



Shark Conservation Fund

SCF Insider's Newsletter 4th Quarter 2020

Executive Director's Take

As we look back on 2020, it's easy to become overwhelmed with all the bad things that have happened. Despite 2020's challenges, we became proficient with ZOOM and our grantees continued to move forward. Nick Dulvy and his Shark Trends team moved their southeast Asia workshop online with participants working all hours for two weeks to complete 125 assessments. Hong Kong customs officials made the largest fin and gill seizures ever because of training we supported. Humane Society International – Australia was able to obtain fishery reforms requiring all sharks caught on the east coast of Queensland to be landed with fins naturally attached and an export ban on hammerhead shark products. Internally, we established our first funder partnership with the establishment and funding of an EU CITES listing campaign. And finally, we decided to focus our external communications on our grantee's successes, adopt more conservative budgeting practices and hire a fundraising consultant to help us more effectively raise funds.

As we head into 2021, fundraising will be my main focus. Danielle has done a great job identifying prospects, developing a "case statement" and crafting fundraising proposals. We've begun to reach out to the top tier prospects, and she will help us refine our approach and presentations. We plan to engage her through another six-month contract. I'll also continue putting partnerships together for including sharks in new MPAs, Caribbean sharks, Biden shark agenda and CITES listings.

Notes from the Field

- **FinPrint Webinar** - SCF in partnership with PGAFF held its first webinar on October 15, 2020 to discuss FinPrint and its management implications. Twenty-five philanthropic organizations participated in the webinar including some major players like Bloomberg Philanthropies, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Walton Family Foundation, OceanKind, and Paradise Foundation. Our next webinar will be a discussion about CITES and how it can be used to drive global conservation using sharks as an example.
- **EU CITES Campaign** - Oceans 5, Flotilla Foundation and Paul G. Allen are jointly funding the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to conduct a campaign in Europe to secure EU support for listing the 60 species requiem shark family on CITES Appendix II. This campaign will be conducted in partnership with the WCS led global listing effort for requiem shark. If successful, over 90% of the Hong Kong fin trade will be listed, greatly expanding the scope and efficacy of CITES.

- **Southwest Indian Ocean MPA Project** - Seth Horstmeyer and I are working with Nick Dulvy and Colin Simpfendorfer to develop maps of areas of the southwestern Indian Ocean that are locally and regionally important to sharks and rays. The maps will be presented to a group of funders who are coordinating and co-funding MPA creation in the western Indian Ocean. The idea is to use the global 30 X 30 effort to improve shark conservation. Members of the group include Oceans 5, Blue Nature Alliance, Ocean Kind, Wyss Foundation and the Blue Action Fund.
- **Caribbean Shark Project** - We're continuing work with the Moore Charitable Foundation, WCS, Bahamas National Trust, Oceans 5 and Demian Chapmen on a funding proposal to protect sharks in the Caribbean. We've generally agreed on a concept and Luke Warwick is drafting a proposal for January. There is a near-term concern that the Bahamian government might allow shark fishing in its shark sanctuary. Demian is developing a research proposal to address the concern that there are now too many sharks. That proposal will be shopped to potential funders separately from the Caribbean-wide project.
- **SCF Website** - Please take a look at our [website](#), which we've revamped to better support fundraising. We've added pictures and longer bios for the Board, staff and expert advisors to make the case we are shark and ocean conservation experts. We've modified the text to reflect the fundraising case statement developed with Danielle and Jacob, and we organized our projects on a global map and by our three investment strategy objectives.

Grantee Highlights

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

"Saving Sharks in Indonesia through Developing and Implementing Science-based Management Reforms - Year 1 (Phase 2)"

2019 SCF Core Grant

As Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) ends their first project year, they have made great progress on their objectives despite COVID restrictions. They have facilitated the development of the national-level aquatic species conservation roadmap for 2020-2024 with the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) and the Indonesian Institute of Sciences. This roadmap will focus on 20 priority taxa for national conservation efforts, which include 29 species of sharks and rays. This will form the backbone of shark conservation policy in Indonesia for the next 5 years.

NDF preparation has commenced for wedgefish and mako sharks through a series of meetings and workshops with Government of Indonesia (GoI) staff. WCS expects the wedgefish and mako NDFs will be submitted by the GoI to the CITES Secretariat by late 2020/early 2021. They have also supported updating the hammerhead NDF by providing new hammerhead production data and developed summarized lessons learned from hammerhead trade monitoring and regulation. In addition, all CITES Appendix II shark and ray quotas are being assessed at the provincial- and national-levels. A total of 103 MMAF officers were trained on CITES implementation, including the first 'train the trainers'.

