



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals



Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme

Progress Report on Activities relating to Sustainable Fisheries undertaken by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Appendices I and II of the CMS

1. CMS currently lists eight species of shark in its Appendices I and II. For species in Appendix I, such as the Great White Shark, the Basking Shark and the Manta Ray taking is prohibited. CMS Appendix II lists migratory species that have an unfavourable conservation status and that require international agreements for their conservation and management, as well as those that have a conservation status which would significantly benefit from the international cooperation that could be achieved by an international agreement.

Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU)

2. For shark species listed in CMS Appendix II, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU) was developed under the auspices of CMS and came into effect in 2010. To date 26 Signatories, including the European Union, have signed this global instrument.

3. The MOU aims is to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for migratory sharks based on the best available scientific information, taking into account the socio-economic and other value of these species for the people of the Signatory States.

4. At the 1st Meeting of the Signatories (MOS1), which was held in September 2012 in Germany, a Conservation Plan for Migratory Sharks was adopted, covering the seven species that are currently listed on Annex 1 to the MOU.

Conservation Plan for Migratory Sharks

5. Signatories committed themselves through the Conservation Plan to improve the understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring and information exchange, to ensure that directed and non-directed fisheries for sharks are sustainable, to ensure the protection of critical habitats and migratory corridors and critical life stages of sharks, to increase public awareness of threats to sharks and their habitats, and to enhance national, regional and international cooperation.

6. The Conservation Plan foresees the development of programmes to establish baseline data to improve ecological knowledge on sharks, and to facilitate reporting at a species-specific level on shark catch rates, the amount of incidental and directed taking and the amount of waste and discards.

7. It is endeavoured to develop and adopt best practice guidance for the conservation and management of shark populations based on the best available scientific knowledge and following a precautionary and ecosystem approach.

8. Following the precautionary approach mortality rates arising from fishing activities should not exceed levels resulting in a significant decline of populations. This should ensure that all shark catch is within sustainable limits. Signatories are encouraged to use selective gear, devices, and techniques to ensure that the take of sharks in fisheries is sustainable and appropriately managed and that mortality of non-utilized catches is minimized. Capacity building should be promoted for the safe handling and release of sharks, that are caught accidentally. Subsidies resulting in unsustainable use of sharks should be reformed, phased out and eliminated.

9. It was further agreed to encourage the implementation of conservation and management measures adopted by RFMOs, RSCs, biodiversity-related MEAs and FAO and develop and implement National Plans of Action for Sharks (NPOA Sharks) in accordance with FAO's voluntary International Plan of Action for Sharks (IPOA Sharks).

10. Signatories should promote the protection of the marine environment from land-based and maritime pollution that may adversely affect shark populations.

11. Furthermore, Signatories are encouraged to enact legislation and/or regulations requiring sharks to be retained on board and landed with each fin naturally attached in line with applicable UN General Assembly Resolutions and IUCN and RFMOs decisions.

12. The Conservation Plan entails the enforcement of existing fisheries conservation and management measures and trade regulations on shark fisheries through effective monitoring, control and surveillance. Signatories should implement specific measures where gaps are identified and develop capacity in compliance and law enforcement. Strategies should be developed and implemented, that seek to ensure that shark products entering international trade are harvested and traded in accordance with existing conservation and management measures and applicable regulations including those of CITES and RFMOs.

13. The Conservation calls upon Signatories to cooperate with the fisheries industry, FAO, RFMOs, RSCs, UN entities such as UNCLOS, UNEP and biodiversity-related MEAs (e.g. CBD, CITES and Ramsar), the World Trade Organization, Interpol and the World Customs Organization, and IGOs and NGOs engaged with shark conservation, and other international organizations that deal with fisheries.

For more information please refer to the following websites:

www.sharksmou.org

www.cms.int