



CCSBT-ERS/1703/Info15

Update on the status of Sharks and Rays under CMS-Sharks

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the Ecologically Related Species Working Group (ERSWG) with an update on the status of sharks and rays under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (CMS-Sharks).

This information was requested for ERSWG 12 as part of the ERSWG 11 workplan.

In response to a request for an update in relation to listed species, population status, and any relevant data and information on best practice mitigation measures for shark species, the CMS Secretariat has provided the attached information.

Prepared by the Secretariat

Robert Kennedy

Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)
PO Box 37
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ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Bonn, 17 March 2013

Your request for an update on the status of sharks and rays under CMS

Dear Mr. Kennedy,

The Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is pleased to provide you updated information related to sharks and rays under the Convention and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks in the attached document.

Yours sincerely,



Melanie Virtue
Head of the Aquatic Species Team
UNEP/CMS Secretariat

Information about the conservation of shark and ray species under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (UNEP/CMS) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU)

Bonn, 17 March 2017
UNEP/CMS Secretariat

1. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)¹, concluded under the auspices of UN Environment (UNEP), aims to conserve terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range. CMS acts as a global framework convention that encourages Range States to develop regional or global agreements covering single or groups of migratory species. There are 124 Parties to CMS.
2. The two appendices of CMS list migratory species to which the Convention applies. The text of the Convention defines the basic obligations of the Contracting Parties towards species listed on Appendix I and Appendix II. These obligations are quite distinct for the two Appendices, and a migratory species can be listed in both Appendices at the same time, if the circumstances so warrant. As of today, 29 species of sharks and rays are listed in the two appendices (table 2).
3. Appendix I comprises migratory species that have been assessed as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Parties that are a Range State to a migratory species listed in Appendix I shall endeavour to strictly protect them by prohibiting the taking of such species, with very restricted scope for exceptions; conserving and where appropriate restoring their habitats; preventing, removing or mitigating obstacles to their migration and controlling other factors that might endanger them. Currently, two species of sharks and twelve species of rays are included in this highest category of protection.
4. Appendix II covers 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.

¹ http://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/instrument/CMS-text.en_.PDF

5. The Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU)² is one such global agreement. The MOU was concluded under the umbrella of CMS in Manila in 2010. The MOU is a legally non-binding international instrument that aims to restore a favourable conservation status for migratory sharks based on the best available scientific information, taking into account the socio-economic and other values of these species for the people of the Signatories. The MOU has 42 Signatories, including the EU. Overlap with the CCSBT members is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Joint membership to CCSBT and CMS instruments

<i>CCSBT CPCs</i>	<i>Sharks MOU Signatories</i>	<i>CMS Parties</i>
<i>Australia</i>	x	x
<i>European Union</i>	x	x
<i>Indonesia</i>		
<i>Japan</i>		
<i>New Zealand</i>	x	x
<i>Republic of Korea</i>		
<i>South Africa</i>	x	x
<i>The Fishing Entity of Taiwan</i>		
<i>The Philippines (Cooperating Non-Member)</i>	x	x

6. A favourable conservation status is achieved when the abundance and structure of populations of migratory sharks remain at levels adequate to maintain ecosystem integrity. Currently, all 29 species of sharks and rays that are listed in either of the CMS Appendices are also included in Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU (table 2).

² http://www.cms.int/sharks/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/Sharks_MOU_Text_annexes.pdf

Table 2: Shark and ray species that are included in CMS Appendices and Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU

<i>Family</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>CMS Appendix I</i>	<i>CMS Appendix II</i>	<i>Sharks-MOU Annex I</i>	<i>CCSBT relevant³</i>
<i>Squalidae</i>	<i>Squalus acanthias</i> ⁴		x	x	
<i>Rhincodontidae</i>	<i>Rhincodon typus</i>		x	x	x
<i>Lamnidae</i>	<i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Isurus paucus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Lamna nasus</i>		x	x	x
<i>Alopiidae</i>	<i>Alopias pelagicus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Alopias superciliosus</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Alopias vulpinus</i>		x	x	x
<i>Cetorhinidae</i>	<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>	x	x	x	x
<i>Carcharhinidae</i>	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>		x	x	x
<i>Sphyrnidae</i>	<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>		x	x	x
	<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>		x	x	
<i>Pristidae</i>	<i>Anoxypristis cuspidata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis clavata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis pectinata</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis zijsron</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Pristis pristis</i>	x	x	x	
<i>Myliobatidae</i>	<i>Manta alfredi</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Manta birostris</i>	x	x	x	x
	<i>Mobula mobular</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula japanica</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula thurstoni</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula tarapacana</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula eregoodootenkee</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula kuhlii</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula hypostoma</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula rochebrunei</i>	x	x	x	
	<i>Mobula munkiana</i>	x	x	x	

7. The MOU's Conservation Plan⁵, adopted in 2012 and further amended at the 2nd Meeting of the Signatories in 2016 has five core objectives:

Objective A: Improving understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring and information exchange

³ Relevance for CCSBT was based on the occurrence of the species in the CCSBT convention area in accordance with IUCN Red List distribution maps.

⁴ Northern hemisphere populations

⁵http://www.cms.int/sharks/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/Annex%20to%20the%20MOU_ConservationPlan.pdf

Objective B: Ensuring that directed and non-directed fisheries for sharks are sustainable – In pursuing activities described under this objective Signatories should endeavour to cooperate through Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Regional Sea Conventions and Action Plans, (RSCAPs) and biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) as appropriate.

Objective C: Ensuring to the extent practicable the protection of critical habitats and migratory corridors and critical life stages of sharks.

Objective D: Increasing public awareness of threats to sharks and their habitats, and enhance public participation in conservation activities

Objective E: Enhancing national, regional and international cooperation

8. When undertaking activities to meet these objectives, Signatories should endeavour to cooperate through RFMOs, the FAO, RSCs and RSAPs, and MEAs. The Signatories should cooperatively strive to adopt, implement and enforce such legal, regulatory and administrative measures as appropriate to conserve and manage migratory sharks and their habitat.

9. The MOU's Programme of Work 2016-2018⁶, adopted in 2016, includes concrete actions to implement the Conservation Plan. The following activities of particular relevance for RFMOs were adopted:

- Expand and encourage fisheries-independent research (e.g. historic data on commercially exploited species) to provide additional data for use in the fishery stock assessments and to inform relevant RFMOs;
- Promote research focussing on the identification of species-selective fishing gear and bycatch mitigation measures;
- Fund and support national and international training courses in data collection, species identification, handling and safe release protocols;
- [...] strengthening synergies with FAO, RSCAPs, RFBs and other relevant bodies

⁶ http://www.cms.int/sharks/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/CMS_Sharks_PoW.pdf

10. The Advisory Committee to the MOU is currently in the process of identifying gaps regarding measures undertaken by relevant organizations, including the RFMOs as well as reviewing bycatch mitigation measures. This work will be discussed at the 2nd meeting of the Advisory Committee in the second half of 2017.