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The 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Proposal to Include Hammerhead Sharks in CITES Appendix II

Proposal 43

HAMMERHEAD SHARKS

Sphyrna lewini, S. mokarran and S. zygaena

Proposed by Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark on behalf of the European Member States acting in the interest of the European Union, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico for listing on CITES Appendix II

RECOMMENDATION : SUPPORT

The CITES Secretariat supports this listing in Appendix II with the following annotations: Entry into effect of inclusion in Appendix II will be delayed by 18 months to enable Parties to resolve the related technical and administrative issues. Annex 2a, Criterion A. *It is known or can be inferred or projected that the regulation in trade of the species is necessary to avoid it becoming eligible for inclusion in Appendix I in the near future*. Hammerhead sharks qualify for inclusion in Appendix II under this criterion because they are over-exploited for their fins.

Hammerhead sharks are circumglobal in tropical and warm temperate seas. Scalloped hammerheads aggregate in large numbers, make them especially vulnerable to targeted fishing[1].

Declines in scalloped hammerhead sharks from the mid-1970s, 1980s and early 1990s to recent years range from 98%, 89% and 76%-89% respectively in the northwest Atlantic, and 98% in the Southwest Atlantic[2,3,4]. Significant declines have been reported in the Indian Ocean[5], and in the Mediterranean Sea, there has been a decline of up to 99.9% in the past century[6] .

On the IUCN Red List, the smooth hammerhead, *S. zygaena,* is listed as Vulnerable[7], the scalloped hammerhead, *S. lewini,* is listed as Endangered globally[8], and the great hammerhead shark, *S. mokarran,* as Endangered globally and Critically Endangered in the Eastern Central Pacific[9].

THREATS TO HAMMERHEAD SHARKS

Trade in meat or other products of hammerhead shark is considered insignificant compared with the trade in their fins. Their fins are primary products in international trade[10].

The fins of the hammerhead species proposed for Appendix II comprise about 6 percent of identifiable fins entering Hong Kong yearly, which leads scientists to estimate 1.5 to 4 million hammerhead sharks are killed per year to satisfy the demands of the international fin trade[11].

The wide flattened heads of hammerhead sharks distinguish them from other species of sharks, and fin traders are able to distinguish hammerhead fins with 96% accuracy[12].

Few countries have management or conservation measures for hammerhead sharks (ICCAT)[13].

Hammerhead sharks are some of the most frequently illegally fished of all shark species[14].

HAMMERHEAD SHARKS HAVE VALUE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

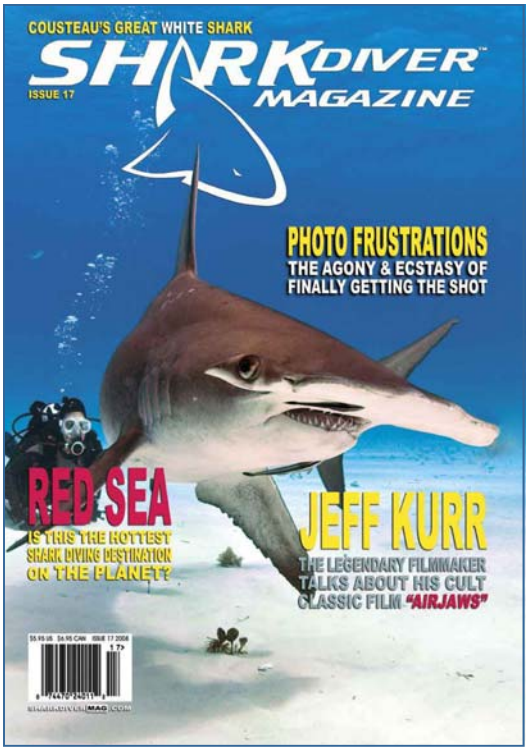
Hammerhead sharks are highly-valued in the ecotourism industry. Shark-based ecotourism generates continuing revenue streams to local economies of range states vs. the one-time gain from a dead shark[15].

HAMMERHEAD SHARKS MEET THE CRITERIA FOR LISTING ON APPENDIX II

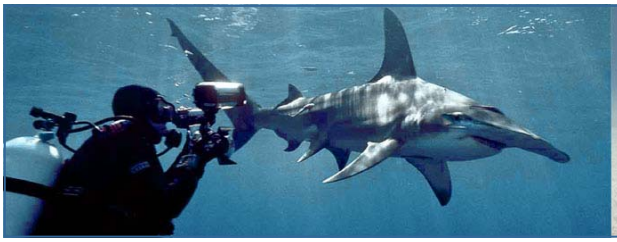
The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Expert Advisory Panel concluded that, based on the available evidence presented, the biological criteria for a listing of scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*) in CITES Appendix II are met. The other two species proposed for an Appendix II listing in accordance with Article II paragraph 2b (look-alike clause), great hammerhead shark (*S. mokarran*) and smooth hammerhead shark (*S. zygaena*), meet the criteria[16].

An Appendix II listing will only ***regulate*** international trade to help ensure that trade in hammerhead sharks is sustainable. The Appendix II listing ***will not affect domestic trade***.

An Appendix II listing may prevent inclusion of hammerhead sharks in Appendix I in the near future.



Hammerhead sharks have high value in the ecotourism industry[13].



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