

Thank you Mr Chair. Project AWARE Foundation is an international nonprofit organization registered in Australia, the UK and the US. We work with scuba divers globally on two critical issues: sharks in peril and marine debris and we are deeply committed to conservation of migratory sharks and the principles of the CMS Sharks MoU. As you've heard from the Secretariat earlier during our meeting, Project AWARE has submitted a letter of interest that explains our work and commitment to shark conservation in greater detail. Also, with your indulgence, I would like to add a few more words on behalf of my colleague Sonja Fordham of Shark Advocates International who unfortunately needed to leave early. Shark Advocates International (SAI), a project of The Ocean Foundation, is based on two decades of experience in advancing science-based shark conservation policies through a wide range of fora, including domestic shark and ray fisheries management bodies in the US and EU, Regional Fishery Management Organizations, and CITES. SAI founder and president, Sonja Fordham, maintains close working relationships with the world's leading shark scientists through roles on the IUCN Shark Specialist Group and the American Elasmobranch Society, and with many conservation NGOs through various coalitions. In addition, SAI regularly liaises with key fishing industry representatives through a number of regional and global advisory panels. To this initiative, SAI offers special expertise in identifying opportunities for concrete, science-based fishery management actions relevant to Signatories and CMS-listed species, in line with the MoU and the Conservation Plan. Both Project AWARE and SAI are eager to participate in the implementation of the MoU and we look forward to the decisions on this matter. Thank you again for your time.