Area-based management plans were finalized in the Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara provinces. A shark specific MPA was officially designated in Aceh Jaya in July 2020. A draft management and zoning plan for the Lunyuk and Tatar MPA was approved at the provincial level and submitted for national-level

designation. A fishery management plan, with catch and efforts limits, has been agreed to for the Tanjung Luar fishery in Lombok and submitted to the provincial government for approval.



WCS Press Release: ["Identification training supported for sustainable management of sharks and rays"](#)

Simon Fraser University
"Global Shark Trends – Year 2"
2019 SCF Core Grant

This project is conducting the 2020 IUCN red list assessments for 1250 sharks and rays and developing living plant and red list indices to track conservation outcomes at national, regional, and global scales. The indices will be used for: 1) making the case for shark and ray conservation to the public; and 2) providing salient information to decision-makers to enable them to make appropriate conservation decisions.

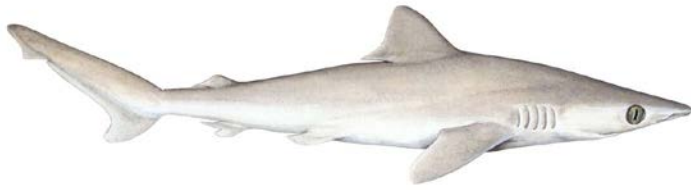
By the end of 2019, 495 assessments were submitted or published, with a further 53 submitted in February 2020. 434 species assessments are in various stages of post-workshop drafting and review; and assessments for an additional 218 species were completed by the end of 2020.

These assessments revealed some good news and some bad. The very rare lost shark is now listed as Critically Endangered (Possibly Extinct). This species was only formally described last year. In good news, the barndoor skate, which was overfished to the brink of extinction is recovering and has been moved from Endangered to Least Concern. This large skate (the size of a barn door) is endemic to the North Atlantic and underwent a population reduction of up to 99% from the 1960s to mid-1970s because of high fishing pressure. The barndoor skate population recovered and grew rapidly aided by a 2003 possession and landing ban in the United States and closure of directed fishing in Canada. The recent assessment update has gained much media attention with articles posted in the NY Times, Reuters and NBC News.

Press Release: ["European bison recovering, 31 species declared Extinct – IUCN Red List"](#) from IUCN

Article: ["'Lost shark' possibly extinct, dolphin threatened -Red List"](#) from Reuters

News Article: ["Will Ghost Sharks Vanish Before Scientists Can Study Them?"](#) from the NY Times



LOST SHARK



BARNDOR SKATE



GHOST SHARK

Florida International University (FIU)

"eDNA: A new way to assess sharks for conservation"

2017 SCF Core Grant

This joint project with Vulcan, was designed to validate the use of eDNA surveys to determine relative abundance and diversity of sharks.

Although the SCF portion of the project ended in 2019, the Vulcan-funded phase continues. They recently submitted a paper, "*Moray eels are more common on coral reefs subject to higher human pressure in the greater Caribbean*", to iScience, which was accepted and is expected to be published in January 2021. The paper describes research using BRUVs and eDNA showing that moray eels are more abundant on coral reefs that are closer to human populations with less sharks. Specifically, they found a

statistically significant negative correlation between sharks and morays, i.e., where there are more morays there are less sharks and vice versa. They documented low moray numbers in the shark sanctuaries in the Bahamas and the Sea Flower Biosphere Reserve in Colombia. The basic hypothesis is morays experience a 'release' from predation on reefs where sharks are less abundant. This is one of the first papers to demonstrate an ecological cascade caused by the removal of sharks from an ecosystem. While not documented yet, Demian Chapman and his team think high moray eel abundance may lead to greater predation on parrot fish which eat coral reef algae, which could lead to an increase in algae cover and the suffocation of reefs. If true, this would be an excellent example of why healthy reefs need healthy sharks populations.



Media Highlights

Please see below articles that may be of interest from SCF grantee work or from shark general interest feature articles.

1. "Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected scheduled manta ray gills" from Hong Kong Government Press Release (BLOOM, Wildlife Crimes SCF Project)
<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202010/25/P2020102500672.htm?fontSize=1>



Hong Kong Customs seized about 330 kilograms of suspected endangered manta ray gills with an estimated market value of about \$900,000 on October 25. Photo shows the seized manta ray gills.



