

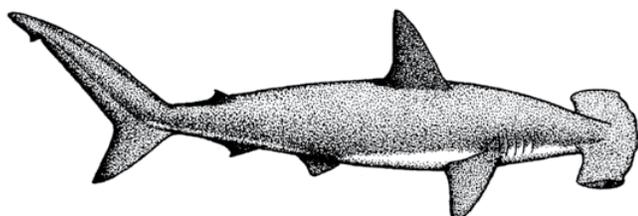


## SCALLOPED HAMMERHEAD (*Sphyrna lewini*)

Appendix II listing	Proposed by Palau, the United States
IUCN Red List status	<b>Endangered</b> globally

### RECOMMENDATION: SUPPORT

- The Pew Environment Group applauds the submission of this proposal and urges CITES Parties to support it.
- The expert panel of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has determined that scalloped hammerheads warrant an Appendix II listing.
- Scalloped hammerheads are exploited primarily to satisfy a growing global demand for their fins. Hammerhead fins are among the most valued in trade due to their large size and high “needle count.”<sup>1</sup> These needles are composed of fibers, which support the fin and are prized in shark fin soup.<sup>2</sup>
- Little to no management exists for the international trade of scalloped hammerhead products.<sup>3</sup> No regional fisheries management organization oversees take of this species or any of the proposed look-alike species.
- A CITES Appendix II listing for scalloped hammerheads would greatly ensure the future sustainability of wild populations by regulating international trade in hammerhead products.



Scalloped hammerhead shark

Alessandro De Maddalena/SeaPics.com

### Biological vulnerability to over-exploitation:

- Low reproductive capacity, with average litters of 14 to 26 pups.<sup>4</sup>
- Slow intrinsic population growth in comparison with other species of sharks.<sup>5</sup>
- Long gestation period of eight to 12 months.<sup>6</sup>
- Long reproductive periodicity, reproducing only every two years.<sup>7</sup>

### Scalloped hammerhead fisheries and trade

The scalloped hammerhead shark, one of the most distinctive creatures on the planet, is subject to targeted fisheries, illegal fishing and fishery bycatch throughout the world. Catch methods include pelagic longlines and fixed bottom nets, as well as bottom and pelagic trawls. They are exploited for their fins, meat, hide and oil.<sup>8</sup> Fisheries surveys in the Northwest Atlantic have documented declines of up to 98 percent,<sup>9</sup> and landings in the Southwest Atlantic have shown declines of up to 90 percent.<sup>10</sup> Unlike other species of sharks, hammerheads frequently aggregate in large numbers, which makes them more vulnerable to fishing efforts.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, according to a 2008 assessment of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, hammerheads are among the most frequently taken shark species in illegal fishing.<sup>12</sup>

Species-specific trade data are limited, but market-based scientific inquiries have yielded important trade information.<sup>13</sup> Traders have stated that hammerhead fins are some of the most valuable in the market.<sup>14</sup> The three hammerhead species (*Sphyrna lewini*, *S. mokarran*, *S. zygaena*) combined make up approximately 6 percent of the identified fins entering the Hong Kong market.<sup>15</sup> From this information, scientists have estimated that 1.3 million to 2.7 million scalloped and smooth hammerheads are exploited for the fin trade every year.<sup>16</sup>

A research study published in 2009 in the journal *Endangered Species Research* documents the global nature of the scalloped hammerhead trade. Researchers performed DNA tests on shark fins obtained from the Hong Kong market and were able to determine their geographic origins. Findings from 62 fins revealed that 21 percent had originated from endangered scalloped hammerhead populations.<sup>17</sup>

Including scalloped hammerheads in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix II is justified under the CITES listing criteria (Res. Conf. 9.24 [Rev. CoP14], Annex 2a [A]): Regulating trade of scalloped hammerhead products is necessary to avoid the future eligibility of this species for an Appendix I listing.

Due to the similar appearance of certain species' fins, it is unlikely that enforcement personnel could readily distinguish between scalloped hammerhead fins and dusky and sandbar shark fins once the fins have been removed from the body and entered into trade. Thus, this proposal also offers regulation of the trade of "look-alike species": smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead, sandbar and dusky sharks. (Although individual sandbar and dusky sharks do not resemble hammerheads, their fins are quite comparable when detached.) Inclusion of these species is justified under the CITES listing criteria in Annex 2b (A).

The Pew Environment Group recommends that Parties support this proposal and looks forward to providing assistance and collaboration in its implementation.

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