



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
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Agenda Item 28.1

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONCERTED ACTION
FOR THE
ANGELSHARK (*Squatina squatina*) ***

Summary:

The Government of Monaco and the Shark Trust have submitted the attached report on the implementation of the Concerted Action for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*), *UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 12.5*.

In addition, a revision to the Concerted Action is proposed in Annex 2 to this document, to extend the Concerted Action for the Angelshark for the next triennium in order to continue the implementation of ongoing activities.

Recommended Action:

The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:

- a) Review and adopt the present report on the implementation of *UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 12.5* for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*);
- b) Revise and extend *UNEP/CMS/Concerted Action 12.5* as proposed in Annex 2 to this report.

*The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CMS Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONCERTED ACTION
FOR THE ANGELSHARK (*Squatina squatina*)**

UNEP/CMS/ CONCERTED ACTION 12.5

1. CONCERTED ACTION

Title: Concerted Action for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*)

Document number: UNEP/CMS/ Concerted Action 12.5

2. REPORTING GOVERNMENT AND ORGANIZATIONS

Government of Monaco

The Shark Trust

3. TARGET SPECIES

Class: Chondrichthyes

Family: Squatinidae

Order: *Squatina*

Species: *Squatina squatina*

4. PROGRESS IN ACTIVITIES

The Concerted Action for *Squatina squatina*, reflects the objectives of the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy (Gordon *et al.* 2017), here after known as the *Strategy*. The Strategy provides a framework for improved protection of the three Critically Endangered species present in the region (*Squatina aculeata*, *Squatina oculata* and *Squatina squatina*) and aims to:

- increase the number of sightings reported;
- generate a better understanding of current distribution;
- contribute to IUCN Red List reassessments, and
- identify new collaboration opportunities to increase conservation action through the development of a series of Regional Action Plans for the: Canary Islands; Mediterranean; West Africa and Northeast Atlantic.

In addition, the Strategy highlights policy priorities which include, but are not limited to:

- listing on Spanish domestic regulations – with particular reference to *Squatina squatina* in the Canary Islands
- effective implementation of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) binding Recommendation, and
- listing on the Convention on Migratory Species.

These objectives are similarly reflected in the Concerted Action, and the significant progress to date reflects the efforts of the expanding angel shark conservation community, under the umbrella of the Angel Shark Conservation Network (ASCN). This Network was established to facilitate dialogue and information sharing on angel shark conservation effort, in particular across the range of *Squatina aculeata*, *S. oculata* and *S. squatina*. The success of the Strategy and Regional Action Plans requires cooperation between different stakeholders, working together towards a common vision (www.angelsharknetwork.com).

Progress on specific Concerted Action objectives are summarised in *Annex 1: Implementation of Activities*. The reviewers recommend renewal of the Concerted Action for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*).

4.1 Sightings and Distribution (include note on collaboration)

ASCN was established by Angel Shark Project, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Shark Specialist Group, Shark Trust, and Submon and has since expanded to include additional collaborators. Angel shark sightings have been submitted to the Network from the Canary Islands, UK and Ireland, as well as from across the Mediterranean: Spain, Libya, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus and Israel. A quarterly ebulletin updates those who have signed up to receive the ASCN newsletter with activities that partners and collaborators are undertaking.

4.2 Policy Priorities

Red List reassessments: *Squatina aculeata*, *Squatina oculata* and *Squatina squatina* reassessed and published in 2019.

Convention on Migratory Species: In 2017 *Squatina squatina* was successfully listed on Appendix I and II of CMS; In 2018 *Squatina squatina* was listed on Annex I of CMS Sharks Memorandum of Understanding. Angel sharks were profiled at MoS3.

Turkey: In 2018, updates to Article 5 of the Turkish Prohibited Species List (Communique 2016/35) included 11 additional elasmobranchs, including *Squatina aculeata*, *Squatina oculata* and *Squatina squatina* to the list.

Spain: In 2019, *Squatina aculeata*, *Squatina oculata* and *Squatina squatina* were included in the Spanish Endangered Species list for the Canary Islands in the highest category 'species in danger of extinction' (Orden AAA/75/2012).

Continued engagement with GFCM, RAC/SPA: specific representation of angel sharks at regional fora.

4.3 Regional Action Plans:

Canary Islands: Complete Angelshark Action Plan for the Canary Islands (Barker *et al.* 2016). This focused solely on *Squatina squatina* and was published prior to the Strategy, and as such is not reflected in the objectives of the Concerted Action. Significant progress has been made on delivery against all objectives.

