



Learning Activities

Protecting Sharks



We have overfished the ocean to the extent that over 90% of global fisheries have now been exploited or overexploited and 90% of the predatory fish species, including sharks, are gone.

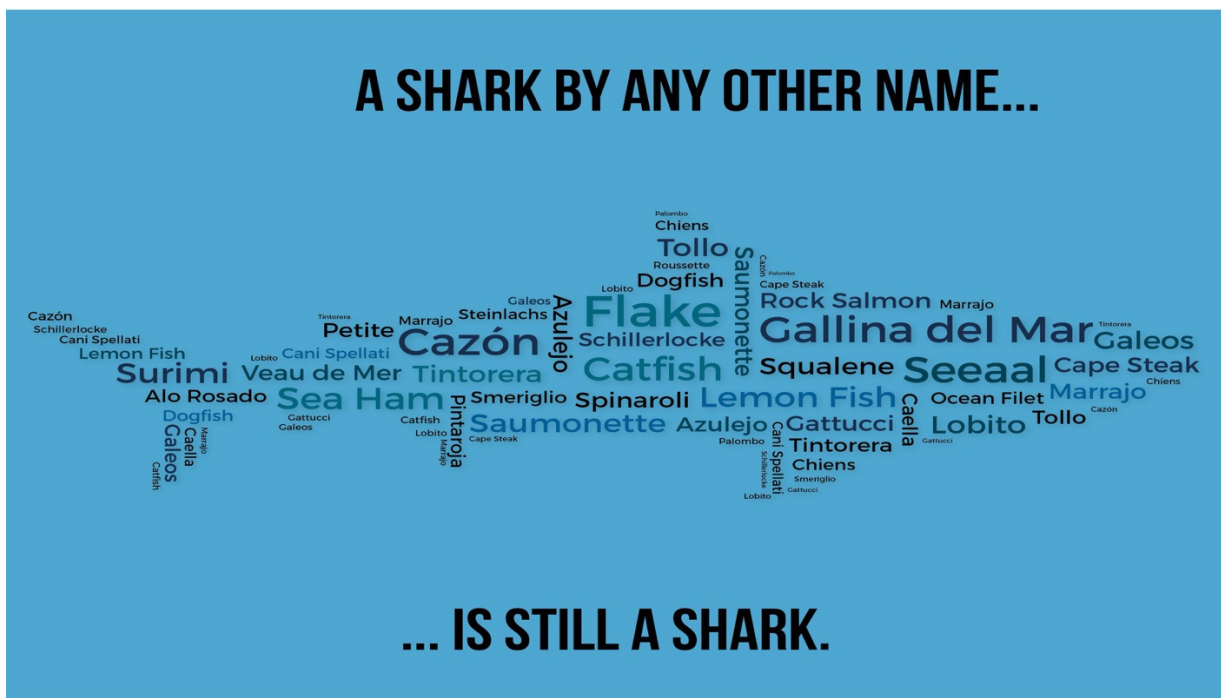
Many shark species are now endangered. Of the over 400 shark species 143 are classified as endangered. Shark species under threat include the Oceanic Whitetip, Scalloped Hammerhead, Silky, Shortfin Mako and Angel shark.

Sharks are killed for a number of reasons, including for their meat and fins and to extract oil from the liver. Fins are used for traditional medicine and shark fin soup. Shark liver oil (squalene) is used in herbal medicines but also in make-up – foundation, lipsticks, eye makeup, moisturisers and sunscreens.

Here are some activities you can do to help better understand why sharks are endangered:

1. Research a species of shark, see what their status is on the [IUCN RedList](#). Investigate where they can be found and why they are becoming endangered.
2. Investigate whether your country allows shark finning, shark products to be imported, or if there are laws in place banning shark finning/products?
3. Research what products sharks are used for in your country? What products can you find being sold that contain shark liver oil? Do you use any in your household?
4. Shark meat is known by many names around the world, why do you think this is? What name is used for shark meat in your country?

This image shows some of the names used around the world:





Creating solutions

Want to do more? Over 100 million sharks are killed each year, mostly for fins and shark liver oil, but many are simply by-catch of the commercial fishing industry.

If you want to do more to help sharks:

- Research why so many are killed each year, what are the other reasons they are killed?
Note: Our lessons on Sharks will provide you some insight into why this is, visit [LessonUp](#).
- Identify why sharks are treated with such little respect? Why are people scared of them?
- Investigate why sharks are so important to the ocean ecosystem and what will happen if they disappear?
- Can you think of ways that the number of sharks being killed each year could be reduced? What action could you take to help protect sharks?

Advocating for change

You can help sharks and the ocean by becoming an advocate for change, simply by creating your own awareness campaign:

- Select the issue you want to focus on – for example shark finning in your country, or the use of shark liver oil in products.
- Research the issue fully – why it is happening, who is producing the product, where it is sold, what alternatives could be used, what action has already been taken and why it may not be effective.
- Select a call to action, your key message, why people should care about the issue and what they can do to help protect sharks.
- Create your campaign – think about how you will convey your message and who your audience will be. You can share messages with friends, on social media, write a news story and ask your local newspaper to consider publishing it. Create information sheets asking local stores or companies to make changes to their products or create a petition to have the government make legislative changes.