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Eighth Meeting of the Scientific and Technical
Advisory Committee (STAC) to the Protocol
Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
(SPAW) in the Wider Caribbean Region

Panama City, Panama, 5 - 7 December 2018

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF SPECIES FOR LISTING
UNDER THE ANNEXES TO THE SPAW PROTOCOL**
(INCLUDES SPECIES PROPOSED FOR LISTING IN ANNEXES II and III)

Action to be Taken:

The 8th SPAW STAC (STAC8) is invited to review this report and to make recommendations to the 10th Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP10) to the SPAW Protocol, with respect to the listing under the SPAW Protocol of the Protected Areas proposed and presented by the Parties.

For reasons of economy and the environment, Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of the Working and Information documents to the Meeting, and not to request additional copies.

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I. BACKGROUND

1. During the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW COP6) in Montego Bay, Jamaica, 5 October 2010, it was decided to “re-establish the Working Group in charge of the Review of the Criteria for the Listing of Species in the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol” and to request the Group to:
 - a) As a first step, seek input from the Parties on the species to be reviewed;
 - b) Secondly, identify any species receiving protection from any other International Agreements and internationally recognized lists that are not listed on the SPAW Annexes; and
 - c) Select from the species resulting from points a and b and any other species that the Working Group feels need attention a species "short-list" to be reviewed by the working group according to the criteria approved by COP3.
2. The Working Group (WG) prepared a list of 100 species that was presented to the 5th Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC5), Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 22 October 2012. The 7th SPAW COP, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 23 October 2012, subsequently adopted the recommendation of STAC5 that the Working Group for listing species under the Protocol continue its work after a renewed nomination process to increase the number of participating Party representatives, and report to STAC6 and COP8 on the progress made during the 2013-2014 biennium.
3. Based on this mandate the Secretariat initiated a renewed nomination process allowing Parties to designate experts to take part in the WG. Regrettably, this did not result in any new nominations. After this, the WG continued its work, taking into account the list of species with recommendations for listing provided by Cuba. With the above mentioned tasks a. and b. completed with the currently available information, the WG focused in particular on task c. to select a species shortlist to be reviewed by the WG according to the criteria for listing species. The starting point was the list of 100 species presented to STAC5, plus the species proposed by Cuba, for a total of 123 species.
4. As per Decision 6 of the SPAW COP8, the revised guidelines and criteria circulated to the Parties by the Secretariat in July 2015. It was entitled: “Revised criteria for the listing of species in the Annexes of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and Procedure for the submission and approval of nominations of species for inclusion in, or deletion from Annexes I, II and III”.
5. In 2017, the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP9) amended the SPAW Protocol Species Annexes by adding two species (*Passerina ciris* and *Pristis pectinata*) to the Annex II and ten species (*Liguus fasciatus*, *Manta birostris*, *Manta alfredi*, *Manta sp. cf. birostris*, *Sphyrna lewini*, *Sphyrna mokarran*, *Sphyrna zygaena*, *Carcharhinus longimanus*, *Rhincodon typus* and *Epinephelus striatus*) to the Annex III.

II. LAUNCH OF NEW LISTING PROCESS OF SPECIES FOR PRESENTATION AT SPAW COP10

6. The SPAW RAC on behalf of the Secretariat invited SPAW Contracting Parties in spring 2018 to consider presenting additional species for listing under the SPAW protocol at the Tenth Conference of the Parties and to initiate the elaboration of the presentation reports.
7. Six nomination proposals were acknowledged for review to be listed in Annex II:
 - **France:** the Great Hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*);
the Smooth Hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*);
the Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*);
the Oceanic Whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*);
the Giant Manta ray (*Manta birostris*)
 - **The Kingdom of the Netherlands:** the Largetooth sawfish (*Pristis pristis*)
8. One nomination proposal was acknowledged for review to be listed in Annex III:
 - **The Kingdom of the Netherlands:** the Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*)

9. France advocates the need for the Cartagena's Convention, under the frame of its Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife for the Wider Caribbean Region, to take into account the commendation on addressing the decline in coral reef health throughout the wider Caribbean by considering parrotfish and similar herbivores adopted on 17 October 2013, at the 28th International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) General Meeting which took place in Belize City. France thus proposes the establishment of a dedicated Working Group whose objective is to prepare as a first step, a recommendation on parrotfish and if applicable, other coral herbivores, including their classification in Annexes II or III of the Protocol.

https://www.icriforum.org/sites/default/files/ICRIGM28-Recommendation_parrotfish.pdf

10. France proposes the establishment of a working group on the Sargassum question, bringing together the different Parties to the Convention that are concerned by the phenomenon. This group could be facilitated or co-facilitated by CAR-SPAW or another body of the Cartagena Convention.

