

ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO PROTECTED ELASMOBRANCHS IN INDIAN WATERS

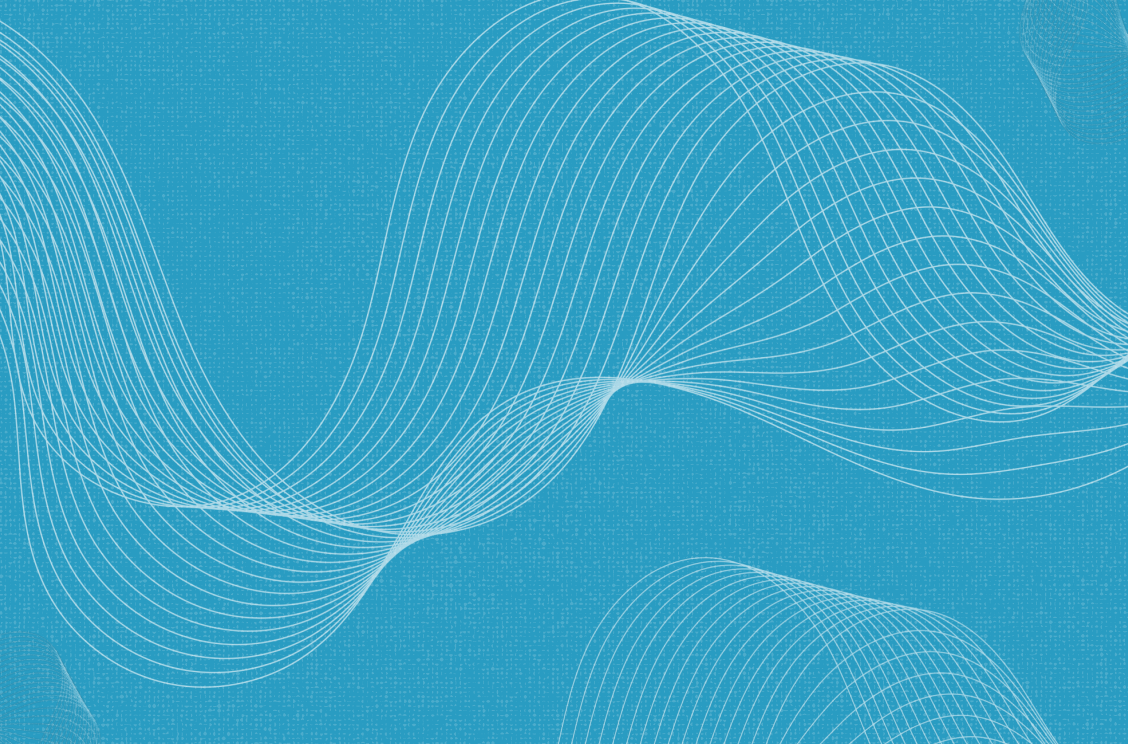
WITH WPAA, IUCN, CITES & NDF STATUS

CMFRI Booklet Series No. 44/2025



Indian Council of Agricultural Research
Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi-682 018, India
www.cmfri.org.in





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**Illustrated Guide To Protected Elasmobranchs In Indian Waters
- With WPAA, IUCN, CITES & NDF Status**

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Foreword



The conservation of marine biodiversity, particularly vulnerable groups like elasmobranchs, has assumed greater significance in India with the enactment of the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022. In this context, I am pleased to present the “Illustrated Guide to Protected Elasmobranchs in Indian Waters with WPAA, IUCN, CITES & NDF Status”—a timely and practical output from our dedicated elasmobranch research team.

This guide offers a concise compilation of elasmobranch species listed under the amended Act, along with their respective protection status under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, CITES Appendices, IUCN Red List categories, and Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) assessments. Each species is illustrated for easy and accurate identification in the field, making this booklet a vital tool for fisheries managers, enforcement agencies, and frontline officials engaged in regulation, monitoring, and curbing illegal trade.

Beyond its operational utility, the guide also serves academic and awareness purposes, aiding researchers and students in understanding the evolving legal and conservation landscape for elasmobranchs in India. By bringing together multiple conservation indicators in a single, accessible format, this publication enhances clarity, supports informed decision-making, and reinforces India’s commitment to sustainable and lawful marine trade practices.

I congratulate the team for their meticulous work in developing this much-needed resource. This guide will undoubtedly strengthen on-ground implementation and advance collective efforts in elasmobranch conservation.

Let this publication inspire continued awareness, stronger enforcement, and meaningful conservation action among all stakeholders.

