



Shark Foundation Annual Report for 2012

July 2013

General

Foundation

In 2012 the foundation was again actively involved in a variety of activities for the protections of sharks.

In November 2012 the European Parliament decided with an overwhelming majority of 566:47 votes to close the existing loopholes in the EU shark finning ban. After years of debate, the 566 members of the European Parliament voted in favor of a report, which approves of the proposal by the European Commission to make the landing of the whole body of all sharks mandatory i.e. the landing in port of the bodies in their natural state with all fins attached mandatory. This big success was only achievable through years of intensive lobbying of the Shark Alliance and its member organizations, amongst which is the Shark Foundation.

At the end of 2012 a music video was released by the music group Melodeego, in which the Shark Foundation was mentioned as a nature protection organization, amongst maaaaaaany others. The song 'Fear is the weapon (fear them not)' can be found on YouTube Fear is the weapon.

This is the second collaboration with music groups, apart from the long-term, very positive collaboration with Artists For Animals.

Also in 2012, the Foundation received larger and smaller donations from shark friends big and small, who want to support our work.

At this point we would like to express our warmest gratitude to all donors and benefactors. Without your help we would not be able to do our work!

EEA Congress Milan

At the end of November, 2012, Alexander Godknecht represented the Shark Foundation as a representative of Switzerland at the 16. International Conference of the European Elasmobranch Association (EEA) in Milan.

US Shark Foundation

The U.S. Shark Foundation was again registered at its seat in Miami, Florida, as a charitable foundation in 2012. Gary and Brenda Adkison, as well as Professor Mahmood S. Shivji, continue in their function as directors of the U.S. Foundation, which was also self-supporting in 2012.

Total administrative costs to date: approx. CHF 58,000

Projects

Shark Exhibit

The exhibit was kept in storage during 2012. In early November, 2012, the content of the information boards was updated and the exhibits were examined and, where necessary, repaired. All parts were inventoried in preparation for the trip to Germany and in order to prepare for the customs documents (Carnet-ATA). The exhibition will be shown from March 8, 2013 to November 10, 2013 at the Galileo Park, Lennestadt/Meggen (Sauerland).

In 2012, an anatomical model of a female great white shark by the famous artist Bill Wieger was acquired from the USA for the exhibition.

Total expenditures/investments to date: approx. CHF 240,500

Shark Identification

In 2012, Prof. Mahmood J. Shivji of the Nova Southeastern University in Florida and his colleagues worked on several shark research projects. With the methods developed for the identification of sharks they investigated specific questions in the field of global genetic investigations of bull sharks (Fiji project), research on hammerhead populations as well as on the migrations of tiger sharks and mako sharks. In 2012, projects were supported within the frame work of the angel shark project in Gran Canaria and in the field of tiger shark migrations. Initial results about angel sharks are available, but they are not yet publishable. Already at the end of 2011, the US Foundation received ca. CHF 30.000,00 for those projects. There were no proposals submitted in 2012.

No requests for financial support were received in 2011.

Investments 2012: CHF 0

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 186,000 CHF

Shark Nurseries

The project Shark "Nurseries", located in Rookery Bay, 10.000 Islands, continues to be supervised by Pat O'Donnell, in collaboration with the Mote Marine Lab. During 2012, data collection continued. The origin of the parents of young lemon, bull and hammerhead sharks will be investigated by using information from genetic databases in collaboration with Profs. Samuel Gruber and Demian Chapman. The pilot project will be supported by the Foundation with \$7,000.

The foundation supports the pilot project with \$5,000.

Investments 2012: CHF 7,000

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 50,500

Basking Sharks

Data collection for the occurrence and migration in the region of the Hebrides continues. Altogether 43 trips with the sailboat were conducted along predetermined transects. The total time spent on data collection was roughly 61 hours and 80 basking sharks were identified and their position recorded. Compared to the 12 shark sightings in 2011 the 80 sharks recorded in 2012 represent a significant increase.

Investments 2012: CHF 11,000

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 75,400

Bull Shark Tagging Fiji (Subproject 2)

The Foundation has been supporting this project since 2004. In 2011 mainly the small-scale movements of bull sharks in the region were investigated in more detail. In collaboration with the laboratory of Prof. Shivji, the global bull shark populations, including Fiji, were genetically analyzed with regards to their relatedness.

In 2012 a small project in Fiji was supported in the framework of a Masters Thesis (see below).

Investments 2012: CHF 0

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 63,800

Shark Protection Zone Fiji

Today, the Fiji Shark Protection Project is financially self-sustaining. If necessary, the Foundation will support the project financially. At the end of 2011 Mike Neumann asked for support of the project "Fiji Shark Count ", which, beginning in 2012, aims to establish an

inventory of all sharks in the region. The Fiji Shark Count is underway and was co-financed by the Foundation in 2012.

