Proposals to amend the lists of species subject to trade controls have been submitted by governments for consideration at the 2007 meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), a United Nations treaty.

Parties to the treaty submitted about 40 proposals for discussion including marine species such as sharks, eels and coral. In fact, one-third of the proposed animals listings put forward are marine species.

Among the marine species proposals to be considered are two by Germany, on behalf of the European Union, to list the porbeagle shark and spiny dogfish in Appendix II of CITES, a listing in which would closely regulate international trade of these species.

Populations of both species have dramatically declined in the North Atlantic — by up to 95 per cent for the spiny dogfish and 89 per cent for the porbeagle in the last 10 and 40 years respectively. International trade of these sharks is not controlled and fisheries are ineffectively managed; it is the 11th hour for both species.

There are also proposals to list species of sawfish in Appendix I (which would prohibit international commercial trade) as well as spiny lobster, European eel, red and pink coral and Bangaii cardinalfish in Appendix II.

There is also a proposal from Japan that asks CITES to review the status of all whale species in Appendix I.

All proposals will be considered at the next CITES meeting, scheduled to take place in the Hague, the Netherlands, from 3–15 June 2007. SRI scientists will attend the CITES meeting to present data in support of Germany’s proposals, and lobby for protection of the two sharks and other marine species.

US Federal officials have broken up a major wildlife smuggling ring led by a pastor of The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HSA-UWC), the church founded by Reverend Sun Myung Moon.

Six men were convicted and sentenced for catching thousands of undersized (under 36 inches in length) leopard sharks in San Francisco Bay and selling them to aquarium dealers in the USA, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. The poachers’ sentences include paying retributions of $410,000. The HSA-UWC will also contribute $500,000 to restore the sharks’ habitat in San Francisco Bay as part of a non-prosecution agreement with the United States Attorney’s Office. In addition, $300,000 from the California Coastal Conservancy and $300,000 through the combined contributions of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation are being designated for the same purpose.
Frilled Shark Exhibited

On January 25, 2007, when Tokyo Sea Life Park’s staff took a boat with local fishermen, we caught a male goblin shark (*Mitsukurina owstoni*), 1.3 m long, in the shallows (160 metres deep) of outer Tokyo Bay. We brought back the shark, which was fortunately not much damaged, and displayed it in a “Deep Sea” tank together with alfonsinos (*Beryx splendens*), and spiny dogfish (*Squalus japonicus*), but it died on January 27.

At first, the shark seemed nervous, swimming in the tank with one side upwards. But after a while, it began to swim normally and slowly, avoiding collision with tank walls and the acrylic window.

Goblin sharks grow up to 3.5 metres long and normally live at depths of 1,200 metres. Specimens are extremely rare and little is known about their lives. They are called “living fossils,” because they resemble pre-historic sharks.

They have awl-like teeth and the sharks’ gastric contents indicate they eat squids, octopuses, shrimp and crabs near the seafloor.

We caught a goblin shark once before. We were able to bring it back to the aquarium, but it died several days later. *Tokyo Sea Life Park*

Goblin Shark Captured and Exhibited

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Frilled Shark Exhibited

On January 21, the Awashima Marine Park in Shizuoka, south of Tokyo, Japan, captured and displayed a 5.3-foot (160-centimeter) frilled shark, *Chlamydoselachus anguineus*.

Frilled sharks usually live at depths of 2,000 feet. They are rarely found alive near the surface. "We think it may have come to the surface because it was sick, or else it was weakened because it was in shallow waters," a park official said. We are very grateful for the continuing support and encouragement of:

- The Adikes Family Foundation
- Wendy Benchley
- The Freeman Foundation
- Edmund Grainger
- Lauren Hutton
- J. Arch McNamara, M.D.
- Microwave Telemetry, Inc.
- The Philanthropic Group
- The Rohauer Collection Foundation
- San Diego Shark Diving
- Greg Sparks
- Underwater Video Images
- World Wildlife Fund
Expeditions

Spaces for sport divers are open on the following expeditions. Please note: These are not dive trips, they are research expeditions. Divers share expedition expenses, assist in gathering environmental data and record species behavior.

