



## Outcomes of the Chennai Capacity Building Workshop<sup>1</sup> on Implementation of CITES Appendix II Listings of Shark and Manta Ray Species

Chennai, India

August 26 ~ 28, 2014

### Preamble

The participants to the workshop<sup>2</sup>, representatives of departments of fisheries, environment and forestry and CITES authorities from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, endorsed the main outcomes and recommendations of the Xiamen Declaration and the Colombo Workshop, and updated the implementation status of the recommended actions. They identified additional national and regional measures in support of the implementation of the CITES Appendix II listings of sharks and manta ray species.

The participants welcomed the assistance and support from FAO, CITES, BOBP-IGO, BOBLME, SACEP, IOTC, MPEDA, CMFRI, Deep Sea Going Out Artisanal Fishing Association, the Pew Environment Group, Manta Trust, TRAFFIC-India, and Humane Society International, and encouraged ongoing regional collaboration across the Bay of Bengal.

The participants recognized that most of the countries present at the workshop had committed to developing a National Plan of Action for Sharks (NPOA-Sharks), and that a Regional Plan of Action for Sharks (RPOA-Sharks) for the Bay of Bengal is being envisaged.

### Regional measures

The participants of the workshop agreed to undertake the following actions to ensure that all countries are able to comply with the CITES Appendix II listings of the 5 new shark species and 2 manta ray species:

#### **1. Coordination/communication:**

**National:** There is a clear need for additional National Coordination among relevant agencies to ensure that to the extent feasible, each relevant agency is aware of the new requirements and will be able to fully comply and share information necessary to ensure compliance with the Appendix II listings.

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<sup>1</sup> The workshop was organized by India's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, C.P.R. Environmental Education Center and Humane Society International/India, with support from CITES Secretariat, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and the European Union.

<sup>2</sup> The meeting was attended, in addition to country representatives listed above, by representatives from intergovernmental organizations, BOBP-IGO, BOBLME, SACEP, IOTC, Indian organizations, MPEDA, CMFRI, Deep Sea Going Out Artisanal Fishing Association, and non-governmental organizations, Manta Trust, the Pew Environment Group, TRAFFIC-India, and Humane Society International.

**Regional:** As appropriate, regional workshops will be carried out to ensure customs, compliance and other officers are adequately trained in the documentation needs for the new listings. Regional support from BOBLME, BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC will continue to help facilitate the implementation of the shark and ray listings and the management and conservation measures as follows.

- BOBLME and BOBP-IGO are supporting the development of NPOAs, addressing the gaps in data collection and species identification in member countries.
- With the limited budget and time available for the BOBLME project, the project, in collaboration with BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC, may help finalize the NPOAs, assist in developing a Regional Plan of Actions for Sharks and organize regional shark working group meeting early 2015. It may also assist in the essential capacity building needed in shark identification where it is still needed.
- The RFBs such as BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC have a major role to play along with the RFMOs, RFBs can also help with the implementation of the shark listings, advisory, stock assessment and capacity building. It would require a lead country in the region to undertake that task. SEAFDEC is already in touch with the CITES Secretariat.

## 2. Capacity building:

**Species/product identification:** Each country will undertake, either in isolation or in partnership with regional countries and experts, species product identification training. Training workshops may be partnered, where possible, with other activities, such as the scientific observer training programs within the Indian Ocean.

## 3. Data collection and scientific support for the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs):

**Data collection:** Although there have been improvements in recent years, data collection on shark catches by Indian Ocean fisheries remains limited. In many cases where data is being collected, it is being incorrectly recorded. A concerted action/effort to enhance data gathering abilities, database development and ongoing maintenance and verification in the following would be needed if relevant stock status indicators, for the newly listed shark and manta ray species could be developed in the future to support NDF documentation.

**Stock structure and delimitation:** To better understand the impact of fisheries on shark populations, it is important to determine the stock boundaries, existence of mixing areas and migration between geographic areas within and between Oceans. The IOTC, through EU funding, will be undertaking a project to examine if there is population structure of tunas of interest to the IOTC throughout the Indian Ocean. Key shark species, including some of the newly listed Appendix II species may be included in the final project if matching funds can be identified. Participant countries agreed that a collaborative approach should be undertaken to the extent feasible.

