

## Reading Practice: Save the Shark



It's been a good week for beleaguered sharks. A cross-border conservation pact signed by 126 countries this week promises for the first time to extend extra protection to sharks and several other migratory species, whichever countries they stray into.

Amongst the biggest winners at the global Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals(CMS) were whale sharks: the world's largest fish. They are a vulnerable species and their population has been falling. Governments added whale sharks to appendix I of the convention, promising to protect them domestically from killing or capture, and to safeguard their habitats.

Conservationists welcomed the move because it means whale sharks will finally be protected at offshore "hotspots" to which they migrate, including Madagascar, Mozambique, Peru and Tanzania.

Several other sharks made it on to appendix II, which obliges countries within a species' migratory range to collaborate on measures to protect them, for example by regulating fishing or banning finning.

## International cooperation

Conservationists particularly welcomed the new status for blue sharks. “They’re the most highly fished sharks in the world, with 20 million caught around the world each year, but they’re also the most migratory, so they’re vulnerable to fisheries everywhere,” says Matt Collis of the International Fund for Animal Welfare. “This puts pressure on countries to commit to international protection.”

Other sharks sharing in the same new protections included dusky sharks, angelsharks, white-spotted wedgefish and the bizarrely named common guitarfish.

As an additional bonus, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Benin and Brazil joined the shark memorandum of understanding, an ad hoc agreement already signed by 41 countries to coordinate protection for sharks. Collis says the addition of Brazil is particularly significant, as it has a large part to play in protection of many species of shark.

On land, lions and leopards were placed on appendix II, again entitling them to coordinated protection across borders. Collis says that lack of cooperation has been a weakness of previous arrangements, allowing lion numbers in Africa to dwindle by 40 per cent over the past two decades to just 20,000 today.

### True, False, or Not Given

1. Whale sharks will receive extra protection in future. \_\_\_\_
2. Conservationists are unhappy about these developments. \_\_\_\_
3. More blue sharks are caught than any other species. \_\_\_\_
4. The Great White Shark is the most endangered species. \_\_\_\_
5. Countries communicating poorly has caused problems in the past. \_\_\_\_

### Summary Completion

A new agreement has been reached between 126 promising to increase \_\_\_1\_\_\_ for various kinds of migratory animals. Governments have agreed to \_\_\_2\_\_\_ the living environments of some species, including the critically endangered whale shark. These animals \_\_\_3\_\_\_ to certain places around the world that scientists call “hotspots”. This measure has been praised by \_\_\_4\_\_\_. The blue shark is another species which is extremely \_\_\_5\_\_\_ due to fishing. In addition to the main agreement, 41 countries have come together to \_\_\_6\_\_\_ their efforts to save sharks. On land, efforts are underway to stop the stop various species reaching extinction by improving \_\_\_7\_\_\_ between nations.

## Answers

### TFNG

1. T
2. F – they welcome it, meaning they are happy
3. T
4. NG
5. T

### Summary Completion

1. Protection
2. Safeguard
3. Migrate
4. Conservationists
5. Vulnerable
6. Coordinate
7. Communication

### Writing

Sharks are a critically important part of our global ecosystem. How can we help to save them from extinction?

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