

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

FINAL
A5-0043/2003

20 February 2003

REPORT

on the proposal for a Council regulation on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels
(COM(2002) 449 – C5-0411/2002 – 2002/0198(CNS))

Committee on Fisheries

Rapporteur: Elspeth Attwooll

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
majority of the votes cast
- **I Cooperation procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- **II Cooperation procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- *** Assent procedure
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases
covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and
Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- ***I Codecision procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- ***II Codecision procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- ***III Codecision procedure (third reading)
majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission)

Amendments to a legislative text

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 4 September 2002 the Council consulted Parliament, pursuant to Article 37 of the EC Treaty on the proposal for a Council regulation on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels (COM(2002) 449 – - 2002/0198(CNS)).

At the sitting of 23 September 2002 the President of Parliament announced that he had referred this proposal to the Committee on Fisheries as the committee responsible and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy for its opinion (C5-0411/2002).

The Committee on Fisheries appointed Elspeth Attwooll rapporteur at its meeting of 30 September 2002.

It considered the Commission proposal and the draft report at its meetings of , 11 November, 10 December 2002 and 20 February 2003.

At the last meeting it adopted the draft legislative resolution by 15 votes to 0, with 1 abstention.

The following were present for the vote: Struan Stevenson, chairman; Brigitte Langenhagen and Rosa Miguélez Ramos, vice-chairmen; Elspeth Attwooll, rapporteur; Arlindo Cunha, Ian Stewart Hudghton, Salvador Jové Peres, Heinz Kindermann, Ioannis Marinos, John Joseph McCartin (for Giorgio Lisi), Patricia McKenna, James Nicholson (for Hugues Martin), Manuel Pérez Álvarez, Fernando Pérez Royo (for Carlos Lage), Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna and Herman Vermeer.

The opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy is attached.

The report was tabled on 20 February 2003.

DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the proposal for a Council regulation on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels (COM(2002) 449 – C5-0411/2002 – 2002/0198(CNS))

(Consultation procedure)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the Council (COM(2002) 449¹),
 - having regard to Article 37 of the EC Treaty, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C5-0411/2002),
 - having regard to Rule 67 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries and the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy (A5-0043/2003),
1. Approves the Commission proposal as amended;
 2. Calls on the Commission to alter its proposal accordingly, pursuant to Article 250(2) of the EC Treaty;
 3. Calls on the Council to notify Parliament should it intend to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 4. Asks the Council to consult Parliament again if it intends to amend the Commission proposal substantially;
 5. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission.

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1
Consideration 4 (new)

Having regard to Paragraph 41 of the European Parliament resolution on the Commission Green Paper on the future of the common fisheries policy dated 17 January 2002

¹ OJ C 331E, 31.12.2002, p. 121.

Justification

Paragraph 41 of this Resolution requested, in particular, that the Commission and Member States prohibit the practice of shark 'finning' and the carriage of shark fins in EU waters and by all EU registered vessels worldwide, ensure that sharks are landed whole and encourage the full utilisation of their bodies, minimise shark bycatch, identify and protect vulnerable shark stocks, ensure that all shark fisheries are sustainably managed and collect and provide relevant catch, landings, trade and biological data, by species where possible;

Amendment 2
Recital 1 (a) (new)

(1a) *Sharks are important components of healthy marine ecosystems.*

Justification

Self-explanatory

Amendment 3
Recital 2

(2) Fish belonging to the taxon *Elasmobranchii*, which includes sharks, skates, rays and similar species are generally very vulnerable to exploitation due to their life-cycle characteristics. ***Most of these species are often caught as by-catch in Community fishing activities directed to other more valuable species.***

(2) Fish belonging to the taxon *Elasmobranchii*, which includes sharks, skates, rays and similar species are generally very vulnerable to exploitation due to their life-cycle characteristics.

Or. es

Justification

The actual situation today is not the same as that described in the deleted text, thanks to the technological progress made by the Community fleet since the 1980s.

Amendment 4
Recital 5

The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, **may** contribute to the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many stocks of sharks are depleted, and their future sustainability **may be** endangered.

The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, **often still alive**, contributes to the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many stocks of sharks are depleted, and their future sustainability **is** endangered.

Justification

It is necessary to highlight the fact that sharks are often not dead when their fins are removed on board. Shark fisheries are often unsustainable because of the low reproductive capacity of these species, close stock-recruitment relationship and long recovery time after depletion. There are several examples of shark species that have become unsustainable after a short period of high landings.

