

Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Legal Counsel

latest meeting of the
Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP18, Geneva, 2019)

Scientific developments – conservation and management of marine species

CoP18 resulted in the inclusion of three species of **teatfish** or **sea cucumbers** and 18 additional species of **sharks and rays** in Appendix II of CITES. A number of Resolutions and Decisions were adopted or revised that focus on the maintenance of biodiversity of oceans and marine ecosystems and ensuring that international trade in CITES-listed marine species does not endanger the survival of these species in the wild.¹

[Resolution Conf. 12.6 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) on *Conservation and management of sharks* encourages Parties to strengthen measures for conservation and management of **sharks** by improving data collection and reporting, developing non-detriment findings (NDFs), and working regionally to collect and share information on shared stocks. To provide an accessible tool for identifying sharks and rays, the CITES Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) jointly published two guides named [Pocket Field Guide: sharks and rays in Southeast Asian region](#) in 2020.

CoP18 mandated the CITES Secretariat to organize an international workshop on Non-Detriment Findings which intends to include a focus on sharks within the marine or aquatic species workstream to support the making of NDFs, in particular in data-poor, multi-species, small-scale/artisanal, and non-target (by-catch)

¹ See [Decision 16.136 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) on *Identification and traceability of sturgeons and paddlefish*, [Decisions 18.197 - 18.202](#) on *Eels* (*Anguilla* spp.), [Decision 18.209](#) on *Humphead wrasse* (*Cheilinus undulatus*), [Decisions 18.210-18.217](#) on *Marine turtles* (*Cheloniidae* spp. and *Dermochelyidae* spp.), [Resolution Conf 12.6 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) on *Conservation and management of sharks* and [Decisions 18.218-18.225](#) on *Sharks and rays* (*Elasmobranchii* spp.), [Decisions 18.228 - 18.233](#) on *Seahorses* (*Hippocampus* spp.),

situations, introduction from the sea, shared and migratory stocks, recognizing that sharks and rays are good examples of the challenges faced by Parties when preparing NDFs in these situations.

Regarding **marine turtles** (*Cheloniidae* spp. and

