

MAKO SHARK AT CoP18

Cop18 has revealed with unprecedented force the influence of NGOs on political decisions. It reveals that we are for the protection of nature, but the influential NGOs are against its exploitation at the expense of necessary and sustainable trade, or even food security.

The media alarmism maintained about the disappearance of terrestrial and marine animals maintains an anxiety in the opinion which makes it possible to accept urgently and without reflection measures of protection, freed even from scientific data.

The negation of the rebuilding of the stocks of many species, and the generalized exaggeration leads us to think that their action is no longer part of the common good and indeed that of a "fake movement".

The case of the protection of the Mako shark at Cop18 has shown that even the rational data of the respectable scientists of the FAO can be trashed, insofar as they do not go in the direction of "all protection". We can legitimately ask ourselves the question of the usefulness of the work of these official bodies, when we see how these NGOs are able to "twist science". It is disturbing to note that the power to adopt protective measures now seems to be much more the responsibility of NGOs than that of the states, which they now seem to replace.

It is a question for these organizations of ensuring the maintenance of the donations at a significant rate, while increasing their influence, which has nothing to do with being "non-governmental". Indeed, their action falls directly within the framework of geopolitical issues in the service of the interest of a group of states.

It was enough to see how, in a perfectly coordinated manner, it is always the same countries that ask for protection measures, and always the same others that fight to try to maintain access to an essential resource. This is illustrated by the document presented by Antigua and Barbuda to avoid further listing of marine fish species until the conservation effects of the previously listed species have been properly evaluated. We felt like we were facing a third world war. The question then arises as to whether behind all of this, would it not also be to contribute to the development of all the alternative supply chains (synthetic meat for example) for animal products, behind which we find often the giants of GAFA?

Growing concerns around the marine environment now cause fish to take a growing place in large entities. The shark also benefits from the status of predator, and as such is one of the totems of nature. Most shark species are doing well, but NGOs are deaf to field data. The protection of sharks has been a very lucrative business for 20 years, and the strong image of these fish in public opinion, always presented as on the verge of extinction, ensures them every time a wide mobilization. It is time that the real data on these fish can be made available to the general public so that reason can take precedence over the emotion when it comes to this species.

NGOs in the United States are currently succeeding in having the fin trade permanently banned, against the advice of NOAA scientists, destroying 20 years of exemplary

management of shark fisheries in that country. Indeed, the end of the fin trade will lead to the end of the fisheries because the meat alone is not profitable enough. And as the demand for this product remains strong in the United States, scientists fear, every time, that poaching will replace legal practices, in order to meet supply. The same situation is found each time when it comes to products emanating from emblematic animals with stocks having been well reconstituted, such as the elephant. Once again, the action of the NGOs will bring consequences against which they are however supposed to fight.

All these elements lead all the countries victims of these acts to ask the question of the legitimacy of CITES, to the extent that this organization seems to have lost control, and therefore, vis-à-vis its members, the legitimacy of the decisions adopted. When an authority of such a level finds itself in such a situation, faced with such questioning, it seems necessary to urgently adopt new rules in order to find an ethic and a serenity allowing to respond to the balance sought between the necessary preservation of species and that of trade.

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