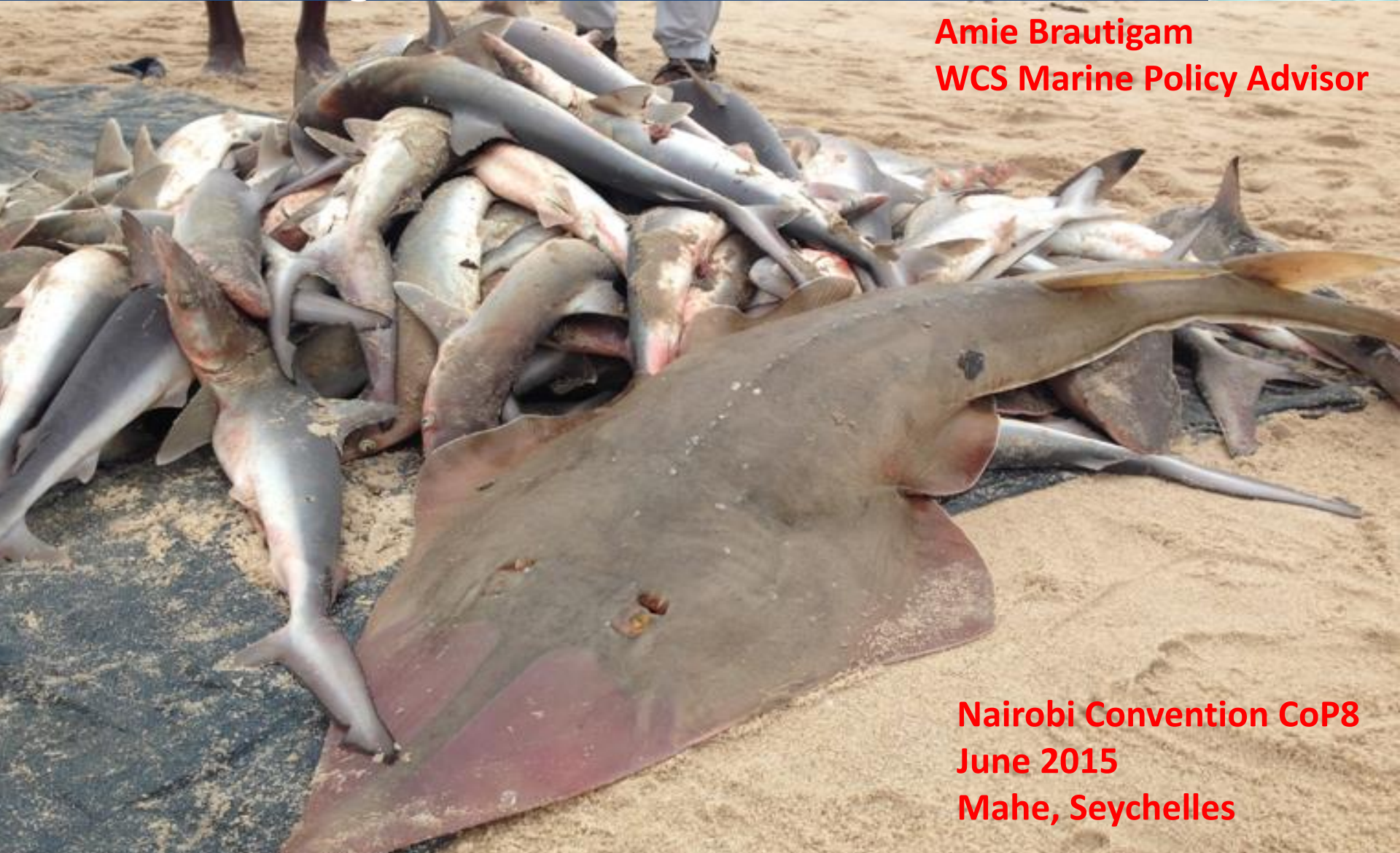


# Regional Review of Sharks and Rays of the Southwest Indian Ocean: Progress Report and Interim Findings



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**Mahe, Seychelles**

# Regional Review of Sharks and Rays of the Southwest Indian Ocean: Progress Report and Interim Findings

## Sharks and Rays and the Nairobi Convention

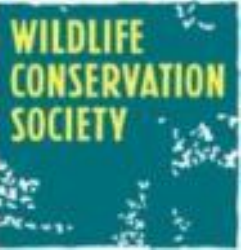
- **CoP7** decision (CP7/12) to incorporate sharks and rays in program of work, undertake regional status report on the state of sharks, and report to the next Conference of Parties
- **Wildlife Conservation Society** leading compilation of status report. Currently in draft form. Final report due autumn 2015.
- **SWIO Regional Status Report on Sharks and Rays**
  - Analyze fisheries, trade, management status and gaps at national and regional level
  - Document successes, constraints, and priority needs
  - Provide suggestions for operationalizing linkages between environment and fisheries sectors around sharks and rays
  - Propose recommendations for consideration by CoP8
  - Propose species for consideration for listing on Annexes of Convention Protocol

