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14 SEPTEMBER 2014
ENTRY INTO EFFECT OF NEW CITES LISTING OF SHARKS AND MANTA RAYS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CITES

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

FAO

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

IATTC

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

ICCAT

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

IOTC

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

ICPO-INTERPOL

International Criminal Police Organization

NEAFC

North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

NAFO

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

RFB

Regional Fishery Body

RFMO

Regional Fisheries Management Organization

SEAFDEC

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre

SEAFO

South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization

SPRFMO

South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization

WCPFC

Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

Text and graphics completed in September 2014.

Cover: downloaded and modified from

<http://alphateck.com/free-vector-file-20-shark-silhouettes/>

More information on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora is available on the Internet (<http://cites.org>).

Activities in support of the implementation of the CITES new listings of sharks and manta rays

At its 16th meeting (Bangkok, March 2013), the Conference of the Parties to CITES decided to include five shark species and all manta rays in Appendix II, in which three other shark species had already been included over the past decade. Species listed in CITES Appendix II are not necessarily threatened with extinction, but international trade in them is carefully regulated to ensure legality and avoid utilization incompatible with their survival in the wild. The entry into effect of these new listings was delayed with 18 months, until 14 September 2014, to give Parties sufficient time to resolve technical and administrative issues related to their implementation.

These recent listings set new challenges and opportunities for Parties in ensuring that international trade in CITES-listed commercially-exploited aquatic species is legal, sustainable and traceable, even for highly traded fisheries commodities such as shark fins, gills and meat.

Over the last 18 months, numerous activities have been undertaken by shark range States, countries involved in shark fisheries or trade, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in support of these listings. This included the launch by the CITES Secretariat and FAO of the project *“Strengthening capacity in developing countries for sustainable wildlife management and enhanced implementation of CITES wildlife trade regulations, with particular focus on commercially-exploited aquatic species”*, financed by the European Union with a contribution of USD 1.7 million covering the period 2013–2016.

During Phase 1 of this EU-CITES project, the collaboration between the CITES Secretariat and FAO was strengthened, regional consultations for key shark fishing and trading countries were organized, capacity building efforts across the globe was supported, and partnerships with RFMOs and RFBs was developed. Furthermore, to enhance the synergies with other ongoing activities, the CITES Secretariat exchanged information and communicated with many other stakeholders. (e.g. CITES management authorities, RFMOs, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations).

NEW SHARK SPECIES LISTED IN CITES



Carcharhinus longimanus



Lamna nasus



Sphyrna lewini



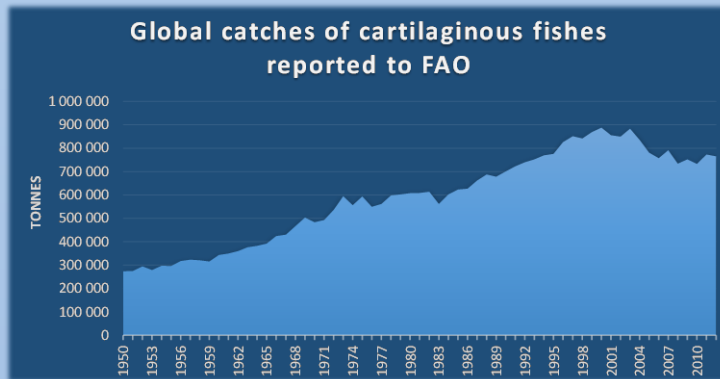
Sphyrna mokarran



Sphyrna zygaena



Manta spp.



Source: FAO FishStat - dataset on "Global capture production"

In "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)" the global shark catches reported to FAO tripled from 1950 to an all-time high of about 900 000 tonnes in 2000. Since then, a downward trend has been observed, with catches about 15 percent lower in 2011 than in 2000. The shark conservation measures introduced in many national and regional fisheries management regimes, and/or the overall declining abundance of fished sharks may have been factors contributing to this recent development.

One of the international measures that can contribute towards improving national and regional regulations for shark conservation and management is the inclusion of certain species in the Appendices of CITES.

