

Project Update: October 2017

Major victory! Although planned for October 2017, I have participated in the meeting with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (responsible for legal protection of species/habitats), Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry (responsible for sustainable development and nature resources), as well as the representatives of the Neum Municipality (as local representatives from the studied area). In this meeting we have discussed the adoption of action plan/strategy for conservation and sustainable management (on both municipality and canton/federation levels) of elasmobranchs. All stakeholders have welcomed the proposed action plan/strategy and expressed their support for my project and conservation efforts.

Since the representatives of the municipality of Neum agree with the proposed ideas for the action plan, I am very close to accomplish the main project goal necessary for proper long-term in-situ conservation of sharks, skates and rays. We have planned several meetings for with both government and civil engagement in order to discuss these ideas more carefully. Through September 2017, I have analysed the pathohistological slides from the different elasmobranch species in order to describe observed changes. There are still some additional studies that I need to conduct (since there is a lack of data about the functional anatomy and pathology of sharks, skates and rays). Currently I am writing two original scientific papers based on the both field and laboratory studies conducted in this project. Besides, I have planned workshops in Sarajevo, Mostar and Neum for the second half of October 2017, but I am still not sure about the precise dates.



Andrej giving his speech about the importance of the legal protection of sharks, skates and rays through Action plan/Strategy for conservation. Representatives of the ministries and the municipality are sitting around the table.



The participants of the round table regarding the protection of the marine part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including both land and water. Photo: A. A. Gajić.



Presentation of conclusions from the group discussions with the representatives of the governmental authorities.