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## SWIO Chondrichthyan Fishes

- 187 marine elasmobranch species recorded by Kiszka and van der Elst (2012, revised 2015)
- Ca. 4-8 chimaera species complete the SWIO chondrichthyans
- *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* Classifications:
  - 49 (26%) threatened globally
  - 39 (21%) Near Threatened (NT)
  - 62 (33%) Data Deficient (DD)
  - 29 (15.5%) Least Concern (LC)
- 4 Critically Endangered species includes 3 sawfishes Pristidae
- 38 (20%) of 187 marine elasmobranchs endemic to SWIO
- South Africa (9 species) and Mozambique alone harbor 16 of endemic species; 4 species are endemic to Madagascar
- IUCN Red List Conservation Status: 23DD, 2C R, 2 EN, 5 VU, 3 LC

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## SWIO Shark and Ray Fisheries

- WIO one of FAO Fishing Areas with highest shark and ray landings during 2003-2012: 14% of global reported catch (FAO Fishstat 2015)
- Most landings not identified to species and in very general categories (“sharks, rays, skates, etc. nei”)
- Observer programs for industrial fisheries are scarce
- Data extremely limited on bycatch and directed take in artisanal fisheries
- Tanzania and Madagascar are only Nairobi Convention Member States (MS) among top 10 of 33 countries reporting landings from WIO; Taiwan and Spain also among top ten



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## **SWIO Shark and Ray Exports**

### **UN ComTrade (2003-2013):**

- Nairobi Convention MS exported ave. 1,212mt/yr of shark and ray products (1.5% of global exports)
- South Africa accounted for 89% of regional exports
- Main product = shark meat
- No exports recorded for Comoros, Mozambique, Réunion, Seychelles  
Somalia

### **Hong Kong Customs Statistics (2003-2013):**

- Nairobi Convention MS = ave. 3%/yr of total shark fin imports by China, Hong Kong SAR
- 7 Nairobi Convention MS recorded as origin of shark fins

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## International Mandates

- **1999 FAO Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks)** calls on all States where shark (chondrichthyan) fisheries operate to conduct shark status assessment and, as needed, develop national Plan of Action (NPOA)
  - South Africa and Seychelles have adopted NPOAs
- **CITES** requires *inter alia* permitting system supported by Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs) for 15 CITES-listed sharks and rays (e.g., oceanic whitetip; scalloped, smooth, and great hammerhead; manta rays) and absolute prohibition on commercial trade in sawfishes
- **CMS** Appendix I listing of manta and devil rays and great white shark mandates strict protection
- **IOTC** prohibits taking and trade of thresher sharks, requires zero retention of oceanic whitetip shark, and requires specific measures for whale shark

# Regional Review of Sharks and Rays of the Southwest Indian Ocean: Progress Report and Interim Findings

## Interim Findings

- SWIO is a hotspot of chondrichthyan biodiversity and threat
- Fisheries and trade in chondrichthyans throughout the region, incl. by distant-water fleets (e.g., Spain, Taiwan)
- Major gaps in knowledge of species status, fisheries, and trade
- Fisheries and trade controls vary across region and incomplete in most countries
- Landings in artisanal fisheries poorly documented for most countries
- Very little species-specific monitoring and recording
- Few, if any, measures to limit fishing and fishing mortality
- Numerous constraints to improved management including lack of technical, staff, and logistical capacity, inadequate knowledge, political will

# Regional Review of Sharks and Rays of the Southwest Indian Ocean: Progress Report and Interim Findings

## **Recommendations to National Governments**

- National legal protection for CR and EN chondrichthyans, particularly sawfishes *Pristidae* spp.
- Strengthen monitoring of chondrichthyan fisheries and trade, including species-level recording and reporting
- Adopt management measures to limit fishing mortality of chondrichthyans by targeted and incidental fishing
- Expand bycatch reduction and mitigation, e.g., gillnets, for sharks and rays and other vulnerable marine vertebrates



# Regional Review of Sharks and Rays of the South West Indian Ocean: Progress Report and Interim Findings



## **Recommendations for Regional Efforts for Nairobi Convention CoP8**

- Undertake regional Shark Status Assessment and Develop Regional Plan of Action for Conservation and Management of Sharks under FAO IPOA-Sharks
- Review and revise list of chondrichthyan species to be considered for listing on the Annexes of the Convention protocol
- Facilitate the convening of a regional IUCN Red List workshop to assess regional conservation status of sharks and rays and build collaborations
- Engage with CITES to implement capacity-building efforts in support of effective CITES implementation and broader trade controls for CITES-listed and other heavily traded chondrichthyans
- Expand membership in and engagement with CMS and CMS Sharks MOU
- Engage with IOTC and SWIOFC to collaborate in management and conservation of sharks and rays

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WILDLIFE  
CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
COLLABORATION**

**QUESTIONS?**