

# Implementing new CITES listings of sharks and manta rays

## Traceability of CITES-listed marine species



CITES regulates international trade in certain species to ensure legality, sustainability and **traceability**.

To ensure traceability, Parties must record and trace trade from the country of origin to the country of destination through the issuance of appropriate CITES documents and the inclusion of all relevant trade in national annual reports, which are then included in the CITES Trade Database.

To address the priority needs identified earlier, i.e., improving the availability of identification materials and establishing traceability systems for specimens and processed products, CITES and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) gathered existing identification materials on sharks and rays, and developed an online identification materials database where the materials can be searched by geographical area and species coverage.

CITES and FAO also collaborated to develop iSharkFin, a software system that helps identify shark species from a picture of its fin.

They jointly produced standard presentation materials to better describe traceability in the context of CITES, particularly in the fisheries sector.

- Traceability presentation: <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/prog/shark/docs/5%20Traceability.pptx>
- Identification material on sharks: <https://cites.org/prog/shark/resources.php>
- iSharkFin: [www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/tools/software/isharkfin/en/](http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/tools/software/isharkfin/en/)

### Shark



Identification material Database

Two studies to investigate shark traceability systems were commissioned:

- Review of CITES traceability schemes that were developed for the trade in processed products of Appendix-II species
- Review of the market chain and traceability systems that are in place for commercially-exploited aquatic species. This study was expanded to reviewing a possible traceability system for shark trade in Costa Rica (with co-financing from Germany)

- Traceability schemes study: <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/prog/shark/docs/BodyofInf12.pdf>
- Market chain and traceability schemes study: <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/prog/shark/docs/BodyofInf11.pdf>



## Outcomes and lessons

- ✓ Avoided possible duplication of efforts by focusing on collecting existing identification materials and identifying gaps
- ✓ Better view of the opportunities and challenges of traceability in CITES-listed shark and ray specimens of different commodity types
- ✓ Successful pilot of full product-chain traceability in Costa Rica
- ✓ Allowed CITES to contribute to the discussions on fish traceability and catch documentation schemes convened under the auspices of FAO

## Looking into the future...

- There are many shark and ray identification materials available, but geographical and taxonomic gaps still exist
- The practicability of the materials – simple, user-friendly, waterproof (for use at ports or onboard fishing vessels), and in local languages – needs further improvement
- The traceability discussion is still in its infancy in CITES. More studies and collaborative work are needed for the effective tracing of CITES-listed shark and manta ray products in trade



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