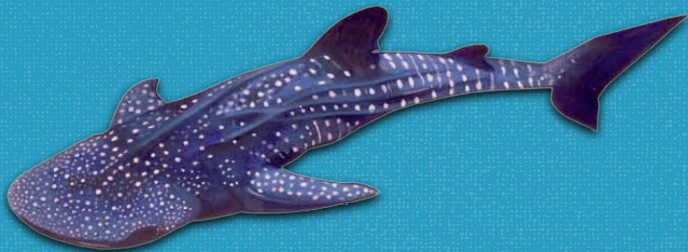
Dr. Grinson George
Director, ICAR-CMFRI

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Rhincodon typus

Whale Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



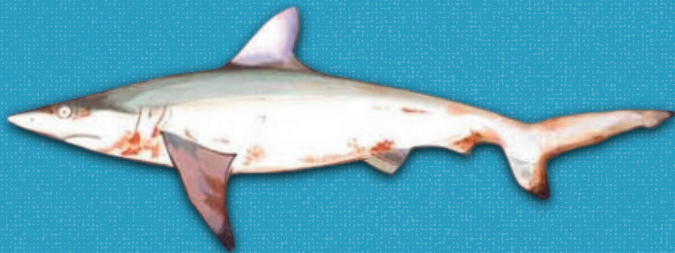
NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under WPA
(1972) since 2001

Carcharhinus hemiodon

Pondicherry Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under WPA
(1972) since 2001

Glyphis gangeticus

Ganges Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under WPA
(1972) since 2001

Carcharhinus longimanus

Oceanic Whitetip Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule II &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Positive (Period 2017-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Carcharhinus falciformis

Silky Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Vulnerable



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India

Positive with conditions (Period 2019-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)

Negative

Remarks

Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Sphyrna mokarran

Great Hammerhead



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule II &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

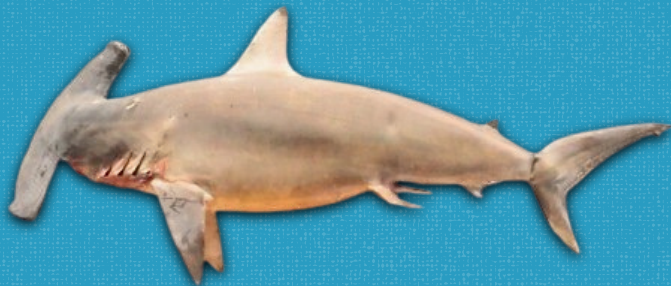
NDF Advisory for India
Positive (Period 2017-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Sphyrna zygaena

Smooth Hammerhead



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule II &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Vulnerable



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

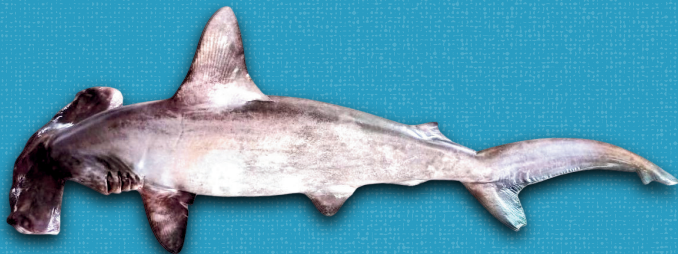
NDF Advisory for India
Positive (Period 2017-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Sphyrna lewini

Scalloped Hammerhead



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India

Positive (Period 2017-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)

Negative

Remarks

Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Eusphyra blochii

Winghead Shark



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule II



IUCN Status

Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Alopias spp.

Thresher Sharks



IUCN Status

Alopias pelagicus
Endangered

Alopias vulpinus
Vulnerable

Alopias superciliosus
Vulnerable



WPAA (2022) Status

Schedule IV



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India

Positive with conditions (Period 2019-2022)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)

Negative

Remarks

Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Isurus oxyrinchus

Shortfin Mako



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Isurus paucus

Longfin Mako



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Pristis pristis

Common Sawfish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix I



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Required

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment Act, 2022

Included in CITES Appendix I

Pristis clavata

Dwarf Sawfish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix I



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Required

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment Act, 2022

Included in CITES Appendix I

Pristis zijsron

Green Sawfish



WPAA (2022)
Status
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



Government Of India

IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix I



NDF

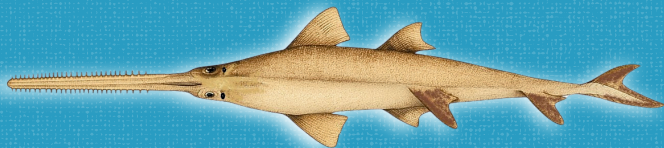
NDF Advisory for India
Not Required

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment Act, 2022

Included in CITES Appendix I

Anoxypristis cuspidata

Narrow Sawfish



WPAA (2022)
Status
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix I



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Required

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment Act, 2022

Included in CITES Appendix I

Urogymnus asperrimus

Porcupine Whipray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

Endangered



CITES Status

Not Evaluated



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under WPA
(1972) since 2001

Urogymnus polylepis

Giant Freshwater Whipray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Not Evaluated



