

**NMFS ANNOUNCES  
FINAL RULE  
TO IMPLEMENT THE  
SHARK FINNING PROHIBITION ACT**

On December 21, 2000, the Shark Finning Prohibition Act (Act) was signed into law (Public Law 106-557). Shark finning is the practice of removing the fin or fins from a shark and discarding the remainder of the shark at sea. Among other things, the Act amended the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit any person under U.S. jurisdiction from (i) engaging in the finning of sharks; (ii) possessing shark fins aboard a fishing vessel without the corresponding carcass; and (iii) landing shark fins without the corresponding carcass. The Act also required the National Marine Fisheries Service to issue regulations to implement the Act.

The final rule, published on February 11, 2002, prohibits any person on a vessel under U.S. jurisdiction from engaging in shark finning, possessing shark fins on board a U.S. fishing vessel without corresponding shark carcasses, or landing shark fins without corresponding carcasses. The final rule also prohibits foreign fishing vessels from engaging in shark finning in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ), from landing shark fins without the corresponding carcass into a U.S. port, and from transshipping shark fins in the U.S. EEZ. The final rule establishes a rebuttable presumption that any shark fins possessed on board a U.S. fishing vessel, or landed from any fishing vessel, were taken, held, or landed in violation of these regulations if the total wet weight of the shark fins exceeds 5 percent of the total dressed weight of shark carcasses landed or found on board the vessel.

The final rule does not modify the shark finning regulations already in place in the Atlantic Ocean for Federal fishery management plans.

This FAX notice is a courtesy to Atlantic Shark Fisheries interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. Copies of the final rule and related documents may be obtained from the Southwest Region. For further information contact:

Southwest Region: Svein Fougner, Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries,  
Southwest Region, NMFS, at 562-980-4040; fax 562-980-4047;

Pacific Islands: Charles Karnella, Administrator, Pacific Island Area Office, NMFS, at 808-973-2935;  
or,

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species: Karyl Brewster-Geisz, NMFS headquarters, at 301-713-2347.

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2/11/2002  
Date