

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
The Hague (Netherlands), 3-15 June 2007

CANADIAN NON-PAPER ON MARINE SPECIES IN PREPARATION FOR COP14

1. The attached document is submitted by Canada.
2. The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

**CANADIAN NON-PAPER ON MARINE SPECIES IN PREPARATION FOR THE 14TH MEETING
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (CoP) TO THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL
TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES)**

**3-16 JUNE 2007
THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS**

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Canada is pleased to summarize its approach and suggestions for the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES. We hope that this will contribute to the effective management and conservation of marine species that are threatened because of overexploitation through international trade.

We welcome the reports of the CITES Secretariat, the proposals and papers developed by country members, the recommendations of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) *Ad Hoc Expert Advisory Panel for Assessment of Listing Proposals to CITES for Commercially-Exploited Aquatic Species* and the position papers submitted by several non-governmental organizations. All of these documents contribute to the international debate on how to improve the management of marine species that are threatened because of overexploitation through international trade.

According to the FAO, approximately one quarter of the world's fish stocks are either overexploited, depleted or recovering from depletion. This statistic has remained stable in recent years despite global efforts to strengthen international fisheries and oceans governance. There are several reasons behind the decline of some fisheries resources, including loss of habitat, marine pollution, climate change, and industrial development. Yet, the predominant reason is overfishing.

This underscores the need to strengthen fisheries management by States, individually and within regional fisheries bodies (RFBs) and management organizations (RFMOs), as the primary tools for preventing overfishing. Canada believes that CITES can also be a tool to improve the conservation and harvesting of fish stocks, both within the exclusive economic zones of coastal states and on the high seas. CITES can assist in the conservation of marine species that are threatened because of overexploitation through international trade, especially where other fisheries management efforts have failed to provide positive results or have not been implemented.

However, in the case of commercially harvested marine species, a significant percentage of landings are sold locally or traded regionally. CITES will be an ineffective tool to promote the recovery of a species that is threatened due to overharvesting for domestic/internal consumption or if the provisions resulting from a species listing cannot be enforced.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Canada is taking a principles-based approach to the deliberations at the CITES CoP and for the development of its policy recommendations and voting positions. These principles provide the lens through which we will evaluate all proposals to list marine species. These principles are intended to guide Canada's participation and decision-making for this and future CITES meetings, as there is a possibility that other commercially harvested aquatic species could be proposed for listing in the future. As such, the following guiding principles are key:

- **Sustainable Use:** CITES measures taken should seek to conserve and protect the species under consideration, while preserving the economic, cultural and social role that the harvesting of marine species plays in the lives of Canadians and other peoples.
- **Scope:** Species to be considered for listing must meet CITES criteria, specifically meaning that the status of the stock is threatened because of overexploitation through international trade or might become threatened if the existing situation continues.
- **Complementarity:** CITES measures should complement national and regional fisheries management measures and be shown to clearly benefit the conservation of the species.
- **Science-based:** Actions taken should be based on the best available scientific information and advice.

- **Conservation Effectiveness:** Species' listings should be accompanied by effective mechanisms to review the science, track international trade, and enforce listing provisions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

While CITES can be an effective tool, Canada believes that the international community must demonstrate more positive achievements in the management of fisheries resources, domestically and on the high seas as the primary means of achieving their sustainable use. Recommended actions include:

- Development by States, individually and through RFMOs, of national and regional plans of action for the conservation and management of sharks, as called for by the FAO.
- Determined effort by States to improve the management of fisheries resources, domestically and on the high seas, as per the 2006 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement Review Conference and the 2006 United Nations General Assembly Sustainable Fisheries Resolution.
- Clear and regular reporting by States, individually and through RFMOs, on the status of stocks.
- Provision of scientific expertise by States in order to manage target stocks and protect the ecosystems on which they depend.
- Implementation of robust tracking and traceability schemes, including the use of catch documentation schemes, as well as improved training of customs officials should be undertaken by States.