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Himantura fluviatilis

Ganges Stingray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

—



CITES Status

Not Evaluated



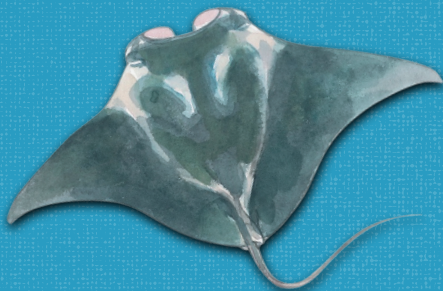
NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under WPA
(1972) since 2001

Mobula alfredi

Reef Manta Ray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status
Vulnerable



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Mobula birostris

Giant Manta Ray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Mobula tarapacana

Chilean Devilray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule II



IUCN Status
Vulnerable



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India

Positive with Conditions (Period 2022-2024)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)

Negative

Remarks

Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Mobula spp.



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



CITES Status

Appendix II



IUCN Status

Mobula mobular
Endangered

Mobula birostris
Endangered

Mobula thurstoni
Endangered

Mobula kuhlii
Endangered

Mobula eregoodoo
Endangered

Mobula tarapacana
Endangered

Mobula alfredi
Vulnerable



NDF

NDF Advisory for India

Positive with Conditions (Period 2022-2024)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)

Negative

Remarks

Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Aetomylaeus maculatus

Mottled Eagle Ray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Not Evaluated



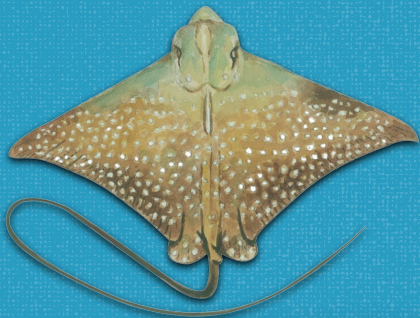
NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Aetomylaeus milvus

Ocellate Eagle Ray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status
Endangered



CITES Status
Not Evaluated



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Aetomylaeus vespertilio

Banded Eagle Ray



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule I



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Not Evaluated



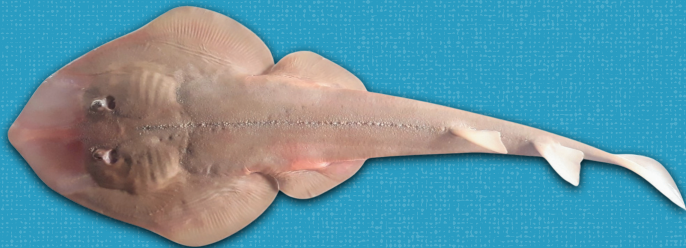
NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Glaucostegus obtusus

Widenose Guitarfish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Glaucostegus thouin

Clubnose Guitarfish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Glaucostegus spp.



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Not Applicable

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Rhina ancylostomus

Bowmouth Guitarfish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Rhynchobatus djiddensis

Giant Guitarfish



WPAA (2022)
Status
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Rhynchobatus laevis

Smoothnose Wedgefish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Rhynchobatus australiae

Bottlenose Wedgefish



**WPAA (2022)
Status**
Schedule I &
Schedule IV



IUCN Status
Critically
Endangered



CITES Status
Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Family Rhinidae



**WPAA (2022)
Status**

Schedule IV



IUCN Status

Critically
Endangered



CITES Status

Appendix II



NDF

NDF Advisory for India
Negative (Period 2022-2026)

Present NDF Advisory (2023 Onwards)
Negative

Remarks
Protected under Wild life
(Protection) Amendment
Act, 2022

Abbreviations

WPAA (2022)

The Wild Life (Protection)
Amendment Act, 2022

IUCN

The International Union for
Conservation of Nature

CITES

Convention on International Trade
in Endangered Species of Wild
Fauna and Flora

NDF

Non-Detriment Finding

WPA (1972)

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972

Notes

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 is a central law enacted in India to provide comprehensive protection to wild animals, birds, and plants, and to regulate activities like hunting, trade, and habitat conservation. It serves as the foundation for wildlife conservation in the country.