Working in partnership with FAO

Based on an analysis of available shark fishery and trade data, FAO and CITES identified the countries that should receive assistance on a priority basis. Subsequently, they organized two regional consultative workshops, one for key African countries (Casablanca, February 2014) and the second for key Asian countries (Xiamen, May 2014). For Latin American countries, CITES and FAO were able to organize consultations during a regional workshop organized by the Brazilian government in Recife in December 2013.

Several actions relating to the new CITES-listed sharks and manta rays have now been incorporated into existing FAO programmes. Examples thereof are:

- Including the CITES implementation requirements in the preparation process of National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks;
- Incorporating the CITES regulations in the fisheries legislation;
- Strengthening activities on international fish trade that integrate the issues of resource conservation, trade and traceability; and
- Strengthening the cooperation with RFMOs, *inter alia* by co-financing a database on RFMO shark management measures.

PRIORITY COUNTRY

PRIORITY REGION 1: AFRICA

1	Nigeria
1	Senegal
1	Ghana
1	Mauritania
1	Guinea
1	Congo, DR
1	Gambia
1	Liberia
3	Namibia
3	South Africa

PRIORITY REGION 2: ASIA

1	Indonesia
1	India
1	Sri Lanka
1	Yemen
2	Maldives
2	Singapore
3	Taiwan, PC
3	Malaysia
3	Pakistan
3	Thailand
3	Iran
3	Korea, Rep.
3	UAE
3	China

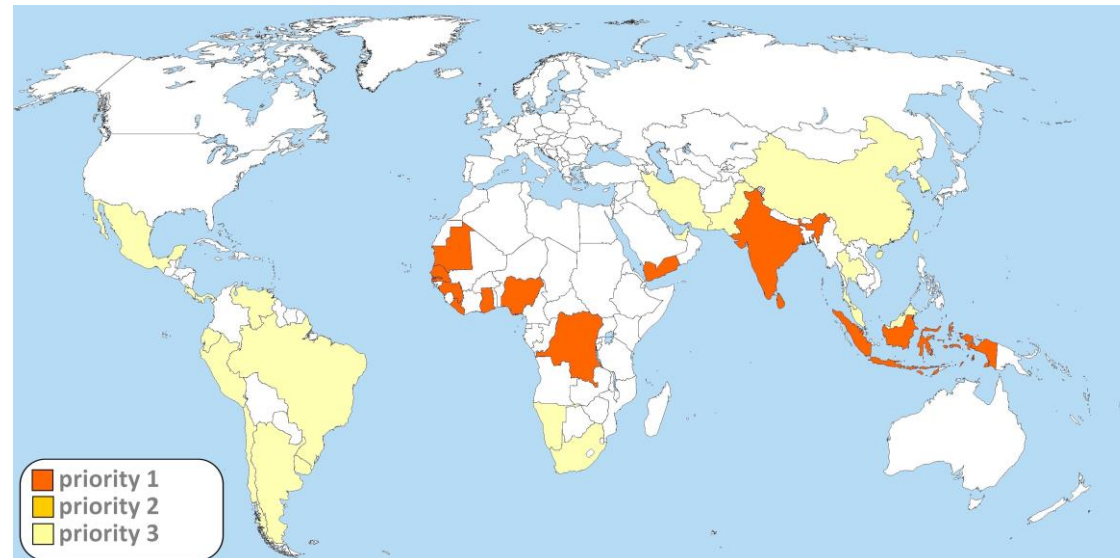
PRIORITY REGION 3: LATIN AMERICA

3	Argentina
3	Mexico
3	Brazil
3	Peru
3	Venezuela
3	Costa Rica
3	Chile
3	Uruguay
3	Panama
3	Ecuador
3	El Salvador

The FAO study “**PRIORITY REGIONS AND COUNTRIES IMPACTED BY THE RECENT CITES LISTINGS OF MARINE ELASMOBRANCHS**” identified 35 countries/entities that should receive assistance from FAO and CITES on a priority basis, in Africa (10), Asia (14) and Latin America (11).