Amendment 5
Recital 5

(5) The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, **may contribute to** the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many stocks **of sharks** are depleted, and **their future sustainability may be endangered**.

(5) The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, **results in** the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many **shark** stocks are depleted, and **fished unsustainably**.

Justification

This is a practical problem because many Elasmobranch species (sharks and rays) have extremely low reproductive rates and late sexual maturity, leaving them unable to recover from targeted over-fishing and incidental by-catch mortality

Amendment 6
Recital 6

(6) Measures to restrict or prevent the further development of the practice of shark finning are urgently required, and the removal of shark fins on board vessels should therefore be prohibited. In view of the practical difficulties involved in the identification of species based on removed fins, this prohibition should apply to all ***Elasmobranchs, except for the removal of ray wings.***

(6) Measures to restrict or prevent the further development of the practice of shark finning are urgently required, and the removal of shark fins on board vessels should therefore be prohibited. In view of the practical difficulties involved in the identification of species based on removed fins, this prohibition should apply to all ***shark species.***

Or. es

Justification

This change simplifies the text and makes it more precise.

Amendment 7
Recital 9

The problems resulting from the practice of shark finning extend well beyond Community waters. It is appropriate that the Community shows equal commitment towards stock conservation in all maritime waters. This Regulation should therefore be applicable to all Community vessels.

The problems resulting from the practice of shark finning extend well beyond Community waters. It is appropriate that the Community shows equal commitment towards stock conservation in all maritime waters. This Regulation should therefore be applicable to all Community vessels ***and, within the framework of the***

Regional Fisheries Organisations in which the Community participates, the Community's representatives should encourage the wider application of the substance of this Regulation to those third countries that have not already taken similar measures.

Justification

The world wide sustainability of shark stocks depends on the widespread application of these, or similar, measures across the globe.

Amendment 8
Article 1 (2) (a) (new)

(2a) and shall be incorporated into fishing agreements between EU Member States and countries outside the EU.

Justification

Self explanatory.

Amendment 9
Article 2, point 2

2. 'shark' means any fish of the taxon *Elasmobranchi*;

2. "shark" means any fish of the taxon *shark species*;

Or. es

Justification

This change simplifies the text and makes it more precise.

Amendment 10
Article 3, paragraph 1

1. It shall be prohibited to remove shark fins on board vessels, or to retain on board, tranship or land shark fins.

1. It shall be prohibited to remove shark fins on board vessels, or to retain on board, tranship or land shark fins, ***if the remainder of the carcass has been discarded.***

Or. es

Justification

In line with the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries and International Action Plan for Sharks, and as the Commission points out in paragraph 7 of its proposal, the sole purpose of this proposal is to prevent the practice known as 'finning', i.e. the catching of sharks with the sole aim of removing their fins and discarding the entire remainder of the body, but not the practice of removing fins in itself.

Amendment 11
Article 4, paragraph 1

1. ***By way of derogation from Article 3 (1), and*** subject to paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit may be allowed to remove shark fins on board and to retain on board, tranship or land shark fins.

1. Subject to paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit may be allowed to remove shark fins on board and to retain on board, tranship or land shark fins.

Or. es

Justification

In keeping with Amendment 18.

Amendment 12
Article 4, paragraph 3

3. Vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall be prohibited from discarding at sea the remaining parts of sharks after evisceration and removal of the shark fins. The removed shark fins shall be retained on board, landed or transhipped together with the corresponding weight of remaining parts of sharks.

3. Vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall be prohibited from discarding at sea the remaining parts of sharks after evisceration, ***removal of the heads*** and removal of the shark fins. The removed shark fins shall be retained on board, landed or transhipped together with the corresponding weight of remaining parts of sharks ***or shall be accompanied by the document attesting to the marketing of each part, as appropriate.***

Or. es

Justification

The aim is to make the text more precise by including removal of the heads, another of the tasks relating to the handling of fish on board which constitute a normal and necessary part of fishing activity. The amendment also seeks to introduce a catch certification system similar to that used for Dissostichus.

Amendment 13
Article 4, paragraph 4

4. All shark fins and remaining parts of sharks on board a vessel shall be transhipped or landed at the same time.

4. All shark fins and remaining parts of sharks on board a vessel shall be transhipped or landed ***either*** at the same time ***or separately at different ports.***

Or. es

Justification

As pointed out in the explanatory memorandum, 'shark species are often caught as by-catch in Community fisheries directed to other more valuable species'. Such catches represent an extremely significant part of their economic activity, given that virtually all shark products are marketed: flesh, fins, liver and skin. Nevertheless, in order for such marketing to be profitable, it must be possible to land and market each of these products in different ports, since the markets are different and are to be found in different parts of the world. This authorisation will doubtless help to achieve the aim sought in the Commission proposal. It is clear that each landing must at all times be accompanied by the documents attesting to the marketing of each part. See the justification for Amendment 18.

