

SHARK FINNING



Shark Finning Facts

What's shark-fin soup? - This glutinous broth is a traditional Chinese dish dating back more than 1,000 years. Once a rare delicacy consumed only by the Chinese aristocracy, it played an important role as an indicator of social standing. The fibers take on a consistency similar to noodles, but they have virtually no taste or nutritional value, so chicken stock or something similar is added to improve the flavor.

Fins from up to **73 -100 million** sharks are used in shark fin soup every year.

Shark finning takes place at sea so the fishers have only the fins to transport.

Shark meat is considered low value and therefore not worth the cost of transporting the bulky shark bodies to market.

Thirty-six percent of the world's 1,250 shark and ray species are threatened with extinction, making them among the most threatened vertebrates on the planet.

Many of these populations have declined over 90% in the past four decades alone.

Shark finning is widespread, and largely unmanaged and unmonitored.

To put the magnitude of shark finning into perspective, it is estimated that this multi-billion dollar industry has profits second only to the illegal drug trade.

The cost of a bowl of shark fin soup can reach upwards of **\$100**.

Sharks thrown back into the oceans after being finned die in agony from suffocation, blood loss or predation.

Sharks are apex predators and play a vital role in maintaining marine ecosystems. Without them, marine animals and habitats suffer.

Shark finning is unsustainable. Not only do humans decimate shark populations, but sharks have low reproductive rates, making repopulation difficult.

Many types of sharks are exploited for their fins, including endangered species such as the Scalloped Hammerhead and Great Hammerhead. Shark products can contain dangerous levels of mercury, presenting a public health risk.

Shark fin doesn't actually have any taste.

Sharks are hunted for other products such as meat, leather and health supplements in addition to their fins.

One pound of dried shark fin can retail for **\$300** or more.

Any shark is taken-regardless of age, size, or species.

Shark populations have decreased by **60 to 90 percent** in just the last **15 years** because of the shark fin trade.

Experts estimate that most shark species will disappear because of longlining within **10 years**.

Since shark populations take a considerable amount of time to recover (as sharks themselves mature within seven to 20 years), it is nearly impossible for them to bounce back as quickly as they are removed from oceans, leaving entire ecosystems at great risk.

Are there laws against shark finning?

Each country with a coastline is responsible for laws and regulations pertaining to fishing in their waters.

A number of countries have shark-finning legislation. Many stipulate that fins must arrive in a 5 per cent weight ratio of the shark carcasses onboard. Only a few countries demand that sharks arrive in port with fins attached.

According to the IUCN Shark Specialist group, the easiest way to implement a ban is to require that shark carcasses be landed with fins attached. The possession of fins alone on vessels would thus be illegal.

Shark finning violates the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Shark finning is contrary to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's International Plan for the Conservation and Management of Sharks.

The United Nations Convention on the Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) lists the whale shark, basking shark, and great white shark as species that could become threatened if trade is not controlled. To date, **169** countries have agreed to.