Photo shows the seized manta ray gills.

2. "On the way to the morgue': Lost sharks, dying amphibians add to growing extinction list" from The Sydney Morning Herald (Simon Fraser University, Global Shark Trends SCF project) <https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/in-the-hospital-on-the-way-to-the-morgue-lost-sharks-dying-amphibians-add-to-growing-extinction-list-20201210-p56mfu.html>



3. "Will Ghost Sharks Vanish Before Scientists Can Study Them?" from the NY Times (Simon Fraser University, Global Shark Trends SCF project) - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/17/science/ghost-sharks-extinction.html>



4. "More than 300 shark, ray species threatened with extinction, new report finds" from NBC News (Simon Fraser University, Global Shark Trends SCF project) - <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/more-than-300-shark-ray-species-threatened-with-extinction-new-report-finds/ar-BB1bOI76>



5. "Silky sharks find hope in Atlantic, remain targets in Indo-Pacific" (related to our Florida International University projects and mentions the Hong Kong seizures) - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/shark-fin-ring-georgia.html>



Social Media

Quarterly Metrics:

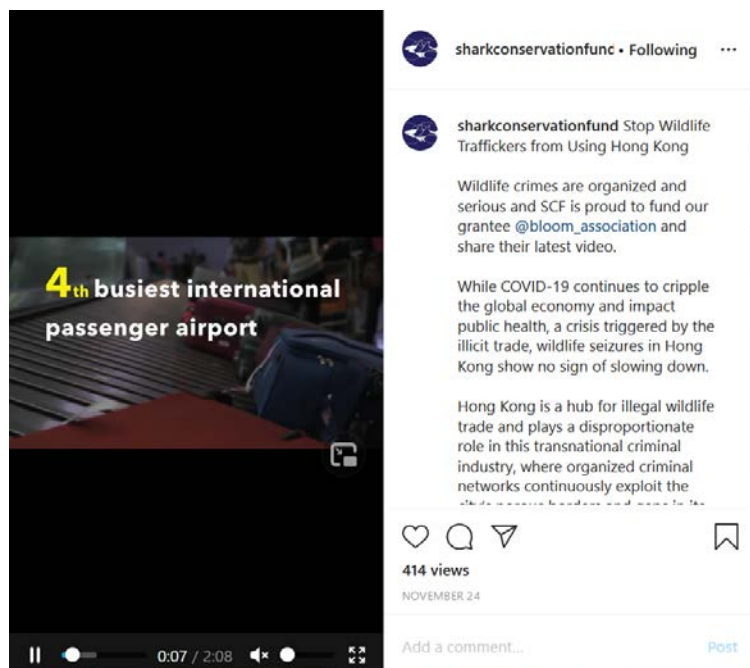
Instagram Followers: 6,568

Twitter Followers: 1,278

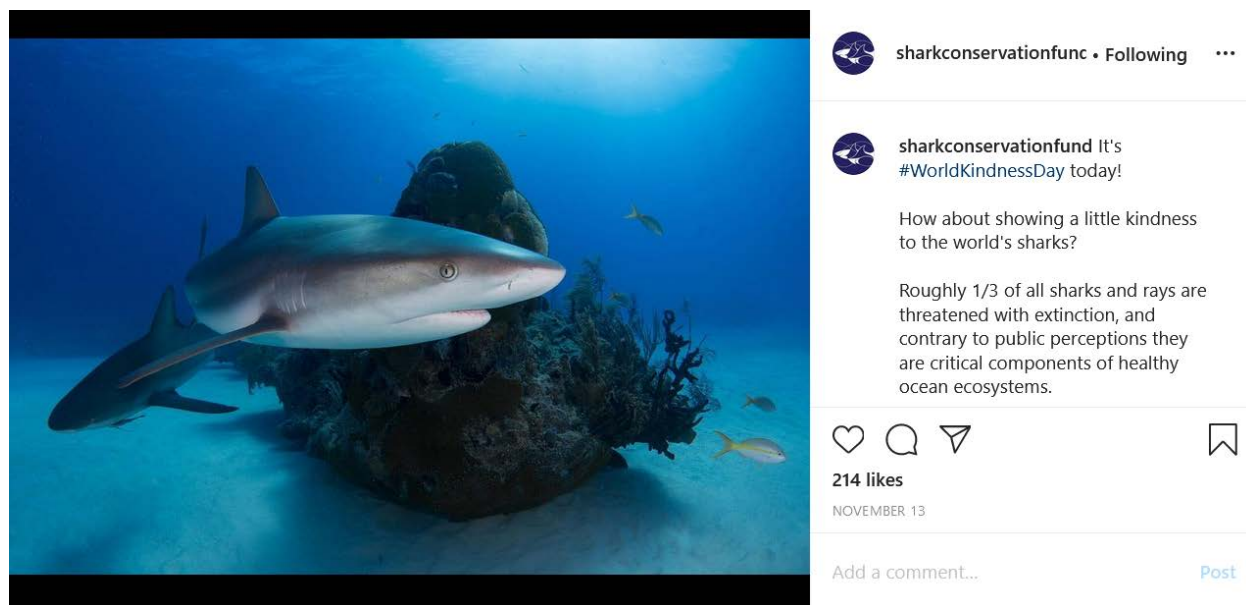
