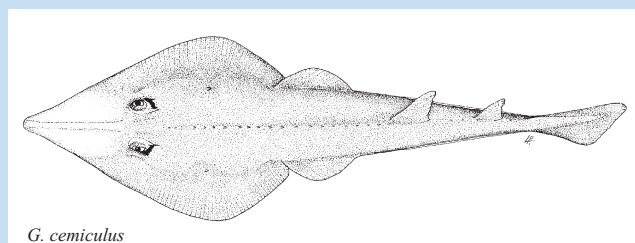


Guitarfish, *Glaucostegus cemiculus* & *G. granulatus*
Wedgefish, *Rhynchobatus australiae* & *R. djiddensis*

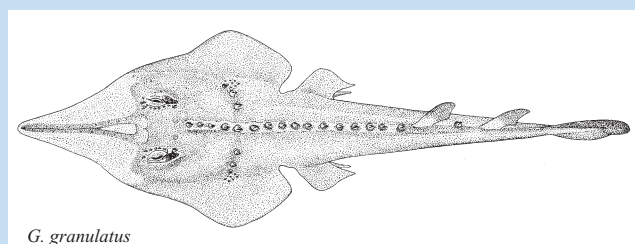
Insufficient Data to make a CITES determination



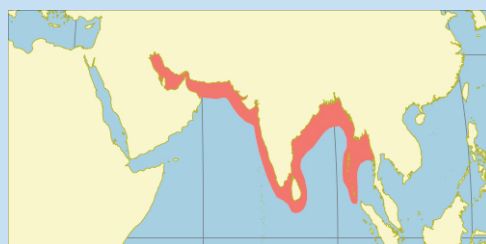
G. cemiculus



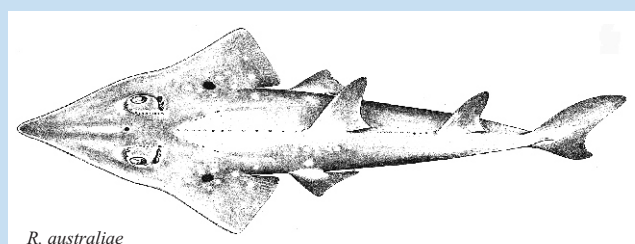
Source: F. Carocci



G. granulatus



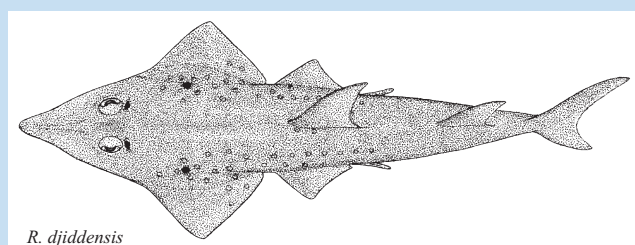
Source: F. Carocci



R. australiae



Source: F. Carocci



R. djiddensis



Source: F. Carocci

The guitarfish (upper panels above) and wedgefish (lower panels above) are shallow-water coastal species, recognized by the Expert Panel as being of low-to-medium productivity.

The Expert Panel looked for stock status information across the species' range, bearing in mind the proposal's argument of high levels of decline. The Expert Panel noted that population estimates do not exist for these species and stock assessment information is largely unavailable.

There was evidence that Blackchin guitarfish, *G. cemiculus*, and other guitarfish have been extirpated in the northwestern Mediterranean part of their range. Elsewhere there was local evidence of long-term declines guitarfish catches in Senegal, but numerical evidence on a larger scale was lacking.

For wedgefish, the Expert Panel had access to additional catch datasets from India and Indonesia, which revealed significant declines.

The panel considered the decline data for guitarfish and

wedgefish insufficient to establish declines over the full species range, either for the long- or short- term rate of decline, as required to make a determination against the CITES criteria.

In considering whether to list these species, the Expert Panel recommends that CITES parties take note of the widespread lack of management in the fisheries taking the species and the very high value of the products (fins) in international trade. Traders might not differentiate between these species' fins, raising a potential lookalike problem between species.

Guitarfish, *Glaucostegus cemiculus* & *G. granulatus* Wedgefish, *Rhynchobatus australiae* & *R. djiddensis*



Management

The FAO IPOA-Sharks underscores the responsibilities of fishing and coastal states to sustain shark populations and improve shark data collection and monitoring. Wedgefish also feature in the 'Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals' Appendices.

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean adopts measures prohibiting the retention, transshipment, landing or offering for sale of guitarfish.

As inshore coastal species that are affected by the degradation of local environments and mixed fisheries, both require management at local and artisanal scales. The use of bycatch reduction devices attached to trawl nets can be effective in reducing bycatch of these species.

In some West African countries guitarfish are registered in shark and ray catch records, and MPAs and other spatial measures have been established in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania

and Sierra Leone amongst others.

For wedgefish, the India and Bangladesh Wildlife Protection Acts protects species, as do regulations in Pakistan. In Western Australia, there is a prohibition on shark and ray landings in non shark-targeted fisheries.

The listing of all other species in the Glaucostegidae and Rhinidae families, on the basis of 'lookalike' provisions, will require extra management considerations for all species in these families.

Trade

Guitarfish and wedgefish are retained when captured incidentally. Retention, where permitted, is for domestic consumption and international trade. Their

fins are widely traded on Asian markets and constitute an important component of overall shark fins traded. There is no evidence that traders differen-

tiate between these species, and CITES parties should carefully consider whether there is a 'lookalike' problem between guitarfish and wedgefish.

Comments on technical aspects relative to management, trade and implementation

LIKELY EFFECTIVENESS FOR CONSERVATION

It is difficult to draw clear conclusions regarding the effectiveness of existing (and future) trade and management measures, given the lack of data available to assess these measures.

However, if properly implemented, a CITES Appendix II listing could be expected to result in better monitoring and reporting of the catches entering international trade. Improved monitoring should enable new or enhanced

assessments of stock status, as well as the subsequent adoption of management measures ensuring the sustainability of harvests, where still permitted.

The listing of the *Glaucostegus* spp genus and the Rhinidae family would help to resolve the 'lookalike' issues across the taxa.

The lack of *Rhynchobatus* fishery information across

many range states, and the limited ability to make NDFs (as evidenced by the situation encountered for shark and ray species already listed) may lead to the following outcomes:

- previous trade ceases;
- trade continues without proper CITES documentation (also known as 'illegal trade'); and/or
- trade continues with inadequate NDFs.