



Shark Foundation Annual Report for 2007

June 2008

Projects

Shark Exhibit

The exhibit was opened in Hamburg on November 10, 2006, in the scope of the Annual Meeting of the European Elasmobranch Association (EEA), and closed on May 20, 2007. The exhibit was just as successful in Hamburg as it was in previous locations. On June 6, 2007, the exhibition was opened by Dr. Alexander Godknecht in Leipzig. The press conference and official opening were very well frequented, and both the exhibit and sharks received a very good echo in the press. The exhibit closed its doors in Leipzig on November 11, 2007, where it will be stored before being moved to Stralsund for renewed opening on July 24, 2008, in the German Oceanographic Museum.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: approx. 8,700 CHF

Total investments to date: approx. 192,700 CHF

Shark Identification

The year 2007 witnessed the expansion of the shark identification project based on minute tissue samples. In the future it will be possible to not only determine the type of shark caught, but also from which region it stems. This gives customs inspectors the means to analyze shark catches more precisely and thus better determine and penalize any violations of regional protective measures. Another project initiated in 2007 is aimed at investigating multiple paternity of various shark species.

Publications

Expenditures/Investments 2007: approx. 23,000 CHF

Total investments to date: approx. 113,000 CHF

Shark Nurseries

Patrick O'Donnell continues to manage the Shark "Nurseries" project in Rookery Bay/Ten Thousand Islands in cooperation with the Mote Marine Lab.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: 0 CHF

Total investments to date: approx. 21,100 CHF

Basking Sharks

Research on shark nurseries and migrations of basking sharks off the coast of Wales and Scotland (under the scientific direction of Colin Speedie) has been successful and will continue to receive the Foundation's support. Research activities have now been extended to the following regions: Cornwall, Devon, Wales, the Irish Sea, the Firth of Clydes and the Hebrides. Initial data collected is very interesting and scientific publications are expected in the summer of 2008. The project was mentioned in various magazines from English animal protection societies. The Foundation continued to make its digital camera available for the project in 2007.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: approx. 200 CHF

Total investments to date: approx. 43,200 CHF

Bull Shark Tagging Programme Fiji (Subproject 2)

Biological data is missing for practically all shark species, especially on their exact geographical distribution areas, their migratory behavior, or reliable statistics on population sizes. This also applies to such widely distributed, coastal species as the bull shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*). In 2007 a dense network of acoustic transmitters and stationary receivers was built up in order to allow more precise examination of the small-scale movements of bull sharks in the area of Shark Fin Reef in Fiji.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: 22,200 CHF
Total investments to date: approx. 41,200 CHF

Shark Protection Zone Fiji

The Foundation's shark protection project in Fiji supports Mike Neumann and his goal of converting "Shark Fin Reef" - a coastal area located off the southern coast of Viti Levu - into a shark protection zone. As a first step, the Foundation financed the 10-meter long motorboat "Reef Warden". The shark protection zone was extended in 2006 and the Foundation guaranteed a sum of CHF 3,600 for the compensation of a newly participating village in return for yielding their usage rights to its reef areas in the protection zone. The project is now self-supporting and in 2007 the Foundation received no request for support.

Investments 2007: 0 CHF
Total investments to date: approx. 26,600 CHF

Lemon Sharks Jupiter (Florida / USA)

New Project

In 2007 the Foundation began supporting a research project on the lemon shark population in Jupiter (Florida / USA). The project is managed by the world-famous shark researcher Professor Samuel "Doc" Gruber and was realized together with the Shark Lab (Bahamas). During specific times of the year, hundreds of lemon sharks gather off the Jupiter coast. Often they lie quietly on the seabed and appear to wait for something. The project aims at examining this unusual behavior more precisely. For this purpose selected females are tagged with acoustic transmitters and their movements are analyzed using stationary receivers. Biochemical and molecular biological analyses of the sharks are also planned, in addition to investigating the sharks swimming and migratory behavior.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: 13'400 CHF

Shark Preservation Hong Kong

New Project

Hong Kong is the international hub for shark fin trading. More than 70% of all shark fins are transported via Hong Kong into the Asian region, especially to the Chinese mainland. In cooperation with Alex Hofford and Paul Hilton, photographers living in Hong Kong, an information campaign is to be established on the shark fin trade. An exhibit and information brochure will be organized, supported by photos and film material from Alex and Paul. If the project is successful the information campaign will be extended to the Chinese mainland. The Foundation supports this project both financially and with its experience, as well as with material from the Shark Exhibit.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: 3'400 CHF

Small Projects:

Tracking Workshop at the AES Meeting

The annual meeting of the largest international elasmobranch organization, the American Elasmobranch Society (AES), in New Orleans was also the scene of a scientific workshop on the "tracking of sharks," organized by Dr. Jürg Brunnschweiler. Subjects of discussion at this very successful workshop were the use of existing and new technologies for tracking shark movements and migrations. Both the Shark Foundation and the U.S. Shark Foundation provided financial support for the workshop, while Gary Adkison, Secretary of the U.S.

Foundation, Prof. Gruber and Dr. Jürg Brunnschweiler held lectures.