Highest Performing Posts

Please see below social media posts pulled from SCF Instagram and Twitter feeds based on the amount of interest and relevance to SCF Board Members.

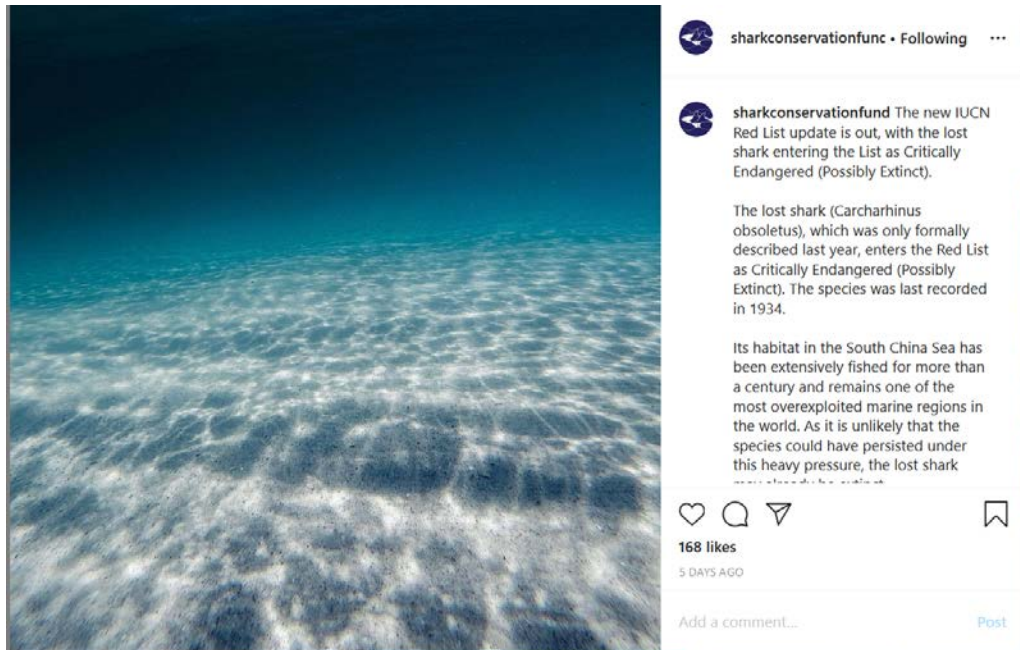
1. Instagram: Stop Hong Kong Traffickers (414 Likes)



2. Instagram: World Kindness Day (214 Likes)



3. Instagram: IUCN Red List Update (168 Likes)



4. Twitter: Shark Advocates Lost Shark Retweet (97 Likes)




5. Twitter: Shark Trust IUCN Global Shark Trends Project Retweet (67 Likes)




6. Twitter: Australia Queensland "Fins Naturally Attached" HSI Australia Retweet (59 Likes)





7. Twitter: WCS IUCN Assessment Retweet (37 Likes)


 Shark Conservation Fund Retweeted




 **Luke Warwick** @WCSsharks · Nov 9

A crucial step to save some of the oceans most endangered species, the resolution calls on all countries to fully protect these Critically Endangered shark like rays, builds on recent @IUCNRedList assessments & @CITES Appendix II listings @VulcanInc @NickDulvy @SharkRayFund



 **Amanda Vincent** @AmandaVincent1 · Nov 4

 Hopeful news for rhino rays! @IUCN just passed Resolution on "Global Conservation of rhino rays (Rhinidae, Glaucostegidae, Rhinobatidae)". Guides >1400 govt agencies (A) and NGOs (B) globally. Read, cite & use: iucncongress2020.org/motion/107 Great job...

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