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Shark Guardian investigation finds endangered sharks for sale in Taiwan

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LONDON, Monday 29 November 2021 – A field investigation into Taiwan's shark fin industry was conducted by Shark Guardian between December 2020 and March 2021. The investigation obtained documentary evidence of fins from endangered shark species being openly offered for sale by over half of all shark fin traders surveyed in Taiwan's southern fishing port of Kaohsiung and online.

Of the 13 shark fin processing and trading companies visited, more than half were found to be trading CITES- listed fins, and 7 had shark fins from CITES Appendix II-listed species as part of their product range. One company said "[...] there is no difference in selling protected or unprotected species. Protected sharks' products usually create a problem for international shipping only."

DOWNLOAD FULL REPORT HERE:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p85ece4>

The full report key points include:

- List of Endangered species found by Shark Guardian researchers in Taiwan shark fin processing and trade
- Overall mapping of the Taiwanese shark fin industry
- Supply chain types for shark fin business operations in Taiwan
- Taiwanese Shark Fin Processing and Trading Companies Selling Endangered Sharks
- Survey of Shark Fins from CITES-listed Species Sold Online
- Conclusion and Recommendations

Our new report details how seven out of thirteen traders surveyed in Taiwan were found to be selling shark fins from silky sharks, oceanic whitetip sharks, mako sharks, thresher sharks and great white sharks in broad daylight – **in contravention of Taiwanese and international law.**

Over a three-month period, Shark Guardian investigators witnessed multiple shipments of shark fins from endangered species being unloaded at Donggang fish market which is in Taiwan's southern city of Kaohsiung.

Alex Hofford, Marine Wildlife Campaigner with Shark Guardian, said *"To save sharks and the marine environment, Taiwanese authorities should implement an immediate crackdown on its cruel and unsustainable shark fin trade, and should tighten up local laws to ban the domestic sale of shark fin as well as better enforce its international obligations under CITES.^[1] It is also high time that the Taiwanese government should rein in its out-of-control distant water tuna fishing fleet, who are a major supplier shark fin to Chinese markets. Whilst Taiwan is a beacon of democratic and progressive values in Asia, it is allowing its unsustainable and often crime-ridden^[2] fisheries sector to rape and pillage our ocean with impunity. This must stop. Taiwan needs to show leadership in environmental protection and must quickly clean up its act as regards its sleazy shark fisheries and trade sectors."*

During our investigation, Shark Guardian also found evidence of Taiwan-based online retailers selling fins of endangered species of shark in contravention of local and international law.

According to WWF, a third of all sharks and rays are threatened with extinction^[3], yet fishing and trading in unsustainable shark fin remains a highly profitable, but environmentally destructive, enterprise for Taiwanese companies operating out of Kaohsiung.

Brendon Sing, Co-Director of Shark Guardian said *"Clearly more must be done to protect sharks globally. There are over 500 known shark species with only a handful of them listed under CITES. Even then, CITES listed sharks are still traded illegally where monitoring and enforcement lack any power and expose loopholes in the system. As long as this continues, there is no real protection for any shark species regardless of CITES listing or not. Taiwan must be responsible and take positive action in response to this report."*

Shark Guardian believes that excessively large profit margins are the main reason why Taiwan has never acted to rein in its shark fisheries and trade.

Shark Guardian hopes that Taiwan can apply its progressive values towards preserving the marine environment by imposing a comprehensive ban on the physical and online selling all species of shark fin in Taiwan. Such a ban would go above and beyond what is required under international law, and Taiwan's domestic laws can be changed with public support.

[1] **CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)** is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species.

[2] <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/29365/taiwans-major-global-tuna-supplier-shows-blind-spots-to-illegal-fishing-practices-and-modern-slavery/>

[3] <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/overfishing-puts-more-than-one-third-of-all-sharks-rays-and-chimaeras-at-risk-of-extinction>

Link to PHOTOS from the investigation: <https://we.tl/t-gpejtOatSz>
(Photo credit: Shark Guardian)

Link to VIDEO from the investigation: <https://we.tl/t-Z9sbaDuEJo>
(Video credit: Shark Guardian)

Link to PHOTOS and VIDEOS of shark beauty shots: <https://we.tl/t-B6CP7IR8lh>
(Photo and video credit: Shark Guardian, or as shown)

About Shark Guardian

Shark Guardian is a UK Charity founded by Brendon Sing and Elizabeth Ward-Sing. Although Shark Guardian is a UK Charity, there are Shark Guardian campaigns and activities taking place worldwide including the United Kingdom, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Our objective is to advance the conservation of sharks and the natural environment through conservation, education, research projects and expeditions.

Website: <https://www.sharkguardian.org/>

Blog: <https://www.sharkguardian.org/blog>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SharkGuardianWorldWide>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/Shark_Guardian

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sharkguardian/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SharkGuardian>

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