



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014

Agenda Item 24.1.1

ADDENDUM TO THE PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE REEF MANTA RAY (*Manta alfredi*) IN CMS APPENDIX I AND II

Summary

Following the recommendation by the Scientific Council, the Government of Fiji has provided additional information to their proposal for the inclusion of the species of *Manta alfredi* in CMS Appendix I and II for the consideration of the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP11), 4-9 November 2014, Quito, Ecuador.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF FIJI TO THE PROPOSAL FOR THE INCLUSION OF MANTA ALFREDI IN APPENDIX I AND II

During the meeting of the CMS Scientific Council in July, members requested that Fiji provide additional information on the benefits of listing in the Appendices of the Convention to this species.

Appendix I listing would encourage Range State Parties where *M. alfredi* are targeted to seek help with implementing measures to protect this species and enable artisanal fishers to benefit from the much more lucrative and sustainable tourism revenues this species generates. For example in Mozambique, *Manta alfredi* and the closely related *Manta birostris* (already included on Appendix I) contribute over US\$13 million annually to tourism revenues. However, off Praia do Tofo, an important manta and Whale shark tourism area in southern Mozambique, artisanal fishers opportunistically target mantas for their low value meat. In this area, Rohner et al. (2013) observed a decline in *Manta alfredi* abundance of 88 per cent over only eight years (less than a third of one generation period for this species).

In addition, new evidence of growing demand for manta and mobula gill plates and expansion of this trade threatens to motivate the emergence of new, targeted manta fisheries in Range States where *M. alfredi* are currently not protected. CMS Parties that are Range States of *M. alfredi*, which currently do not have protection measures in place for *M. alfredi*, include Australia, Comoros, Cook Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Fiji, France (Mayotte and New Caledonia), India, Madagascar, Mozambique, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, South Africa and Yemen.

The CMS Appendix I listing, therefore, will help this species by curbing existing targeted fisheries and preventing emergence of new fisheries in response to demand from the mobulid gill plate trade.