Expenditures/Investments 2007: 3'700 CHF

Public Relations Activities of the Shark Foundation and Shark Info

Media / Public Relations

In 2007 the administrative office of the Shark Foundation and Shark Info again answered hundreds of calls and E-mails on questions regarding sharks. They also edited various articles on sharks and gave numerous interviews on current shark topics. Although Shark info does not issue any publications at the moment, it regularly receives inquiries on questions regarding sharks. Worth special mention is an interview that appeared in the German magazine "SPIEGEL" in early 2007 on the rare discovery of a living frilled shark. And in February, Swiss television showed an interview with Dr. Alexander Godknecht in its program Cultural Spot ("Kulturplatz") dealing with Damien Hirst's pickled tiger shark "artwork" on exhibit in Bregenz. In the same month, another interview was recorded with Dr. Jürg Brunnschweiler in the Shark Foundation offices and was shown on Swiss TV in the last "MTW" program (MTW = Man - Technology - Science).

Stop Shark Products

The year 2007 also witnessed the launch of a campaign to "stop shark products" in Switzerland. The Foundation designed both a logo and campaign-specific web pages for this purpose. Appearing on the web pages are companies who promised to discontinue the use of any more shark products. The Foundation also makes sample letters available which request manufacturers to remove any possible shark products from their product line. Unfortunately, up until now the campaign failed to attract any real interest

Marathon du Médoc

In September 2007 Dr. Alexander Godknecht gave a "running performance" on behalf of sharks at the 23rd Médoc Marathon under the motto "stop using shark products." Although his time was extremely average, it did have the positive effect that his message could be displayed for a longer period of time. ;)

European Shark Week

European Shark Week began in October 2007. The campaign week was organized in cooperation with Shark Alliance, Ocean Care and the EEA with the aim of pointing to the dramatic drop in shark populations in Europe, Europe's role in the international trade with sharks and the worldwide threat to sharks. Insufficient legislation in the European Union represents a worldwide threat to shark populations. Through an online petition and the distribution of documentation and brochures the Foundation collected more than 1,200 signatures that were presented to the European Commission together with signatures collected by other organizations.

CITES

In August 2007 the Shark Foundation submitted a request to Dr. Mathias Lörtscher, Federal Veterinary Office, Protection of Species, that Switzerland engage itself in the protection of spiny dogfish and mackerel sharks at the CITES Conference (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Unfortunately, all efforts to protect these two species were unsuccessful and neither the spiny dogfish nor mackerel sharks were added to the CITES list of threatened species.

Web-Server

In 2007 the Shark Foundation's German web site (www.hai.ch) recorded approx. 335,000 visits, the English web site (www.shark.ch) roughly 357,000. It was the first time that www.shark.ch recorded more visits than www.hai.ch. Clearly leading in popularity in the sides frequented on both servers was the Shark Database. A positive note is the generally increasing visitor trend to both servers.

Administration

General

Once again the Foundation was actively involved in shark protection activities in 2007. In addition to project support, the Foundation organized the move of the Shark Exhibit to an excellent location in the German Oceanographic Museum in Stralsund, following its stay in Leipzig. It also backed two new projects important to shark protection. During a trip to the U.S., the President was able to establish new contacts and achieve improved coordination of work with the U.S. Foundation.

Also in 2007 a new foundation flyer was prepared in cooperation with an agency.

Furthermore, the Shark Foundation was very pleased to be the recipient of proceeds from a fund-raising campaign initiated by a well-known Zurich dentist on the occasion of his 50th birthday. Dr. Jürg Brunnschweiler attended the celebration where he was able to introduce the Shark Foundation and his Fiji project to participants. All donations were used exclusively for the Fiji bull shark project.

Another large donation resulting from a tombola was made to the Shark Foundation by a long-standing sponsor.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our deep thanks to all our benefactors and sponsors without whose help our work would not be possible!

U.S. Shark Foundation

In 2007 the U.S. Shark Foundation was again registered at its seat in Miami, Florida, as a charitable foundation. Gary and Brenda Adkinson, as well as Professor Mahmood S. Shivji, continue in their function as directors of the U.S. Foundation. The AES Shark Tracking Workshop and the Project Lemon Sharks Jupiter were both organized and launched in cooperation with the U.S. Foundation. And for the first time since its establishment, the U.S. Shark Foundation was self-supporting in 2007.

Total administrative costs to date: approx. CHF 36,000

Financial Policy of the Shark Foundation

Established on August 29, 1997, the Shark Foundation is an internationally active organization that falls under the supervision of the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA) / Swiss Federal Supervisory Authority in Bern. The Foundation can accept tax-deductible donations and once a year it submits its annual report and financial statement to the supervisory authority for approval.

The Foundation finances all its activities through donations, presentations or the sale of products such as T-shirts or plush toy sharks. The Board of Trustees works on a voluntary basis and its members receive neither attendance fees nor salaries. The Foundation runs a "Shark Shop" on its Internet website (t-shirts, cuddly plush toy sharks, tear-off notebooks, postcards, shark sponsorships). Sales revenues flow directly into the Foundation account, and once a year all interested parties are sent a mailing requesting donations and including a pay-in slip.

In its first meeting of the respective year, the Board of Trustees of the Shark Foundation decides on the usage of any accumulated income and donation money from the previous year. Up until then no reserves are set aside; instead all funds are released to cover ongoing projects, investments and administrative costs. Revisal, an auditing company located in Gossau, is auditing the annual accounts of the Shark Foundation.