Amendment 14 Article 5, paragraph 1

1. For the purposes of the application of Article 4 (3), the weight of the shark fins shall not exceed 5 % of the **total weight of the remaining parts of sharks, after evisceration**.

1. For the purposes of the application of Article 4 (3), the weight of the shark fins shall not exceed 5 % of the **live** weight.

Or. es

Justification

Scientists take the view that the 5% coefficient in no way matches the real situation given that this percentage varies quite widely according to the species of dogfish and the various presentations involved. There is an evident need to continue scientific research on the subject, but 5% of the live weight appears to be a value most closely matched by the various species of dogfish.

Amendment 15 Article 5 Paragraph 2

2. **Masters** of vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall keep records of the weight of shark fins and the eviscerated remaining parts of sharks retained on board and transhipped or landed.

2. **In addition to the traceability requirements of Article 4(2)**, masters of vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall keep records of the weight of shark fins and the eviscerated remaining parts of sharks retained on board and transhipped or landed.

These records shall be kept in the logbook established by Article 6 (1) of Regulation (EEC) N° 2847/93, where applicable. For those vessels not subject to Article 6 (1) of that Regulation, these records shall be kept in a special register to be provided by the competent authority issuing the special fishing permit.

These records shall be kept in the logbook established by Article 6 (1) of Regulation (EEC) N° 2847/93, where applicable. For those vessels not subject to Article 6 (1) of that Regulation, these records shall be kept in a special register to be provided by the competent authority issuing the special fishing permit.

Justification

See the justifications for amendments 4 and 5.

Amendment 16
Article 5 (a) (new)

***The provisions of this Regulation shall be reviewed on the basis of improved catch data and inspection reports.
Subsequently, a report will be presented to the Member States and the European Parliament at the latest two years after the entry into force of the Regulation.***

Justification

As this is a preventative rather than curative Regulation without a precedent it is essential that its implementation is carefully monitored and that these findings are presented to the European Parliament on a timely basis.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This Regulation seeks to prevent the practice of removing the fins and then dumping the rest of the shark, often still alive, overboard. The extent of this practice worldwide is unclear due to alleged underreporting, some evidence for which lies in the fact that the FAO estimate for world shark fin production in 1997 was 6 million kg which is approximately 1 million kg less than the quantity of fins imported into Hong Kong alone in 1998.

The lack of clear data means that it is impossible to establish whether any of the EU fleet is involved in the practice but it is, however, certain that the export of shark fins by the EU is substantial. In 2000, the EU was responsible for 14.36% by weight of Hong Kong shark fin imports (the main consumer) after adjustments to take into account the fact that Europe tends to export mainly frozen or salted fins rather than dried fins, which are lighter. Taiwan, with 9.43%, was the next highest contributor to the Hong Kong market out of an estimated 85 countries involved.

Increasing levels of catch have meant that several species of shark are under threat. The FAO International Plan of Action (IPOA) for the Conservation and Management of Sharks calls for plans ensuring that catches are made sustainable. The Parliament's Resolution on the Commission Green Paper on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy endorsed this call, seeking also the collection of the data required to manage the fishery. Management is particularly important in the light of the fact that the species has a low reproductive capacity. Most sharks take 12-15 years to reach maturity and they may have a gestation period of up to 22 months.

A number of territories outwith the EU have introduced a ban on retaining shark fins without bodies, in some cases allowing the viscera, and sometimes the heads, to be discarded and requiring the remainder of the body to be landed. For conservation purposes, this is undoubtedly the most effective approach and is one that other major shark fishing nations have adopted.

It is also the general thrust of the proposed Regulation. Articles 4 and 5, however, allow an exception to be made, under special permit from Member States, for vessels which have "demonstrated a capacity to use all parts of sharks, and have justified the need for separate processing on board of shark fins and the remaining parts of sharks". The Proposal does not, though, expand further on what such a need might be and what would be required to justify its existence.

Given that EU exploitation of this fishery does in some instances take place a long distance from port, allowing freezing of these parts may be advantageous in terms of the quality of the final product provided to the consumer. In addition, the maintenance of carcasses whole until landed in their frozen form renders the processing more difficult.

