**Communiqué**

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SHARK-PLAN REPRESENTATIVE GROUP**

The Shark-Plan Representative Group (SRG) met for the seventh time on 31 October 2019 in Canberra.

The SRG meets annually to review, monitor and report on the implementation of Australia’s National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (Shark-plan).

Members noted the progress of jurisdictions in a number of areas including: shark stock assessments; harvest and discards strategies; vessel monitoring; ecological risk assessments; fishing surveys; technological developments; and shark listing proposals under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and shark species adopted for listing for the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Members also discussed improving the Shark Assessment Report (SAR) as a key part of the National Plan of Action (NPOA) process. This publically available report is a commitment under the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation's International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks and the Shark-plan. Members agreed to form a small working group to look at ways to improve future SARs and its outcomes.

Current research programs to better understand the status of Australia’s shark populations were discussed at the meeting including:

* [Estimating the abundance of school shark in Australia using close kin genetic methods](http://www.frdc.com.au/project/2014-024).
* [Shark Futures, a report card for Australia’s sharks and rays](https://www.sharkreportcard.org/). The project synthesised available information on sharks and rays in Australian waters, and produced a report card on the status of Australia’s sharks and shark-like rays.

The group also discussed the public reporting of actions and updated the reporting worksheet to simplify jurisdictional data reporting. Jurisdictional data has been updated and is available at [www.agriculture.gov.au/fisheries/environment/sharks](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/fisheries/environment/sharks)

The next meeting of SRG members will likely be held in late-2020.