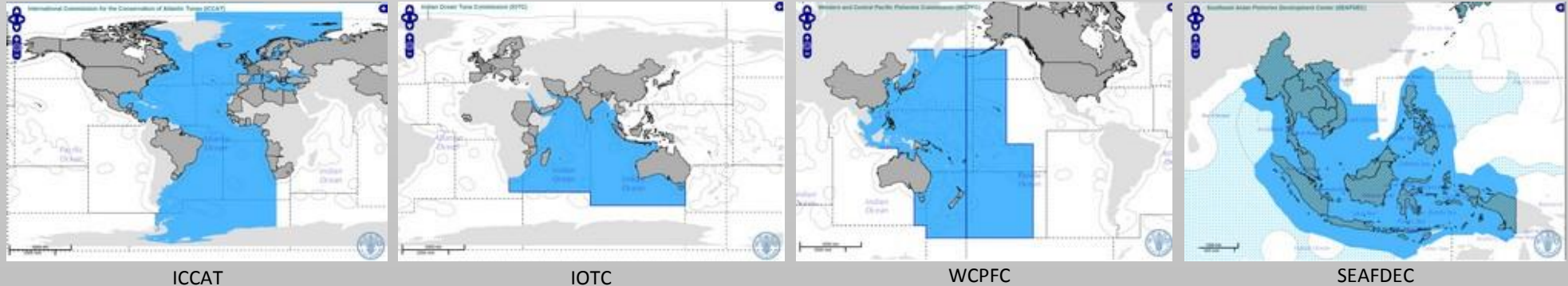
The criteria followed are:

1. countries/entities that are range states for one or more of the recently listed elasmobranchs;
2. have reported significant catches and/or exports of sharks, i.e. they are
 - among the top 26 shark-fishing nations, or
 - among the top 40 shark-exporting nations, or
 - during the last decade reported captures of 100 tons and more per year of the recently listed species;
3. are recognized as “developing countries” by the UN, assigning priorities to those that are classified as
 - Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDC) by FAO, or
 - Least Developed Countries (LDC) or Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) by the UN.



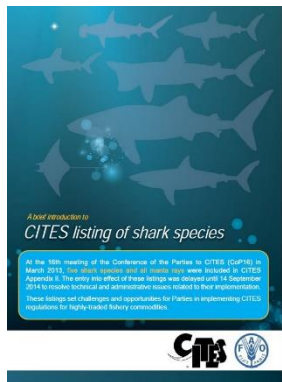
Working in partnership with RFMOs and RFBs

Areas of competence of some RFMOs and RFBs



Source: <http://www.fao.org/figis/geoserver/factsheets/rfbs.html>

To reach out to fisheries-related national focal points that may have experience with shark management, but may not have actively participated in CITES discussions so far, the Secretariat attended meetings of three RFMOs (ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC) responsible for the conservation of tunas and tuna-like species, and also involved in certain shark fisheries issues. The Secretariat also made a presentation to the fifth meeting of the Regional Fishery Bodies Secretariats' Network (RSN-5) held in Rome on 7 and 14 June 2014. In the Asian region, the Secretariat is collaborating with SEAFDEC to support the implementation of a data collection scheme for the assessment of stock status of shark.