Mediterranean: In prep Mediterranean Angel Sharks: Regional Action Plan (Gordon *et al.* 2019 in prep) - launch is scheduled for late 2019. This Action Plan reflects current knowledge of angel shark distribution and Mediterranean fisheries. It is designed to focus efforts and will aid in increasing the profile of angel sharks in the Mediterranean, classifying threats faced, reconstructing past baselines, understanding the cause of decline, and fostering collaboration between stakeholders and governments of coastal states/territories in determining and implementing legislation and effective conservation actions. Subregional Action Plans (SubRAPs) for the Mediterranean will also be developed (starting with areas identified as high priority for angel sharks) to facilitate further coordinated action and engage governments and industry.

It is foreseen to develop an annex as a companion document to the Mediterranean Angel Sharks: Regional Action Plan that includes activities of high priority which need to be implemented on a governmental level by CMS Parties. A draft annex will be prepared by the CMS Secretariat, in association with the Shark Trust and the ASCN, and will be communicated to the Parties in the Mediterranean region for comment. A CMS Range States meeting to consolidate all comments and to agree the final activities is planned for 2020.

It should be noted however that the actions of the Regional Action Plan are also relevant to governments which are not Parties to CMS.

Workshop details: The three-day workshop was organized by the Shark Trust and hosted in Tunis by the National Institute of Sciences and Technologies of the Sea (INSTM) in March 2019. It engaged 26 participants who represented 21 organizations and 11 countries. This workshop was in association with IUCN (with representatives from both the Shark Specialist Group (SSG) and the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation) and had contributions from NGOs, Universities, National Institutes, and inter-governmental organisations (CMS and RAC/SPA).

Northeast Atlantic: Action renewed The Angel Shark Project: Wales was established in 2018 (following a pilot study) to safeguard Angelsharks in Wales through fisher participation, heritage and citizen science. In 2020, the project will bring all stakeholders together to develop the Angelshark Action Plan for Wales, highlighting key steps to secure the future of this species in Welsh waters. The Action Plan will contribute to the wider Strategy.

West Africa: Action renewed. Currently informal engagement with individuals in West Africa, proposal to step-up activities in 2020 with roll-out of the SubRegional Action Plan process as developed for delivery of the Mediterranean Regional Action Plan.

4.4 Profile:

FishForum2018: At the inaugural FishForum 2018, held in Rome at FAO headquarters, angel sharks were heavily profiled at a stand in the main atrium and through a poster presentation focusing on angel sharks in the Mediterranean.

5. CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL CONCERTED ACTION (IF ANY)

Delivery of the Concerted Actions for *Squatina squatina* and the closely associated species (*Squatina aculeata* and *Squatina oculata*) is progressing well, but in a priority order and a more realistic time frame (see Annex 1 for adjusted timeframes). Immediate focus has been on the Mediterranean as the region where contemporary records indicate all three species are found with overlapping ranges.

With regards adjustment to the workshop schedule: the number of coastal states and territories in each geographic region (e.g. Mediterranean, West Africa) and a volume of constraints (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental) adds a complexity to the process of regional planning. Overarching Regional Action Plans are now supported by a series of subregional plans which will work to reflect threats and challenges specific to a discrete coastal region, engaging resident NGOs, stakeholders and governments for tangible, pragmatic action.

For specific progress made with the implementation of the Concerted Action please refer to Annex 1 and 2.

6. REFERENCES (if any)

- [Angel Shark Conservation Network](#)
- Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy ([English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#))
- Angelshark Action Plan for the Canary Islands ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))
- Full protection for angel sharks in the Canary Islands under Spanish legislation ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))
- IUCN Red List reassessments ([English](#))
- Mediterranean Regional Action Plan workshop ([English](#) | [French](#) | [Arabic](#))
- Angelshark fishing advisory ([English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Greek](#))
- Best practice guidelines ([English](#) | [Spanish](#))

- Lawson, J.M. Pollom, R., Gordon, C.A., Barker, J., Meyers, E.K.M., Zidowitz, H., Ellis, J.R., Bartolí, A., Morey, G., Fowler, S.L., Jiménez Alvarado, D., Fordham, S., Sharp, R., Hood, A.R., and Dulvy, N.K. in prep 2019. Fallen Angels: Extinction risk and conservation of Critically Endangered angel sharks in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea.

7. ACTION

The Concerted Action for *Squatina squatina* should be revised and extended for the following triennium as proposed in Annex 2 to this report.