Investments 2012: CHF 5,300

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 36,600

Lemon Sharks Jupiter (Florida / USA)

During the research period from January 6 to February 15, 2012, 23 lemon sharks, 5 tiger sharks, 11 bull sharks, 4 great hammerhead sharks, 1 nurse shark and 1 Caribbean reef shark were examined and marked. During the examination, the sex and weight of the shark was determined and small biopsies and, where possible, small blood samples taken for DNA and stable isotope analysis. The isotopes provide information about the dietary habits of the sharks. By using a new, larger research vessel, the duration for each examination could be reduced from ca. 15 to 4 minutes. The reduction of the duration for the examination also reduces stress for the sharks.

The project is fully financed by the Shark Foundation since 2006.

Investments 2011: CHF 21,000

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 120,000

Angel Sharks on Canary Islands

The project investigates the angel shark population in the region of Gran Canaria in order to better protect the last available habitats and nurseries in the Canary Islands. More than 200 biopsies were collected from 2008 to 2012 and were sent to the laboratory for molecular biology of Prof. Mahmood S. Shivji for the analysis of relatedness. CHF 22.000 were transferred in 2011 for the analysis of the population genetics. Unfortunately it was not possible to start with the analyses in 2011 due to a lack of specialists. 2012/13 researchers of the University of Birmingham began with the analyses. Initial and not yet validated results indicate that, as expected, angel shark populations in Gran Canaria are very isolated and that almost no exchange of genetic material occurs between populations. This means that if those stocks are overfished, no replacements can move in from other populations. The populations are endangered accordingly.

Investments 2012: see Identification

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 23'700

Whalesharks Mozambique

Whale sharks are listed on the IUCN Red List and on the CITES Appendix II. The coastal region near Tofo Beach in Mozambique, where whale sharks gather during the algal bloom, is of international importance. The project was developed after a request by the government of Mozambique. For establishing a marine protection area for whale sharks off its south coast, Mozambique requires a scientifically sound recommendation with regards to the location and size of the protection area. In 2012, the research group surrounding Simon Pierce extended their analyses of whale shark populations in Mozambique and collected and published new valuable data for the whale shark protection area. (Publications). Apart from their main focus Mozambique, the analyses of migrations, populations, diet and health of the whale shark populations were greatly extended. In 2012, populations in the Red Sea and Honduras (West Atlantic Ocean) were investigated. For the year 2013 several global analyses and collaborations were initiated, in order to better understand the worldwide populations and global migrations of whale sharks.

Investments 2012: CHF 8,500

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 39,800

Thermoregulation Nurse Sharks

For thousands of years nurse sharks (*Ginglymostoma cirratum*) have been gathering between June and July to mate in the very warm waters of the Dry Tortuga Islands off Florida. During the last 21 years, the project team has marked and studied more than one hundred of those

two to three meter long animals. In order to reduce disturbance to the nurse sharks to a minimum, only kayaks and nets were used to mark the sharks.

Nurse sharks regularly visit regions that provide them with ideal conditions. This project aims to contribute to the understanding why pregnant female nurse sharks visit regions with particularly high water temperatures. Nurse sharks mate in June and July in the warm, shallow lagoons of Dry Tortugas. Some of the female animals return to these waters in the fall to give birth. It is assumed that the sharks visit these places in order to raise their body temperature, similar to reptiles, so that the development of the embryos and delivery is facilitated.

With the support of the Shark Foundation, 14 CEFAS G5 transmitters, which log the temperature and water depth, were deployed on female nurse sharks. Because the sharks return to Dry Tortugas every 2 to 3 years to mate, the first half of the transmitters was deployed in 2011 and the second half in 2012. Altogether 145 nurse sharks were marked in the last 10 years. 47 were recaptured and examined once or several times in the following years. In 2012, 13 adult females and 7 adult males were captured and marked.

Investments 2012: CHF 7,000

Total investments to date: approx. CHF 13,600

Short-term Projects

Indigenous fishing in Fiji:

Local and indigenous fishing activities are a poorly investigated and often underestimated factor, which can strongly affect the fish stocks of the Pacific coastal regions. Especially shark populations, due to their low birth rates, react particularly sensibly to overfishing and pressure from fishing activities in general.

This project aims to investigate, for the first time, how many and what species of shark are being caught by local fishermen in Fiji. In addition, historical data will be collected and fishing methods as well as local fisheries will be analyzed.

Project manager: Dr. Jürg Brunnscheiler, Kerstin Glaus (University of Basel)

Total investments 2012: 3,700 CHF

Public Relations Activities of the Shark Foundation and Shark Info

Media / Public Relations

The Foundation gave several interviews and provided its expertise as well as contributed to TV productions. Alexander Godknecht was interviewed by Tele Top with regards to the planned dogfish aquarium at the Zurich Zoo.

Web Server

In 2012 the Shark Foundation's German web site (www.hai.ch) recorded approx. 204,350 visits, the English web site (www.shark.ch) roughly 477,100. Clearly leading in popularity in the sides frequented on both servers was the Shark Database. Compared to 2011, a slight increase in the number of visitors to both servers was registered.

Administration

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. The annual accounts for both the Foundation and Shark Info are checked by Revisal, an auditing company located in Gossau.