As the proposal is framed, however, there appears to be too great a potential for fraud. It is considered essential, therefore, if such an exception is to be allowed, that a proper traceability scheme is introduced where feasible. This is only likely to be possible for large sharks - those over 1.5 metres by fork length (from the nose to the fork in the tail) - and would require all the parts of the sharks to be identified. Where it could be established that all parts of any one

shark, except the viscera, had been landed, then the condition in Article 5(1) that the weight of the shark fins should not exceed 5% of the total weight of the remaining parts of the shark should still apply as a precautionary measure. This should help to discourage discards, encourage the fullest possible utilisation of the carcass and ensure collection of a comprehensive set of data in order to allow the sustainable management of shark stocks, a fundamental objective of the IPOA.

Without comprehensive implementation of similar legislation on a global level, the objectives of the IPOA will not be achieved. To this end, the Community should encourage, through the Regional Fisheries Organisations in which it participates, the wider application of the substance of this Regulation to those third countries that have not already taken similar measures.

Finally, it should be emphasised that this is the first attempt at regulating shark fisheries on a European level and, as such, it is essential that the implementation of the Regulation is carefully monitored. On this basis, a report, taking into account the environmental and socio-economic impact of the Regulation should be presented to Parliament and Member States after a maximum period of two years following the entry into force of the legislation.

30 January 2003

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND CONSUMER POLICY

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the proposal for a Council regulation on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels
(COM(2002) 449 – C5-0411/2002 – 2002/0198(CNS))

Draftsman: Chris Davies

PROCEDURE

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy appointed Chris Davies draftsman at its meeting of 2 October 2002.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 9 December 2002 and 28 January 2003.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following amendments by 32 votes to 0, unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Caroline F. Jackson, chairman; Mauro Nobilia and Anneli Hulthén, vice-chairmen; Chris Davies, draftsman; and María del Pilar Ayuso González, Emmanouil Bakopoulos (for Pernille Frahm), Jean-Louis Bernié, David Robert Bowe, John Bowis, Philip Bushill-Matthews (for Martin Callanan), Karl-Heinz Florenz, Cristina García-Orcoyen Tormo, Laura González Álvarez, Robert Goodwill, Françoise Grossetête, Hedwig Keppelhoff-Wiechert (for Marialiese Flemming), Christa Klaß, Eija-Riitta Anneli Korhola, Bernd Lange, Minerva Melpomeni Malliori, Emilia Franziska Müller, Rosemarie Müller, Riitta Myller, Frédérique Ries, Dagmar Roth-Behrendt, Guido Sacconi, Giacomo Santini, Karin Scheele, Inger Schörling, María Sornosa Martínez, Nicole Thomas-Mauro and Peder Wachtmeister.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Text proposed by the Commission¹

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1 Recital 1 (a) (new)

(1a) *Sharks are important components of healthy marine ecosystems.*

Justification

Self-explanatory

Amendment 2 Recital 5

(5) The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, ***may contribute to*** the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many stocks ***of sharks*** are depleted, and ***their future sustainability may be endangered.***

(5) The practice of “shark finning”, whereby the fins are removed from sharks, with the remainder of the shark body being discarded at sea, ***results in*** the excessive mortality of sharks to such an extent that many ***shark*** stocks are depleted, and ***fished unsustainably.***

¹ OJ C not yet published.

Justification

This is a practical problem because many Elasmobranch species (sharks and rays) have extremely low reproductive rates and late sexual maturity, leaving them unable to recover from targeted over-fishing and incidental by-catch mortality

Amendment 3

Recital 7

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(7) <i>However, the removal of shark fins on board may be allowed if the removal is in order to make a more efficient use of all shark parts by the separate processing on board of fins and the remaining parts of the sharks. In this case, the flag Member State should issue and manage, with associated conditions, a special fishing permit in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1627/94 of 27 June 1994 laying down general provisions concerning special fishing permits.</i></p> | <p>(7) <i>Landing sharks and rays with fins attached will promote standardised data reporting of official statistics on catches, facilitate species identification, eliminate potential loopholes in enforcement, and may increase the value of the carcass itself.</i></p> |
|--|--|

Justification

Permitting fins to be carried detached from shark carcasses makes it difficult for inspectors to determine whether finning has actually been taking place at sea or not. It is difficult to identify sharks once their fins have been detached and to permit partial processing on board will make it easier to pass off prohibited catches as permitted species of shark. The carriage of detached shark fins should therefore be disallowed. Similar legislation has long been in force in Australia.