ANNEX 1:IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress	Changes or solutions
1. The Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy				
Acknowledge the Strategy and implement its objectives where appropriate	Strategy provides guidance to Parties	2017	Completed: The Strategy (Gordon <i>et al.</i> 2017) was brought to the attention of Parties at COP12 and of Signatories to the CMS Sharks MOU at their third meeting, but the implementation of objectives is ongoing. Led by Shark Trust.	Extend CA
2. Regional Action Plan Workshops				
2.1 Prepare and hold Northeast Atlantic workshop	Strategy published and delivery initiated	2018/2019	Action renewed: Subregional activities for <i>S.squatina</i> are being delivered in Wales, UK. Led by Angel Shark Project: Wales. Level of existing protection for <i>S.squatina</i> in NE Atlantic identifies region as lowest priority at this time.	Wales Subregional Action Plan proposed for 2020. NE Atlantic plan proposed for 2021-2022
2.2 Prepare and hold Mediterranean workshop	Strategy published and delivery initiated	2018/2019	Action renewed: Workshop completed in March 2019. Overarching Mediterranean Regional Action Plan due for publication in Nov 2019. Led by Shark Trust.	Extend CA Subregional Action Plans to be rolled out in 2019-2020. CMS Range States meeting to negotiate CMS Annex of the Regional Action Plan
2.3 Prepare and hold West Africa workshop	Strategy published and delivery initiated	2018/2019	Action renewed: Workshop proposed 2020/21 (funding dependent), data gathering exercises underway. Led by Shark Trust and ASCN partners.	Extend CA

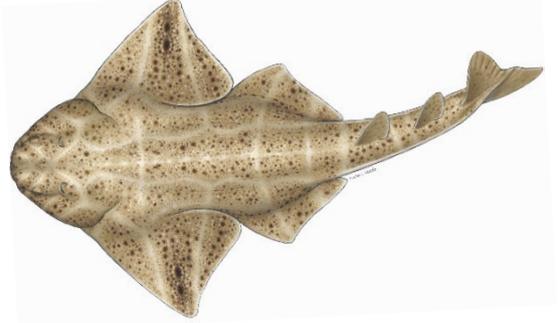
Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress	Changes or solutions
3. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)				
3.1 Encourage CMS Parties who are also Parties to GFCM to comply with their obligations GFCM/36/2012/3	Reduced incidental catch of angel sharks; markedly reduced landings; greater fisher awareness; increased knowledge of species distribution.	2018/2019	<p>Action renewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angel shark profile increased through engagement in subregional for a (GFCM, SPA/RAC, FishForum2018). - All Parties to GFCM directly encouraged to comply with their obligations, with compliance under increasing scrutiny. - Advisory materials for fishers now available in Greek, French, Spanish, English, with Hebrew and Arabic in prep. - Turkey (non-Party to CMS or Shark MoU signatory) extended national protections to <i>S. aculeata</i>, <i>S. oculata</i> and <i>S. squatina</i> in 2018. 	Extend CA Utilise Subregional Action Plan process to assist compliance with existing operational regulations.
4. Global Strategy				
Engage with IUCN SSG and contribute to Global Red List reassessments for all angel shark species	Engagement with IUCN Shark Specialist Group established, and scientific information provided to support the reassessment of the angel shark.	2018/2019	<p>Completed: Red List reviews for <i>S. aculeata</i>, <i>S. oculata</i> and <i>S. squatina</i> have been completed and were published in 2019. Led by IUCN SSG.</p> <p>In progress: A global identification guide for the 22 described species of angel sharks is in prep (publication 2020). Led by Shark Trust.</p>	Extend CA A number of angel sharks species remain data deficient, and others a poorly known.

Activity	Expected outcomes	Original timeline	Progress	Changes or solutions
5. Sharks MOU				
5.1 Support the inclusion of Angelsharks in Annex 1 of the MOU	Angelsharks proposed for inclusion in Annex 1 of the MOU at MOS3.	End 2018	Completed The Angelshark was listed in Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU at Sharks MOS3 in 2018	NA
5.1 Present the Strategy to the Sharks MOU Signatories at Sharks MOS3	Acknowledge and where appropriate implement aspects of the Strategy.	End 2018	Completed The Strategy has been presented to Sharks MOS3 delegates. Signatories adopted CMS/Sharks/Outcome 3.8, in which Signatories agreed to review the Strategy and to apply it as appropriate.	NA

ANNEX 2

**DRAFT REVISION OF THE
CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE ANGELSHARK (*Squatina squatina*)**

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 12th Meeting (Manila, October 2017)

