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CoP20 Prop. XX

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



Twentieth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Samarkand (Uzbekistan), 24 November – 5 December 2025

DRAFT DECISIONS ON TRADE, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DEEP-WATER
ELASMOBRANCHS

1. This document has been submitted by the European Union and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland *

Background

2. At its 33rd meeting (AC33, Geneva, July 2024), the Animals Committee invited the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting Parties and organizations to provide information on gulper sharks (*Centrophoridae* spp.) (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notifications/E-Notif-2024-088.pdf>)
3. Several parties responded to the notification (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notifications/E-Notif-2024-123.pdf>).

Issue

4. In a number of fisheries there are regulations in place to limit the catch of deep-sea elasmobranch. Examples in the North Atlantic for gulper sharks include:
 - ICES advice on the leaf scale gulper shark (*Centrophorus squamosus*): “ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catches in each of the years 2024–2027.” [adviceExplorer](#)
 - The species *Centrophorus squamosus* and *C. granulosus* are on the OSPAR list of ‘Threatened and Endangered Species’.
 - *C. squamosus* is on the list of “Prohibited Species on EU fisheries regulations*. It is prohibited for EU vessels “... to fish for, to retain on board, to tranship or to land ...” these species in certain areas within EU waters (Article 13) or, for certain species listed in Article 22, within the ICCAT Convention area. Adapted from EU (2019/1241; 2023/194)”
 - Since 2013 NEAFC (North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission) has prohibited fishing on *Centrophorus squamosus* and *C. granulosus*.

* 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.

5. From the responses to the Notification 2024-088 it is clear that many RFMOs (Regional Fisheries Management Organisations) have similar prohibitions (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notifications/E-Notif-2024-123.pdf>) .

6. However, it is unclear how effective these regulations are, and many species are caught in fisheries for teleost target species. There is little information on species-specific measures such as bycatch reduction, closed areas or seasons etc. It is also clear that despite these regulations, deep-water sharks the species are still experiencing declines in numbers and products of deep-water species are present in trade. See (Finucci et al., 2024): “The deep ocean is the last natural biodiversity refuge from the reach of human activities. Deepwater sharks and rays are among the most sensitive marine vertebrates to overexploitation. One-third of threatened deepwater sharks are targeted, and half the species targeted for the international liver-oil trade are threatened with extinction. Steep population declines cannot be easily reversed owing to long generation lengths, low recovery potentials, and the near absence of management. Depth and spatial limits to fishing activity could improve conservation when implemented alongside catch regulations, bycatch mitigation, and international trade regulation. Deepwater sharks and rays require immediate trade and fishing regulations to prevent irreversible defaunation and promote recovery of this threatened megafauna group.”

7. In order to respond to these challenges, the EU and its Member States and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (and XX) consider it important to:

- Undertake a global review of the current use and trade of deep-water elasmobranch species, including, but not limited to: species-specific trade data; products in trade and their use; current trade restrictions and how effective they are; current management and its' effectiveness.
- Undertake a review of current population statuses and knowledge gaps on deep-water elasmobranchs, including IUCN status of the species where possible.
- Use the information to identify which species would benefit from CITES listing or other management measures.
- Discuss an approach for effective implementation of any potential CITES listings against the background of expected implementation challenges.

Recommendations

8. The Conference of Parties is invited to take note of the issues outlined in this document and adopt the draft decisions contained in the Annex 1.

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Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA

The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:

- a) within 12 months of the conclusion of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, commission a preliminary study by appropriate technical and scientific experts to prepare documents on:
 - i. global overview of the current situation about deep-water elasmobranch species: species-specific trade data; products in trade and their use; current trade restrictions and how effective they are; current management and its' effectiveness; and
 - ii. an overview of population status and gaps in knowledge on deep-water elasmobranchs, including IUCN status of the species where possible; hereby taking into account the replies to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/088 on Request for information on gulper sharks (*Centrophoridae* spp.);

and convene a technical workshop to consider the findings of the study and the reports referred to in paragraph i) above and discuss an approach for effective implementation of any potential CITES listings against the background of expected implementation challenges; and invite workshop participants and Parties to contribute further relevant information and expertise to the appointed technical experts, including but not limited to the following objectives: compile further data on use and trade; share existing trade regulations and management measures; and

- b) invite the Animals Committee, the Secretariats of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and relevant daughter agreements and MoUs, Food & Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, other Regional Fisheries Bodies, other relevant scientific advisory bodies, representatives from States especially those which flag vessels undertake deep-sea fisheries, exporting, transit, importing and consumer countries, fishery stakeholder and industry representatives, and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in this workshop and to contribute relevant information and expertise to this workshop.
- c) submit findings and recommendations of this workshop to the Animals Committee at their 35th meeting for their consideration and for them to make recommendations to the Standing Committee for its consideration, and any recommendations to be considered by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.BB

The Animals Committee shall consider the report of the workshop in Decision 20.AA and make recommendations to the next meeting of the Standing Committee as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC

The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the workshop and the recommendations and comments of the Animals Committee and shall submit recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders

20.DD

- a) Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private businesses, and other donors are encouraged to provide funding to the Secretariat for implementing Decision 20.AA.

b) Parties, intergovernmental organizations, RFMOs and other RFBs, non-governmental organizations, fishery stakeholders and others are encouraged to respond to the Notification from the Secretariat in Decision 19.AA, paragraph c)

DRAFT

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.

In order to help Parties propose a tentative budget, the Secretariat is providing the guidance below:

Activity	Approximate cost	Source of funding
Technical study – SMALL (straightforward, mostly desk study involving individual consultant)	USD 20,000 – 40,000	
Technical study – LARGE (complicated work involving large institutions with high admin costs)	USD 50,000 - 100,000	
Meetings – LARGE (global or large regional workshops/consultations/task force meetings involving a total of 60< participants, with 30< supported participants traveling across continents)	USD 100,000 - 200,000	
Meetings – MEDIUM (regional workshops/consultations of around 20-30 supported participants)	USD 50,000 - 70,000	
Meetings – SMALL (national workshops and meetings where <10 supported participants)	USD 10,000 - 25,000	
Online meetings – meeting platform and interpretation in CITES working languages	USD 3,000-5,000 per half day	
Interpretation at meetings/workshops	USD 10,000 - 20,000 per meeting	
Secretariat travel depending on number of staff	USD 1,000-1,500/trip	
Secretariat staff travel – MEDIUM (Outside EU, but where economy class travel applies)	USD 5,000-7,000/trip	
Secretariat staff travel – LARGE (Transcontinental travel where business class applies)	USD 8,000-12,000/trip	
Translation of reports/studies/guides	USD 300 per page per language (e.g. a 50-page report would cost USD 15,000 per language)	
Publication cost	USD 3,000 – 5,000 per language (about 200 copies)	
Administrative support (staff)	USD 32,000 (20%) USD 80,000 (50%) USD 160,000 (100%) per annum for G staff	
Programme Support Cost (PSC) (13%)	Please ensure that this is also calculated and added to the total amount	