional information for consideration of the Standing Committee in the context of its implementation of Decision 17.216. The Secretariat can provide an oral update on the status of these activities at the present meeting
11. The Secretariat will continue maintaining its shark portal website (<http://cites.org/prog/shark>) with up-to-date information on these and future activities and, pursuant to Decision 17.213 paragraph d), offer support to maintain and improve FAO’s ‘Shark Measures Database’ (<http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en/>) that provides information on instruments for the conservation and management of sharks.

12. The shark portal, pursuant to Decision 17.210, paragraph a), will also continue to serve as a repository for: identification materials, including for fins and other products and derivatives; genetic testing protocols and other forensic approaches as they are or become available; reference and training materials; non-detriment findings (NDF) and NDF guidance; events and agendas; and other relevant publications.

#### Implementation by the Animals Committee of relevant provisions in Resolution Conf.12.6 (Rev. CoP17)

13. The Conference of the Parties, in Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation and management of sharks*, paragraphs 2, 9 and 14:
  2. *DIRECTS the Animals Committee to examine new information provided by range States on trade and other available relevant data and information, and report their analyses at meetings of the Conference of the Parties; [...]*
  9. *DIRECTS the Animals Committee to make species-specific recommendations at meetings of the Conference of the Parties if necessary on improving the conservation status of sharks; [...]*

and

14. *DIRECTS the Animals Committee to report progress on shark and ray activities at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties.*
14. In addressing its mandate and analysing information received from Parties, the Animals Committee at its 27th and 28th meetings (AC27, Veracruz, April 2014; AC28, Tel Aviv, August 2015) highlighted a variety of issues to the Standing Committee (for reference see documents [SC65 Doc. 46](#) and [SC66 Doc 53.1](#)), which formed the basis of the elements contained under Decision 17.216 (see document [CoP17 Doc. 56.1](#)).
15. Pursuant to Decision 17.211, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2017/031 of 11 April 2017, inviting Parties to submit any new information on shark and ray conservation and management activities and requested an excerpt of the data in the CITES trade database on trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2000 from UNEP-WCMC (see [AC29 Doc. 23](#)).
16. At its 29th meeting (AC29, Geneva, July 2017), the Animals Committee examined this information, and formulated a new set of recommendations, some of which are pertinent to the mandate of the Standing Committee [see document [AC29 Com.3 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)].
17. The information submitted by Parties to AC27, AC28 and AC29, which is relevant to the present document, can be found in documents [AC27 Doc. 22.1 Annex](#), AC28 Doc. 17.1.1 [Annexes 1-10](#) and [AC29 Doc. 23 Annex 1 \(Rev.1\)](#). Document [AC29 Inf. 23](#) provides a summary of AC29 Doc. 23 Annex 1 (Rev.1).

#### Request for guidance by the Standing Committee through Decision 17.216

18. In the process of implementing the relevant provisions in different countries and industries, it is foreseeable that new questions and challenges will be identified, some of which are more technical in nature, i.e. falling under the purview of the Animals Committee, and some of which are more regulatory in nature, where guidance by the Standing Committee would be helpful.
19. The issues for which the Standing Committee seems best placed to provide guidance were identified by the Animals Committee, during bilateral exchanges with Parties, and in the course of capacity-building activities, and through consultations with stakeholder and implementing Partners. They have been summarized in Decision 17.216.

#### Implementation of Decision 17.216, paragraph a): legislative matters

20. As reported at SC66 and CoP17 (see documents [SC66 Doc 53.1](#) and [CoP17 Doc. 56.1](#)), the Secretariat has been notified by Parties and other stakeholders that the collection and transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of the fisheries management of several species of Elasmobranchii had been significantly delayed or completely suspended when CITES provisions for the species entered into force. Challenges seem to particularly occur in the case of samples taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any State, i.e. falling under the provisions for "Introduction from the Sea", as contained in Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea*, where transport to the destination State would go through vessels or ports of other States. Similar challenges have been

reported for at least one other marine species (see document SC69 Doc. 36). The Secretariat notes that these cases may partially be due to difficulties in communication between the scientific institutions concerned and the relevant CITES authorities, as well as limited experience in dealing with “Introduction from the Sea” by authorities.