Proponent	<i>Principality of Monaco</i>
Target species, lower taxon or population, or group of taxa with needs in common	<p>Class: Chondrichthyes, Subclass: Elasmobranchii Order: Squatiniformes Family: Squatinidae Genus, species: <i>Squatina squatina</i> Linnaeus, 1758</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> <p style="text-align: right;">© Illustration by Marc Dando</p> <p>Proposed for inclusion in CMS App. I and II at COP12</p>
Geographical range	<p>The Angelshark¹, <i>Squatina squatina</i>, was historically common and widespread in depths of <5–150m over large areas of the coastal, continental and insular shelf of the Western Baltic Sea, North Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and the Eastern Atlantic, from Southern Norway, Sweden and the Shetland Islands to Morocco, Western Sahara and the Canary Islands (Figure 1, Ebert <i>et al.</i> 2013, Feretti <i>et al.</i> 2015). However, <i>Squatina squatina</i> has now been depleted from much of its former range (see Annex 1 for the list of Range States).</p> <p>Four geographic areas have been identified, and whilst there is some uncertainty as to species distribution there have been recent verified reports from each area.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Northeast Atlantic 2. Mediterranean 3. West Africa 4. Canary Islands

¹ Angel shark (as two words) refers to multiple species in the family Squatinidae, while Angelshark (as one word) is used for species common names, e.g. Angelshark *Squatina squatina*

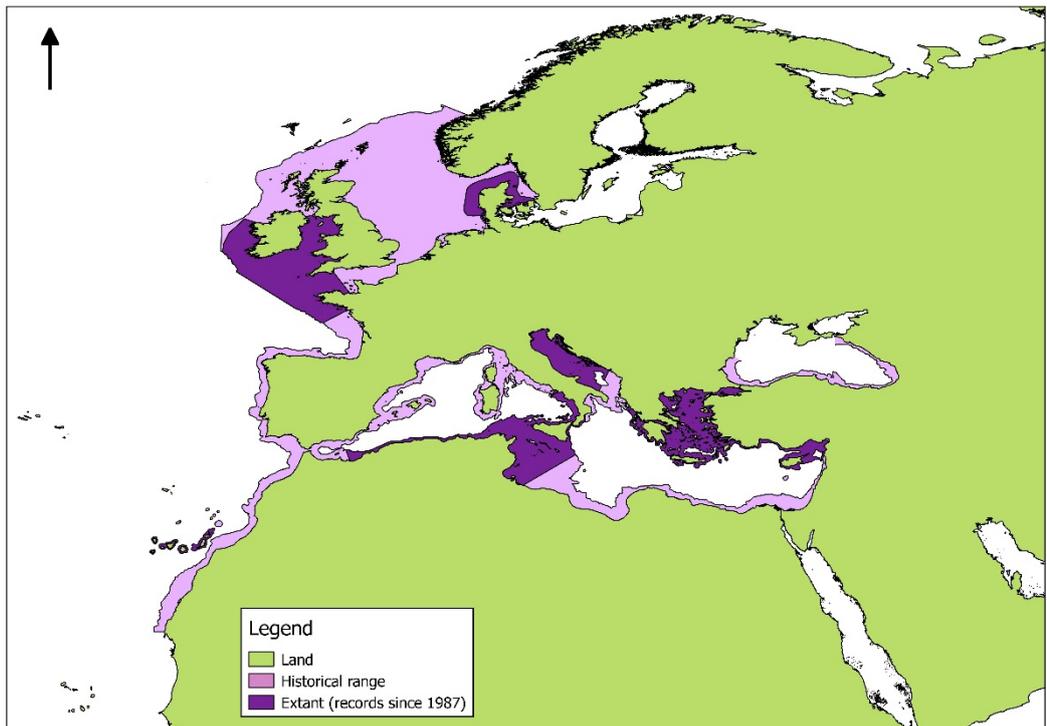


Figure 1. Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*) historical range and recent known distribution (based on at least one *Squatina squatina* individual positively identified since 1987). All distributions are shown to a 1,000m depth contour to show potential Angelshark habitat. Map created by J. Barker, Zoological Society of London on behalf of the Angel Shark Project using QGIS 2.6.1-Brighton in May 2016. Depth contour shapefiles were downloaded from Natural Earth naturalearthdata.com and presence data collected through the Angel Shark Conservation Workshop.

Activities and expected outcomes

International organizational and management structures for the mitigation of threats are vital to improve the conservation status of the Angelshark. The potential threats faced by Angelshark populations vary according to geographical area, highlighting the need for specific regional actions. To this end the following activities are proposed for consideration by the Parties, subject to the availability of funds:

1: Acknowledge and where appropriate implement aspects of The Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy, (hereafter “The Strategy”). The Strategy provides a framework for improved protection of the three Critically Endangered angel shark species (*S. squatina*, *S. aculeata* & *S. oculata*) throughout their entire range (a copy of the Strategy can be found in UNEP/CMS/COP12/Inf.22).

The Strategy aims to:

- a) improve the overall profile of angel sharks;
- b) increase flow of sightings reports;
- c) generate better understanding of the current distribution;
- d) contribute to the IUCN Red List re-assessments; and
- e) identify new collaborations opportunities to increase conservation action.

