

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



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Species specific matters

Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)

LEGAL ACQUISITION FINDINGS AND CONTROL AND MONITORING
OF STOCKPILES OF SHARK PARTS AND DERIVATIVES:
REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been submitted by the United States of America as Chair of the working group on sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.).*

Introduction

2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted the following Decision 18.224 on *Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)*:

18.224 Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) *develop guidance on the making of legal acquisition findings, and related assessments for introductions from the sea for CITES-listed shark species in the context of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 18.7 on Legal acquisition findings;*
 - b) *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; and*
 - c) *report its findings under Decision 18.224, paragraphs a) and b) to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*
3. As outlined in [Notification 2020/081](#), the Standing Committee established an intersessional working group on sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) with a mandate to:

Taking into consideration the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2020/016 requesting for new information on shark and ray conservation and management activities, the working group shall:

* *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.*

- a) *develop guidance on the making of legal acquisition findings, and related assessments for introductions from the sea for CITES-listed shark species in the context of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 18.7 on Legal acquisition findings;*
 - b) *develop new guidance or identify existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives with an emphasis on the shark meat trade, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II; and*
 - c) *report its findings under Decision 18.224, paragraphs a) and b) to the Standing Committee.*
4. The membership of the intersessional working group on sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) was agreed as follows (23 Parties; 13 Observers): Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Canada, Comoros, Croatia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (Chair), Yemen; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IUCN Species Survival Commission Shark Specialist Group (SSG), BLOOM Association, Blue Resources Trust, Global Guardian Trust, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA), Oceana Inc., Sea Shepherd Legal, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoological Society of London.

Recommendation

5. The working group recommends that the Standing Committee agree to the following:
- a) Encourage the Secretariat to liaise with relevant RFMO/As to identify opportunities for capacity building with the same organizations. In this regard, we recommend that the Standing Committee submit the draft decision 19.XX1, below, to the Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19; 14 - 25 November 2022; Panama City, Panama) for consideration.
 - b) Invite self-nomination from more Parties, particularly those Parties that self-identify as key beneficiaries from the guidance document(s) provided by Decision 19.XX2 paragraphs a) and b) to encourage further and broader participation in any Standing Committee working groups established to address Decision 19.XX2. In this regard, we recommend that the Standing Committee submit the draft decision 19.XX3, below, to CoP19 for consideration.
 - c) Invite the Standing Committee to recommend to CoP19 the renewal of Decision 18.224 with some amendments as captured in Decision 19.XX2 below (text proposed to be deleted from CoP18 Decision is in strikethrough and proposed new text is underlined). Although this intersessional working group made progress in its deliberations, more time and discussion are needed to fulfil its mandate.
 - d) Invite the Standing Committee to prepare information to support engagement with and capacity building of RFMO/As and include this information within the guidance called for by Decision 19.XX2. In this regard, we recommend that the Standing Committee submit paragraph d), below, as part of Decision 19.XX2, for consideration at CoP19.
 - e) Invite the Standing Committee to review the content of the following sources and to include relevant information within the guidance called for by Decision 19.XX2 paragraphs a-c): 1) FAO's guidance on Catch Document Schemes, pending publication (FAO. 2022. Understanding and implementing catch documentation schemes - A guide for national authorities. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 14. Rome.), 2) guidance the CITES Parties have agreed on traceability, and 3) relevant documents on the Secretariat's website on traceability (https://cites.org/eng/prog/Cross-cutting_issues/traceability). In this regard, we recommend that the Standing Committee submit paragraph e), below, as part of Decision 19.XX2, for consideration at CoP19.
6. As indicated above, the working group recommends that the Standing Committee submit the following set of draft decisions for consideration at CoP19:

19.XX1 Directed to Secretariat

Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall liaise with relevant RFMO/As to identify opportunities for capacity building with the same organizations, possibly in the form of attending meetings (where the RFMO/A 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. The aim of this exercise would be to share information to improve the knowledge of CITES in the workings of each relevant RFMO/A.

19.XX2 Directed to Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) develop guidance on the making of legal acquisition findings, and related assessments for introductions from the sea for CITES-listed shark species in the context of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 18.7 on Legal acquisition findings and its annexes 1 and 2. This guidance should include detailed descriptions and related graphics on specific scenarios regarding trade in CITES-listed shark species;
- b) 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; ~~and~~
- c) report its findings under Decision ~~18.224 (Rev. CoP19)~~, 19.XX2 paragraphs a), ~~and b)~~, d) ~~and e)~~ to the ~~19th~~ 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- d) prepare information to support engagement with and capacity building of RFMO/As and include this information within the guidance called for by Decision 19.XX2 paragraph a).
- e) review the FAO's guidance on Catch Document Schemes, pending publication (FAO, 2022. Understanding and implementing catch documentation schemes - A guide for national authorities. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 14. Rome.), guidance the CITES Parties have agreed on traceability, relevant documents on the Secretariat's website on traceability (https://cites.org/eng/prog/Cross-cutting_issues/traceability) and include relevant information within the guidance called for by Decision 19.XX2 paragraph a).

19.XX3 Directed to Parties

The Parties shall consider if they are likely to be key beneficiaries from the guidance document(s) provided by Decision 19.XX2 paragraphs a) and b); if so, the same Parties are strongly encouraged to participate in any Standing Committee working groups established to address Decision 19.XX2.