

Shark Research Institute Newsletter



Shark Research Institute Global Headquarters

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Full Protection for White Sharks in New Zealand



On 30 November 2006, the New Zealand Government issued the following news release:

White pointer sharks will now be fully protected within the 200 nautical miles of New Zealand and from fishing by New Zealand-flagged boats, further a field, in a change in legislation announced by the Ministers of Conservation and Fisheries today.

The species, also known as the great white shark, will be protected under The Wildlife Act meaning it will be illegal to hunt, kill or harm a white pointer shark within New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ - 200 nautical mile limit around NZ). It will also be illegal in New Zealand to possess or trade in any part of a white pointer shark.

New Zealand is a signatory to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and has an obligation to prohibit the taking of white pointer sharks.

Conservation Minister Chris Carter said despite the white pointer's reputation as an apex predator, it was vulnerable to fishing and becoming rarer throughout the world.

"These majestic animals occur naturally in low numbers and, without protection, could be pushed to the brink of extinction. The Wildlife Act provides a strong deterrent against targeting great whites

with a \$250,000 fine and up to six months imprisonment as a maximum penalty."

The species will be further protected on the high seas (outside the EEZ) under the Fisheries Act where New Zealand-flagged boats will be prohibited from taking white pointer sharks while fishing outside the EEZ.

However, provisions will be created to permit the continued use of shark nets to protect swimmers around beaches in Dunedin, and fishers accidentally catching and killing white pointers will not be prosecuted provided they register the death with authorities.

Fisheries Minister Jim Anderton said the white pointer shark was not known to be targeted by commercial fishing but was occasionally taken, unintentionally, as by-catch.

Mr. Anderton also said they were sometimes targeted by recreational fishers and there was some demand for jaws and teeth as fishing trophies. Others were unintentionally caught in set nets.

"No one wants to see an animal hunted to extinction for the sake of a jaw or a few teeth or to be placed under pressure by accidental catch.

Under these new regulations no fisher will be able to profit from taking a white pointer, and any fisher inadvertently catching one will have to return it to the sea, intact, and alive, if possible," Mr. Anderton said.

The protection comes into effect in April 2007.

Update on Alibaba.com

Alibaba.com, the largest online marketplace in China, has made a decision to continue facilitating the shark fin trade. Of interest, Jack Ma, CEO of Alibaba.com, has been promoting himself as a conservationist on CNN, and Alibaba.com is now seeking customers in the USA. In November, Alibaba hosted an event in Philadelphia and more are scheduled throughout the USA.

continued on page 2

Alibaba update, continued...

Expect to see much more about Alibaba.com as this campaign heats up in the coming months. This fight has only just begun.

Organizations around the world are getting involved; it has become a real team effort.

Can you or your company help by donating your skills, services or support? Do you work in marketing or sponsorship, do you have good images of sharks, are you a printer, do you know a celebrity that could act as a spokesperson for sharks, can you or your company donate items that we can auction to raise funds, is Bill Gates or Steve Jobs your best pal? You get the idea.

Petitions will also help too. You can download a Stop Finning sheets on our website at:

www.sharks.org/pdfs/nonfinning-4topage.pdf

Please sign and mail them directly to:

Jack Ma, CEO
Alibaba International Headquarters
Room 2403-05 Jubilee Centre
18 Fenwick Street
Wanchai, Hong Kong

You can also download a petition at:

www.sharkproject.org/downlods/Unterschriften_alibaba.pdf?cPath=14%0F%22ucts_id=66

Taiwan to end its Whale Shark Fishery...

Taiwan's Vice-Chairman of the Council of Agriculture has proposed the 2007 quota of 30 whale sharks be the last quota and the fishery to close afterwards.

While pleased with the announcement, LCA / Co-Habitat have asked that during 2007 the whale sharks be tagged, not killed. They plan to ask the government to provide \$500,000 to the fishers to tag the sharks instead of slaughtering them. They hope the government will view the project as a win-win situation: the fishers will still get their money next year, Taiwan will gain enormous prestige among environmental organizations worldwide, and the scientific community will obtain data from 30 tagged sharks.

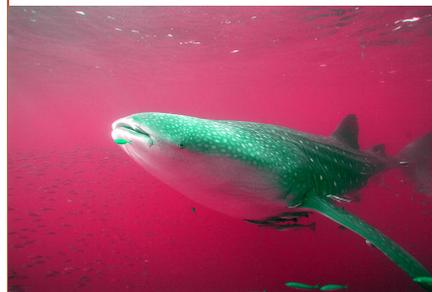
It is hoped that the Taiwanese government will accept the LCA / Co-Habitat proposal.