To manage and conserve shark populations effectively, information on size, species and sex of sharks caught is urgently required.

Amendment 4
Recital 8

(8) *In order to ensure that all parts of sharks are kept on board after the removal of fins, masters of vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit should keep records of the weight of shark fins and the remaining parts of sharks after evisceration. Such records should be kept in the logbook as provided for by Regulation No 2847/93 of 12 October 1993 establishing a control system applicable to the common fisheries policy, or in a special register as appropriate.*

(8) *In the event of adoption of quota management it is essential to have a standard carcass form.*

Justification

It is important to land sharks in a standard form of dressed carcass for the relationship between the quotas landed and the weight of sharks original caught to be meaningful.

Reference to the logbook is moved to Article 5.

Amendment 5
Recital 10

(10) *In accordance with the principle of proportionality, it is necessary and appropriate for the achievement of the basic objective of conservation of shark stocks to lay down rules on the removal of shark fins on board vessels.* This regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve the objectives pursued in accordance with the third paragraph of Article 5 of the Treaty,

(10) This regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve the objectives pursued in accordance with the third paragraph of Article 5 of the Treaty,

Justification

As stressed in amendment 4, permitting fins to be carried detached from shark carcasses makes it difficult for inspectors to determine whether finning has actually been taking place at sea or not. It is difficult to identify sharks once their fins have been detached and to permit partial processing on board will make it easier to pass off prohibited catches as permitted species of shark. The carriage of detached shark fins should therefore be disallowed. Similar legislation has long been in force in Australia.

Amendment 6
Article 1 (2) (a) (new)

(2a) and shall be incorporated into fishing agreements between EU Member States and countries outside the EU.

Justification

Self explanatory.

Amendment 7
Article 2 (3) (a) (new)

“Finning” refers to the practice of slicing off a shark’s valuable fins and discarding the body at sea.

Justification

Major welfare concerns are associated with the capture and finning of sharks, as the fins are often removed from live animals that are then thrown back into the sea to drown, bleed or starve to death. Once the fin is removed, it is impossible to identify shark species.

Amendment 8 Article 4

Derogation and special fishing permit

- 1. By way of derogation from Article 3 (1), and subject to paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit may be allowed to remove shark fins on board and to retain on board, tranship or land shark fins.***
- 2. Such a special fishing permit shall only be issued to fishing vessels, which have demonstrated a capacity to use all parts of sharks, and have justified the need for the separate processing on board of shark fins and the remaining parts of sharks.***
- 3. Vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall be prohibited from discarding at sea the remaining parts of sharks after evisceration and removal of the shark fins. The removed shark fins shall be retained on board, landed or transhipped together with the corresponding weight of remaining parts of sharks.***
- 4. All shark fins and remaining parts of sharks on board a vessel shall be transhipped or landed at the same time.***

Permitted processing on board

- 1 Only partial processing of shark bodies is permitted on board vessels; namely evisceration. Otherwise sharks shall be retained intact until landed.***

Justification

If shark fins are removed on board vessels it becomes impossible to secure accurate information regarding the population of shark species, and greatly increases the potential for fraudulent practice.

Similar legislation has long been in force in Australia.

Amendment 9
Article 5

Ratio of weight of shark fins and remaining parts of sharks and records

- 1. For the purposes of the application of Article 4 (3), the weight of the shark fins shall not exceed 5 % of the total weight of the remaining parts of sharks, after evisceration.***
- 2. Masters of vessels which hold a valid special fishing permit shall keep records of the weight of shark fins and the eviscerated remaining parts of sharks retained on board and transhipped or landed.***

These records shall be kept in the logbook established by Article 6 (1) of Regulation (EEC) N° 2847/93, where applicable. For those vessels not subject to Article 6 (1) of that Regulation, these records shall be kept in a special register to be provided by the competent authority issuing the special fishing permit.

Records of retained and discarded shark catches

- 1. All vessels shall keep logbook records to detail, species by species, weights of sharks retained on board, transhipped, landed, or discarded as bycatch.***

Justification

The potential for fraudulent practices must be prevented. A fin to body ratio is impossible to

enforce due to the need to compare weights of carcasses with weights of fins at landing points. Transshipments and landings of fins and carcasses at different locations will make illegal finning difficult to control.

To manage and conserve shark populations more effectively in the future, information on size, species and sex of sharks caught is urgently required.