

**Xiamen Declaration**  
**&**  
**Action Plan for the Implementation of CITES Requirements**  
**in Relation to Sharks and Manta Rays**

**Xiamen, China, from 13 to 15 of May 2014**



**Main outputs of the FAO/CITES Regional Consultative Workshop on**  
**Capacity Assessments for the Implementation of New CITES listing of**  
**Sharks and Manta Rays**



## XIAMEN DECLARATION

We, the representatives of fisheries and CITES authorities from China, Hong Kong (China), Macao (China), India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan (as an observer), Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Yemen at the FAO/CITES “Asian Regional Consultative Workshop on Capacity Assessments for the Implementation of new CITES Listing of Sharks and Manta Rays” (Xiamen, Fujian Province, P. R. China, from 13 to 15 of May 2014), reviewed and discussed the implementation of the new CITES listing for sharks and manta rays<sup>1</sup> agreed at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES to be effective from 14<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

Having in mind the importance of conservation and sustainable use of sharks and rays and after scrutinizing the limitations, challenges and needs of the countries in the region, we recommend the following priority actions to effectively implement the new listing of sharks and manta rays in CITES Appendix II:

- IMPROVEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION
- STRENGTHENING NATIONAL LEGISLATION, ENFORCEMENT (MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE) AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
- STRENGTHENING CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES
- ENHANCING TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING/HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
- SECURING FUNDING

We encourage all countries to closely collaborate with Regional Fisheries Bodies and fully use existing regional wildlife enforcement networks in relation to CITES-listed marine species, to enhance sharing of information and expertise with regard to the management and sustainable utilization of shark and ray species.

We appeal to our governments and donors to support the efforts by Asian countries to improve measures for implementing CITES regulations for sharks and manta rays, and for the conservation and sustainable utilization of sharks and rays.

We thank the European Union and China for funding the workshop, China for hosting the workshop, and FAO and the CITES Secretariat for their support in the organization of the event.

*Xiamen, Fujian Province, P. R. China, 15 May 2014*

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<sup>1</sup> Oceanic whitetip (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*), great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*), smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*), the porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*) and the genus *Manta* spp, the entry into force of the inclusion in Appendix II of which is 14 September 2014.

## Regional action plan for the implementation of the recent listings of sharks and manta rays under CITES Appendix II for Asia

### Notes:

1. The term “shark” is taken to include all species of sharks, skates, rays and chimeras (Class Chondrichthyes)
2. At the end of each activity the following abbreviations are used to indicate the time frame for implementation:  
 ST = Short Term (1 to 2 years)  
 MT = Medium Term (3 to 5 years)  
 LT = Long Term (over 5 years)

<b>ACTION 1: IMPROVEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION</b>		
<b>Issues</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Activities to address identified needs</b>
<b>1.</b> Scientific information to support assessment and management of shark and ray fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of fisheries data (catch, discards, effort) in particular in areas with high species diversity, small-scale fisheries and limited human capacity</li> <li>• Lack of spatio-temporal data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct more training courses and workshops on biology, taxonomy, ecology and stock assessment of sharks and rays (ST)</li> <li>• Support the data collection through logbook and/or observer programs and others as feasible (ST)</li> <li>• Encourage the use of local knowledge (ST)</li> <li>• Record all landing data of CITES listed species at species level (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Carry out stock assessments at regional levels (MT)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of biological information, stock structure, nursery grounds and habitats of sharks and rays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve knowledge of sharks and rays through research and fisheries monitoring (ST)</li> <li>• Collect biological information on sharks (ST)</li> <li>• Develop field guides for sharks and rays, using pre-existing material (ST)</li> <li>• Encourage the use of local knowledge (ST)</li> <li>• Support data collection through fishery independent surveys (MT)</li> <li>• Collect information on survival rates of released fish (MT)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of socio-economic information on fishers and traders of sharks and rays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect basic socio-economic information on relevant shark fisheries and trade (ST)</li> <li>• Conduct comprehensive socio-economic assessments and analysis of shark and ray fisheries and trade (MT)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of data and information on utilization, marketing and trade of sharks and rays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the supply chains of the different products and derivatives of sharks and rays in trade (ST)</li> <li>• Conduct marketing and trade assessments (MT)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of adequate shark fisheries management (as a basis for NDFs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance training and capacity building (ST)</li> <li>• Provide sufficient funding (ST)</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b> Lack of collaboration on research and data sharing on migratory or straddling sharks and rays species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited research on shared shark and ray resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile a list of existing regional data, information and experts on sharks and rays (ST)</li> <li>• Develop regional data sharing mechanisms (MT)</li> <li>• Carry out regional joint shark research and assessments (MT/LT)</li> </ul>

