



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
ON THE CONSERVATION OF  
MIGRATORY SHARKS**

CMS/Sharks/MOS4/Doc.11.2  
29 November 2022  
Original: English

4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Signatories (Sharks MOS4)  
Bonn, 28 February – 2 March 2023  
Agenda Item 11

**GLOBAL COMPENDIUM  
OF THE CONSERVATION STATUS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES OF SHARKS**

*(Submitted by the European Union)*

This document includes a proposal, submitted by the European Union, to establish a global compendium of the conservation status and management of sharks.

The Annex includes comments by the Secretariat in response to the proposal which Signatories may wish to consider when taking a decision with regards to the proposal.

Action requested:

The Meeting is requested to:

- a) Review and discuss the proposal by the EU to request the Secretariat to establish a global compendium of the conservation status and management of sharks;
- b) Take note of the comments provided by the Secretariat in the Annex to this document;
- c) Establish an in-session Working Group tasked with developing a budgeted project document to develop a “Global compendium of conservation status and management measures of sharks” to be included in Outcome 4.x from this meeting;
- d) Consider including the implementation of the project in the Programme of Work (2023-2025) also discussed under agenda item 12;
- e) In case the in-session Working Group requires more time to finish its work, consider establishing an intersessional Working Group (IWG) to finalize the project document after MOS4 and develop Terms of Reference for this IWG during MOS4.

**GLOBAL COMPENDIUM  
OF THE CONSERVATION STATUS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES OF SHARKS**

*(Submitted by the European Union)*

1. In order to facilitate the timely access to and exchange of information necessary to coordinate conservation and management measures, develop the most suitable methods for information dissemination, and regularly exchange information among various stakeholders the global compendium of the conservation status and management measures of sharks should be prepared and disseminated.
2. The specific objective of the project is to create a living database for the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks MOU), the Advisory Committee (AC), Secretariat and Cooperating Partners in order to provide them with a clear picture of the conservation situation across the globe, therefore helping to identify possible data gaps and conservation issues that would need to be addressed either through direct intervention by the MOU or through the input that Signatories could provide in other fishery management fora, particularly Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs).
3. The creation of the compendium should be funded through voluntary contributions and in-kind contributions of Signatories and other donor countries or organizations.
4. Wherever possible, the Secretariat is requested to support such activities in the context of other related outreach and capacity-building activities.
5. As appropriate and feasible, this work should be undertaken in cooperation with other relevant organizations, in particular, but not limited to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), RFMOs and Regional Seas Conventions (RSCs) and Action Plans, as well as relevant non-profit organizations and private sector.

Activities	Implementing Entity	Corresponding objective in Annex 3 to the MoU: Conservation Plan, activities (A) and given priorities to the activity (P)	Implementation timeframe	Comments
<b>1. Technical Capacity:</b>				
a) Identify existing materials on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Species identification</li> <li>– Overview of legal status and instruments</li> <li>– Status of species in various RFMOs</li> <li>– Data collection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Secretariat</li> <li>– AC (Scientific advice)</li> <li>– liaising with RFMOs</li> </ul>	<b>Objective A:</b> Improving understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring, and information exchange (A 2.1 (P 5), 2.2 (P 5), 2.5 (P 5))	2023 June (TBC)	Secretariat in cooperation with RFMOs
b) Develop a sharks' compendium;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Secretariat</li> <li>– Scientific advice from AC</li> </ul>	<b>Objective A:</b> Improving understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring, and information exchange (A 2.1 (P 5), 2.3 (P 5))	20XX	The specific objective of the identified project is to provide Signatories to the Sharks MOU with a clear picture of the conservation situation across the globe, to identify possible data gaps that would need to be addressed either through direct intervention by the MOU or through the input that Signatories could provide in other fishery management fora, particularly RFMOs.
c) Translate (if agreed/needed) and disseminate a shark's compendium.	– Secretariat	<b>Objective A:</b> Improving understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring, and information exchange, Annex 3 to the MoU, (A 2.1 (P 5), 2.3 (P 5))	20XX	

Activities	Implementing Entity	Corresponding objective in Annex 3 to the MoU: Conservation Plan, activities (A) and given priorities to the activity (P)	Implementation timeframe	Comments
d) Identify further materials to be developed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Species identification</li> <li>– Overview of legal status and instruments</li> <li>– Status of species in various RFMOs</li> <li>– Data collection;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Secretariat in cooperation with RFMOs</li> </ul>	<b>Objective A:</b> Improving understanding of migratory shark populations through research, monitoring, and information exchange, (Annex 3 to the MOU, A 2.3 (P 5), 2.4 (P 5))	20XX	The FAO “Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks” and MOS1 had already developed some material in this regard. Moreover, much information could already be held in the various RFMOs.
<b>2. Awareness-raising and Communication:</b>				
Develop awareness-raising materials or identify existing ones and disseminate them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cooperating Partners</li> <li>– Secretariat</li> <li>– AC</li> </ul>	<b>Objective D:</b> Increasing public awareness of threats to sharks and their habitats and enhancing public participation in conservation activities. Annex 3 to the MoU, A 12.1 (P 2), A 13.1 (P 4)	20XX	Information may be already available through Signatories or NGOs.
<b>3. Cooperation with other Range States:</b>				
Inform Signatories of opportunities for regional or international cooperation, such as multi-national initiatives, projects, or meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Signatories</li> <li>– Secretariat</li> <li>– Cooperating Partners</li> </ul>	<b>Objective E:</b> Enhancing national, regional, and international cooperation, Annex 3 to the MOU, (A 15.1 (P 5))	20XX	This activity could be achieved at a low cost.
<b>4. Funding:</b>				