Presentations, brochures and posters

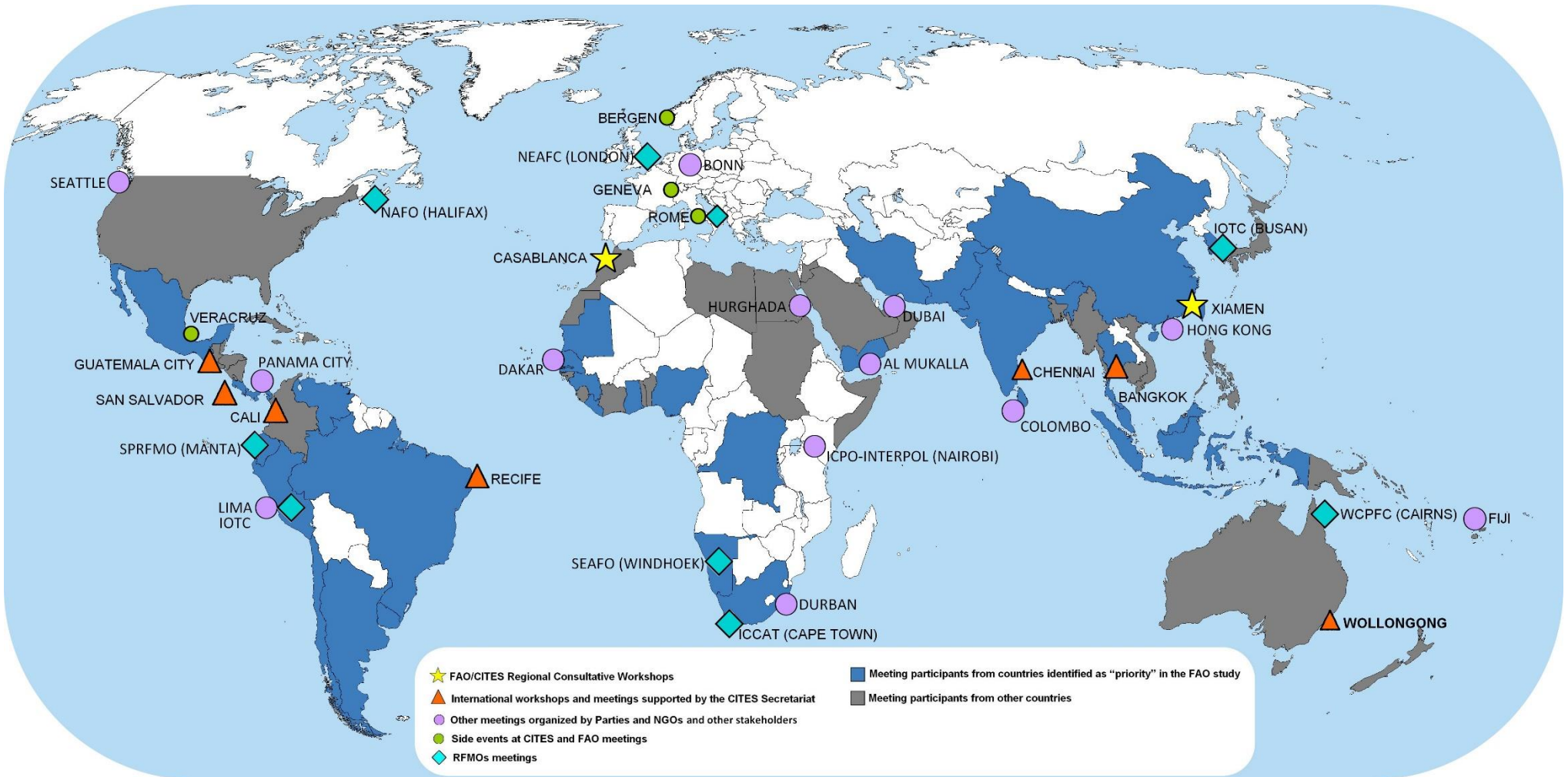
The joint FAO/CITES leaflet "A brief introduction to CITES listing of shark species" was published and distributed during the relevant meetings.

FAO and CITES also shared and made available a series of Power Point presentations. In addition, posters summarizing the status of the shark fisheries in relation to the new shark listings were produced for the Asian countries participating at a regional shark workshop in Chennai, India, in August 2014.



Meetings and beneficiaries of the EU-CITES project and other shark-related workshops

Across the globe, CITES Parties, the Secretariat, FAO and other inter-governmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations have been active in preparing for the new CITES-listings.



The above map is based on information communicated to the CITES Secretariat and includes events up to 14 September 2014. To inform the Secretariat of other events in the future, please send an email to sharks@cites.org.

Main outputs of the consultative workshops

During the regional CITES/FAO consultative workshops held for Africa and Asia, region-specific roadmaps for the implementation of CITES requirements in relation to shark and manta rays were developed. CITES States in Latin America and Oceania organized their own meetings with support from the CITES Secretariat, and also developed a list of actions and activities required in their region.

Among the more frequent needs expressed by the countries for implementing the Appendix II listings are:

- Improve data collection on shark catches, assuring that all landing data of CITES listed species are recorded at species level;
- Conduct more training courses and workshops on biology, taxonomy, ecology and stock assessment of sharks and rays, in support of making non detriment findings;
- Establish traceability systems for specimens and processed products;
- Update national legislation concerning the new CITES listings;
- Produce user-friendly and reliable identification tools for CITES-listed shark species and their products;
- Develop and implement the National Plan of Action (NPOA) for sharks;
- Strengthen the collaboration between CITES authorities and fishery agencies; and
- Strengthen regional cooperation.