LCA / Co-Habitat asks all who support their proposal to please email Vice-Chairman Lee, chyuan@mail.coa.gov.tw; and Minister Su Jia Chuan, mio1129@mail.coa.gov.tw.

Jambo! (Greetings) from Tanzania



Matt Potenski, SRI researcher onboard the oceanographic vessel *Kairo* out of Dar-Es-Salaam, reports that he was in Tanzania for almost a month before his research permit was issued, but he has certainly made up for lost time. "I just tagged 11 whale sharks in 2½ days at Mafia Island. WWF generously gave us a grant (\$25,000) for six more satellite tags, which we will be deploying in February. In the next two months, I will place more ID tags and the satellite tags on the whale sharks. I have also been taking a lot of photographs. Here are some of my images...."



Note: There are still a few spaces available onboard the *Kairo*. If you'd like to join Matt, contact SRI HQ asap.

2007 Shark Calendar

SRI Member Kathy Jobin has produced a 2007 calendar featuring her superb photographs of sharks. The calendars are \$14 each, including shipping, and measure 8.5" x 11". To order a calendar, contact Kathy at 276-944-4697 or 276-676-6933.



Remember Blue Water White Death?

It was among the first films made of the "Great White" in action. It was done many years ago by Peter Gimbel and *Stan Waterman, President of SRI*. A special edition will be featured in *Beneath The Sea's Legends of the Sea 2007*.

Beneath The Sea, the largest dive expo in North America will be held March 23-25 at the Meadowlands, Secaucus, New Jersey. In addition to hundreds of exhibitors, workshops, seminars, the Fish & Famous Dinner, the Film Festival – with Stan as MC, many dive celebrities, including Rodney Fox, will be in attendance.

Come "Meet the Pres" and visit with SRI staff at Booth #208. For more information and to purchase tickets follow this link, www.beneaththesea.org BTS is the 2007 event no diver should miss!

News from Sharm

One person CAN make a difference! The Little Buddha, a popular sushi bar restaurant in the Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sheikh placed shark fin soup on its menu earlier this month. But when James Tunney, spokesman for Sharm El Sheikh-based Red Sea Diving College brought the oversight to the attention of the restaurant, the dish was immediately removed from the menu. "The Little Buddha's quick response shows an understanding of the local dive community's feelings," said Tunney.

The worldwide demand for shark fin soup is thought to be responsible for the death of tens of millions of sharks each year. According to a recent report by IUCN (The World Conservation Union), the trade in shark fins seriously threatens 65 of the 373 known species of sharks.

Board seeking additional Trustees

SRI's Board of Trustees is seeking additional members. SRI members, sponsors or individuals that are interested in applying for a seat on the Board should send an email to marie@sharks.org.

Criteria for a potential Trustee: 1) Actively support and promote the mission of SRI; 2) Have the ability to obtain sizeable annual grants or corporate donations, or make a significant personal financial commitment; 3) Be available to attend (either in-person or by conference call) at least one Board of Trustees meeting each year.

News from Costa Rica

At the recent conference in Costa Rica, organized by the Humane Society, representatives from Ecuador, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico and Columbia were in attendance. During the conference, a coalition was created to stop shark finning -- *Coalicion Por Los Tiburones* – which will work with governments in the South / Central America region. It is hoped that this effort will expand to the Caribbean.

...*Steve Fox, Deep Blue, Utila*

Experience the World... Your Way: At the Adventures in Travel Expo

The Adventures in Travel Expos are unique events, offering scuba pools, climbing walls, cultural performances and more. Check out The Gear of the Year

Gallery, meet National Geographic editors and photographers, and SRI staff, If you are interested in eco, active, responsible, adventure, culture or heritage travel, this is the place to be.

For more information, go to:

www.adventureexpo.com/sr1

January 13-14, 2007 - Come to New York, Pier 94, 775 12th Avenue at 55th Street & visit us in Booth #2095

March 3-4, 2007 - Washington Convention Center, 801 Mount Vernon Place NW & we will be in Booth #650



December 2006 LaPaz Expedition

It was **whale sharks, whale sharks and more whale sharks!** The SRI expedition to LaPaz December 16-23, encountered dozens of the giants -- including 20 whale sharks on 20th!

Dr. Alex Antoniou, expedition leader, says he will be working same place, same time next year! He sends his sincere thanks to the divers who participated in the research expedition: Ruth and Max Lowther, Beverly Rogers and Ryan Jones, Rene Rogers and Michael Wham, Raina and Basum Attum, Courtney Graham, Dorothy Wheatley, Marla Downer and UK divers Rachel Ball, Janina Henly, Winter Dotto and Sarah Drake. What a fantastic team of divers!

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