21. Another challenge for collection and transport of biological samples of species in low data situations may lie in the making of NDFs. For scientific samples with no or a negligible impact on the conservation of the species concerned, the simplified procedures for biological samples, that are outlined in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP17) on *Permits and certificates* may help to address this. The Secretariat notes however, that the registration of persons and bodies that may benefit from such simplified procedures required in paragraph 20 b) i) may be a large hurdle in practice. It may therefore be helpful to consider if establishing a list and pre-approving institutions involved in the collection and transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of the fisheries management would be warranted. The Secretariat further notes that the table “Types of biological samples and their use” contained in Annex 4 of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP17) may need to be updated to include sample types commonly collected in the context of fisheries management. Finally, the Secretariat notes that the Standing Committee, under Decision 17.85, is also tasked to “*examine mechanisms to facilitate the efficient international movement of samples for forensic or enforcement purpose*” and that some overlap may exist between the two issues.
22. Parties also highlighted the potential challenges of assessing whether the conditions for the granting of an export permit were met for specimens obtained during a fishing trip, where fishing activities took place in multiple locations, e.g. inside and outside areas of national jurisdiction, that differ in applicable legislation and/or the non-detriment finding by the Scientific Authority.
23. Pursuant to the request by the Animals Committee [[see document AC29 Com. 3 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)], the Secretariat would further like to bring to the attention of the Standing Committee the need for guidance to Parties when issuing permits for products that are composed of multiple species, which can include listed and non-listed species. Products based on cartilage (chondroitin) or liver oil (squalene) are potential examples. The Secretariat notes that footnote 1 d) of the *Vicugna vicugna* Appendix II listing addresses a similar case and could form the basis to address this issue.

#### Implementation of Decision 17.216, paragraph b): identification and traceability

24. While good basic information is presented in the 2015 FAO report “[State of the global market for shark products](#)” and the number of trade records in the CITES trade database is slowly growing, Parties and stakeholders flagged as a priority a better understanding of the supply chain of shark products derived from CITES-listed species. Decision 17.213, paragraph b), instructs the Secretariat and FAO to work with the World Customs Organization to expand customs codes for shark and ray species and product categories, which would be helpful towards this end. Additional efforts, such as species-specific custom codes that were adopted nationally by several Parties, and knowledge-sharing among relevant actors along the supply chain, and among other stakeholders, may also improve the understanding of the chain of custody.
25. The Secretariat notes that FAO is currently planning to conduct a study on the utilisation of and trade in shark and ray meat and other non-fin products, which may provide further relevant information. It further notes that the Animals Committee endorsed the development of case studies by FAO and others concerning international trade in and markets for these products. This study is expected to provide novel techniques for species identification, especially where products contain a mixture of different species.
26. Under the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project, the Secretariat had commissioned two expert studies relating to traceability: one study ([SC66 Inf. 12](#)) reviews CITES traceability schemes that have been developed for the trade in processed products of Appendix-II species, while the other ([SC66 Inf. 11](#)) reviews the market chain and traceability systems that are in place for other commercially exploited aquatic species. The studies contain a wealth of findings and recommendations that seem pertinent to the Standing Committee’s mandate under Decision 17.216, paragraph b), including, but not limited to:
  - a) Traceability is a tool to protect legal trade, with limited use to combat illegal trade;
  - b) Traceability should be standard-based and compatible with CITES standards for electronic permitting;
  - c) Agreed traceability standards allow integration across technologies and platforms, and avoid proliferation of requirements that can be a burden to exporters and traders;



- d) Stakeholder involvement in the development of traceability systems is important;
- e) Electronic systems and digital data entry offer advantages over paper-based systems, where feasible; and
- f) Traceability systems should be linked to risk-management approaches.

These elements should of course not be considered in isolation, but also in the context of document SC69 Doc. 42, in which the Secretariat reports on traceability at the present meeting.

- 27. With the generous support of Germany, the implementation of traceability as a tool for strengthening CITES processes was tested in a pilot project in Costa Rica from December 2015 to February 2016 (see "[Catch documentation and traceability of shark products in Costa Rica](#)"). The findings of this study may be relevant to the Standing Committee, in particular regarding the benefits of linking traceability systems with certain monitoring, control and surveillance measures, such as Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS).
- 28. Pursuant to the request by the Animals Committee [[see document AC29 Com. 3 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)], the Secretariat would further like to bring to the Standing Committee's attention the importance of ensuring that CITES species are identified accurately at species level at the first point of capture/landing, which will facilitate the implementation of traceability systems for international trade.
- 29. To assist Parties in identification, the CITES Secretariat supported FAO in the development of the isharkFin software, which uses machine learning techniques to identify shark species from shark fin shapes, under the 2013-2016 EU-CITES project. To assist the further development of this tool, the Animals Committee at AC29 urged Parties and all relevant stakeholders to provide clear imagery of wet and dried unprocessed shark fins (particularly, but not exclusively from CITES-listed species) along with related species level taxonomic information to FAO.
- 30. The Secretariat would also like to recall that issues pertaining to species identification continue to be highlighted by Parties as a challenge faced by customs and other relevant actors along the supply chain. As large amount of identification materials already exist, it would be helpful for the Secretariat and other stakeholders to understand whether wider dissemination of existing material would be sufficient and where real gaps in the existing identification lie. This could fit well into the mandate of the joint intersessional working group on capacity building and identification materials established pursuant to Decision 17.32 on capacity-building at the joint meeting of AC29 and the 23 meeting of the Plants Committee (PC23) (see [document AC29/PC23 ExSum \(Rev.1\)](#), which among other tasks shall:
  - b) *determine the current availability of capacity building materials, including identification guides and other tools, and enhance their accessibility.*