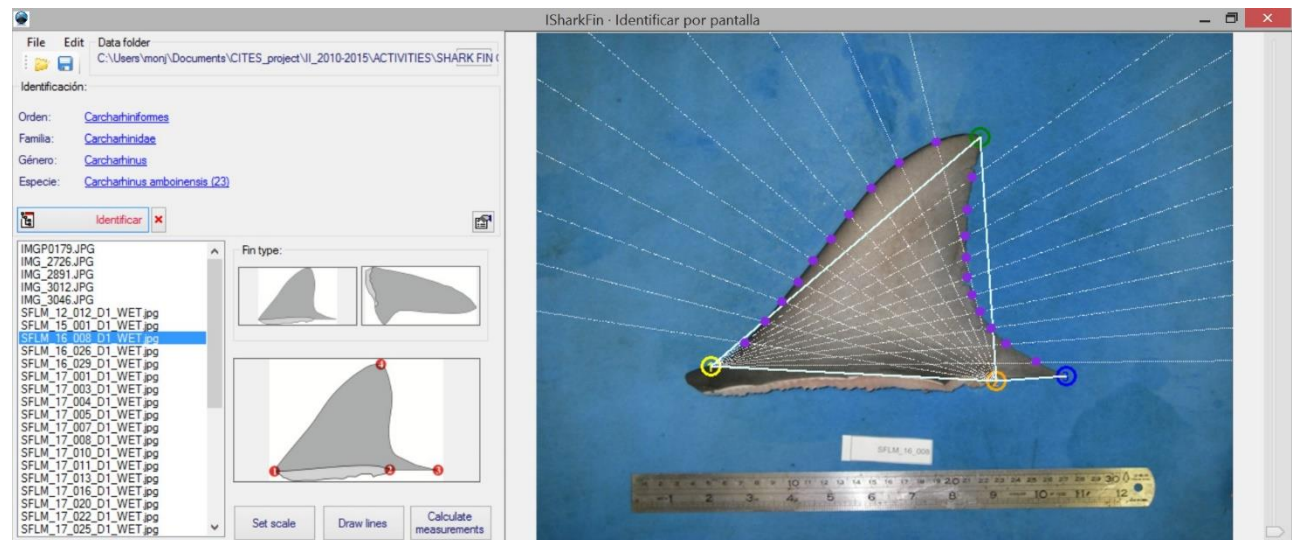
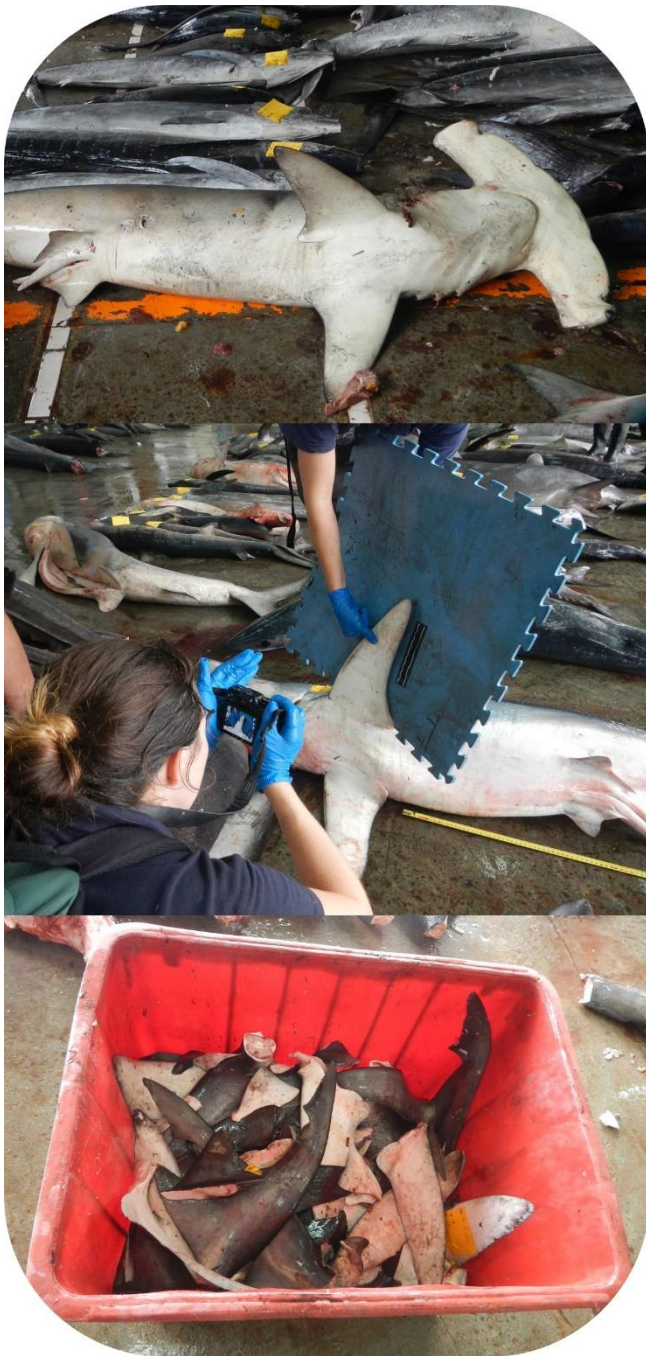
A report on “Assessment of the capacity of selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to implement the new CITES listings of sharks and manta rays” prepared by the CITES Secretariat and FAO, will become available online.



