



EEP Proposal for

Common Species Name: Common skate and Flapperskate

Scientific Species Name: *Dipturus batis* & *Dipturus intermedius*

Prepared by

Name(s): Elasmobranch TAG

Year:2024

1. Contact information

Contact details of proposed EEP Coordinator

Name: Mark de Boer

Institution: Blijdorp (Rotterdam zoo)

Email: m.de.boer@diergaardeblijdorp.nl

2. Taxonomy information

Taxonomy of the species

Taxonomy notes: Currently, this listing for *Dipturus batis* represents a species complex. A recent taxonomic review indicates that *D. batis* will soon be split into two separate species (Iglisias *et al.* 2010). (Dulvy *et al.* 2006). These species are *Dipturus batis* and *Dipturus intermedius*.

3. Identified roles

Identified role(s) description *(copy from the Species Assessment Sheet in RCP)*

Conservation roles for *ex situ* management

Direct Role(s)	Programme characteristics required	Benefit	Feasibility	Risk	Recommended?¹	Contribution?²	Notes
Population restoration	Fulfil reintroduction guidelines. Facilities to hold animals where they can be kept separate from other species. Finalise Best Practice Guidelines. Clear legislation for reintroduction.	High	Medium	Medium	Yes	Yes	Headstart programme. Not for breeding. Require colder water temperature than other rays. Feasibility project is just starting. Provide space in aquaria.
<i>Ex situ</i> research	Hatching and raising is part of research.	High	Medium/high	Medium/low	Yes	Yes	Not much data and experience to build on. Learn from other species of the genus and other ray species. Feasibility is lower because not tried before. Risk is higher due to reputational risk of CR species being taken from the wild.
Capacity building		High	High	Low	Yes	Yes	To train people. For aquaria much work done already by raising this and other ray species. Potential to educate fishermen.
Conservation education	Educational programme	High	High/medium	Low	Yes	Yes	Don't necessarily need the species in the collection.



Monitoring (<i>in situ</i> research)	Step for the future. Not yet and more role of <i>in situ</i> partners.	-	-	-	-	-	Require to track/monitor individuals after release.
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¹ Role recommended by TAG?

² Will EAZA contribute to deliver this role?

Role description for potential EEP

Direct conservation roles:

- Population restoration: To re-establish the species to part of its range from which the population has been depleted. This role is the main part of a headstart programme. It would imply providing space in aquaria to hold animals where they can be kept separate from other species. This work needs to be done in line with IUCN's reintroduction guidelines and following the relevant legislation. As a by-product of this role, Best Practice Guidelines for *Dipturus batis* will be produced.
- *Ex situ* research: This role focuses on hatching and development of hatchlings. Given the lack of data and experience, the base for this research will be from other species of the genus and other similar ray species.
- Capacity building: The knowledge gained on release methods and handling/welfare expertise should be shared with collaborative institutions and potentially to fishermen.
- Conservation Education: This role's objective will be to develop an educational programme which can contribute to increasing public awareness of the population restoration and to highlight the need to conserve *Dipturus batis* in the wild. To achieve this, it is not necessary to keep the species in the collection.
- Monitoring (*in situ*): This role focuses on monitoring *in situ* the animals after their release and coordinating those activities as well as doing the necessary networking to find collaborating partners in range countries. This is a role for a later stage and in which the *in situ* partners are expected to lead.

Decision statement: EEP

According to IUCN's red list, *Dipturus batis*, is listed as Critically Endangered (CR) with a declining population in the wild. Despite not having an *ex situ* population, the main role of this programme is to restore the population using some space in EAZA aquariums. Furthermore, other roles and activities include supporting research, education, capacity building and monitoring the restored population. Most of these roles are already ongoing as part of a headstart programme. Therefore, the TAG recommends to actively manage it as EEP, including *Dipturus batis* and *Dipturus intermedius*.



4. Programme participants and governance

EAZA institutional scope

These species are not currently kept in European aquaria. Focus programme focuses on direct conservation tasks as mentioned in the RCP.

Non-EAZA holding institutional scope

- EAZA population/community is the dominating driver of the EEP and any non-EAZA Members will occasionally join and are not integral to the structure of the EEP.*
- In addition to EAZA, there are other structural/equal drivers of the EEP (e.g., World Pheasant Association, ...). Please describe.*
- A larger initiative exists and the EAZA population is a small part of this (e.g., GSMP, ...). Please describe.*

Additional information:

Besides the EAZA, aquaria affiliated to the EUAC are important partners for this project. Furthermore, the coordinator is affiliated to the Regional Flapper Skate Working Group in the UK & Ireland.

Additional information:

Essential non-EAZA partners not holding animals

Members of the Regional Flapper Skate Working Group, Queen's Universiteit van Belfast, Orkney Skate Trust, ARK Rewilding, University of St. Andrews, Scottish Association for Marine Science

Members of the EEP core group (Species Committee + non-voting members)

To be elected

Collaboration with EAZA Working Groups and Committees

None at the moment

5. Programme characteristics



The detailed programme characteristics, goals, objectives and management strategies to fulfil the roles and goals of the EEP will be developed at a later stage as part of a Long-Term Management Plan (LTMP). The questions below are intended to help paint a rough view of what is currently intended/expected for the general EEP programme characteristics.

- *If there is a recent/active Long-term Management Plan for this species, list the demographic, genetic and other goals determined (if they still apply post RCP workshop). : **No***
- *Is this EEP intended to include rearing of wild eggs/young (i.e. head-starting)? : **YES***
- *Is this EEP intended to include ex situ breeding?: **NO***
- *Is there likely sufficient expertise for this, or a model, taxon to achieve the roles of the programme and provide conditions for good welfare?: **YES, several other ray / skate species in EAZA & EUAC aquaria***
- *Please indicate if Best Practice Guidelines already exist and if yes, include publication date. **YES, December 2021***
- *Do you anticipate, or proactively plan for, biobanking and/or assisted reproduction to be key components of this programme? **YES, if animals available***
- *Are there any other issues/plans related to in situ conservation support that you feel should be mentioned and are not evident from the role description of the EEP?: **NO***
- *Do you anticipate there to be any sizeable political, social, or public conflicts of interest related to the EEP programme and how do you plan to deal with them? **NO***



- *Any important additional programme characteristics that you would like to mention?:* **NO**

6. References (if any)

Janse, M., Baylina, N., Wille, M., Aparici Plaza, D., van der Meer, R., Hausen, N. (eds.) 2021. EAZA Elasmobranch Taxon Advisory Group Regional Collection Plan – First Edition. EAZA Executive Office: Amsterdam.