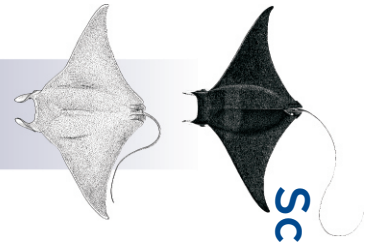


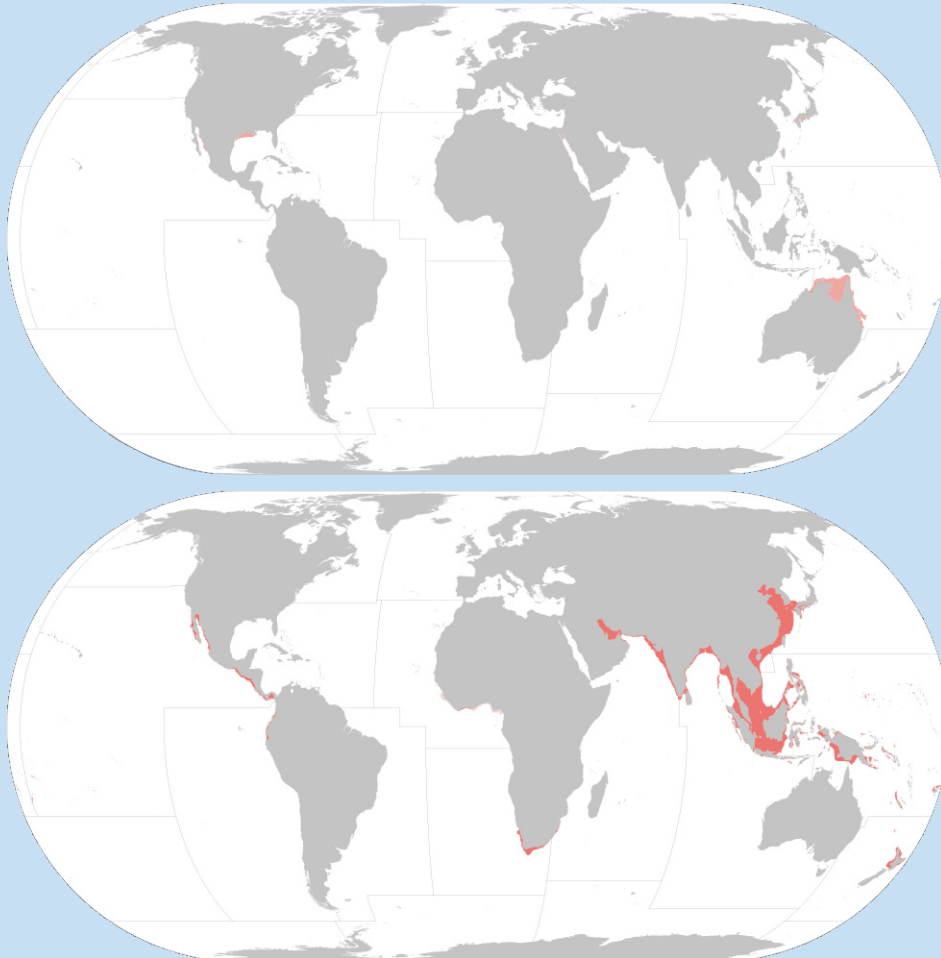


Sicklefin devil ray *Mobula tarapacana*  
Spinetail devil ray *Mobula japonica*



**Meets CITES Listing Criteria**

Scientific assessment in accordance with CITES biological listing criteria



Top: *Mobula tarapacana* recorded distribution.  
Bottom: *Mobula japonica* distribution.  
There has been no recorded change in the distribution of both mobulids.

Sicklefin, *Mobula tarapacana* and spinetail, *M. japonica* are slow-growing, large-bodied rays characterized by low productivity. Both species are highly migratory and have worldwide distribution in the tropical and temperate waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Within this broad range, populations are distributed into smaller populations with the species tending to aggregate in specific areas. No global population estimates are available and nothing is

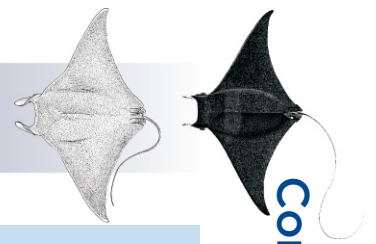
known about stock structure for the species.

As data on status and trends is extremely limited, the Panel considering several references pertaining to declines in catches of sicklefin devil ray, spinetail devil ray and catches defined as the genus *Mobula* spp.

The Panel determined that based on the 'best available evidence', the data on decline meets the CITES Appendix II listing criteria. However, the

Panel recognised that most of the data showing declines in abundance were derived from unstandardized catch or landings, which is considered least reliable due to the effects that changes in targeting, effort and environmental conditions could have on the data. Moreover, the evidence for decline is limited to the eastern Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions and the Panel could not determine the status of these species in other areas across its range.

# Sicklefin devil ray *Mobula tarapacana* Spinetail devil ray *Mobula japanica*



## Management

The FAO IPOA-Sharks applies to chondrichthyans and therefore also applies to rays. It underscores the responsibilities of fishing and coastal States for sustaining chondrichthyan populations, ensuring full utilisation of retained species and improving data collection and monitoring. The Convention for Migratory Species (CMS)

includes mobulids on Appendix I and II and Annex I of the CMS MOU on the conservation of migratory sharks which requires member parties to fully protect mobulids.

Regional management actions include the IATTC prohibition on the retention of mobulids, with an exemption

for developing non-contracting parties, small-scale and artisanal fisheries exclusively for domestic consumption from 1 August 2016. Some tuna RFMOs require catches of mobulids as a group or as individual species to be recorded and reported annually.

## Trade

Mobulids are caught in target fisheries in coastal state small-scale and artisanal fisheries. They are also caught during fishing for other species. Target fishing is primarily for local

consumption and international trade of the gill-plates.

While the trade in gill plates may have expanded in recent years, in the absence

of an historical baseline, the Panel considered that this trade may have been in existence for longer than is referenced in the Proposal.

## LIKELY EFFECTIVENESS FOR CONSERVATION

It is difficult to draw clear conclusions regarding the effectiveness of existing and future management and trade measures, due to the lack of data available to be able to assess these measures. However, it is noted that, if properly implemented, a CITES Appendix II listing could be expected to result in better monitoring and reporting of catches of mobulid rays entering international trade.

Improved monitoring should enable new or enhanced assessments of stock status and the subsequent adoption of management measures that ensure the sustainability of harvests, where these are still permitted.

Harvests from international waters would fall under the 'Introduction From the Sea' (IFS) provisions of the Convention. These require catch documentation to the species level for specimens entering the jurisdiction of a State from international waters, along with a non-detriment finding (NDF) indicating that the harvest was sustainable.

The listing of these ray species would also assist in resolving the 'look-alike' issues for products derived from mobulids which can be confused with products from manta rays, an issue raised by the CITES Animals Committee. In this case NDFs and appropriate

permits/certificates would then apply to the entire mobulidae family and all *Manta* spp.

It should be noted that States' abilities to make NDFs for highly migratory species is limited in the absence of region-wide assessments as evidenced by difficulties encountered in making NDFs for shark and ray species that have already been listed. Under these conditions the following outcomes can occur: previous trade ceases, trade continues without proper CITES documentation (i.e. illegal trade) and/or trade continues with inadequate NDFs.