

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL COMMENTS
(arising from ScC-SC6)

**PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF
THE BLACKCHIN GUITARFISH (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) IN APPENDIX II AND THE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA POPULATION OF THIS SPECIES ON APPENDIX I OF THE
CONVENTION**

UNEP/CMS/COP14/Doc.31.4.10

(ScC-SC6 Agenda Item 13.4.10)

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COP14

- ScC-SC6 concluded that the global population of *Glaucostegus cemiculus* meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix II and that the Mediterranean population meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I of the Convention.
- ScC-SC6 recommended the listing proposal for adoption.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT

- For the review of this listing proposal the ScC-SC6 also 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](#) and ~~welcomed~~ ~~agreed with~~ their overall findings and comments provided.
- Members of the Committee agreed that the Mediterranean Sea and even the global species meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I and II with regards to its conservation status.
- The Committee pointed out that not only the Mediterranean population should be listed in Appendix I, but also the global population, as the species is targeted in West Africa for its fins. It was reported that catch numbers in West Africa are now in decline, indicating a population decline.
- In this context it was suggested that Range States in West Africa should provide available data to the proponent.
- It was noted that available evidence is insufficient to assess the scale of migratory behaviour, ~~as it was a very rare species as it has rarely been studied~~. However, using the Common Guitarfish as a model it was justifiable to assume that the Blackchin Guitarfish was migratory.
- It was noted that the species ~~is likely locally extirpated in parts of the Mediterranean but is still relatively abundant (Despite population declines) in parts of its range~~ ~~was very rare~~, poorly studied and that little information on its migration behavior is available. Under these circumstances it was felt difficult to determine whether it meets the CMS definition of “migratory”. However, it was pointed out that the species is considered migratory as comparisons with similar species, that are better studied, suggest.
- The Sharks AC previously commented on the Sharks MOU listing proposal for *R. rhinobatos*, noting “The Common Guitarfish is a coastal batoid species. Information from the Mediterranean Sea clearly indicates seasonal inshore-offshore migrations, although it was unclear as to whether these migrations crossed one or more national jurisdictional boundaries. Such seasonal

migrations were also noted off West Africa (Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone), based on coastal fishers altering their fishing activities, and there was some evidence that these migrations crossed national jurisdictional boundaries (Diop and Menna 2000). The AC considered these migrations to be a significant portion of the population (as it is unlikely that fishers would shift their activities based on a few individuals because this would not be profitable). Given the known importance of West Africa to the species, international cooperation is required."

- In the absence of species-specific information for *G. cemiculus*, the Sharks AC concluded that their migratory behaviors may broadly mirror those of such related and/or sympatric species, a position that was shared by the ScC-SC6.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC SECTIONS/ INCLUDING POSSIBLE PROPOSALS FOR TEXT REVISION

- ScC-SC6 noted that several references were missing related to migration behavior and recommended that these should be provided by the proponent.