

The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** is an international agreement between 179 countries. International trade in some 35,000 species is covered under CITES, 97 % of which are included in its Appendix II where international trade is strictly regulated but not prohibited. CITES helps ensure that international trade in wild plants and animals is legal, sustainable and traceable.

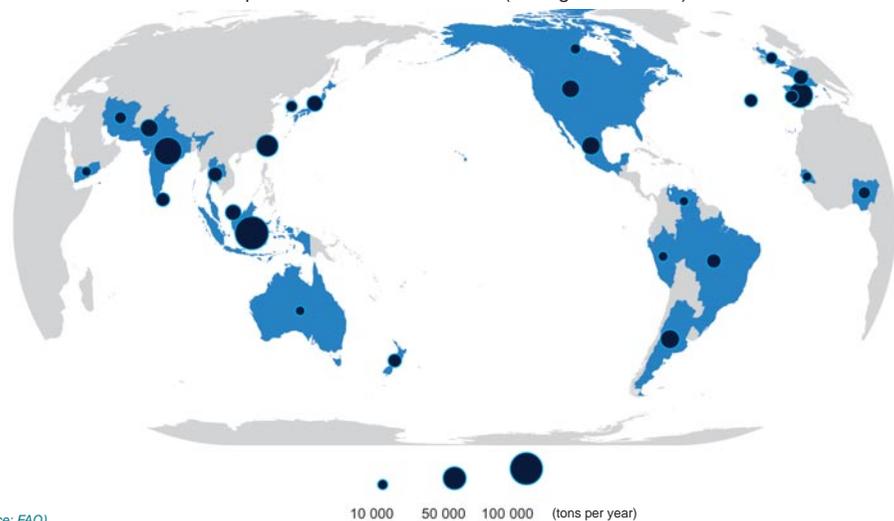
The **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** is a Specialized UN Agency established in 1945 with the goal to achieve food security for all. Its mandate is to improve nutrition, increase agricultural productivity and sustainability, raise the standard of living in rural populations and contribute to global economic growth. It currently has 194 Member Nations and has presence in more than 130 countries.

## Scientific basis for listing under CITES

For species to be included in, deleted from or transferred between CITES Appendices I and II, they must meet certain biological and trade criteria, with specific provisions for commercially-exploited aquatic species.

The recently-listed elasmobranchs meet the CITES listing criteria because they are species of low productivity that have shown historic populations declines owing to international trade in fins and meat and to bycatch. The great and smooth hammerhead sharks were included because the specimens most frequently traded resemble those of the scalloped hammerhead to such an extent that it is difficult to distinguish amongst them. Manta rays are in demand in international trade and have a behaviour and biology that render them vulnerable to fishing. Regulation of trade in these species is considered necessary under CITES to ensure that the harvest of specimens is not reducing the wild populations to a level at which their survival may become threatened.

TOP 26 SHARK-FISHING COUNTRIES, AREAS AND TERRITORIES  
Reported shark catches in tons (average 2000-2009)



(Source: FAO)

## About the EU-CITES Project

At CoP16, the European Union announced a contribution of EUR 1.2 million to CITES to assist developing countries in their implementation of the new listings of sharks and manta rays in 2013-2015. The EU has continued to support CITES-related activities over the years.



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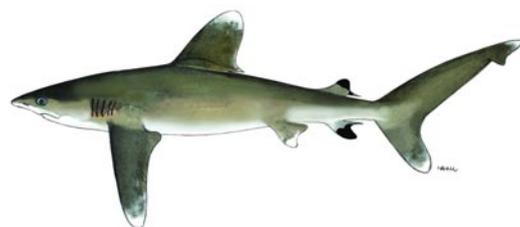
A brief introduction to

## CITES listing of shark species

At the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP16) in March 2013, **five shark species and all manta rays** were included in CITES Appendix II. The entry into effect of these listings was delayed until 14 September 2014 to resolve technical and administrative issues related to their implementation.

These listings set challenges and opportunities for Parties in implementing CITES regulations for highly-traded fishery commodities.

## Which sharks and rays were listed in CITES Appendix II at CoP16?



Oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)

Oceanic-epipelagic and occasionally coastal, tropical and warm-temperate shark that is found worldwide.

Maximum length of 350-395 cm, but most are < 300 cm. Fins are in demand and of high value on the international market.



Porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*)

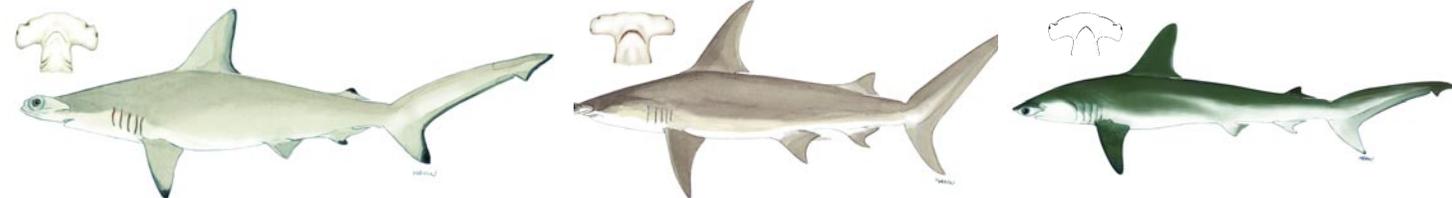
A wide-ranging, coastal and oceanic shark, and one of the few truly high-latitude sharks that is often encountered in Arctic and Antarctic waters. Maximum reported length is 355 cm.

The meat and, to a lesser extent, the fins are in demand and of high value on the international market.



Manta rays (*Manta* spp.)

Distributed in most tropical and subtropical seas and sometimes in temperate waters. The giant manta (*Manta birostris*) reaches a maximum disc width of > 700 cm but most average 450 cm. The reef manta (*Manta alfredi*) grows to an average of 400 cm. Skin, cartilage and gill rakers are the main products in international trade.



Scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*); great hammerhead shark (*S. mokarran*); smooth hammerhead shark (*S. zygaena*)

Mostly coastal-pelagic and semi-oceanic. Found around the globe in coastal warm temperate and tropical seas. The scalloped hammerhead reaches a maximum length of ~370 cm, while the great hammerhead can reach > 600 cm. The smooth hammerhead is the most cool-water-tolerant member of the family and is found inshore and in shallow waters. Maximum total length < 400 cm.

The fins of these three hammerhead sharks are highly valued in international trade, while the meat is mainly consumed locally.

Other aquatic species, including other elasmobranchs, are already included in CITES Appendices.

Over the past 10 years, Parties have placed the basking shark, great white shark and whale shark in Appendix II, and sawfishes in Appendix I. Other commercially-exploited aquatic species listed in CITES include:

- Humphead wrasse (Napoleon fish) - Appendix II
- Queen conch – Appendix II
- Giant clams – Appendix II
- Hard corals, black corals – Appendix II
- Sturgeons - Appendices I and II
- European eel – Appendix II

## CITES and fishery management measures

National and regional fishery management agencies and organizations have the main responsibility for managing fishery resources, including sharks and rays. CITES is a global instrument for regulating international trade in listed wild species that are or may be affected by such trade. CITES can complement fishery management to encourage fishery stakeholders – managers and fishermen alike – to implement and follow sustainable fishing practices. Good fishery management measures based on the best scientific information available play a major role in the implementation of CITES requirements for international trade in commercially-exploited aquatic species. CITES Parties have encouraged the involvement of national and regional fishery management organizations in CITES implementation to enhance coordination and cooperation at the national and regional levels.

### For more information...

CITES sharks Web page... <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/shark/>

FAO activities on sharks... <http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/14750/en>

## Working in partnership

FAO is the only global agency whose main competencies include fisheries and aquaculture. FAO collaborates closely with national governments and regional fishery organizations. In 1999, FAO members adopted the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks). CITES supports the IPOA -Sharks as a key tool for improving the implementation of CITES measures for listed sharks and rays. CITES Parties and the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) have urged nations to improve coordination between national CITES authorities and national fishery agencies to ensure that CITES regulations for marine species are implemented efficiently and integrated as much as possible into fishery management.



## What should CITES Parties do by 14 September 2014?

**Countries wishing to (re-)export or import specimens of the recently CITES-listed sharks and rays after 14 September 2014 must meet certain requirements, for which collaboration between CITES authorities and fishery agencies is essential:**

**Legality:** Ensure that specimens in trade have been legally acquired, through monitoring and compliance with applicable laws, (sub)regional fishery management measures, etc.

**Sustainability:** Determine that proposed trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species, through scientific assessments of the status of the species in the national/regional territory (called 'non-detriment findings' or 'NDFs' in CITES).

**Traceability:** Record and trace trade from the country of origin to the country of destination, through the issuance of appropriate CITES permits or certificates, inclusion of all relevant trade in national annual reports and the CITES Trade Database, training of enforcement authorities on CITES regulations, identification/verification of specimens, etc.