III. RESULTS OF THE REVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION REPORTS MADE BY THE WORKING GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF SPECIES PROPOSED FOR LISTING UNDER THE SPAW ANNEXES

First evaluation process by the "Species" working group - External review

11. The admissibility of the reports presenting the species proposed for listing under SPAW Annexes II and III have been first verified in October by the SPAW Regional Activity Center as a part of the SPAW Secretariat and coordinator of the Working Group on the Evaluation of Species proposed for listing under the SPAW Protocol (attached in Annex II list of members). The Working Group was then asked through the SPAW-RAC to conduct a first standard evaluation process of presentation reports (external review). The reports will then be assessed by the Eighth Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC8) before being presented to the Conference of the Parties (spring 2019) for adoption. See this presentation report below.

12. Summary of main comments by the experts of the Working Group:

SPAW RAC has received very few reviews from the Species Working Group. Certainly because of the short delay, but also because the working group list needs to be checked by the Parties.

The reviews are divided regarding the quality, scientific robustness and accuracy of cited sources of the proposals:

- One expert has concerns regarding the quality of the proposals and whether some of the proposals followed the revised guidelines and criteria circulated to the Parties by the Secretariat as per Decision 6 of SPAW COP 8 entitled: "Revised criteria for the listing of species in the Annexes of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) and Procedure for the submission and approval of nominations of species for inclusion in, or deletion from Annexes I, II and III". She is also concerned with the lack of scientific robustness in the proposals as well errors in the characterization and interpretation of the information used. She considers that in several cases, some literature provided in certain proposals were not properly updated or referenced.
- The two or three other experts (depending on the species), consider, however, that the propositions coincided with the assessment of the *Ad Hoc* Species Working group in 2014, highlighting priority species for listing on Annex II and also with the revised guidelines and criteria aforementioned

The proposals analyses led to mixed opinions toward the integration of the concerned species in the SPAW Annexes. Most experts supported the propositions whereas one showed reservation especially regarding the removal of species from one Annex to include them in another.

13. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:**The Great Hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*) — Annex II — France****Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:**

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through four criteria: Population size, Evidence of decline, Biology, Increasing vulnerability conditions.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*

Position: *Policy coordinator Nature, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)*

Email contact: *paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com*

Date of review: *November 14, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

Position: *Endangered species Division Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA*

Email contact: *angela.somma@noaa.gov*

Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

Email contact: *keckert@widecast.org*

Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*

Position: *General Secretary, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness*

Email contact: *L.suttly@orange.fr*

Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species.

PH, KE, LS: The proposal highlights the highly migratory nature of the species; its IUCN endangered status; the negative effects of trade necessitating listing on Appendix II of CITES; the prohibition on retention by ICCAT; and the importance of cooperative action as evidenced by its listing on Appendix I of the Sharks MOU and CMS Appendix II.

Taking into account also the precautionary principle, the indications above warrant listing on SPAW Annex II. This coincides with the assessment of the Ad Hoc Species Working group in 2014 that this is a priority species for listing on Annex II.

AS: The information presented in the proposals for great hammerhead shark does not support listing this species in Annex II. The information for these species is extremely limited, with most information aggregated at the genus or hammerhead complex level. For the great hammerhead, a comprehensive status review by the National Marine Fisheries Service (Miller et al. 2014) found that while trends from the Northwest Atlantic show large declines, most of these studies have high degrees of uncertainty and, in some cases, alternate analyses indicate different results (e.g. Hayes 2008 vs. Jiao et al. 2011). Miller et al. (2014) noted it is likely that great hammerhead sharks have declined due to fishing mortality, but recent relative abundance data that was not included in the species proposal suggest the population is either stable, shows no clear trend, or may be increasing in some areas. Additionally, using a hammerhead complex or other hammerhead species as a proxy for great hammerhead abundance could be erroneous because of the large difference in the proportions they make up in commercial and artisanal catch. Usually great hammerheads comprise <10% of the sphyrid catch (Miller et al. 2014). In fact, when identified to species level, great hammerhead sharks are not a significant part of the direct or incidental shark catch in most of their range, with the exception of some coastal fisheries (Miller et al. 2014).

