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13<sup>th</sup> July 2006

The Honourable Ian MacDonald, MLC  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Level 30 Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Dear Minister,

**Re: CITES, Red Data Book and the Grey Nurse Shark**

Thank you for your letter of 29th March 2006, reference MP105/5280. Following your response we have further questions concerning the genetics of the grey nurse shark.

There are two international systems in place to help protect endangered and threatened species, CITES and the Red Data Book.

The Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) was established as a world wide system of controls in the international trade in threatened wildlife and wildlife products, or as the name suggests threatened species. Australia has been a signatory of CITES for about 30 years with the signing taking place on 27th October 1976.

Additionally, the IUCN Red List of categories and criteria provides a system of classifying species at high risk of global extinction so as to focus attention on conservation measures designed to protect them. What's referred to as the Red Data Book provides data on the population status of the species included in the Red List.

One threat to the east coast population of the grey nurse shark has been stated as shark finning, where the fins of grey nurse shark are presumably sold to the Asian market. The

question then becomes, is the grey nurse shark CITES listed to help combat the trade in the fins of the shark? If not, is CITES listing being contemplated by the NSW Government? If not, then why not?

Secondly, as the east coast grey nurse shark is classified as a threatened species by the DPI's Independent Scientific Committee, has it been listed in the IUCN's Red List and included in the Red Data Book? If not, is there any intention of applying for inclusion of the grey nurse shark in the IUCN's Red List and Red Data Book? If not, then why not?

Lastly, is the east coast grey nurse shark genetically different from other populations around the world, such as Western Australia, South Africa and the United States, to be classified as a separate species, or are they a local, yet isolated, population of the grey nurse?

The extent of the genetic differences between the east coast and other grey nurse populations may have importance and implications in any possible international listing, and for maintaining genetic diversity with breeding from other genetic stocks. Maintaining genetic diversity assists the population to cope with change and strengthens the population. This is particularly important if the east coast population is as low as the 460 that DPI scientists believe, and maybe even the 3000 figure given by other groups. Also, if DPI scientists believe that the east coast population is declining and approaching extinction, the CITES and Red Listing the grey nurse should be considered to assist in its recovery.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Ingram  
President  
Anglers Action Group