The vision of the Strategy is: *that angel sharks in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean are restored to robust populations and safeguarded throughout their range.*

Delivered through objectives grouped under three key goals:

Goal 1: Fisheries based angel shark mortality is minimised.

Goal 2: Critical angel shark areas are identified, investigated and protected where appropriate.

Goal 3: Human interactions are identified and any negative impacts on angel sharks are minimised.

	<p>2: Implement Objectives of the Strategy through the following actions, as appropriate:</p> <p>2.1 Convene a regional workshop in each of (1) Northeast Atlantic; (2) Mediterranean and (3) West Africa, with Range States, possible Range States that are not Parties to CMS, and regional/international experts.</p> <p>2.2 Acknowledge and use the example of the Angelshark Action Plan for the Canary Islands (presented as UNEP/CMS/COP12/Inf.17) to develop the Regional Action Plans.</p> <p>2.3 Compile data and information through the workshops on the other two sympatric threatened species, <i>S. aculeata</i> and <i>S. oculata</i> in areas (2) and (3).</p> <p>3: Engage Parties to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) where <i>S. squatina</i> (<i>S. aculeata</i> and <i>S. oculata</i>) are listed on the GFCM recommendation (GFCM/36/2016/3) which prohibits the retention, landing, transshipment, storage, display, and sale of 24 species of exceptionally vulnerable elasmobranchs listed on the Barcelona Convention's Annex II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean; advocate for effective implementation of this regulation in order to reduce the incidental catch of angel shark in the Mediterranean; and, as 21 of the 24 GFCM Contracting and Non-Contracting Parties are Party to CMS, listing would further cement the commitment of the majority of GFCM members to protecting angel sharks.</p> <p>4. Global Strategy: Liaise with the IUCN Shark Specialist Group to ensure regional workshops contribute to the Global Red List reassessments for all angel shark species, and similarly that regional workshops and subsequent reports coordinate effectively with global activities.</p> <p>5. Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU)</p> <p>5.1 Support the inclusion of Angelsharks in Annex 1 of the Sharks MOU at the 3rd Meeting of the Signatories (Sharks MOS3)</p> <p>5.2 Present the Strategy to the Sharks MOU Signatories at Sharks MOS3.</p>
<p>Associated benefits</p>	<p>It is the intention of the activities proposed in this document to serve as a catalyst to deliver effective conservation for angel sharks, but also to serve as an opportunity for Parties to collaborate for the protection of other marine species.</p> <p>Due to the overlapping distribution ranges of the three Critically Endangered angel shark species (<i>S. squatina</i>, <i>S. aculeata</i> & <i>S. oculata</i>), the Regional Action Plans would at the same time improve the knowledge and protection of all three species and implement the Strategy with its aims and goals.</p> <p>The regional workshops will invite all the Range States (also non-parties) to assist the workshops and will therefore promote Party accessions to CMS and to the Sharks MOU and raise awareness of the obligations under the Convention and the MOU. In addition, in some regions, e.g. West Africa, the Action Plans will include capacity-building activities for the region as well as awareness raising initiatives.</p> <p>Furthermore, the workshops will also establish a network of various stakeholders in the different regions, which will be invaluable for any future activities concerning other migratory species within the same range, with a great potential for future synergies.</p> <p>Liaise with the IUCN Shark Specialist Group to ensure regional workshops contribute to the Global Red List reassessments for all angel shark species, and similarly that regional workshops and subsequent reports coordinate effectively with global activities.</p>

Timeframe	Activities, expected Outputs and Outcomes, Timeframe for Implementation, Implementing Organizations and Funding Requirements:				
	Activity	Outputs / Outcomes	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
1. The Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy					
	Acknowledge the Strategy and implement its objectives where appropriate	Strategy provides guidance to Parties	2017 ongoing	Range State Parties	No funding needed
2. Regional Action Plan Workshops					
	2.1 Prepare and hold Northeast Atlantic workshop	Regional Action Plan published and delivery initiated	2018/2019 2019-2021	Range State Parties, CMS Secretariat, NGOs Shark Trust and the ASCN	Fundingraising needed ~\$30k-45k for workshop and workshop report
	2.2 Prepare and hold Mediterranean workshop Develop Subregional Action Plans for the Mediterranean region	Subregional Actions Plans published and delivery initiated	2018/2019 2020	Range States, CMS Secretariat, NGOs Shark Trust and the ASCN	Fundingraising needed ~\$30k for workshop and workshop report Costs will differ dependent on subregion (>\$10k)
	2.3 Develop in collaboration with CMS Range States an annex for the Regional Action Plan that includes actions to be implemented by CMS Parties	CMS annex developed and agreed by Range States	2021	Range States, CMS Secretariat, Shark Trust and the ASCN	Funding needed to hire a consultant (~\$5-8k) and to organize a Range State meeting (~\$20k)
	2.4 Submit the Regional Action Plan to CMS COP14 for review and adoption of the "CMS annex"	Regional Action Plan considered by Parties at CMS COP14	2022	CMS Secretariat	No funding needed
	2.5 Prepare and hold West Africa workshop	Regional Action Plan published and delivery initiated	2018/2019 2020/2021	Range States, CMS Secretariat, Shark Trust and the ASCN	Fundingraising needed ~\$30k-~80k for workshop and workshop report

3. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)				
Encourage CMS Parties who are also Parties to GFCM to comply with their obligations GFCM/36/2012/3 and utilize Subregional Action Plan process to assist compliance with existing operational regulations.	Reduced incidental catch of angel sharks; markedly reduced landings; greater fisher awareness; increased knowledge of species distribution.	2018/2019 ongoing	Range State Parties NGOs <u>Shark Trust and the ASCN</u>	No funding needed
4. Global Strategy				
Engage with IUCN SSG and contribute to Global Red List reassessments for all angel shark species	Engagement with IUCN Shark Specialist Group established, and scientific information provided to support the reassessment of the angel shark.	2018/2019 ongoing	Range States Parties, CMS Secretariat	Fundraising Funding needed to attend or support the process
5.1 Support the inclusion of Angelsharks in Annex 1 of the MOU	Angelsharks proposed for inclusion in Annex 1 of the MOU at MOS3.	End 2018	Range State Parties who are also Signatories to the Sharks MOU Cooperating Partners to the Sharks MOU	No funding needed
5.1 Present the Strategy to the Sharks MOU Signatories at Sharks MOS3	Acknowledge and where appropriate implement aspects of the Strategy.	End 2018	Range State Parties who are also Signatories to the Sharks MOU Cooperating Partners to the Sharks MOU	No funding needed

<p>Relationship to other CMS actions and mandates</p>	<p>The Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU) is the specialized agreement for chondrichthyan species in accordance with Article IV 1 of the Convention. It aims to guide international cooperation to maintain and achieve a sustainable conservation status for migratory sharks and rays included in its Annex 1.</p> <p>Although the MOU is independent from the Convention, Signatories nevertheless decided that chondrichthyan species listed on CMS would automatically be proposed for inclusion in Annex 1 of the MOU.</p> <p>In the event that the Angelshark were to be included on Annex 1 of the MOU, the species would benefit from the agreed measures and actions under the MOU and its Conservation Plan as well as from technical guidance for its conservation, provided by the MOU's Advisory Committee and Conservation Working Group.</p> <p>In return, these Concerted Actions would support the overall implementation of the Sharks MOU. In particular, to increase knowledge of Angelsharks and to improve management and international cooperation amongst Range States and with relevant organizations.</p> <p>The CMS Family Bycatch Working Group, which was set up in 2016, reviews existing measure to mitigate or reduce bycatch of CMS species and aims ensure that recommended measure benefit all taxa. The results of the proposed Concerted Actions would also contribute to this work.</p> <p>Finally, the actions would help to implement CMS resolutions and recommendations on Bycatch (Res 6.2, Rec 7.2, Res 8.14, Res 9.18, Res 10.14), which are proposed for consolidation to one Resolution by COP12 (see UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.21.2.4 and Doc.24.4.4).</p>
<p>Conservation priority</p>	<p>The Angelshark (<i>Squatina squatina</i>) has been depleted throughout much of its historical range over the past century and is listed as Critically Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species (Ferretti <i>et al.</i>, 2015). The angel shark family (Squatinidae) were identified as the second most threatened of all the world's sharks and rays after a global review of extinction risk by the IUCN Shark Specialist Group (Dulvy <i>et al.</i>, 2014). In the 2015 European Red List of Marine Fishes report, the angel shark was amongst the 2.5% of species assessed as Critically Endangered (Nieto <i>et al.</i>, 2015).</p> <p>The European Red List assessment was based on estimated and suspected declines of at least 80% over three generations and the likelihood of continued future declines (Nieto <i>et al.</i>, 2015). Hence, Angelsharks have an unfavourable conservation status as defined under the Convention since they do not meet the conditions outlined in subparagraph 1 C of the Convention Text.</p> <p>Any conservation initiative intended to prevent this Critically Endangered shark from being driven further towards extinction is unlikely to be successful without international cooperation working at a regional level and a specific Action Plan for each region. The Strategy provides a framework and links to technical support for Parties to address the priority threats and improve the protection of angel sharks.</p> <p>Adopting the Strategy and further developing the Regional Action Plans will comply with Resolution 11.20 on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks and Rays, addressing paragraphs 6,7,8, and 10.</p> <p>Angelsharks are caught as bycatch in a variety of fisheries across their range leading to steep declines in their populations. Incidental catch still remains a priority threat for Angelsharks. As stated in Resolution 9.18 on Bycatch, engaging with regional fisheries bodies, improving incidental catch reporting, identifying fisheries with significant incidental catch and initiating incidental catch mitigation measures will be addressed within the Action Plans.</p>

