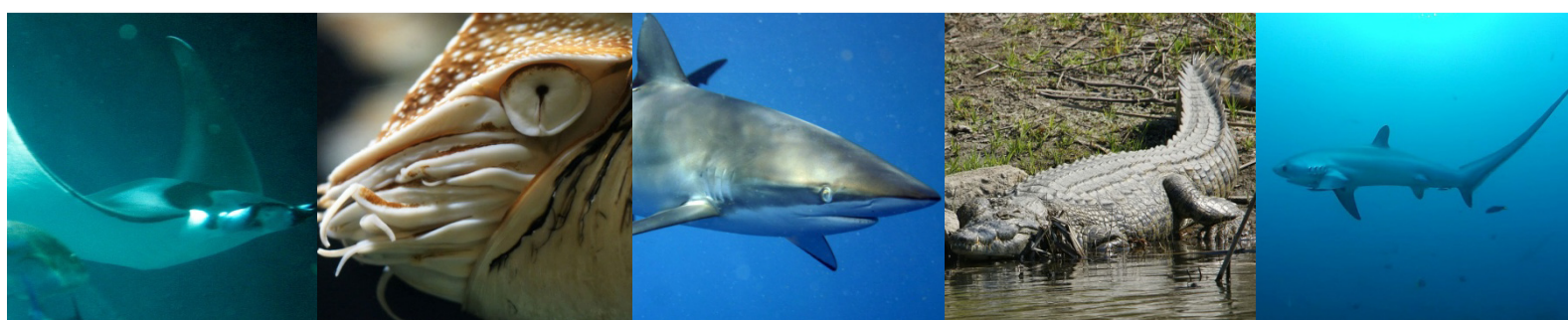


Wädenswil, 25. August 2015

OceanCare Positions on CITES COP17 Agenda Items



Interpretation and implementation matters

CoP17 Doc.28 – Prohibiting, Preventing and Countering Corruption Facilitating Activities Conducted in Violation of the Convention

OceanCare welcomes the proposal submitted by the EU and Senegal for a Resolution on tackling corruption. We note that corruption at all levels facilitates wildlife crime, and undermines the rule of law, good governance, and sustainable development. We believe this Resolution is an important step forward, in supporting government officials to maintain good governance standards everywhere.

We also note that 'UNGA Resolution 69/314: Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife', adopted by consensus of all UN Member States, para. 10, "*Calls upon all Member States to prohibit, prevent and counter any form of corruption that facilitates illicit trafficking in wildlife and wildlife products*".

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties support the adoption of the draft Resolution in Annex to CoP17 Doc 28.

CoP17 Doc. 35.1 and Doc. 35.2 – Review of Reporting Requirements

OceanCare strongly supports annual mandatory reporting on illegal trade in CITES specimens and further urges that CITES Parties consider strengthening this by pursuing the adoption of a decision at CoP17 that urges all Parties to submit the new annual illegal trade report within the prescribed deadline, in the format provided in Notification to the Parties No. 2016/007

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties support the progression of more comprehensive reporting requirements.

CoP17 Doc. 39.1 and Doc. 39.2 – Hunt trophies

OceanCare holds grave concerns about the premise that hunting trophies is a genuine conservation tool. We recognise that trophy hunting provides limited livelihood opportunities for a few individuals in rural communities, but believe that the majority of profit is not enjoyed by those communities or even the country where the hunting takes place. There is strong evidence of serious animal welfare violations. Incentivising the market also places an additional pressure on rural communities who co-inhabit trophy hunting spaces and wish to limit, resist, and or eliminate the practice.

OceanCare believes that other, more sustainable incentives for habitat conservation should be employed instead.

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should require a robust and transparent investigation into the actual conservation benefit of trophy hunting, including the flow of benefit to local communities, before progressing any further recommendations that explicitly recognise trophy hunting as consistent with and a contribution to species conservation.

Species specific matters

CoP17 Doc. 75.1 and Doc 75.2 – Bushmeat

OceanCare is pleased that the international trade in illegally or unsustainably harvested bushmeat as a threat to wild populations of CITES-listed species is once again on the CITES agenda. We note that indirect pressures such as forest fragmentation, improved road or other access, and natural resource exploitation, as well as increasing demand for and commercial supply of bushmeat, have the potential to increase levels of bushmeat harvest and trade to unsustainable levels.

We urge CITES Parties to also recognise the cause and effect of industrial fishing on local communities and the recent rise in aquatic bushmeat demand, as a significant and immediate threat to aquatic wildlife in many regions around the world.

In western Africa, years of poor fish supply has coincided with increased hunting in nature reserves and sharp declines in biomass of forty-one wildlife species. Local market data has provided evidence of a direct link between fish supply and subsequent bushmeat demand in villages. At the same time current rates of fisheries extraction are driving several species towards extinction while jeopardising the livelihoods of artisanal fishing communities across a broad group of countries, including Senegal, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Mauritania. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is at the heart of the problem. Industrial fishing vessels from Europe, China and Japan already out-perform local artisanal fishers by at least 20:1. Europe sanctions its own fishing vessels to legally continue this unbalanced harvest through its Fisheries Partnership Agreements.

