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29 January 2016

Andrea Pauly  
UNEP / CMS Secretariat  
United Nations Premises  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
53113 Bonn, Germany

Dear Ms. Pauly,

On behalf of MarAlliance, I am writing to confirm our interest in becoming a Cooperating Partner for the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Migratory Sharks and the corresponding Conservation Plan, in line with paragraph 30 of the MoU.

MarAlliance is an international NGO founded in 2014, based in Belize, and whose team of eight works on the research and conservation of marine wildlife, notably reef-associated sharks and rays and mega-planktivores (whale sharks, manta rays). Collectively, we draw on over 75 years of experience with marine research and conservation and fisheries science, and specifically my 18 years of experience in shark research and conservation. We work with a range of stakeholders, notably small scale traditional fishers in several countries worldwide. Capacity-building of local partners as well as conducting education and outreach to inform and foster attitudinal and consumer change are all integral to our mission. We have provided policy support in numerous ways and levels from the support of the successful listing of whale sharks in CITES and the national protection of whale sharks and nurse sharks in Belize to the designation or expansion of marine protected areas that encompass critical feeding or spawning habitat for numerous fish species.

MarAlliance works with multiple shark stakeholders including the Fisheries Departments in several countries. We have both helped to found several national shark advisory committees and supported the drafting of National Plans of Action for sharks in several countries. In November 2015, we founded the Caribbean Chondrichthyan Network to provide a research, management, conservation and policy forum for Caribbean shark stakeholders. Given our expertise, I believe MarAlliance is well placed to help encourage more countries to become signatories, support their quest for improved elasmobranch management and contribute to the implementation of the CMS Sharks MoU. Should MarAlliance be selected, please note that I would serve as focal point.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,



Dr. Rachel Graham  
Executive Director

cc.: File