**Species biology and ecology:** Noting that the IOTC is currently developing an Indian Ocean shark research plan (IO-ShYP) with the aim of “*promoting cooperation and coordination among IOTC researchers, to improve the quality of the scientific advice on sharks provided to*

*the Commission, namely by conducting quantitative stock assessments for selected species by 2016, and to better assess the impact on shark stocks of the current IOTC Conservation and Management Measures*”, participants agreed that to the extent possible/applicable, national research scientists undertaking research programs on the newly listed shark and manta ray species, should work in collaboration with the IOTC Secretariat to ensure resources are maximised and objectives are aligned. The IO-ShYP will be discussed at the upcoming IOTC Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (27-31 October 2014 in Japan) where all Indian Ocean coastal states are invited to actively participate.

**Making of NDFs:** Good practical guidance on the making of NDFs is required. NDF findings and experiences, as well as examples of best practice, should be shared between, and implemented by Scientific Authorities and relevant fisheries agencies. Malaysia and Indonesia reported on NDF guidance that is being developed with support from Germany. They advised that regional capacity building workshops should be organized for relevant authorities and experts to develop national NDFs and to explore the feasibility of a regional NDF for trade in CITES-listed sharks and manta rays. The workshops could make use of available guidance, and/or adapt this guidance to meet the specific needs of the Bay of Bengal countries and region.

### **National measures concerning India**

The participants of the workshop recognized that India<sup>3</sup> had agreed on the following in support of the CITES Appendix II listings of shark and manta ray species and the management of shark fisheries within Indian waters:

- The collective objective of all stakeholder groups is to achieve sustainable fisheries management and to comply with the requirements of international conventions such as CITES that India is a party to.
- There is a need for greater involvement of all stakeholder groups, including the fishermen community in order to achieve effective management of shark species. Fishermen community must be included in all stages of shark species management – from planning to implementation.
- There is a need for clear organizational setup and division of duties amongst the various Government of India organizations for the creation of an NDF for the CITES Appendix II listed species.
- There exists a deficiency of scientific data and all participants agree that a clear roadmap for scientific assessment of the CITES listed species is required.
- Methodology for uniform data collection and collation needs to be created.
- The Department of Agriculture, Dairy and Animal Husbandry is the apex body for the management of shark species and data collection shall be coordinated by nodal agencies appointed by them, such as Fishery Survey of India and Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. Further, molecular identification technology and expertise on elasmobranchs as offered by CMFRI would also be extended for the management of shark species.

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<sup>3</sup> Representatives from MoEF, Forest Departments, Fisheries Departments, Customs, NGOs and Fishermen community.

- Awareness building activities for the implementation agencies, the fishermen community and trader groups on the CITES listed shark species and shark based products shall be undertaken by various agencies such as MPEDA, CMFRI and FSI.
- Information material in local coastal languages shall be created with the aim to achieve effective outreach at grassroots level.
- All the participants recognize the need for immense manpower required for monitoring of products from CITES listed sharks species at customs and port routes. Hence, it has been agreed upon to building capacity to facilitate this further.
- Various coastal regions in India need to identify the CITES listed species that they need to prioritize for assessment and management.
- Traders are key stakeholders and concrete efforts should be made to sensitize traders. All participants agree that traders have an obligation to follow CITES regulations and strict penalties should exist for violations of CITES Appendix II listings by traders.
- The current catch composition of shark landings shall be analyzed and evaluation of the reliance of fishermen livelihoods on CITES Appendix II listed shark species shall be assessed.
- There is a challenge in the removal of shark species as part of by-catch. Many of the participants agree that sharks that are caught in Indian waters ought to be landed whole and utilized fully.
- There is a need to create concrete steps for identification of pupping grounds and catch ranges of the CITES listed species. Further, all participants agree that fishermen need to be involved as key members of this data collection effort.
- There is a need to be create legal provisions in order to address the trade of CITES listed species. Many of the participants believe that WPA listings can be upgraded from time to time vis-à-vis CITES listings, subject to development of an NDF for these species.