<p>Relevance</p>	<p>The species is legally protected on domestic regulations in only a small part of its range under Monaco, UK, Gibraltar and Spanish legislation, and incidentally in some marine protected areas where trawl and net fisheries are prohibited (e.g. in Spain and Turkey). Regional EU and GFCM fisheries prohibitions and listings under regional agreements (OSPAR, Barcelona and Bern Conventions) should provide a degree of protection and a framework for further action however landings continue to be reported.</p> <p>Public and fisher awareness of the Angelshark's threatened status and the existence of these measures is generally poor, and Range State implementation activities and compliance monitoring is often lacking. Any national conservation initiatives intended to prevent this Critically Endangered species from being driven further towards extinction is unlikely to be successful if the animal is not protected during its seasonal migrations into, and through other Range States' and high seas waters.</p> <p>Moreover, there is still a significant uncertainty about the contemporary presence and distribution of Angelsharks, in particular in the Mediterranean and West Africa where multilateral action would be key to effective actions for the species. Hence, the Angelshark would significantly benefit from coordinated international management structures to obtain a better understanding of the remaining Angelshark populations and stimulate full protection from the CMS Parties whose waters cover a large part of its range.</p> <p>The Principality of Monaco has proposed to include the Angleshark in Appendix I and II of CMS at COP12.</p>
<p>Absence of better remedies</p>	<p>There is limited compliance monitoring for some of the management measures mandated through the species protection actions and recommendations mentioned in the above point, making it difficult to determine which are being implemented effectively. Fisheries landings data (FAO FishStat) also indicate that angel shark species are retained by commercial fisheries even in sea areas where protective measures are in place.</p> <p>Angelsharks are currently not listed under CITES.</p> <p>The Angel Shark Conservation Network (ASCN) was created following a successful workshop in 2016, to develop the Angelshark Action Plan for the Canary Islands. The lead partners of this process, The Shark Trust (Cooperating Partner Sharks MOU), IUCN Shark Specialist Group (member of the Sharks MOU Conservation Working Group), the Angel Shark Project and Submón have established an extremely functional partnership on the ground between research and conservation of Angelsharks. The Angelshark Action Plan has proved to be a very successful pilot process to engage multiple stakeholders and identify the main threats and conservation priorities for Angelsharks in the region (Canary Islands). Following the release, the first actions have already been implemented, in particular with regards advocating for legislative change. The collaborative efforts of the network that has already been established, in combination with a CMS Concerted Action, will enable effective work towards achieving the favourable conservation status of Angelsharks.</p>
<p>Readiness and feasibility</p>	<p>The Principality of Monaco (Party to CMS and Signatory to the CMS Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Migratory Sharks) has already taken the lead on the listing proposal of Angelsharks on Appendix I and II and is committed to support the concerted actions with some funding and leadership.</p> <p>An Angel Shark Conservation Network (ASCN) is already established enabling effective sharing of data and information, taking the lead on identifying regional experts and capacity within the community. The IUCN Shark Specialist Group and the Shark Trust are both a founder member of the ASCN and the Shark Trust is also a Cooperating Partner to the CMS Sharks MOU. See next section for more on the ASCN.</p>

