# DRAFT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLES SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE ANGELSHARK (*Squatina squatina*) IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

**Amended version based on comments received after the online Range State Meeting on 5 & 6 July 2022**

**Endorsed by the Range States at their 1st Meeting on 29 – 30 April 2025**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

## Introduction

1. The draft governance structure outlined here is designed to support the effective implementation of the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*) in the Mediterranean Sea. Its primary goal is to establish a framework that helps Range States identify key priorities and opportunities for Angelshark conservation within their respective territories. This structure aims to foster collaboration through an international Working Group (WG), strengthening coordination and monitoring the progress of SSAP implementation across all Range States.

2. This governance structure will ensure that efforts are aligned and that challenges faced by different Range States are addressed in a cohesive and coordinated manner. The framework provides clear roles, responsibilities, and mechanisms for ongoing review and monitoring of progress.

## Coordination

## Working Group

3. As part of achieving Action 4.2 of the SSAP, which calls for the establishment of an International Working Group (WG) for the Mediterranean, the WG has been established following a call by the Secretariat (CMS Notification 2024/008: Implementation of the Single Species Action Plan for the Angelshark in the Mediterranean Sea Region (SSAP Angelshark Med), dated 15 May 2024). The WG is composed of one representative from each Range State, who will serve as the national government Focal Point, along with one national expert per Range State. In addition to national representation, the WG comprises experts from the Angel Shark Conservation Network (ASCN). Furthermore, the WG may consider inviting international stakeholders, either as full members or as observers, to contribute to the discussion and implementation efforts. A list of the WG members is provided as UNEP/CMS/Angelshark WG1/Inf.1.

4. To coordinate the work of the WG, a Chair and a Co-Chair will be elected on a voluntary basis. These individuals will be responsible for overseeing the coordination and progress of the WG's activities, ensuring that the WG functions efficiently and that its efforts align with the objectives of the SSAP.

5. The CMS Secretariat will provide administrative and logistical support for the WG but will not assume a leadership role in coordinating the implementation of the SSAP.

6. The Chair of the WG will be supported by a designated Coordinator, who will be responsible for the day-to-day coordination and management of the activities of the WG. The Chair's role will

primarily be to oversee the work of the Coordinator. The Chair will provide strategic guidance and ensure that communication between WG members is coordinated effectively, while the Coordinator will handle the operational aspects, including organizing meetings and reviewing the annual reports submitted by Range States.

7. On a triennial basis, the Chair and Co-Chair will also oversee the review of the SSAP, synthesize feedback on the challenges faced by Range States, and compile recommendations to the Conference of the Parties (COP) to address these challenges effectively.

**Implementation**

8. Following the establishment of the WG, it should agree upon a Programme of Work (POW) covering a COP triennium, focused on prioritizing key actions for Angelshark conservation. The Draft Programme of Work for 2025 and 2026, as presented in document UNEP/CMS/Angelshark WG1/Doc.7.1, should serve as the starting point for this process. The POW should be a living document, publicly accessible and annually updated by the WG members as progress is made. The POW will outline specific actions, timelines, and responsibilities, ensuring clear accountability and measurable outcomes.

9. To facilitate ongoing collaboration, the WG will have access to an online platform containing the SSAP, relevant supporting documents, and regular updates such as progress reports and meeting minutes. The Secretariat will support the WG by providing the technical tools necessary to enable efficient collaboration and document sharing.

**Meetings of the Working Group**

10. The WG should hold an annual meeting to assess the implementation progress of SSAP actions across the Range States. These meetings will serve as an opportunity to share updates, discuss challenges, and plan next steps.

11. In the lead-up to a Conference of the Parties (COP), the WG should hold a dedicated meeting to review both the progress of the WG itself and to conduct an in-depth review of the SSAP. This review should inform the decisions and priorities for the upcoming COP.

12. The CMS Secretariat will assist in organizing these meetings upon the request of the WG Chair. Typically, these meetings will be held virtually and conducted in English.

**Funding**

13. The responsibility for securing funding for the implementation of the SSAP at the national level will lie with the individual Range States. Each state is encouraged to identify and secure financial resources to support conservation efforts within their jurisdiction.

14. Additionally, Range States may consider providing funds directly to partner organizations, particularly those within the Angel Shark Conservation Network, to support the implementation of specific activities outlined in the SSAP. This approach could facilitate more targeted and efficient conservation actions, leveraging the expertise and local knowledge of these partner organizations.

15. In particular, the Draft Programme of Work for 2025 and 2026 presents several key actions that could be supported by such direct funding, including research, capacity-building, public awareness campaigns, and on-the-ground conservation activities. By channeling financial

resources to trusted, experienced partners, Range States can enhance the overall effectiveness of conservation efforts, ensuring that funds are used where they are most needed and can make the greatest impact.

16. Furthermore, Range States may explore the possibility of establishing a dedicated fund to support SSAP activities, particularly to assist developing countries and non-governmental organizations in implementing key actions. This fund could be used to provide financial support for capacity-building, research, and other essential activities outlined in the SSAP**.**

**Monitoring**

17. To ensure effective tracking of progress and accountability, a light monitoring framework will be employed. This will involve Range States submitting annual reports outlining their progress in implementing each action outlined in the SSAP. A standardized reporting template[1] will be provided to facilitate consistency and comparability in these reports. The reports will be uploaded to a shared, accessible online platform, ensuring transparency and facilitating information-sharing among Range States and stakeholders. The Secretariat will ensure that the reporting platform remains functional and user-friendly, regularly updating it with relevant templates and guidance to support Range States in their reporting obligations.

18. In addition to the annual reports, every three years, the Chair of the WG will conduct a thorough analysis of the national reports. This analysis will include a detailed assessment of the progress towards the SSAP's objectives, identifying trends, challenges, and areas where additional efforts may be required. This will provide an evidence-based understanding of the status of conservation actions across the Mediterranean. The analyses will be instrumental in determining where resources should be prioritized, and which Range States might require additional support.

19. The Coordinator, under the oversight of the Chair, will be responsible for compiling the results of these analyses into a consolidated progress report. The Coordinator will highlight key successes, common challenges, and gaps in implementation. This report will include recommendations for addressing issues identified across the Range States, with a focus on providing practical solutions and actions that can accelerate progress. The report will also serve as a foundation for discussions during WG meetings and provide valuable input into the overall strategy for the SSAP’s continued implementation.

**Documentation**

20. The outcomes of each WG meeting, including decisions, action points, will be documented in meeting reports. These reports will be prepared by the Coordinator, who will work closely with the Chair and the Secretariat to ensure accuracy and completeness. The Secretariat will ensure that these reports are prepared in a timely manner

[1] For the current reporting cycle, the Secretariat has already developed a reporting template that aligns with the structure of the SSAP, ensuring that information is captured for each specific activity. This reporting format was shared with Range States in February 2025 and has already been used by Range States to submit their reports in preparation for this meeting. The template was designed to gather detailed, activity-specific information, making it easier to track progress across the various actions outlined in the SSAP and identify areas that may need additional focus or support.

21. All documents related to the implementation of the SSAP, including meeting documents, national reports on implementation, and meeting reports, will be made publicly available via the CMS website, ensuring that key information is shared openly.