



# Our Pacific, Our Sharks, Our Responsibility

Over 100 million sharks are caught annually, mainly for their fins which are highly valued in Asian markets. As predators at the top of the food chain, sharks are important in Pacific island ecosystems and also in the cultures and traditions of the Pacific people. They are depicted in our stories, legends, songs and artefacts.

Many species of sharks are long-lived, slow to breed and produce only a few offspring every 1–2 years. With increasing fishing pressure, several shark species that have been assessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have been categorised as threatened or near threatened with extinction. They have also been listed on international agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) which calls for Parties to have conservation measures in place to ensure the survival of these species.

## Did you know?

- Over 20 million blue sharks are taken out of our ocean every year. Blue sharks are also the dominant species in the global shark fin trade in Hong Kong.
- The Pacific islands region leads the world in the establishment of large sanctuaries for sharks. The Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Samoa have all declared their Exclusive Economic Zones as shark sanctuaries, covering almost 20 million square kilometres of the ocean
- A live shark is worth more to Pacific islanders alive than dead. In Palau one live reef shark brings in US 1.9 million over its lifetime to Palau's economy through ecotourism, and in Fiji shark and ray ecotourism brings in US 42 million annually.

## What can be done to protect sharks?

- Drastically reduce the removal of sharks from our oceans and protect the most depleted species
- Establish more shark sanctuaries which protect many shark species and critically important habitats
- Encourage best practices and mitigation measures with the specific objective of reducing fishing mortalities on sharks.

## Our Pacific, Our Sharks, Our Responsibility

Have the Pacific conversation today with your friends and let's work together to protect our sharks, our ecosystems and our Pacific.

#SaveOurOcean

#4Paclands



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*A resilient Pacific environment sustaining  
 our livelihoods and natural heritage in  
 harmony with our cultures.*