



FIELD IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE SHARKS AND RAYS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA



FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION GUIDE FOR FISHERY PURPOSES

**FIELD IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE SHARKS AND RAYS
OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA**

by

Fabrizio Serena

Environmental Protection Agency – Tuscany Region
Livorno, Italy

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document was prepared under the coordination of the Species Identification and Data Programme of the Marine Resources Service, Fishery Resources and Environment Division, Fisheries Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems of the General Fishery Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in February 2001 in Palma de Majorca, some member countries concerned with the protection of sharks and other cartilaginous species suggested that a field guide for the identification of cartilaginous species be prepared. At its fourth session in June 2001 in Athens, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) endorsed the suggestion and asked the COPEMED Project GCP/REM/O57/SPA to support the preparation of the field guide.

This increasing recognition of the significance of sharks and batoid fishes as ecosystem health indicators, as well as their particular importance in exploited ecosystems in the Mediterranean, have been key considerations to promote the preparation of this field guide.

Project managers: M. Lamboeuf, J. Leonart (FAO, Rome).

Scientific reviser: N. De Angelis (FAO, Rome).

Editorial assistance, page composition and indexing: M. Kautenberger-Longo (FAO, Rome).

Scientific illustrator (for material presented here for the first time): E. D'Antoni (FAO, Rome).

Cover: E. D'Antoni (FAO, Rome).

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Abstract

This volume presents a fully illustrated field guide for the identification of the sharks and rays most relevant to the fisheries of the Mediterranean and Black Sea. An extensive literature review was carried out for the preparation of this document. A total of 49 sharks, 34 batoids and 1 chimaera are fully treated. The presence of 5 sharks and 2 batoids included in this field guide, need, however, to be confirmed. The guide includes sections on technical terms and measurements for sharks and batoids, and fully illustrated keys to those orders and families that occur in the region. Each species account includes: at least one annotated illustration of the species highlighting its relevant identification characters; basic information on nomenclature, synonyms and possible misidentifications; FAO common names; basic information on size, habitat and biology, distribution, importance to fisheries, and conservation and exploitation status. Colour plates for a large number of the species are included as well as two plates showing the egg cases.

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