**ACTION 2: STRENGTHENING NATIONAL LEGISLATION, ENFORCEMENT (MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE) AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Issues	Challenges	Activities to address identified needs
<p><b>1.</b> Limited knowledge and expertise for the identification of sharks products in international trade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large variety of processed and semi-processed products in trade (e.g. meat, fins, cartilage, oil, skin, gill rakers, belt, wallet, etc.)</li> <li>• Merchandise often contains a mix of parts from different shark species especially dried fins</li> <li>• Derivatives are often unrecognizable, especially those for medicinal and cosmetic/ health care use.</li> <li>• Lack of mechanisms to verify the origin of products in trade (e.g. curios taken abroad by tourists)</li> <li>• Lack of species-specific tariff codes for CITES listed species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce user friendly (simple/low-cost/fast) and reliable identification tools for CITES-listed shark species and their products to enable timely procedures by customs and enforcement officers (ST)</li> <li>• Encourage traders to not mix shark species in their merchandise, or to list all included shark species on the label of the merchandise, if appropriate. (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Establish traceability systems ( e.g. labeling, CDS, certificates) for processed products at the origin/exporting/processing countries as well as registration/license systems for traders etc. (MT/LT)</li> <li>• Implement regional/global species-specific tariff codes and support the FAO proposal to WCO for new shark species-specific tariff codes . (MT/LT)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b> Insufficient enforcement capacity at ports of entry/exit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High volume of export, re-export and import</li> <li>• Lack of adequate and trained enforcement staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of enforcement staff (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Use risk analysis to select high-risk shipments for inspection (MT)</li> <li>• Require a certificate of origin for shark product shipments (MT/LT)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> Insufficient international collaboration among enforcement officers in export, import and re-export countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International exchange of information and data is not harmonized (forms, content, units, etc.)</li> <li>• Language barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of existing regional wildlife enforcement network in relation to CITES-listed marine species (ST)</li> <li>• Establish regional platform or network for information exchange (MT)</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> Lack of coordinated inter-agency networking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishery agencies often have a low awareness of the importance of CITES</li> <li>• No direct linkage between fisheries and CITES enforcement agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a regular consultation mechanism among relevant agencies (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Ensure that the fisheries authority plays its full role in CITES implementation (MT)</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.</b> Strengthen legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation procedures are time-consuming in some countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update legislation in a timely manner after the adoption of new CITES listings and resolutions (MT)</li> <li>• Encourage countries to be more proactive and to use foresight by adopting shark management measures ahead of a legislation revision (MT)</li> <li>• Encourage countries to develop NPOA-Sharks which also address CITES-listed species (MT/LT)</li> </ul>

### ACTION 3: STRENGTHENING CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Issues	Challenges	Activities to address identified needs
1. Lack of programmes for awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of consultation with stakeholders</li> <li>• Remoteness of fishing (target) communities</li> <li>• Insufficient knowledge on shark and ray fishers</li> <li>• Insufficient knowledge by fishers of existing shark management measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with various categories of stakeholders (fishers, traders, managers, policy makers, etc) (ST)</li> <li>• Develop and implement comprehensive awareness programs (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Strengthen regional co-operation amongst stakeholders (MT)</li> <li>• Improve media advertisements to raise awareness of shark fishery issues (MT)</li> </ul>
2. Addressing demand and supply of CITES listed species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining economic returns in some countries</li> <li>• Lack of suitable alternatives to shark products for domestic consumers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop consumer awareness raising campaigns (ST)</li> <li>• Develop alternative livelihood options for fishers such as ecotourism. (MT/LT)</li> </ul>
3. Technical difficulties in applying fisheries management measures to the CITES listed species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties in live release of non-target species</li> <li>• Difficulties in controlling and reducing overfishing and fishing capacity</li> <li>• Difficulties in reducing the bycatch of sharks and rays</li> <li>• Lack of enforcement of management measures</li> <li>• Lack of implementation of management plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop guidelines and techniques for the safe release of live specimens incidentally caught (ST)</li> <li>• Develop appropriate species-specific gears and/or bycatch -reduction-devices (BRDs) to reduce bycatch of sharks and rays listed in CITES appendices (MT)</li> <li>• Develop and implement shark management plans (MT)</li> </ul>
4. Lack of effective regional shark management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of appropriate legislation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop effective regional management measures for CITES listed elasmobranchs (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Develop regional management plans for elasmobranchs (MT)</li> </ul>

**ACTION 4: ENHANCING TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING/HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Activities to address identified needs</b>
1. Lack of capacity in the species identification of shark and ray products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many products and derivatives from different species cannot be readily differentiated (look-alike species or some highly processed products)</li> <li>• Lack of officers with taxonomic competence for the identification of fresh and processed sharks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide user friendly guides for non-experts (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Train customs officials and all other actors in the supply chain in the use of shark identification tools (MT)</li> </ul>

**ACTION 5 : SECURING FUNDING**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Activities to address identified needs</b>
1. Insufficient prolonged and targeted funding for the implementation of CITES requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for shark research and CITES implementation is very limited</li> <li>• Securing adequate financial and human resources to support the implementation of CITES listings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite recipient countries to prioritize CITES implementation in their request for capacity building assistance to donors (ST)</li> <li>• Share information on funding sources (ST)</li> <li>• Invite the CITES Secretariat and FAO to identify funding availability from international and other donors (ST)</li> <li>• Advise relevant national and regional agencies of the high value of sharks and rays products (ST/MT)</li> <li>• Enhance the capacity of recipient countries on fund raising for capacity building assistance (MT).</li> <li>• Encourage developed countries to fulfill their commitment regarding the Official Development Assistance (MT)</li> <li>• Encourage countries to incorporate the conservation and management of sharks and rays into their socioeconomic development plans (MT)</li> </ul>