Based on these comprehensive reviews on the status of the species, neither the smooth hammerhead shark nor great hammerhead shark is listed under the ESA. Under the U.S. Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species FMP, targeted commercial fishing and retention of both hammerhead shark species is prohibited for commercial vessels fishing with pelagic longline gear onboard.

14. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:

The Smooth Hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna zygaena*) — Annex II — France

Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through one criteria: Behavior.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*

Position: *Policy coordinator Nature, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)*

Email contact: *paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com*

Date of review: *November 14, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

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Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

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Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*

Position: *General Secretary, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness*

Email contact: *L.suttly@orange.fr*

Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal:

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

PH: The proposal mostly highlights the general lack of data on this species, though stating that it is likely that the populations have declined; its IUCN status assessment as Vulnerable; the highly migratory nature of the species; its listing on CITES appendix II; the importance of cooperative action as evidenced by its listing on Appendix II of the Barcelona Convention and ban on retention under ICCAT.

*In the end the proposal does not provide enough argumentation for the listing of this species on SPAW Annex II. However, taking into account the difficulty for non-specialists to distinguish between the three large-bodied species of Hammerhead sharks, listing of all three species on the same Annex is recommended; if *Sphyrna mokarran* is added to Annex II, then so should *Sphyrna zygaena* and *Sphyrna lewini*.*

KE, LS support the previous comments.

AS : [Regarding the previous comment concerning the great hammerhead shark,] there is even less information available for the smooth hammerhead shark, but similar conclusions were drawn in another comprehensive status review of the species by the National Marine Fisheries Service (Miller 2016). In the Northwest Atlantic region, only a preliminary stock assessment is available that provides very crude estimates based on a single abundance index and is hampered by significant uncertainty. Additionally, regional and local information indicates that smooth hammerhead sharks tend to be a rare occurrence, observed only sporadically in the fisheries data and in low numbers. In the Northwest Atlantic, strong management measures are in place to prevent overfishing of the species. Miller (2016) concluded that based on the best available data throughout the species' range, current utilization levels do not appear to be a threat significantly contributing to the species' risk of extinction. Based on these comprehensive reviews on the status of the species, neither the smooth hammerhead shark nor great hammerhead shark is listed under the ESA. Under the U.S. Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species FMP, targeted commercial fishing and retention of both hammerhead shark species is prohibited for commercial vessels fishing with pelagic longline gear onboard.

15. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:**The Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) — Annex II — France****Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:**

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through two criteria: Evidence of decline and Conditions increasing Vulnerability.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*

Position: *Policy coordinator Nature, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)*

Email contact: *paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com*

Date of review: *November 14, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

Position: *Endangered species Division Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA*

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Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

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Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*

Position: *General Secretary, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness*

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Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

PH: The proposal provides few data for the Caribbean, leaving it unclear to what extent the population in the Caribbean is under threat. Similarly the level of threats in the Wider Caribbean is not specifically addressed. However, the proposal highlights the highly migratory behavior of this species; its assessment by IUCN as being Endangered; the negative effects of trade necessitating listing on Appendix II of CITES; and the importance of cooperative action as evidenced by its listing on Appendix I of the Sharks MOU and CMS Appendix I and II. Taking into consideration the precautionary principle, this warrants listing on Annex II, especially as it coincides with the assessment of the Ad Hoc Species Working group in 2014 that this is one of the priority species for listing on Annex II.

KE, LS support the previous comments.

AS: The information presented in the proposal for the whale shark does not support listing this species in Annex II. The proposal provides no information regarding threats acting on the species in the region such that an Annex II listing may be warranted. In fact, all of the information presented regarding threats of commercial fisheries and international trade is from the Indo-Pacific, where 75% of the population occurs. The proposal did not provide any new substantial information since the species was added to Annex III at SPAW COP9 in 2017, nor did the proposal provide any scientific rationale or justification as to why the species warrants removal from Annex III and inclusion in Annex II. The whale shark is not listed under the ESA, but is managed via the U.S. Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (FMP) under the U.S. MSA, in which the landing of whale sharks or parts of whale sharks caught with all gear types is prohibited.

16. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:

The Oceanic Whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) — Annex II — France

Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through three criteria: Evidence of decline, Degree of population fragmentation and Conditions increasing Vulnerability.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*

Position: *Policy coordinator Nature, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)*

Email contact: *paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com*

Date of review: *November 14, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

Position: *Endangered species Division Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA*

Email contact: *angela.somma@noaa.gov*

Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

Email contact: *keckert@widecast.org*

Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*

Position: *General Secretary, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness*

Email contact: *l.suttly@orange.fr*

Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

PH, KE, LS: The proposal highlights the high rate of decline of the global population of this species; the fact that whereas IUCN assesses the global status of this species as Vulnerable, the Northwest and Western Central Atlantic populations are assessed as Critically Endangered; the fact that all RFMOs have banned retention of this species; the negative effects of trade necessitating listing on Appendix II of CITES; and the importance of cooperative action as evidenced by its full protection under the Barcelona Convention.

Taking into account also the precautionary principle, since reliable population data are not available, the indications provided warrant listing on Annex II. This coincides with the assessment of the Ad Hoc Species Working group in 2014 that this is one of the top priority species for listing on Annex II.

AS: The information presented in the proposal for the oceanic whitetip shark does not support listing this species in Annex II. While the proposal to list the oceanic whitetip shark in Annex II cites the recent comprehensive ESA status review completed by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (Young et al. 2018), it did not include information pertinent to the region, including an analysis of fisheries observer data that indicates the population has stabilized likely due to management measures implemented. The proposal did not provide any new substantial information since the species was added to Annex III at SPAW COP9 in 2017, nor did the proposal provide any scientific rationale or justification as to why the species warrants removal from Annex III and inclusion in Annex II.

17. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:**The Giant Manta ray (*Manta birostris*) — Annex II — France****Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:**

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through six criteria: Size of Population, Evidence of decline, Degree of population fragmentation, Biology, Behavior, and Conditions increasing Vulnerability.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*

Position: *Policy coordinator Nature, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)*

Email contact: *paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com*

Date of review: *November 14, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

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Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

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Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*

Position: *General Secretary, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness*

Email contact: *l.suttly@orange.fr*

Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

PH: The proposal highlights the highly migratory nature, vulnerability to exploitation due to its low reproductive rate as well as its tendency to aggregate in specific areas; the continuing high rate of population decline and deterioration of its status, going from NT to VU in five years; the fact that negative effects of trade in this species have been sufficient to list it on Appendix II of CITES; the recognized need for coordinated action as evidenced by its listing on Appendix I and II of CMS and Annex I of the Sharks MoU; the need for regional protection because of the possibility of genetically distinct populations; and its economic value for non-extractive use (dive tourism).

Even though precise population data are not available, based on the above indications that this species is threatened, the precautionary principle warrants listing on Annex II. This coincides with the assessment of the Ad Hoc Species Working group in 2014 that this is a priority species for listing on Annex II.

KE, LS support the previous comments.

*AS: The information provided in the proposal does not support listing the giant manta ray in Annex II. Much of the information cited in the proposal is specific to the reef manta (*Manta alfredi*) as opposed to the giant manta ray. Additionally, the population declines cited of up to 80% in several regions are from the Indo-Pacific. In fact, after a comprehensive status review of the species under the U.S. ESA (Miller and Klimovich, 2018), the species was listed as threatened based on its status and threats in a significant portion of its range (i.e., the Indo-Pacific), with virtually no information from the Caribbean or Atlantic. With the giant manta ray currently listed as threatened under the U.S. ESA, all Federal government agencies must ensure, in consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service, that any actions they carry out, authorize or fund be not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the species. The ESA also provides for development and implementation of recovery plans and the designation of critical habitat. There is no U.S. federal prohibition against fishing for mantas, but some U.S. states, such as Florida, prohibit fishing for mantas.*

18. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:
the Largetooth sawfish (*Pristis pristis*) — Annex II — The Kingdom of the Netherlands

Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through five criteria: Evidence of Decline, Restricted distribution area, Biology, Population dynamics, and Vulnerability.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

Position: *Endangered species Division Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA*

Email contact: *angela.somma@noaa.gov*

Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

Email contact: *keckert@widecast.org*

Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

AS: We found some minor issues with some of the information provided. In particular, recent and relevant literature were missing from the proposal whereas outdated literature was included instead. Additionally, some statements made in the proposal regarding population declines were not referenced.