Activities	Implementing Entity	Corresponding objective in Annex 3 to the MoU: Conservation Plan, activities (A) and given priorities to the activity (P)	Implementation timeframe	Comments
Identify suitable funds and make Signatories and Range States aware of funding opportunities for the implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Signatories</li> <li>– Secretariat</li> <li>– Cooperating Partners</li> <li>– AC</li> </ul>			Signatories, Cooperating Partners, and AC might be able to provide feedback.

## ANNEX

### COMMENTS BY THE SECRETARIAT

1. The Secretariat has reviewed the proposal by the European Union (EU) to establish a global compendium of the conservation status and management measures of sharks and is below providing comments regarding required resources relative to different options for implementation.

#### General Observations

2. The Secretariat welcomes the initiative while noting that the proposed activities could be rather extensive. We note that the proposed global compendium as proposed in activity 1 (b) would require both initial development and regular updates. Therefore, additional personnel on an ongoing basis or the regular services of a willing implementing partner would be required.
3. Clarification is required on whether all or any of the information mentioned in activities 1-4 would be part of the global compendium or whether those would constitute separate activities.
4. To provide a realistic estimate of the costs involved, more details would be required, such as information on expected deliverables and the frequency of updates, as well as the envisaged platform for the compendium.

#### Existing Websites and Databases

5. The Secretariat notes that some of the suggested information is already being provided through other organizations. For example:
  - a. The **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** in its "[Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks](#)"<sup>1</sup> provides a list of instruments for the conservation and management of sharks.

As explained on the FAO website:

*"These instruments include binding and non-binding Conservation and Management Measures, Plans of Action, and national legislation. This database has been developed in cooperation with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and with the support of the European Union, the Government of Japan, and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States of America (NOAA). The information held within the database will be checked and updated on a six-monthly basis, ..."*

It should be noted that this information is provided for most, but not all Annex 1 listed species. Furthermore, information on national legislation is not provided for all Signatories of the MOU.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO. 2022. Database of measures on conservation and management of sharks. In: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation [online]. Rome. Database version 1-2022. [www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en](http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en)

- b. The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** provides information on the conservation status of all Annex 1-listed species in [The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™](#). In addition, the Red List provides information about the species range, population size, habitat and ecology, use and/or trade, threats, and conservation actions aimed at informing necessary conservation decisions.
  - c. The **IUCN Species Survival Commission Shark Specialist Group (IUCN SSC SSG)** provides on its [website](#) amongst other resources a quarterly newsletter, references to relevant scientific literature, publications related to fisheries management, species status reports, species identification guides, as well as information on CITES, CMS, the Sharks MOU, and RFMOs.
  - d. The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** provides on its website (section on "[Sharks and rays](#)") a compilation of species identification guides and other information materials.
6. Guidance may be provided as to the relationship between those existing databases and information sources and the envisaged compendium, especially to create possible synergies.

### **CMS Sharks MOU Info Hub**

7. In 2019, the Secretariat established an "[Information Hub](#)" for sharks and rays on its website. It provides materials such as species identification guides, policy documents, scientific reports and assessments, toolkits and guidelines on e.g. responsible tourism, safe handling and release, and awareness raising.
8. To augment this information hub with additional information, the Secretariat relies on permission to upload documents. This is needed to ensure that information stays available. Providing links to information on other websites might lead to the unavailability of information within a short time as links are often changed. It should be noted that the process of identifying and collecting materials and securing permission for publication is time-consuming. It requires active participation and support by authors of such materials, including Signatories and relevant organizations.

### **Information on National Legislation**

9. While information on international regulations, such as the Conservation and Management Measures agreed upon by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), is publicly available, national legislation and policies are often not published online. Moreover, even when available online, such information is often available in file formats that are not machine-readable or in languages other than those of the Sharks MOU. It would go beyond the current capacity of the Secretariat to identify relevant information for all Signatories and to keep it updated. Obtaining information on national legislation involves legal expertise which the MOU Secretariat does not have.

### **Suggested way forward**

10. Signatories need to agree on further details to provide clarity on the scope of the proposed compendium and other deliverables.
11. Then the Secretariat can estimate the initial establishment costs as well as the ongoing costs to maintain and keep the information updated. This would include both technical costs and costs of personnel.
12. As a first step, the Secretariat, therefore, suggests establishing an in-session Working Group tasked with developing a budgeted project document to develop a “Global compendium of conservation status and management measures of sharks” to be included in Outcome 4.x from this meeting.
13. Thereafter, Signatories may decide to include the implementation of the project in the Programme of Work (2023-2025) also discussed under agenda item 12.
14. If the in-session Working Group requires more time to finish its work, Signatories may decide to establish an intersessional Working Group (IWG) to finalize the project document after MOS4. In this case, Terms of Reference to guide the work of the IWG would have to be developed during this meeting