



COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO

REPORT

Participation in the 18th meeting of the CoP to the CITES August 17-28, 2019 (Geneva)

Introduction

In line with Objective 4 of the ATLAFCO 2019 Action Plan, which aims at strengthening the ATLAFCO group in international bodies dealing with fisheries issues, representatives of the fisheries departments of the Member States participated in their national delegations to the 18th Session of the Conference of the Parties of CITES held in Geneva from 17 to 28 August 2019.

It should be recalled that this session was initially scheduled from May 23rd to June 3rd, 2019 in Colombo (Sri Lanka).

The participation of fisheries department officials in the national delegations responds to the remarkable trend of the treatment of more and more marine species by CITES, while the national focal points of this Convention are systematically coming from the departments in charge of environment or water and forests, with the majority of countries lacking coordination with their fisheries counterparts on the position to be taken for marine species.

The consequence is that at each new session, since 2013, more and more marine species are listed on the appendices of this organization, which limits or completely prohibits the international trade.

Given the socio-economic importance of the fisheries sector for the ATLAFCO countries, this *listing* trend by CITES will inevitably lead to negative consequences particularly in terms of income and food security for the populations.

Participation

To ensure a high level of participation of fishery representatives in their national delegations and to introduce the socio-economic dimension in the decision-making related to the listing of marine species on CITES lists and therefore curb accordingly the current trend, ATLAFCO issued an invitation to all Member States (Department in charge of fisheries) to designate a representative to participate in this 18th CoP, with the aim of defending the principle of *sustainable use of marine resources*.

In addition to the supervision of this participation by the secretariat of ATLAFCO, 12 countries have designated their representatives. (See Tab I).

Tab I: List of participants

Country	Names	Position
Mauritania	M. Lamine CAMARA	Directeur de l'aménagement des ressources et études
Guinea	M. Amadou Telivel DIALLO M. KEITA BALLA MOUSSA	Personne-ressource Commissaire suppléant /CBI
Togo	M. Domtani ALI	Directeur des Pêches
Senegal	M. Abdoulay DIEDHIOU	Chef de la division de la pêche industrielle et point focal requins à la direction des pêches maritimes
Nigeria	M. Ibrahim Abubakar	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Federal Department of Fisheries
Democratic Republic of Congo	M.TUSANGA MUKANGA Sylvain	Directeur des pêches et ressources halieutiques de l'administration centrale du Ministère de pêche et Elevage
Benin	M. KOROGONE/SINAGABE O ULYSSEKOROGONE/SINAGABE O ULYSSE	Point Focal du Bénin CITES
Morocco	M. KANDIL Faouzi,	Chef de service du suivi de l'application des plans d'aménagement et de gestion des pêcheries à la Direction des pêches maritimes
Gambia	Mme Anna Benga Cham	Coordinator WARFP-PPT Ministry of Fisheries
Côte d'Ivoire	M. KOUAKOU Kouadjo Georges	Sous-Directeur de la Pêche Continentale Direction de l'Aquaculture et des Pêches
Ghana	M. Paul BANNERMAN	Deputy director
ATLAFCO Secretariat	M. Abdelouahed BENABBOU M. Mohammed HADDAD M. Atsushi ISHIKAWA M. Abdennaji LAAMRICH	Executive Secretary Financial officer Fisheries expert Head of cooperation department

Amendment proposals

For this session, CITES has received 4 proposals to amend Annex II on marine species, at least one of which is initiated by an ATLAFCO country and all supported by many member states. (See Tab II).

This is done **exclusively** by the departments of the CITES National Focal Points, without **any consultation** with the department in charge of Fisheries Management.

Tab II: Proposals for amendment of Appendices

Species covered by the Proposal (and common name -for information only)	Proposal number and Proponent	Proposal
<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i> and <i>Isurus paucus</i> (Mako sharks)	CoP18 Prop. 42 Bangladesh, Benin , Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde , Chad, Côte d'Ivoire , Dominican Republic, Egypt, European Union, Gabon , Gambia , Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia , Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria , Palau, Samoa, Senegal , Sri Lanka, Sudan and Togo	Include in Appendix II
<i>Glaucostegus</i> spp. (Guitarfishes)	CoP18 Prop. 43 Bangladesh, Benin , Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde , Chad, Côte d'Ivoire , Egypt, European Union, Gabon , Gambia , Maldives, Mali, Mauritania , Monaco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria , Palau, Senegal , Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo and Ukraine	Include in Appendix II
Rhinidae spp. (Wedgefishes)	CoP18 Prop. 44 Bangladesh, Benin , Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde , Chad, Côte d'Ivoire , Egypt, Ethiopia, European Union, Fiji, Gabon , Gambia , India, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria , Palau, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal , Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo and Ukraine	Include in Appendix II
<i>Holothuria (Microthele) fuscogilva</i> , <i>Holothuria (Microthele) nobilis</i> , <i>Holothuria (Microthele) whitmaei</i> (Teatfish)	CoP18 Prop. 45 (Rev. 1) European Union, Kenya, Senegal , Seychelles and United States of America	Include in Appendix II

Results

The 4 nominations of marine species for Appendix II submitted were accepted at this session, following the votes of the delegates.

The results of the votes, is as follows:

Proposition	Yes		No		Abstention	Total
P42 : Mako sharks	102	71,83%	40	28,17%	5	147
P43 :Guitarfishes	109	78,42%	30	21,58%	4	143
P44 : Wedgefishes	112	78,87%	30	21,13%	4	146
P45 : Teatfish	108	78,26%	30	21,74%	7	145

Finding

Despite the presence of the representatives of the fisheries departments in the official national delegations to CITES, almost all of them had any role in the decision-making power even for the marine species. **Their influence was very limited or nil.**

Lessons learned

- It is often too late to revisit a decision made well before the CITES session when sponsoring a marine species nomination.
- Despite the socio-economic importance of marine resources for our States, they are increasingly subject to trade restrictions, without any scientific evidence and contrary to the advice of the FAO Scientific Committee;
- These restrictions are often the result of NGO pressure, using subjective arguments and feelings;
- These inscriptions will only favor the illegal trade of these products, by increasing their price;
- To date, no assessment of the impact of listing marine species on the CITES Appendices has been conducted by the latter.

Conclusions

- It is certain that for better protection of marine species threatened with extinction (overfishing), it is more efficient to first focus on the management at the national level or through RFMOs, based on relevant scientific advice.
- For a better participation in the COP 19, it is necessary to start a consultation at the national level so that each member country may have a representative of the department of fisheries with a real power within the national delegation to CITES.