Like many animals before them, sharks have become prey to human indulgence. Today, sharks are among the ocean's most threatened species.

Similar to killing elephants for their valuable tusks, sharks are now often hunted for a very specific part of their bodies – their fins.

Fetching up to 500 Euros a kilo when dried, shark fins are rich pickings for fishermen. Most shark fins end up in Asia where shark fin soup is a traditional delicacy and status symbol.

With shark fins fetching such a high price, and with the rest of the shark being so much less valuable, many fishermen have taken to ‘finning’ the sharks they catch to save room on their boats for the bodies of more commercially important fish.

Closing the loopholes on shark finning

The Shark Alliance is a global, not-for-profit coalition of non-governmental organizations dedicated to enticing and conserving shark populations by improving shark conservation policies.

Globally Threatened sharks on the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) Red List

CR – Critically Endangered: Species considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild

EN – Endangered: Species considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild

VU – Vulnerable: Species considered to be facing a high risk of extinction

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important in fin trade

www.sharkalliance.org
Portugal grant them, but they do so for most of their shark fishermen. The United Kingdom recently stopped issuing these permits. Currently, only Spain and Germany and the United Kingdom are authorized to 'process' sharks, and thereby remove fins, on-board vessels. Germany and the United Kingdom are authorized to allow sharks to be landed on-board vessels for the purpose of removing shark fins, and thereby remove fins, on-board vessels. Germany and the United Kingdom are authorized to provide fishermen with special permits to remove shark fins at sea, which is known as finning. Germany and the United Kingdom are authorized to provide fishermen with special permits to remove shark fins at sea, which is known as finning.

Although the EU finning regulation prohibits the removal of shark fins at sea, it is perfectly legal for EU vessels to land shark fins and shark carcasses simultaneous. This loophole in the EU finning regulation has been used by some EU fishermen to circumvent the ban on finning at sea. This loophole has been widely criticized by shark conservationists and international bodies, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which is charged with assessing the conservation status of the world’s species.

The EU finning regulation prohibits the removal of shark fins at sea, but allows for the removal of shark fins on-board vessels. This loophole has been extensively used by some EU fishermen to circumvent the ban on finning at sea. This loophole has been widely criticized by shark conservationists and international bodies, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which is charged with assessing the conservation status of the world’s species.

Finning is the wasteful practice of slicing off the valuable fin from the shark and throwing the carcass back into the ocean. This is usually illegal to fish for shark, finning has been banned by many countries around the world and in most international waters.

The European Union (EU) finning regulation is one of the weakest in the world and yet is modeled by other countries and international bodies. Given the EU’s influence on global fisheries and the fact that European fishermen are responsible for roughly a third of the Asian fin trade, the lenient EU finning ban may influence on global fishing policy and the fact that European fishermen are responsible for roughly a third of the Asian fin trade.

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