

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Vice Dean of Faculty of Sciences of the University of Lisbon, I am pleased to express our full support to the proposal led by Rui Rosa to the Animal Behaviour and Cognition Funding Opportunity by the National Geographic Society. This ambitious 4-year research project aims to evaluate the behaviour and cognition of sharks in their wild environment, with a special attention for the iconic scalloped hammerhead sharks – one of the most compelling enigmas in the evolution of vertebrate cognition. Further, focusing one of the most threatened groups of animals worldwide, it not only addresses the proximate and ultimate drivers of shark behaviour, but also how humans may be reshaping shark behavioural patterns and responses, whilst assessing how human-shark mitigation strategies may be designed considering the complex behaviour and cognitive complexity of this group. Additionally, this project will be centred in Sal Rei, Cabo Verde, where a multi-specific shark nursery was recently described by the same team, following six years of field work in partnership with Cape Verde institutions. As such, this project strongly aligns with one of key priorities of our institution, namely by fostering the scientific exchange with Portuguese-speaking African countries, promoting research and conservation in a context of sustainable socio-economic development and tackling a more sustainable world, namely contributing to the United Nations SDG 14: Life Below Water.

Lisbon, 11 april 2023

Margarida Santos-Reis, Full Professor

Vice-Dean for Research