

To the Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Department of House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir

Your View on the Mako Shark is poorly and inadequately informed, as is the National Impact Assessment which in our opinion is also wrong (in terms of consultation, economic and social impact etc)

Consultation has not been undertaken, nor has it included recreational fisherman or their representative Groups or tackle industry members. In fact recreational fisherman are only finding out about this proposal now.

We currently have, from our own small coastal township over 200 signatures against this proposal and I believe nationwide the numbers are in their thousands

No one has undertaken a comprehensive economic impact statement to understand what affect this will have on local coastal economies nor have they looked at the affect on recreational fishing as a whole. Most recreational Fisherman will tell you that Mako populations in Australian waters are quite solid

Because the Northern hemisphere has basically wiped out their shark populations Australian recreational fisherman should not be penalised Without Consultation of Stakeholders or relevant assessments being undertaken in our region, the Federal Labor Government has, under the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts 'Mr. Peter Garrett' determined that as of the 29th of January 2010, and he will include the three shark species in the list of migratory species under the EPBC Act. These sharks being the: Porbeagle, Shortfin Mako & Longfin Mako In affect banning the catching or taking of any of the above species in Australian Commonwealth waters.

This wipes out the entire summer gamefishing for Makos along the entire Victoria Coast and with it millions of dollars in revenue for local communities.

Fishing in Victoria is worth \$2.3 Billion a year to the Victorian economy. Summer Gamefishing along the coast is estimated at least 10% of this turnover, Mr Garrett's department has in affect just wiped out \$230 million dollars of revenue from the Victorian economy (accommodation, meals, drinks, fuel, bait, tackle etc)

Why have the three shark species been listed as migratory?

In December 2008, at the 9th Conference of Parties to the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) mainly European Countries voted for the listing under Article II of the Convention which means that the listed species require management to be put in place to conserve the stocks.

This whole situation seems to be the result of insufficient thought being given to the rulings that have been put in place, Mako's which are now listed in the Atlantic and Mediterranean as threatened, were until now, not listed in Australia or the Eastern Pacific, because it was considered our shark populations were stable.

What's changed?

There is no evidence that the population in the Atlantic is connected with the Mako population around Australia. In fact if anything it is clearly the opposite.

What other ramifications are there for other species that will follow the Makos.?"

Blue fin Tuna, Mulloway, who knows maybe even Flathead?

Peak Fishing bodies as well as members of the general fishing public are up in arms over this whole affair with Local government bodies and politicians of all persuasions indicating their lack of support for these bans.

Research on this topic already done On December 11, 2009; by Dr Julian Pepperell a respected fisheries scientist said any Australian ban was "mystifying - there is no biological sense to it.

There is no evidence of any connection between the populations of Makos in the Mediterranean and the short finned Makos off the Australian coast." Makos just don't move between Australia and the Mediterranean. Banning fishing here will do absolutely nothing to help the Makos there.

A Satellite tagging project is currently being supported by SARDI Aquatic Sciences, Flinders University of South Australia, Marine Innovations South Australia, and the Department for Environment and Heritage. This project investigates the movement and migration paths of Mako sharks in Australian waters.

It is interesting to note that the data collected to date shows that short fin Mako sharks are not inter-hemisphere migratory.

Garretts own department is well aware of this'

Tag results strongly support the idea of quite separate populations.

Indications are the Mako Population in Australian waters is still high in numbers.

So why, declare it as a migratory species, when studies to date, indicate the opposite???

Who are signatories to this convention?

There are 41 European Countries 39 African Countries 12 South Central American countries

14 Central Asian Countries, besides 6 Oceanic Countries including Australia

United States, Russia, China, nor any Southeast Asian Countries are signatories to this convention.

Here in Australia it appears we are being dictated to by overseas interests which have already destroyed their own shark fisheries and are now asking us to sacrifice ours, when none of the Major countries that take and eat the sharks (mainly fins) are even bound by this agreement.

As per the below table, Indonesia are one of the major takers of sharks globally.

They will not reduce their global take therefore whatever we do will have little or no effect on shark populations globally.

Major shark catching countries and territories

1990-2004		2004	
Rank and country/territory	% global catch	Rank and country/territory	Catch ('000 t) (% global catch)
1. Indonesia	12.3	1. Indonesia	122 (15.0)
2. India	9.1	2. India	61 (7.6)
3. Taiwan	6.3	3. Spain	51 (6.3)
4. Pakistan	5.8	4. Taiwan	44 (5.4)
5. Spain	5.7	5. Mexico	32 (4.0)
6. Mexico	4.8	6. Argentina	32 (4.0)
7. USA	4.6	7. USA	31 (3.8)
8. Japan	3.9	8. Thailand	28 (3.5)
9. Argentina	3.3	9. Pakistan	27 (3.4)
10. Sri Lanka	3.1	10. Japan	27 (3.4)
11. France	2.9	11. Malaysia	25 (3.1)
12. Malaysia	2.9	12. France	22 (2.7)
13. UK	2.5	13. Brazil	20 (2.5)
14. Brazil	2.4	14. Sri Lanka	20 (2.4)
15. Thailand	2.3	15. Iran, Islamic Rep. of	18 (2.3)
16. Portugal	2.1	16. New Zealand	17 (2.1)
17. New Zealand	2.0	17. UK	16 (2.0)
18. Korea, Rep. of	1.9	18. Nigeria	14 (1.7)
19. Nigeria	1.4	19. Portugal	13 (1.6)
20. Peru	1.3	20. Yemen	13 (1.6)

Is MR Garrett going to implement bans against Indonesia who are one of the worst offenders for the slaughter of sharks of all Species ?

I Think not.

We would also like a explanation from Mr Garrett and his department as to why,

An extreme green group gets a seat at a key marine meeting when the fishing industry misses out.

The extreme environmental group Humane Society International (HSI), had a key seat at the table when an international decision was made to stop Australian fishers from fishing for mako sharks.

Representatives of the recreational fishing industry were not invited nor adequately consulted about what could occur at the conference – the

decisions of which will have a major financial impact on the industry. Neither were representatives from the Australian Fisheries Management Authority on the official list.

The fringe group above, attended the Rome conference of the Convention on Migratory Species, along with 3 other Australian Government delegates from the Environment Department.

HSI's Australian Program Manager, Ms Danielle Annese-Arenas, is listed as an official participant of Australian delegation at the December 2008 conference.

Even the Federal Coalition spokesman for Fisheries, Senator Richard Colbeck said it was unclear whether HSI was given financial or other kinds of support to attend the conference in Rome.

"It seems the extreme HSI were in a position to be a key influence on international talks which are having major impact on recreational fishing.

"Of course, HSI were greatly opposed to the fishing of any shark species – even without any scientific evidence of overfishing in Australian waters."

We need an explanation what role HSI played as an official participant within the Australian delegation.

"Was any support provided to HSI by the Federal Government to attend the Rome conference? What level of cooperation occurred between the Government and HSI to allow the extreme green group to influence the conference?"

"And, critically, why weren't any fishing groups given a seat at the table?"

"Following this conference, Minister Garrett has proposed to ban the fishing of mako and porbeagle sharks – a plan which will come into place on January.

"Minister Garrett must postpone his ban plan and come to understand the major impact his proposal, no doubt influenced by the fringe HSI, will have upon coastal communities and businesses.

"He must immediately announce the postponement of his ban and begin a genuine consultation process prior to any decision being made."

I am more than happy to provide evidence of the impact this will have in our region or better yet I am happy to present evidence in person if your joint standing subcommittee is prepared to come to our region to listen to our concerns

Regards
Garry Kerr

A concerned recreational fisherman and tackle store owner