#### Implementation of Decision 17.216, paragraph c): measures by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations

- 31. Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Bodies (RFBs) have a variety of conservation and management measures in place for sharks and rays taken in their fisheries. These include the prohibition of retention and landing for several CITES-listed species; gear restrictions; requirements for vessel registration; and vessel monitoring and observer coverage. All these measures may apply differently depending on the type of vessel, and whether a vessels' flag state is a contracting party to a particular RFMO. As reported above (see paragraph 11), FAO, in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat, within the previous EU CITES project, developed a [Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks](#) that provides a collection of instruments for the conservation and management of sharks in response to the challenge for Parties to assess which regulations apply in a particular case. The Secretariat, pursuant to Decision 17.213, paragraph d), will continue to collaborate with FAO to maintain and improve this database. How to take these provisions into account when making legal acquisition findings remains however a challenge that may benefit from some additional guidance.
- 32. Due to the migratory nature and transboundary stocks of many CITES-listed sharks and rays, regional cooperation in the making of non-detriment findings is desirable in order to take all mortality on the stock into account. In the Secretariat's view, RFMOs and RFBs, in particular when they are data holders, may often be well placed to support the making of NDFs and even to establish and allocate export quotas within their specific mandate, which could then be adopted by national CITES authorities. [Resolution Conf. 10.3 on Designation and role of the Scientific Authorities](#) provides some guidance in that regard, including:

2. e) *neighbouring Parties consider sharing their resources by supporting common scientific institutions to provide the scientific findings required under the Convention;*

but further guidance by CoP, e.g. in the form of amendments to [Resolution Conf. 10.3](#), may be helpful.

#### Implementation of Decision 17.216, paragraph d): coherence of CITES provisions with those of other MEAs

33. At AC28, the Animals Committee highlighted in its recommendations [see document [AC28 Com 9 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)] that several species of sharks and rays are listed in the Appendices of CITES and of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and, in particular, that currently *Manta* spp. species are listed in CITES Appendix II, but simultaneously in Appendix I of CMS. With regard to the take of species listed on CMS Appendix I, the text of the CMS states:

5. *Parties that are Range States of a migratory species listed in Appendix I shall prohibit the taking of animals belonging to such species. Exceptions may be made to this prohibition only if:*
  - a) *the taking is for scientific purposes;*
  - b) *the taking is for the purpose of enhancing the propagation or survival of the affected species;*
  - c) *the taking is to accommodate the needs of traditional subsistence users of such species; or*
  - d) *extraordinary circumstances so require; provided that such exceptions are precise as to content and limited in space and time. Such taking should not operate to the disadvantage of the species.*

This may lead to a situation for Parties that are also Parties to CMS similar to the one described for RFMOs/RFBs (paragraph 22) where stricter regulations than those applicable for trade in CITES Appendix II species could apply. However, there seems to be uncertainty on the conditions under which this would be the case, so guidance on how Parties should take this into consideration when trading in *Manta* spp. may be required. This guidance should also consider the case when a specimen is caught as bycatch, taking into account any guidance that CMS may have regarding the handling of bycaught specimens.

#### Recommendations

34. To assist fulfilment of its mandate pursuant to Decision 17.216, the Standing Committee may wish to consider establishing an intersessional working group with the terms of reference presented in the Annex to this document.



Intersessional working group on sharks and rays

Mandate

In support of the implementation of Decision 17.216, the intersessional working group on sharks and rays of the Standing Committee shall:

1. Consider the information in paragraphs 20 to 33 of this document.
2. Review the following:
  - a) possibilities to simplify procedures for the transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of the fisheries management, which may include developing draft amendments to Resolution 12.3 (Rev. CoP17) on *Permits and certificates* and its Annex 4, taking into account, as appropriate, other pertinent discussions of the Standing Committee;
  - b) how to take account of measures and regulations agreed under Regional Fisheries Management Organizations and Bodies, or other multilateral environmental agreements, in particular the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), in the implementation of CITES;
  - c) the role of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations and Bodies in supporting the making of non-detriment findings; and whether amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.3 on *Designation and role of the Scientific Authorities* are needed to better reflect this role;
  - d) identification and traceability issues, taking into consideration requirements that have been developed for the trade in specimens of other Appendix-II species, and their applicability to specimens of CITES-listed sharks and rays in trade; and
  - e) legislative issues that might be hindering the implementation of the Convention for sharks and rays.
3. Report on its deliberations and make recommendations to the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee for its report to CoP18.