*KE Supports the proposal for adding the Largetooth sawfish (*Pristis pristis*) to the SPAW Protocol Annex II.*

19. Species for which the presentation report was submitted, Annex to be listed to and Country:

The Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) — Annex III — The Kingdom of the Netherlands

Summary of the SPAW-RAC's preliminary comments on the presentation report:

The report is well completed (Admissibility).

The species threatened or endangered status is scientifically demonstrated through three criteria: Evidence of decline, Behavior and Vulnerability.

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Angela Somma*

Position: *Endangered species Division Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA*

Email contact: *angela.somma@noaa.gov*

Date of review: *November 16, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*

Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*

Email contact: *keckert@widecast.org*

Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Global assessment of the proposal

According to you and given the comments made in the above section, do you recommend the listing of the proposed Species under the SPAW Annex II ? Please provide a brief statement supporting your position with respect to the listing or not of the proposed Species

AS: We found several errors and mischaracterizations of information, particularly summaries of U.S. regulations for managing shark populations in the Atlantic, as well as information derived from our shark tag recapture program. With regard to the species' population status in the Northwest Atlantic, the proposal also relies heavily on literature (Baum and Myers 2004) that has been publicly challenged and disputed by several scientists in subsequent publications.

*KE: Supports the proposal for adding the silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) to the SPAW Protocol Annex II.*

IV. RESULTS OF THE REVIEW MADE BY THE WORKING GROUP OVER THE FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING A DEDICATED WORKING GROUP UPON CORAL HERBIVORES

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*
Position: *WIDECAST Executive Director*
Email contact: keckert@widecast.org
Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*
Position: *ECCEA ??*
Email contact: L.suttly@orange.fr
Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*
Position: *Policy coordinator Nature*
Email contact: paul.hoetjes@rijksdienstcn.com
Date of review: *November 19, 2018*

KE: I support France's proposal to establish a dedicated working group "whose objective is to prepare, as a first step, a recommendation on parrotfish and, if applicable, other coral herbivores, and secondly their classification in Annexes II or III of the Protocol".

LS: We clearly support France's proposals and also the comments made by [the colleagues].

PH: I very much support the establishment of a working group to prepare a proposal for listing of parrotfish as it is clearly a "species essential to the maintenance of such fragile and vulnerable ecosystems/habitats, as mangrove ecosystems, seagrass beds and coral reefs ..." (criterion 10 for listing), though in the end a proposal will have to be adopted by one of the Parties as its own, as the COP8 in 2014 established in the procedures for listing of species that only Party States had the authority to make proposals.

V. RESULTS OF THE REVIEW MADE BY THE WORKING GROUP OVER THE FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING A DEDICATED WORKING GROUP UPON SARGASSUM

External review by the experts:

Name of the Expert: *Karen Eckert*
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Date of review: *November 17, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Lesley Suttly*
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Date of review: *November 18, 2018*

Name of the Expert: *Paul Hoetjes*
Position: *Policy coordinator Nature*
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Date of review: *November 19, 2018*

KE: I believe that quite a lot of attention is already being paid to the Sargassum influx at the level of the CEP, GCFI, and others. If a working group is to be established, it should collaborate closely with others.

LS: I agree with Karen regarding the Sargassum influx that has weighed so heavily on our island ecosystems since 2011 and the importance of collaboration following the meeting in Martinique 3-4 October 2018 which project proposals were interesting but not largely made available to a wider reading public so far. Since this meeting sargassum influx has been notably lower off our costs, a miracle of sorts, but for how long? Quite an alarm has been rung since 2011 for Caribbean biotopes and ecosystems. A large number of species - size being indifferent - have been suffocated or affected one way or the other, particularly those dependent on a mangrove environment; oysters, sea cucumbers... Certain of the invasive sargassum fauna are adapting and breeding. ie sargassum crabs, sargassum fish.

