



Over 1/3 of the world has banned shark finning New Zealand hasn't

What's the problem? Shark finning is a cruel and wasteful practice. In New Zealand, it is completely legal to kill a shark only for its fins and dump the body overboard. Recent video evidence shows some New Zealand fishers are finning sharks while they are still alive and leaving them to die a slow, painful death.

Ninety eight countries have banned shark finning. New Zealand is one of the few countries that condone this barbaric practice. Globally, there is real concern that shark finning is contributing to a serious population decline of sharks.

Internationally, over 100 million sharks are killed every year for their fins, valued at upwards of US\$1.2 billion.

- NZ is one of the top 20 exporters of shark fins to Hong Kong, alongside Spain, Taiwan, and Singapore
- NZ shark fin exports are worth ~ \$4.5million annually, NZ fishing exports are worth ~\$1.56 billion
- Over 73 of the 112 shark species in NZ waters are commercially fished
- Only 9% (11 species) are managed under the Quota Management System
- The remaining species in NZ waters are completely unprotected.

What's so special about the fins?

Some believe shark fins have special medicinal properties. Others prize fins as the main ingredient of the cultural delicacy shark fin soup. Shark fins fetch exorbitant prices overseas, up to US\$1000 per kilogram, which encourages fishers to hunt and kill sharks exclusively for fins and dump the body at sea.

But doesn't the government have rules to protect sharks?

The NZ government has fishing quotas for most commercially-fished species to prevent overfishing. But there are serious gaps in this system so that some species, including the most commonly caught shark species, are inadequately managed.

For example the most commonly caught sharks have never had a quantitative stock assessment, so it is impossible to set accurate quotas and guarantee the species' long-term survival.

- Blue, porbeagle & shortfin mako are the most common sharks finned in NZ
- All are caught predominately as by-catch in the tuna longline fisheries
- All are listed on the IUCN Red List of threatened species

What is NZ's responsibility?

NZ has an international responsibility to institute a National Plan of Action-Sharks (NPOA). The goal of the NPOA-Sharks is "to ensure the conservation and management of sharks and their long-term sustainable use".

Introduced in 2008, NZ's NPOA-Sharks is required to be reviewed every four years, with the first review occurring towards the end of this year. This is our best chance to point out the failures in the system, the inadequate observer coverage for shark fisheries, meaningless quotas and collapsing shark numbers. This is our chance to change the NPOA-Sharks so that it actually meets its goal.

What's being done in NZ to stop shark finning?

The New Zealand Shark Alliance is an umbrella group of NGOs, unified in a campaign to prohibit shark finning in NZ waters and protect our sharks.

The alliance is fighting to bring New Zealand shark legislation in line with other countries. We are insisting that all sharks be caught sustainably, killed and brought to shore with "fins naturally attached". This internationally-recommended approach will stop the wasteful practice of only catching sharks for their fins, reinforce laws against live finning and encourage long-term sustainable fishing.

What can I do?

You can help the New Zealand Shark Alliance by visiting www.nzsharkalliance.org.nz

- learn more about the issue
- sign our "Fins Naturally Attached" petition
- use our handy submission guide so when submissions open on the NPOA-sharks you can let the government know you want immediate action to save our sharks