

Dear Mr Howes

Almost one third of shark and ray species face extinction within decades, threatening the unravelling of entire ecosystems. As such, it is clear that their protection is a top priority for all of us working towards a shared vision of a healthy, thriving marine environment. Alongside Harvest Control Rules derived from science-based reference points, bycatch reduction and live release mitigation measures, the elimination of shark finning is a fundamental element for ensuring the protection and recovery of threatened species. Besides being an extremely cruel and wasteful form of exploitation of marine life, shark finning is an illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity in much of the world, which undermines effective management and conservation. As such, MSC has quite rightly stated that it takes a 'zero tolerance' approach towards the practice.

In this context, we welcome the inclusion of shark finning in the MSC's ongoing Fisheries Standard Review (FSR) as it provides a key opportunity for the implementation of vital reforms which could subsequently incentivise broader change across the fishing industry. We are writing ahead of upcoming Board decisions related to the Fisheries Standard Review to express our view that **a Fins Naturally Attached (FNA) policy in all fisheries interacting with sharks is the *only* way to effectively enact such a zero tolerance approach to shark finning** and to request **active, ongoing involvement as a stakeholder group in the policy development process** leading up to decisions made at your December Board.

Call for the MSC to introduce a Fins Naturally Attached (FNA) policy

FNA is widely accepted, in the scientific literature and in management practice, to represent global best practice in preventing shark finning and, supported by effective monitoring and compliance, to be the only way of ensuring no finning can take place. FNA avoids many of the loopholes and ambiguities which limit effectiveness and enforcement of other approaches and facilitates species identification and collection of vital data. No alternative can offer the same level of confidence and therefore FNA is the only policy basis that is 100% consistent with MSC's zero tolerance approach to shark finning. Furthermore, the MSC itself perceives FNA to be best practice, acknowledging in the guidance to the Fisheries Standard that "*The MSC considers that a policy requiring the landing of all sharks with fins naturally attached is the most rigorous approach to ensuring that shark finning is not occurring.*" However, despite this recognition, MSC has still not implemented FNA as a mandatory requirement or prerequisite (i.e. at SG60) for the certification of fisheries that interact with sharks, and alarmingly also does not require it even at higher scoring levels, thereby falling far behind the curve of global fisheries management.

We are therefore calling on the MSC to use this Fisheries Standard Review as an opportunity to align its policy with global best practice: **evidence of shark finning *must* preclude a fishery from entering the certification process** and **any fisheries interacting with sharks as**

primary, secondary or ETP species must have an FNA policy with no exemptions in place as a prerequisite for certification. The fishery must **demonstrate compliance** with the policy prior to, and throughout, certification with a level of monitoring and surveillance proportionate to the risk of finning occurring in that specific fishery.

It is of course critically important that the MSC remains globally accessible. However, it should be noted that FNA has been successfully adopted and implemented by a large number and range of countries, international bodies and fisheries management authorities. Additionally, it would be feasible for MSC to conduct an appropriate process to identify fisheries that might be concerned about financial or logistical challenges in implementing FNA and work with them to find effective solutions.

Request for active and constructive participation in the policy development process

We appreciated the opportunity to participate in the public workshops on this topic in July and the ability to provide further feedback as part of the survey on this topic. In line with both FAO and ISEAL guidance, transparent and participatory decision-making with adequate representation of all stakeholders is a vital principle underpinning ecolabelling schemes such as MSC.

We were however disappointed at the MSC's delay in publishing reports from the workshops or the outcomes of the subsequent survey. Furthermore, we would respectfully urge that public engagement not be limited to narrow consultation windows or to singular questions and that, as highlighted by FAO, "balanced participation by independent technical experts and by representatives of interested parties" be ensured. Rather than presenting a completed proposal, drafted internally and then deliberated on by the Board, to stakeholders in 2021, by which stage it may be too late for fundamental changes, we instead urge the MSC to incorporate ongoing engagement with all stakeholder groups and perspectives throughout the process of developing and drafting proposals for the revision of the Standard.

We therefore write to request that representatives of this group of signatories be invited to attend TAB and STAC meetings in order to understand how feedback from workshops, surveys and other stakeholder engagement are being considered. Furthermore, we wish to request that we be given the opportunity to present to the MSC Board, Executive, TAB and STAC and discuss a proposal regarding the implementation of an FNA policy in the updated Standard, prior to a final proposal being selected for public consultation by the Board.

In light of the rapidly approaching TAB and STAC meetings, we look forward to receiving a response within the next two weeks and to continuing to engage with the MSC's shark finning policy development process.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Genasci
CEO
ADM Capital Foundation

Birgit Braun
Executive Board Member
Aktionsgemeinschaft Artenschutz (AGA) e.V.