PH: I also agree that a Sargassum group should connect to already existing initiatives in the region. At the COP8 a Sargassum related activity was added to the SPAW work plan, which was admirably implemented by the SPAW-RAC over the following years. I think that leading role should indeed be taken on again by the SPAW-RAC.

VI. SPAW-RAC OVERALL CONCLUSION REGARDING SPECIES PROPOSALS TO BE LISTED UNDER THE SPAW ANNEXES II AND III.

Overall the above discussed elements, the SPAW RAC has received very few reviews from the Species Working Group.

The proposals analysis led to mixed opinions toward the integration of the concerned species in the SPAW Annexes. Some of the experts supported the propositions whereas another showed reservations especially regarding the removal of species from one Annex to include them in another;

The building of Working Groups among the Sargassum and Herbivores Status topics were supported by the three experts that address those questions but regarding the Sargassum group they stated that it should connect to already many existing initiatives in the region.

The RAC recommends the meeting to have further discussion during the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, in order to build a more unanimous conclusion toward the proposals to be submitted for approval at the COP10.

Regarding the method, the RAC kindly suggests the meeting to consider discussion regarding the improvements that could be considered regarding the call for proposals process (for both species and protected areas) and more generally how to keep an active communication among the Contracting Parties and the SPAW-RAC in the period of 2 years between two subsequent STAC.

Also, rules of translations regarding the proposals may be considered as they have been cause of additional delays in the process as well as an update and re-endorsement of the existing working groups member lists, as some people left.

ANNEX I

LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE “SPECIES WORKING GROUP” (30 OCTOBER 2018) TO INVITE THEM TO REVIEW THE REPRESENTED SPECIES FOR LISTING UNDER SPAW

From: Marius Dragin for Sandrine Pivard
Regional Activity Center for the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Executive Director
SPAW/RAC - UNEP

Dear Experts of the species Working group,

You have accepted to be on the list of experts to review proposals for inclusion of species in the SPAW Appendices. We are very grateful of your support. On behalf of the Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention, please find herewith the proposals made by contracting Parties, following the revised guidelines and criteria circulated to the Parties by the Secretariat as per Decision 6 of SPAW COP 8 (see attached).

Two of the Parties have submitted the following species:

* Two (2) shark species (*Pristis pristis* and *Carcharhinus falciformis*) to be respectively added to Annexes II and III of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol, supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands;

* Four (4) shark species (*Rhincodon typus*, *Sphyrna mokarran*, *Sphyrna zygaena*, *Carcharhinus longimanus*) to be respectively added to Annexes II of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol, supported by France;

* One (1) manta specie (*Manta birostris*) to be added to Annexes II of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol, supported by France;

* France also proposes the establishment of a dedicated working group whose objective is to prepare, as a first step, a recommendation on parrotfish and, if applicable, other coral herbivores, and secondly their classification in Annexes II or III of the Protocol.

* France proposes the establishment of a working group on the Sargassum influx.

In keeping with COP8 Decision 6, the proposals will be considered by the 8th Meeting of SPAW STAC to be held in Panama City, Panama, 5-7 December 2017. Please note that the full proposals and supporting documentation are currently uploaded on the UNEP-CEP .

Further to that same decision and your commitment in this working group, we kindly request your inputs on those proposals.

Considering a very pressured timeline, could you please, as soon as you read that message, acknowledge reception of this hereby e-mail and also notify us as if you intend to review some of the proposals. If you do, we need you to do it for Monday 12 October- final deadline.

DOWNLOAD FILES: <https://melanissimo.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/lecture.jsf?uuid=61A1FAC21156B3CE2933A020A7E92DF2>

Please send your review to:

* PIVARD Sandrine <Sandrine.PIVARD@developpement-durable.gouv.fr>

* DRAGIN Marius <marius.dragin@developpement-durable.gouv.fr>

* PITTINO Laura <laura.pittino@i-carre.net>

With grateful thanks,

Best regards,

DRAGIN Marius for

Sandrine PIVARD
Regional Activity Center for the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Director
SPAW/RAC - UNEP
<http://www.car-spaw-rac.org/>

ANNEX II: LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE “SPECIES WORKING GROUP”

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- Ileana Lopez
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