



National laws, multi-lateral agreements, regional and global regulations on shark protection and shark finning

As of January 2012

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations	Date	Shark Finning Regulations
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)	2004	The ICCAT finning ban requires full utilisation (defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches. Fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of the sharks onboard. Does not specify if it is whole or dressed weight.
General Fisheries Commission of the Mediterranean (GFCM)	2005	Same as ICCAT. Requires full utilisation (defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches. Fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of the sharks onboard.
Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)	2005	Same as ICCAT - full utilisation (defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches. Fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard.
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)	2005	Same as ICCAT - full utilisation (defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches. Fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard.
Southeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (SEAFO)	2006	Same as ICCAT - full utilisation (defined as retention by the fishing vessel of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts and skins, to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches. Fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard.
North Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO)	2005	Similar to ICCAT and IATTC.
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)	2008	Full utilisation (retention of all parts of the shark excepting head, guts, and skins), to the first point of landing or transshipment of retained sharks. Fins should make up no more than 5% of the weight of sharks onboard. Fins may be landed and transhipped separately.
Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)	2006	Directed fishing on shark species in the Convention Area, for purposes other than scientific research, is prohibited. Incidental catch of sharks taken in other fisheries should be released alive as far as possible.



North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)	2007	Full utilisation (all parts of the sharks except head and guts to the point of first landing) of entire shark catches required. Shark fins should not total more than 5% of the weight of sharks. Fins may be landed and transhipped separately from other shark parts.
	Date	Domestic Regulations on Shark Finning
Argentina	2009	The practice of retaining fins and discarding carcasses is banned.
Australia	Various	States and Territories govern their own waters, which extend to three nautical miles offshore. Central government regulates 'Commonwealth' (Federal) waters, from three to 200 nautical miles offshore. Most States and Territories ban finning, and some require that sharks be landed with their fins naturally attached.
Brazil	1998	Prohibits landing of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses. The total weight of fins shall not exceed 5% of the total weight of carcasses, all carcasses and fins must be unloaded and weighed and the weights reported to the authorities.
Canada	1994	Finning in Canadian waters and by any Canadian licensed vessel fishing outside Canada's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is prohibited. When landed, the fins must not weigh more than 5% of the dressed weight of the shark.
Cape Verde	2005	Shark finning is prohibited throughout the EEZ.
Chile	2011	Sharks must be landed with their fins naturally attached to their bodies.
Colombia	2007	All sharks must be landed with their fins naturally attached to their bodies.
Costa Rica	2001-2006	Regulation AJDIP/47-2001 required fins to be landed attached to shark carcasses. This was replaced by AJDIP/415-2003, permitting fins to be landed separately from carcasses, but the "fins-attached" requirement was reinstated in 2006.
Ecuador	2004	Directed fishing for sharks is banned in all Ecuadorian waters, but sharks caught in "continental" (i.e. not Galapagos) fisheries may be landed if bycaught. Sharks must be landed with fins attached in all fisheries. A previous ban on trade in shark fins was lifted in 2007.
El Salvador	2006	Shark finning is prohibited. Sharks must be landed with at least 25% of each fin still attached in the natural way. The sale or export of fins is prohibited (be they fresh, frozen or dried) without the corresponding body.
England and Wales	2009	All sharks must be landed with their fins naturally attached.
European Union	2009	Prohibits finning in EU waters and by EU vessels worldwide. Requires sharks to be landed with fins naturally attached, unless a Special Permit has been issued to allow onboard removal of fins and landing in separate ports.