Susan Millward
Director Marine Animal Program
Animal Welfare Institute

Dr. Jill Robinson
Founder and CEO
Animals Asia

José Truda Palazzo Jr.
Vice President
Augusto Carneiro Institute

Matthieu Lapinski
President
L'Association Ailerons

Dr. Leonardo Guida
Shark scientist and AMCS spokesperson
Australian Marine Conservation Society

Graham Buckingham
Campaign Director
Bite-Back Shark and Marine Conservation

Dr. Frédéric Le Manach
Scientific Director
BLOOM

Charles Clover
Executive Director
Blue Marine Foundation

John Hourston
Director
Blue Planet Society

Katrien Vandevelde and Jan Wouters

Founders
Blue Shark Conservation

Dr. Mark Jones

Head of Policy
Born Free Foundation

Ericka Ceballos

CEO
CATCA Environmental and Wildlife Society

Sarah Uhlemann

International Program Director and Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity

Adam Weiss

Head of Programme: Ocean, Plastics and Chemicals
Client Earth

Isabel Naranjo

President
CREMA (Centro Rescate Especies Marinas Amenazadas)

Alejandra Goyenechea

Senior International Counsel
Defenders of Wildlife

Ulrike Kirsch

Foundation Board Member
Deutsche Stiftung Meeresschutz (DSM)

Paulo Guilherme Alves Cavalcanti

Co-founder
Divers for Sharks

Elise Dufour

Consultant
Dufour Productions

Georgina Wiersma

Director
Dutch Shark Society

Steve Trent

Founder and Executive Director
Environmental Justice Foundation

Felipe Vallejo

Executive Director
Equilibrio Azul

Billo Heinzpeter Studer

President
Fair Fish International Association

Randall Arauz

Policy Advisor
Fins Attached Marine Research and Conservation

Charles Redfern

Founder
Fish4Ever

Valeska Diemel

Director
FishAct

Jorge Serendero

CEO
For the Oceans Foundation

Sandra Bessudo Lion

Founder and Executive Director
Fundación Malpelo

Antoinette Vermilye

Co-Founder
Gallifrey Foundation

Ulrich Karlowski

Board Member
Gesellschaft zur Rettung der Delphine e.V.

Veerle Roelandt

President
The Global Shark Conservation Initiative

Alexandra Andersson

Founder
Hong Kong for Pangolins

Andrea Richey

Executive Director
Hong Kong Shark Foundation

Rebecca Regnery

Senior Director of Wildlife
Humane Society International

Dr. Phillippe Cury

Senior Scientist and Scientific Coordinator of EuroMarine
Institut de Recherche pour le Développement

David Phillips

Director
International Marine Mammal Project Earth Island Institute

Pierre-André Adam

Head of Science and Projects
Island Conservation Society

Dr. Gary WJ Ades

Department Head, Fauna Conservation Department
Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation

Dr. Silvia Frey

Marine conservation biologist
KYMA Sea Conservation and Research

Dr. Rachel T. Graham

Founder and Executive Director
MarAlliance

Hannah McIntyre

Fisheries and Aquaculture Manager
Marks and Spencer

Sandra Hinni

Fisheries Sustainability Project Manager
MIGROS

Maximillian Bello

Ocean Policy Advisor
Mission Blue

Dr. Cornelia E. Nauen

President
Mundus maris absI

Elizabeth Murdock

Director, Pacific Ocean Initiative, Nature Program
Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC)

Mark Wilkins

Founder
Nature Trust of the Americas

Prof. Jennifer Jacquet

Associate Professor of Environmental Studies
New York University

Doug Woodring

Founder
Ocean Recovery Alliance

Louie Psihoyos

Executive Director
Oceanic Preservation Society

Gary Stokes

Director
Oceans Asia

Dr. Sandra Altherr

Founder
Pro Wildlife e.V.

Suzanne M. Gendron

Director
Sage Advice

Vince Cinches

Save Sharks Network Philippines

Shawn Heinrichs

Co-Founder
Sea Legacy

Jorge Serendero

President
Sea Shepherd Costa Rica

Stefanie Brendl

Executive Director and Founder
Shark Allies

Brendon Sing

Co-Director
Shark Guardian

David McGuire

Executive Director
Shark Stewards

Ali Hood

Director of Conservation
The Shark Trust

Fernando Reis

Executive Director
Sharks Educational Institute

Fabienne Rossier

President
Sharks Mission France

Alexander Smolinsky

President
Sharkproject International

Brian W. Darvell

University of Birmingham
Former Chairman, Hong Kong Marine Conservation Society

Dr. David Dudgeon

Emeritus Professor of Ecology and Biodiversity
The University of Hong Kong

Prof. Yvonne Sadovy
The University of Hong Kong

Dr. Kerstin Reichert
Vice President
German Underwater Federation (VDST)

Alex Hofford
Wildlife campaigner
WildAid

Colum Muccio
Development Director
Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association

Dr. Ralf P. Sonntag
Senior Advisor Oceans
World Future Council

John Burton
CEO
World Wise Foods

Dr. Catherine (Cat) Dorey
Independent Advisor on Fishes and Fisheries

Ila France Porcher
Shark ethologist and author of 'The True Nature of Sharks' and 'The Shark Sessions'

Karli Thomas
Ocean Advocate

Ben Goldsmith

International Pole and Line Foundation

Joseph Robertson (Aberdeen) Ltd.

Synchronicity Earth

Woolworths South Africa