To reserve a space or obtain more details, go to: www.sharks.org/expeditions

Cocos Island - The Island of Sharks
May 22-June 4 This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn shark photography with Ernie Brooks, CEO of Brooks Institute of Photography! Known as the Ansel Adams of Underwater Photography, he is also a member of the Scuba Hall of Fame. You will also have the opportunity to search for sharks at a depth of 1500 feet in a submersible. $5,600 per person

Whale Sharks
$1,500 per person

December 15-22 LaPaz, Mexico. Expedition leader: Dr. Alex Antoniou.
$1,350 per person

December 2007-March 2008 Tanzania & Northern Mozambique Channel, aboard the oceanographic vessel Kairos. Watch our website for dates & costs

March 3-13, 2008 Donsol, Philippines. Expedition Leader, Marie Levine
$1,887 per person

White Sharks
August 10-15 & October 12-18 Guadalupe Island aboard the Sea Escape. Expedition Leader, Dean Fessler.
$2,600 to $2,900 per person.

August 25-29, September 1-5, September 22-29 September 29- October 3, and October 6-10 Guadalupe Island aboard the Andrea Lynn. Dean Fessler will lead the October 6-10 expedition. $2,650 per person

Breaking news: A whale shark conference is being planned in Quintana Roo, Mexico, for late August or early September 2007. Details will be disseminated when finalized.

Calendar of Events

Adventures in Travel Expo
March 3-4 at the Washington Convention Center, 801 Mount Vernon Place NW. This is a unique event, offering scuba pools, cultural performances and more. If you live in the Washington, DC area don’t miss the show. Meet SRI staff in booth #650.
www.adventureexpo.com/sr1

Beneath The Sea - March 23-25
BTS is the largest dive expo in North America and is held at the Meadowlands Convention Center in Secaucus, NJ. In addition to hundreds of exhibitors, workshops, seminars, the Fish & Famous Dinner, the Film Festival will feature SRI President Stan Waterman as emcee. Many dive celebrities, including Rodney Fox, will be in attendance. Stan will receive the Legends of the Sea Award, and SRI member Lauren Hutton will be inducted into the Women Divers Hall of Fame. Dr. Alex Antoniou, Marie Levine and Dean Fessler will be presenting seminars. Join SRI staff at Booth #208 and “talk shark”. For more information and to purchase tickets follow this link, www.beneaththesea.org

SeaSpace - March 31 & April 1 at the Reliant Center in Houston Texas, features 150 booths, Photo Gallery, Kid’s Place activities, workshops, seminars and a film festival with Deep Sea 3D, an IMAX film by Howard & Michelle Hall. SRI members Mike Tichenor, and Chris and Craig Hebel will be at booth 547.
www.seaspace.org/
Update on AMAZON.COM!

Amazon.com has removed all shark fin related products from their website. Although no official statement has yet been made by the company, it appears that they have chosen the ecologically responsible path.

The next step is to convince Amazon to make a public stand against trade in endangered species (in this case sharks). Take a moment to send a communication to Amazon, voicing your support for their immediate action and asking them to take this stand. Email customer service at advantage@amazon.com and investor relations at ir@amazon.com

Don’t blame the Tooth Fairy

The fibreglass replica shark jaw that hung for more than 10 years inside the concession building at Montauk Point State Park is missing four teeth and two replica teeth. The theft was discovered when the concession changed hands and the jaws were taken down. The owner of the jaws, Bill Hojohn, believes the theft was recent because there was no dust on that section of jaw. Alone the teeth are worth perhaps $80 each, but the replica jaw (with teeth intact) was valued at $30,000.

Vito Bertucci, a fossil-hunter and scuba-diver from Virginia, found the teeth at different times in rivers near Charleston, S.C. and constructed the jaws which were purchased from him by Hojohn. “The teeth are some of the largest from a big-tooth mako, *Isurus hastalis*, ever discovered,” said Hojohn. “Each measures about three inches at the root and three and three-eighth inches at the top. That’s very big for this particular species.”

We are saddened to report the untimely death on February 13 of R. Aidan Martin, Director of SRI Canada. Aidan was an enthusiastic and generous educator, a gifted writer and artist (and a hilarious stand-up comedian). Aidan painted the image of a porbeagle on page 1, and his sketch of a mako (below) — done on the back of a menu after a shark conference while we “talked shark” — hangs on the wall of SRI HQ. We have lost a friend and sharks have lost an eloquent champion. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Anne, who was his best friend and soul mate.

R. Aidan Martin 1965-2007