Identification tools for shark product

In collaboration with the University of Vigo, FAO, with support from CITES, is developing the software iSharkFin (see <http://cites.org/eng/prog/shark/isharkfin>), an expert system based on machine-learning techniques for the identification of shark fins by their shape. Aimed at port inspectors, custom agents, fish traders and others, the user takes a picture of the fin and selects some characteristics before automatically finding out what species is involved. The iSharkFin software will be complemented by a more traditional, document format Shark Fin Guide, containing identification keys, species fact sheets, methodology for the identification and training courses.

Multiple other shark identification aids, guides and toolkits exist in a variety of languages and formats. A global inventory of all these identification materials is ongoing in support of their wider dissemination, available at <http://cites.org/eng/prog/shark/resources.php>.



Screenshot of the FAO iSharkFin software

CITES web portal on sharks and rays: <http://www.cites.org/prog/shark>

The CITES website offers dedicated webpages on sharks with information on:

- NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS ON SHARKS AND RAYS
- EVENTS AND MEETINGS
 - ▼ Events calendar
 - ▼ Summary of meetings/workshops supported by the EU-CITES Project
- RESOURCES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW SHARK LISTINGS:
 - ▼ Legality:
 - Summary of current RFMO measures for shark conservation and management
 - Relevant CITES Notifications to the Parties
 - CITES-FAO PowerPoint presentations on legal acquisition and Introduction from the Sea (IFS)
 - ▼ Sustainability:
 - CITES-FAO PowerPoint presentations on Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs)
 - Training materials on NDFs
 - Examples of NDFs for other marine species
 - ▼ Traceability:
 - Global inventory of identification materials
 - Links to the CITES trade database and dashboard
 - ▼ Relevant information and resources submitted by Parties and stakeholders

The screenshot shows the CITES website interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Discover CITES, Programmes, Documents, Resources, and News. The main content area is titled 'CITES at work' and features a large image of sharks and rays with the text 'New listing of sharks and manta rays will come into force on 14 September. More...'. Below this is a 'News and highlights' section with a list of recent news items, including '3 September 2014: FAO and CITES support India's effort in coordinating the Bay of Bengal regional cooperation on sharks and manta rays'. A 'Notifications to the Parties' section follows, listing various international agreements and resolutions. The 'CITES calendar' section at the bottom lists upcoming meetings and events. The left sidebar contains 'About CITES' and 'Explore more' links. The right sidebar features 'Highlights' with social media links and a 'Subscribe to email alerts' button.



Prepared by CITES in collaboration with FAO
with support from the European Union