The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022

The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 strengthens wildlife protection in India by enhancing species classification, enforcement mechanisms, and alignment with international agreements like CITES.

The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022, in force since 1st April 2023, strengthens the legal framework for the protection of wild species and aligns Indian law with international obligations under CITES. This includes 18 elasmobranch species in Schedule I and 8 species in Schedule II, providing them legal protection.

Schedule I

Species listed here get the highest level of protection

- No hunting, trade, or harm allowed
- Violations attract strictest penalties

Notes

Schedule II

Species that get a lesser degree of protection compared to Schedule I

→ Still protected, but penalties for violations are relatively lighter

Schedule III

Lists protected plant species

→ Cultivation, collection, or trade of these plants is regulated or prohibited

Schedule IV

Covers CITES-listed species (Appendices I, II, III)

→ Regulates international trade in line with global conservation rules

→ Includes both wild animals and plants

Penalties:

Imprisonment 3–7 years, fine not less than ₹25,000, and up to ₹1 lakh or more for repeat offences

Notes

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a global organization that works to conserve nature and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. It maintains the IUCN Red List, the world's most comprehensive inventory of the conservation status of species.

IUCN Red List Categories

EX – Extinct

No known individuals remaining anywhere in the world

EW – Extinct in the Wild

Survives only in captivity or cultivation; no individuals left in their natural habitat

CR – Critically Endangered

Faces an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild

EN – Endangered

At a very high risk of extinction in the near future

VU – Vulnerable

At a high risk of extinction if threats continue

NT – Near Threatened

Close to qualifying as threatened; may be at risk soon

LC – Least Concern

Widespread and abundant; lowest extinction risk

DD – Data Deficient

Not enough information to assess the species' risk

NE – Not Evaluated

Species has not yet been assessed by IUCN

Notes

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)

CITES regulates international trade of wild species to ensure it does not threaten their survival.

Species are listed in three Appendices:

- **Appendix I** – Species threatened with extinction; commercial trade is generally prohibited
- **Appendix II** – Species not necessarily threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is controlled
- **Appendix III** – Species listed by a country seeking international cooperation to control trade

Non-Detriment Finding (NDF)

Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) is a scientific assessment required under CITES to ensure that international trade in a species does not harm its survival in the wild.

It is conducted by the Scientific Authority of a country before granting export permits for species listed in CITES Appendix I or II.

Notes

- **Positive NDF**

Trade will not harm the survival of the species
→ Export may be allowed with proper permits

- **Positive with Conditions**

Trade may be allowed, but only under specific conditions to ensure sustainability
→ Export allowed with safeguards

- **Negative NDF**

Trade would be detrimental to the species
→ Export is not permitted

- **Not Required/ Not Applicable**

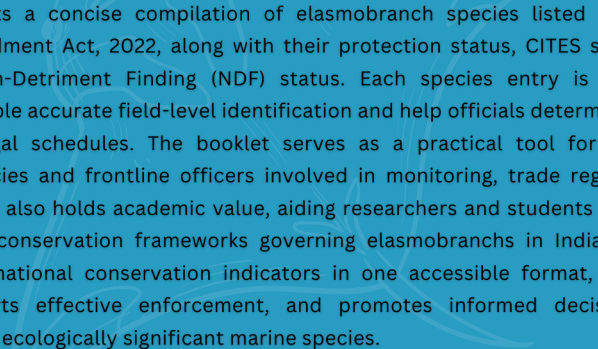
NDF is not needed for species in Appendix I or for domestic use (non-international trade)

The species is protected under various schedules of The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022, where hunting and trade are already prohibited by law.

**ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute is
the recognized Scientific Authority of CITES in India
for marine species and their trade regulation.**

**For further information,
Please contact**

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E-mail: director.cmfri@icar.org.in
www.cmfri.org.in



This guide presents a concise compilation of elasmobranch species listed under the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022, along with their protection status, CITES status, IUCN Red List category, and Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) status. Each species entry is supported by clear illustrations to enable accurate field-level identification and help officials determine protection status and applicable legal schedules. The booklet serves as a practical tool for fisheries managers, enforcement agencies and frontline officers involved in monitoring, trade regulation, and curbing illegal trafficking. It also holds academic value, aiding researchers and students in understanding the current legal and conservation frameworks governing elasmobranchs in India. By integrating key national and international conservation indicators in one accessible format, the guide enhances awareness, supports effective enforcement, and promotes informed decision-making for the protection of these ecologically significant marine species.