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should:

1. support West and Central African governments to prohibit transshipments at sea, following the leadership of Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, and support West and Central African authorities to allow transshipments under closely monitored conditions where reefers cannot be accommodated. Vessels and operators that violate this ban should be added to a blacklist to prevent repeated offences and to deter non-compliance.
2. urge the EU to close the IUU container loophole in EU regulations. Container ships carrying fish should be subject to the same scrutiny and reporting requirements as reefers and fishing vessels, requiring container ships to inform port authorities of their intention to unload their catch several days ahead of their arrival and to fully disclose and document details of their catch.
3. advocate for broadening the definition and discussion of bushmeat to formally encompass aquatic bushmeat and the impact of industrial fishing fleets in the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, CBD and FAO.

Proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II

CoP17 Prop. 42 – Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*)

The principal driver of silky shark catch and trade for many species is the international market demand for their fins, although the meat of this species is also valuable. The high value of the fins and comparatively lower value of the meat may lead to finning or retention of fins and discarding of the rest of the animal. Other products including skin, liver oil, cartilage, and teeth are considered low grade and are not traded internationally in significant quantities. Live silky sharks are also valuable domestically in some countries. The proportion of silky shark fins found in the international trade has increased to 2.55-7.47% with a median of 4.6% in 2013 from around 3.5% in the early 2000s.

OceanCare believes the silky shark satisfies the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix II in accordance with Article II, paragraph 2a of the Convention. Listing on Appendix II will help to ensure that international trade in silky sharks is not detrimental to the survival of the species.

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should support the listing of Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*).

CoP17 Prop. 43 – Thresher Sharks (*Alopias spp.*)

Thresher sharks are among the most vulnerable of all shark species and are the family at highest risk of extinction of all pelagic sharks. Fins are the main thresher shark product found in international trade. Thresher shark catches are also driven by national market demand for meat in some countries. Other products, including skin, liver oil, cartilage, and teeth, are not traded in significant quantities. Thresher sharks are an important recreational sports fishing resource in some countries, and *A. pelagicus* is valuable for dive tourism in the Philippines.

In the early 2000s, thresher shark species made up 2.3% of the fins in trade. By 2015, this had fallen to some 0.03-0.53% of the sharks in the Hong Kong fin market. This 77-99% decline in thresher shark fins in trade, combined with reported catches and other trend data, confirms that thresher shark catches have been significantly underreported, that populations are declining.

OceanCare believes that *A. Supercilliosus* satisfies the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix II in accordance with Article II, paragraph 2a of the Convention. All other *Alopias spp.* satisfy Article II, paragraph 2(b). Listing on Appendix II of these species will help to ensure that international trade in thresher sharks is not detrimental to the survival of the species.

OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should support the listing of Thresher Sharks (*Alopias spp.*).

CoP17 Prop. 44 – Devil rays (*Mobula spp.*)

The gill plates, used by mantas and mobula rays to filter food from the water, are highly valued in international trade for use as an Asian health tonic advertised to treat a wide range of conditions. Recent market surveys have documented an escalation of demand for mobulid gill plates, with the estimated number of individual devil rays represented increasing almost threefold from early 2011 to late 2013. Historically, subsistence fishing for *M. japonica* and *M. tarapacana* occurred in isolated locations with simple gear, limiting the distance and time fishermen could travel to hunt. In recent years, however, fishers have begun targeting *M. japonica* and *M. tarapacana* with modern fishing gear and expanding their fishing range and season, primarily in response to demand for highly valued dried gill plates.

An Appendix II listing of *Mobula spp.* would not affect the national utilization of products from *Mobula spp.* caught within national waters.

OceanCare believes that *M. Tarapacana* and *M. Japanica* satisfy the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix II in accordance with Article II, paragraph 2a of the Convention. All other *Mobula spp.* satisfy Article II, paragraph 2(b). Listing on Appendix II of these species will help to ensure that international trade in mobula rays is not detrimental to the survival of the species.

■ OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should support the listing of Devil rays (*Mobula spp.*).

CoP17 Prop. 48 – (*Nautilidae spp.*)

Nautilidae spp. are vulnerable to overexploitation, threats from targeted, largely unregulated harvest and mortality or habitat degradation caused by destructive fishing practices and overfishing in other fisheries. Population declines have been documented in areas where fisheries exist or have existed. Harvest of these species removes mature individuals and mostly males. *Nautilus pompilius* is the species most reported in trade, but all *Nautilidae spp.* are found in international trade.

OceanCare believes that *Nautilidae spp.* satisfy the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix II in accordance with Article II, paragraph 2a of the Convention.

■ OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should support the listing of Nautilus (*Nautilidae spp.*).

Other Appendix listing proposals

CoP17 Prop. 21 – American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*)
CoP17 Prop. 22 – Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*)
CoP17 Prop. 24 – Salt-water crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*)

■ OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should reject proposal 21, 22 and 24.

CoP17 Prop. 23 – Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*)
CoP17 Prop. 46 – Banggai cardinalfish (*Pterapogon kauderni*)
CoP17 Prop. 47 – Clarion angelfish (*Holacanthus clarionensis*)

■ OceanCare recommends that CITES Parties should support proposal 23, 46 and 47.