<p>Likelihood of success</p>	<p>The Angel Shark Conservation Network (ASCN) was created following a successful workshop in 2016, to develop the Angelshark Action Plan for the Canary Islands. The lead partners of this process, The Shark Trust (Cooperating Partner Sharks MOU), IUCN Shark Specialist Group (member of the Sharks MOU Conservation Working Group), the Angel Shark Project and Submón have established an extremely functional partnership on the ground between research and conservation of Angelsharks. The Angelshark Action Plan has proved to be a very successful pilot process to engage multiple stakeholders and identify the main threats and conservation priorities for Angelsharks in the region (Canary Islands). Following the release, the first actions have already been implemented, in particular with regards advocating for legislative change.</p> <p>Following this workshop, the same partners and a wider group of experts have convened at a second workshop to develop the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Angel Shark Conservation Strategy, which serves as a coordinated international framework.</p> <p>With the support of the partners involved in the above-mentioned processes there is a very strong foundation from which Range States can work on to deliver the regional workshops and implement the activities resulting from these workshops. Furthermore, support will be requested from the Sharks MOU and Cooperating Partners (especially the Shark Trust), to support the development and implementation of the action plans.</p> <p>There is a great deal of uncertainty regarding the distribution and presence of angel sharks, in particular in West Africa. West Africa is a priority region which poses some of the greatest challenges, with little published information currently available. However, these priority activities will be addressed by the regional action plans and benefit from the commitment of the ASCN.</p>
<p>Magnitude of likely impact</p>	<p>The family Squatinidae contains over 23 species, half of which are listed as threatened (Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The majority of the remaining species are either Data Deficient or Not Evaluated. Many species in this family have suffered steep population declines and now face a significant risk of extinction. The range of <i>S. squatina</i> overlaps with the Critically Endangered <i>S. aculeata</i> and <i>S. oculata</i>, consequently actions associated with the primary species may act as a flagship not only for the two associated species but for all Squatinidae.</p> <p>Successful implementation could result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improvements in: legal protection status; data quality and monitoring; local and regional capacity to address bycatch (gear adaptations/temporal or seasonal closures in critical areas); and general awareness; – Benefits to science through increased data and information; improved communication; expanded research network; increased sharing of knowledge and techniques. In addition to providing substantial opportunity for complementary action for the two additional Critically Endangered angel shark species which have a partial shared range. – An increase in political will and resourcing with greater profile and commitment from Range States and facilitated access to funding as species is higher on government's agendas. – A more certain future, as a concerted effort across the species range could result in a halt in decline and in-time foster species recovery.
<p>Cost-effectiveness</p>	<p>The expected costs are outlined under the timeframe table above. Estimated costs for holding the regional workshops have been added and are subject to successful fundraising. Holding regional workshops are a cost-effective approach to reach out to multiple stakeholders and accomplish species and region specific actions.</p>

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Annex 4: List of Range States and their status in CMS and the Sharks MOU

Due to current converted effort on securing information on the range of Angelsharks, this list is subject to change. Furthermore, Range States for the other two Angelshark species (*Squatina aculeata* and *Squatina oculata*) have also been included for reasons of overlapping range, lookalike species, misidentification and misreporting and associated benefits for the conservation of other Critically Endangered sharks.

The following definitions are used for this table:

Yes = This species is known or thought very likely to occur presently in the area. Current or recent records (past 30 years) or there is no record of the species in the area, but the species may occur based on distribution of suitable habitat.

Extinct?: Formerly known or thought likely to occur in the area, likely now extirpated due to habitat loss/other threats. No recent records despite searches, and intensity and timing of threats could plausibly have extirpated the taxon. Habitat loss/other threats are thought likely to have extirpated the species and/or owing to a lack of records in the last 30 years

Uncertain: A record exists of the species presence in an area, but this record requires verification or is rendered questionable owing to uncertainty over the identity or authenticity of the record, or accuracy of the location.

Country	Range State	CMS Party	Sharks MOU Signatory
Albania	yes	yes	no
Algeria	yes	yes	no
Belgium	extinct?	yes	yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina	yes	no	no
Bulgaria	uncertain	yes	no
Croatia	yes	yes	no
Cyprus	yes	yes	no
Denmark	uncertain	yes	yes
Egypt	yes	yes	yes
European Union	yes	yes	yes
France	yes	yes	no
Gambia	yes	yes	no
Georgia	uncertain	yes	no
Germany	extinct?	yes	yes
Greece	yes	yes	no
Guinea	extinct?	yes	yes
Guinea-Bissau	extinct?	yes	no
Ireland	yes	yes	no
Israel	yes	yes	no
Italy	yes	yes	no
Lebanon	yes	no	no

Country	Range State	CMS Party	Sharks MOU Signatory
Liberia	yes	yes	yes
Libya	yes	yes	yes
Malta	yes	yes	no
Mauritania	yes	yes	yes
Monaco	extinct?	yes	yes
Montenegro	extinct?	yes	no
Morocco	yes	yes	no
Netherlands	extinct?	yes	yes
Norway	extinct?	yes	no
Portugal	yes	yes	yes
Romania	uncertain	yes	yes
Russian Federation	uncertain	no	no
Senegal	yes	yes	yes
Slovenia	yes	yes	no
Spain	yes	yes	no
Sweden	extinct?	yes	yes
Syrian Arab Republic	yes	yes	yes
Tunisia	yes	yes	no
Turkey	yes	no	no
Ukraine	uncertain	yes	no
United Kingdom	yes	yes	yes