

Regional Workshop on Sharks Listed in Appendix II of CITES - Preparing for Implementation

2-4 December 2013, Recife, Brazil

REPORT ON REGIONAL NEEDS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITES SHARK LISTINGS & NEXT STEPS

The participants then divided into regional groups (the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America, South America Atlantic and South America Pacific) to discuss how they can use the information learned from the presenters in their countries or regions, share experiences, and identify and prioritize needs for implementing the shark listings. They were given a set of questions to consider and they presented their findings to the full group afterwards and a group discussion followed. This is a summary of the priority needs and next steps identified during those sessions.

Improve fisheries management including species identification and monitoring:

- Use ecological risk assessments and seek support from scientific experts from relevant tuna RFMOs to help determine the population status of the CITES listed shark species in the absence of stock assessments.
- Share identification guides with fishermen and government officials (Customs, CITES authorities, fisheries ministry) as appropriate to assist in species identification and improved monitoring of CITES-listed sharks.
- Develop a regional tagging program for hammerheads.
- Find funding for and set up at least one portable DNA lab in each country; in the meantime, each country can identify and establish partnerships with universities in their country that have genetic labs.
- Ensure that fishing permits are implemented in each country to facilitate with monitoring.

Provide education on the CITES requirements:

- Conduct public education on CITES and pertinent domestic regulations to help raise awareness of the CITES shark listings that will become effective in September 2014 and its requirements.
- Tell fishers how proper species identification could improve prices they receive for their products.

Put procedures in place for implementing trade measures to comply with CITES

- Move towards the use of electronic permits for CITES.
- See how Ecuador's traceability program could be applied in other countries.
- Work to harmonize tariff codes for sharks and shark products in trade.
- Look at OSPESCA's harmonized landing form as an example for standardized data reporting of shark catch and try to apply it to improve trade monitoring.
- Review processes that have been developed to monitor the harvest and trade of other CITES-listed species (for mahogany as an example) to help guide the monitoring of the products of CITES-listed sharks in trade.
- Work to identify regional priorities, develop and share funding ideas and sources.
- Review regulatory frameworks and identify gaps in legislation to address these.
- Connect with and make use of experts, such as experts on genetic identification techniques, and connect with labs that have the equipment to request equipment for countries that do not have it.

Provide training on implementation:

- Determine all the actors involved in the trade of CITES-listed sharks and shark products and then organize national meetings with everyone involved in the trade (not just fisheries and environment authorities).
- Improve interagency coordination on implementation of the CITES listings through information sharing and communication.
- Develop an e-tool kit that can be used for training when there are changes in enforcement personnel.
- Train Customs officials, including teaching airport and port authorities, how to take genetic samples when needed.
- Develop and share guidance amongst countries in the region on how to make non-detriment findings (NDFs) for the CITES-listed shark species, preferably on a regional basis.

Next steps:

- Create a flow chart or infograph with all the steps for implementing the shark listings could be created, from fisheries to export (such as population information, fishing limits, management plan, control points, species and fin identification, genetics, etc.) to help provide a clear picture of the whole process.
- The FAO has identified countries and 3 areas that need assistance on a priority basis – West Central Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. CITES/FAO will be holding regional consultative workshops with countries on their needs and receiving specific requests for assistance. They can only support the participation of priority countries but others can fund their own attendance. The first one will be for Africa in early 2014, then Latin America in March 2014 and Asia in April 2014. They intend to develop a range of projects to support the shark listings in CITES Appendix II, ideally before September 2014.
- Disseminate information on the tools and information needed to assist in implementation of the CITES shark listings on a national level with coordination amongst the relevant authorities (including Customs authorities).
- Development and implementation of a chain of custody and legal acquisition finding mechanisms for the CITES-listed sharks.
- Strengthen national capacities with identification tools, including DNA techniques.
- Harmonize Customs codes at a regional level.
- Hold a regional workshop on NDFs.
- Create a discussion list of all participants so that information can be exchanged on a permanent basis including providing assistance and giving suggestions to each other.