



## **2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event**

### **Promoting implementation of CITES towards sustainable and traceable ocean trade: Spotlight on the Blue BioTrade project**

Friday 1 July, 17:30-18:45, Interactive Dialogue Room

Organized by: CITES, UNCTAD, OECS

#### **Background on the event (one paragraph)**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) regulates international trade in some of the world's most vulnerable marine species to ensure that trade is legal, sustainable and traceable. With a keynote speech from the Honourable Minister Saboto Caesar of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, this event focussed on the science-based and innovative approaches taken by CITES, in collaboration with key partners UNCTAD and the OECS to address unsustainable trade practices.

The Blue BioTradeProject is a Caribbean-based project led by UNCTAD and OECS with the collaboration of CITES and funded by the European Union. This event shared how the project partners support participating countries through the project to manage their ocean resources sustainably and meet CITES obligations concerning sustainable trade.

#### **Key Issues discussed**

- The CITES Secretary-General explained how over the near fifty years since its signature, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna has taken on a greater and greater role in the regulation of international trade in commercially exploited aquatic species, including sharks and rays. This is so that their use is sustainable and current and future generations can enjoy the benefits they bring.
- In November 2022, the 184 Parties to CITES will meet in Panama for COP19, and they will consider listing additional marine species to regulate their trade under the

Convention. During this side event, the CITES Secretary-General announced that CITES has received proposals to list over 50 new shark species in Appendix II, as well as over 35 species of guitarfish and around 3 sea cucumbers.

- Promoting implementation of CITES is facilitated by partnership. UNCTAD is a formidable ally and strategic partner of CITES. During this side event, insights and good practice were shared from the collaboration between CITES, UNCTAD and OECS through the Blue BioTrade Project, focussing on queen conch value chains in the Eastern Caribbean. This Project aims to promote legal trade and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to build capacity to ensure that international trade does not harm the conservation of CITES-listed species whilst enhancing livelihoods and promoting opportunities for those relying on the ocean economy.
- Teresa Moreira, Director at UNCTAD, explained that Blue BioTrade is an approach to product or service sourcing from marine biodiversity which is commercialised in a way that respects people, nature, and legal frameworks. The revised 2020 BioTrade Principles and Criteria, developed by UNCTAD, are guidelines for businesses, governments and civil society wishing to not only support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, but also promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits through trade.
- Through the keynote speech from the Honourable Minister Saboto Caesar of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and presentations from CITES, UNCTAD, OECS and CAF, the project partners reaffirmed the view that through fruitful cooperation a safe harbour can be reached where the queen conch and other CITES listed marine species such as rays, sharks and corals are sourced with respect, whilst balancing the need to recognise and act on the needs of the small-scale coastal actors in the region.

## Contact

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