



**Australian Government**  
**Department of the Environment**

Senator Linda Reynolds CSC  
Chair  
Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Senator Reynolds

On 8 February 2016, I appeared as a witness before the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Additional Estimates Hearing.

During the hearing Senator Siewert asked in relation to the upcoming meeting of signatories to the Convention on Migratory Species Memorandum of Understanding on Sharks

*"Has the department provided advice to the government on the inclusion of 21 shark and ray species in the sharks MOU in Costa Rica? If so, has the government reached a decision on its position?"*

In response I said

*"No decision has been taken yet. We have briefed the Minister and we are awaiting approval of the delegation instructions to take to Costa Rica."*

I wish to correct this answer. The Minister has been briefed on the inclusion of 22 species of sharks and rays in the annex to the CMS Shark MOU. The delegation will take the position of supporting the inclusion of all 22 species in the annex into the negotiations in Costa Rica. The delegation instructions for this meeting were approved by a Senior Executive Service officer in the Department following consultation with State and Australian government agencies and other interested parties. They were not provided to the Minister for approval.

I apologise for the error in my answer and trust this further information will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Oxley  
First Assistant Secretary  
Wildlife, Heritage and Marine Division  
12 February 2016