

ADDENDUM 1

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL COMMENTS

(arising from ScC-SC6)

PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE BULL RAY (*Aetomylaeus bovinus*) IN APPENDIX II AND THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA POPULATION OF THIS SPECIES IN APPENDIX I OF THE CONVENTION

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.11

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COP14

- Recommended for adoption.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT

- For the review of this listing proposal the Scientific Council took into consideration the analysis of listing proposals provided by the Sharks MOU Advisory Committee (Sharks AC) contained in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.13.4](#).
- The Scientific Council concluded that the available evidence would allow the conservation status of the Bull Ray to be considered as 'unfavourable' throughout its range. Given that the Mediterranean Sea populations appear to occur in a number of discrete areas, such populations could be at an elevated risk of extinction and may be considered endangered in accordance with Article III(1) of CMS and Resolution 13.7 *Guidelines for preparing and assessing proposals for the amendment of CMS Appendices*.
- The Scientific Council noted that, while the locally/regionally defined areas of occurrence may straddle the waters of multiple range states (e.g., Italy and Croatia in the northern Adriatic, or Greece and Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean Sea), there are no indications that any migrations in these areas would be of a cyclical and predictable nature.
- However, the Scientific Council concluded that available evidence indicates that the Bull Ray is an aggregating species that exhibits seasonal migrations, moving into shallower waters to give birth. The spatial extent of this migration is, however, likely to be limited, given that Bull Rays are generally encountered over much of the year in those localized areas where they occur.
- A general comment on the applicability of CMS listing criteria for marine species, also included in [UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC6/Inf.13.4](#) was made, noting that:

“the definition of ‘migratory’ as per CMS can sometimes be difficult to gauge, especially for species that are rare, difficult to assess, and/or occur in areas subject to more limited scientific investigations. Sharks and rays may display different types of migratory behaviour, and the [Sharks] AC has previously noted that there are different scales of cyclical and predictable migrations of fish populations (or part thereof; refer to CMS/Sharks/Outcome 3.2, provided in the Annex). In addition to this, some shark and ray species (as well as fish in general) may form ‘straddling stocks’ irrespective of whether or not the migratory behaviours would meet the CMS criteria. A straddling stock

(which equates with a transboundary population) is a population of fish that is (usually) highly mobile and has a distributional range extending over multiple jurisdictional areas.

There are clearly technical and practical considerations of demonstrating whether a species meets the CMS criteria for being 'migratory'. For example, longer-term tagging studies may be limited for some species and areas or may have only been undertaken for more accessible part/s of the global population which may or may not be representative. Additionally, when a species becomes depleted, it can be difficult to characterize the seasonal nature of the species' occurrence (e.g., through landings or catch data), due to data being more limited."

- It was recommended that the proponent provides further information on the added value of international cooperation for the conservation and management of the species.