



TAKE ACTION!

SMALL SHARKS, BIG FISHERIES: *Please help prevent finning, promote best practice, and preserve US leadership in global shark conservation!*

This *Shark Week*, concerned citizens have a great opportunity to help strengthen the finning ban for one of the most heavily fished sharks in the US: the **Dusky Smoothhound** aka the **Smooth Dogfish**.

This small shark is taken in big numbers for meat and fins, mostly for export. They aren't nearly as loved as bigger sharks, and have fallen through some important policy cracks. Dogfish deserve enforceable finning bans, just like other sharks! *Please weigh in during this key comment period!*



What is finning and how is it regulated?

Finning (slicing off a shark's fins and discarding the body at sea) is a wasteful practice that was prohibited in the US Atlantic in 1993. In 2008, to more effectively prevent finning, US Atlantic fishery managers switched from a complicated fin-to-body weight ratio limit to banning all at-sea removal of shark fins. This "fins attached" rule is widely recognized as the best practice for finning ban enforcement, and also helps with collecting data on landed species.

The 2010 Shark Conservation Act expanded the fins-attached rule to US Pacific fisheries, but created a new exception for Atlantic Smooth Dogfish, and raised the associated fin-to-body ratio from 5% to 12%. Such a high limit increases the wiggle room for undetected finning of not only Smooth Dogfish, but also many other coastal sharks.

What's on deck?

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is currently inviting public comment on the Smooth Dogfish finning ban. Although the proposed changes could reduce the at-sea removal of Smooth Dogfish fins (in line with federal limits), individual states could instead simply reject the exception altogether and apply the same, sound fins-attached rule to all sharks. In fact, several Atlantic states already do. Ending the exceptions can help US efforts to promote better shark conservation policies around the world.

You Can Help: Support Strong Finning Bans, No exceptions!



By July 11, 2016, 5pm EDT write to the ASMFC and call for an end to the Smooth Dogfish exceptions to Atlantic state bans on at-sea shark fin removal.

Email your comment to (aharp@asmfc.org) using *Subject line: Draft Addendum IV*.
Address letters to: Ashton Harp, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201

Follow @SharkAdvocates on Twitter for updates. THANK YOU!

Graphic/photo credits: Jim Toomey (*Sherman's Lagoon*), Andy Murch (*Elasmodiver*).