Mexico	2007	Shark finning is prohibited. Shark fins must not be landed unless the bodies are on board the vessel. In 2011, Mexico banned shark fishing from May-August each year.
Namibia	2000	Namibia generally prohibits discards of harvested or bycaught marine resources. Namibia's National Shark Plan, adopted in 2003, recommends the formulation of legislation under the Marine Resources Act to prohibit finning of any shark species.
Nicaragua	2004	Prohibits vessels from having fins on board or from landing land fins that weigh more than 5% of the total weight of the sharks. Those who wish to export fins must first prove that the meat has been sold.
Oman	?	Sharks must be landed, transported, sold or disposed of whole. It is strictly forbidden to throw away any shark part or shark waste in the sea or the shores of the Sultanate of Oman. It is also prohibited to land shark fins separated from the body, unless otherwise authorized by competent authority.
Panama	2006	Shark finning is prohibited in all Panamanian waters. Industrial fishers must land sharks with fins attached naturally. Artisanal fishers may land the fins separately but the weight ratio must be no more than 5% fins to whole weight of sharks.
Seychelles	2006	Fins may not be removed onboard a vessel unless authorisation is granted. Applicants are required to produce evidence that they have the capacity to utilise all parts of the shark. Fins may not be transhipped. Fins landed separately from carcasses must weigh no more than 5% (after evisceration) or 7% (after evisceration and beheading).
South Africa	1998	Sharks caught in South African waters must be landed, transported, sold or disposed of whole (they can be headed and gutted). However, fins from sharks caught in international waters may be landed in South Africa with fins detached from carcasses.
Spain	2002	It is illegal to have shark fins onboard without the corresponding carcasses. Compliance is verified through the use of a conversion system of fins to carcass weight.
Taiwan	2012	Bans shark finning for both near- and far-seas fleets.
United States	2011	All sharks must be landed with their fins fully or partially attached in the natural way in all federal waters (with an exemption for smooth dogfish).
Bans on shark fishing		
Bahamas	2011	All commercial shark fishing, sale and trade in shark products was banned in the Bahamas in July 2011.
Congo-Brazzaville	2001	All shark fishing is prohibited in Congo-Brazzaville.
Egypt	2005	Shark fishing is prohibited throughout Egyptian Red Sea territorial waters to 12 miles from the shore as is the commercial sale of sharks.



Fiji	2011	In July 2011, Fiji announced pending legislation to ban all shark fishing and sale in shark products.
French Polynesia	2006	In 2006, French Polynesia banned shark fishing (except for mako sharks) and trade in all sharks.(again except makos).
Israel	1980	All elasmobranchs are protected in Israeli waters.
Maldives	2010	All shark fishing is prohibited in the Republic of the Maldives.
Marshall Islands	2011	All commercial shark fishing, sale of shark products, and retention of sharks caught incidentally is prohibited.
Palau	2009	All shark fishing is prohibited in Palau.
Raja Ampat, Indonesia	2010	All shark fishing is prohibited in Raja Ampat, Indonesia.
Sabah, Malaysia	2011	Shark fishing and possession and sale of sharks and fins are banned.
		Bans on the sale of shark fins and products
Bahamas	2011	All commercial shark fishing, sale and trade in shark products was banned in the Bahamas in July 2011.
Canada	2011	The cities of Brantford, Oakville, Mississauga and Toronto have banned the possession and sale of shark fins.
California, USA	2011	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins was prohibited in October 2011.
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)	2011	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins was prohibited in January 2011 (with an exception for subsistence fishing).
Egypt	2005	Shark fishing is prohibited throughout Egyptian Red Sea territorial waters to 12 miles from the shore as is the commercial sale of sharks.
Fiji	2011	In July 2011, Fiji announced pending legislation to ban all shark fishing and sale in shark products.
French Polynesia	2006	In 2006, French Polynesia banned shark fishing (except for mako sharks) and trade in all sharks.(again except makos).
Guam	2011	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins was prohibited in March 2011 (with an exception for subsistence fishing).



Hawaii, USA	2010	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins is prohibited in the state as of July 1, 2010.
Marshall Islands	2011	All commercial shark fishing, sale of shark products, and retention of sharks caught incidentally is prohibited
Oregon, USA	2011	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins was prohibited (with an exception for dogfish)
Sabah, Malaysia	2011	Shark fishing and possession and sale of sharks and fins are banned.
Washington, USA	2011	Possession, sale and trade of shark fins was prohibited in May 2011.
Multi-lateral agreements	Date	Recommendations/Resolutions on shark finning
United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	1999	The International Plan of Action for sharks calls on all States to minimise waste and discards, such as through requiring the retention of sharks from which fins are removed.
United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)	2007	Calls on all States to consider requiring sharks to be landed with their fins naturally attached.
IUCN - World Conservation Union	2008	Calls on States with fisheries that capture sharks, whether in directed fishery activities or as accidental by-catch of other fisheries, to require at the point of first landing that sharks be landed only if their fins are naturally attached to their bodies, though allowing for partial detachment of fins to permit efficient storage and species identification.
United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement	2010	Calls on all States to consider requiring sharks to be landed with their fins naturally attached.