

January 22, 2002

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment for a Rule to Implement the Shark Finning Prohibition Act

LOCATION: Seaward of the inner boundary of U.S. exclusive economic zone in which U.S. fishers may operate in a manner that takes sharks which could be finned in the absence of this action.

SUMMARY: This action implements the prohibitions of the Shark Finning Prohibition Act. Specifically, this rule would establish that a person under U.S. jurisdiction (a) may not engage in shark finning at sea; (b) may not possess on a fishing vessel shark fins without the corresponding carcasses; and (c) may not land shark fins without corresponding carcasses. Also, foreign fishing vessels may not land shark fins without corresponding carcasses into a U.S. port. Administrative elements are included, such as making records available for inspection and copying. The rule does not apply to activities by persons fishing in state waters under authority of a state.

RESPONSIBLE Svein Fougner
OFFICIAL: Assistant Regional Administrator
 for Sustainable Fisheries
 National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
 501 West Ocean Blvd. Suite 4200
 Long Beach, CA 90802-4213
 Phone: 562-980-4030

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact, including the revised environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information. Also, please send one copy of your comments to my staff in Room 6117, NOAA/SP, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230.

Sincerely,

//s// Margaret R. McCalla for
Scott B. Gudes
Deputy Under Secretary

Enclosure