

List of endangered sharks where a target or bycatch fishery exists or collapsed in Europe

Critically Endangered:

Mediterranean

Blue shark

Shortfin mako

Gulper sharks

Northeast Atlantic

Porbeagle shark

Spiny dogfish

Tope shark

Common skate

Endangered:

Mediterranean

Common thresher shark

Pelagic thresher shark

Portuguese dogfish

Longnose spurdog

Little gulper shark

Small-spotted catshark

Northeast Atlantic

Blue shark

Porbeagle

Shortfin mako

Gulper sharks

The problem of loose shark fins

Did you know that oceanic shark species have declined by more than 70% over the last 50 years? [1] This makes sharks globally the second most threatened vertebrates.

Especially around Europe, shark fisheries have led to rapid declines of the target species. This is because traditional fisheries models do not work for sharks, as their reproduction rate compares much more to mammals than to other fish species.



Blue Shark

Effective replacements [2]

4–10 adult sharks per lifetime

Lifespan: ~20 years

Reproduction frequency: 25 – 50 pups every 2–3 years

Survival to adulthood: ~1%

African Elephant

Effective replacements [3]

3–8 per lifetime

Lifespan: 60–70 years

Reproduction frequency: One calf every 4–6 years

Calf survival rate: ~70–80%

Fin laundering

Besides shark fishing being unsustainable, a PEW study has shown that catch composition of European longliners do contain CITES protected species such as the oceanic whitetip, silky, thresher, hammerhead, and porbeagle sharks [4].

Once the fins are removed from the bodies, it becomes nearly impossible to distinguish them without expensive and time intensive DNA sequencing. Therefore, CITES-listed sharks remain among the top species in the contemporary fin trade [5]

Sources: 1. Pacoureau et al., 2021 2. Vignaud et al., 2013; Corrigan et al., 2018 3. Heller et al., 2010, Archie et al., 2014, 4. PEW 2014, 5. Cardeñosa et al. 2018

The full details of the sources can be found on www.stop-finning-eu.org