

**NETS  
OUT  
NOW  
COALITION**

Meet your local MP  
Briefing Pack

## IT DOESN'T WORK

- Multiple studies show the current program has not affected the number of shark related incidents<sup>1</sup>
- There have been almost 70 bites and 3 fatalities at 'protected' beaches in NSW and QLD (Source: Australian Shark Attack File)
- 500+ cases have been found of predation on captured animals in Queensland alone. The catch attracts other, larger sharks closer to shore (QSCP data file comments)
- During the HSI v Department of Fisheries/Great Barrier Reef Marine Park court case determined that "the lethal component of the Shark Control Program does not reduce the risk of unprovoked shark interactions. The scientific evidence before us is overwhelming in this regard".<sup>2</sup>
- The Federal Government Senate Inquiry into shark mitigation in 2017 is seemingly being ignored by state governments. These findings very clearly showed the programs do not work and they in fact provide a false sense of security to ocean goers. (Senate Inquiry into Shark Mitigation - Recommendations, 2017)
- Studies have shown that fatal attacks on protected beaches have decreased due to advancements in medical care and earlier access to treatment, rather than as a result of these programs. (Source: Effects and effectiveness of lethal shark hazard management, 2019)
- Since 1962 the fatality rate has averaged 0.37 per year, a number not significantly different than previous decades. During the 160 years from 1850 to 2010, the average fatality from shark bite rate varied. From 1850 to 1910 it was 0.32 fatalities per year, but then a spike in fatalities in the 1920s saw the average increase to 1.1 per year. Following that, the rate of fatal bites generally declined, falling to a low of 0.2 per year in the 1990s (Source: Has Queensland really saved lives by killing thousands of sharks, 2014).

## WHY IS NOW THE TIME?

- Up to 97.4% of animals caught in the nets on some beaches are non-target species (Source: NSW Ballina Trial)
- 83% of Queensland's drumlines occur in areas where there has never been a recorded fatality, with records dating back to 1852.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, 40% of all shark entanglements have occurred on the beachward-side of the net as the animal is swimming back out to sea.<sup>4</sup>
- The majority (16 of 19) of shark species on the Governments' target lists are accepted as not posing a lethal threat to humans
- Shark populations have been decimated since the program began. Tiger sharks -74%, Whaler sharks -84%, White -92%, Hammerhead -92% (Source: Decline of coastal apex shark populations over the past half century, 2018)
- Proven and peer-reviewed modern technology alternatives are readily available to the Government (Source: 2019 Cardno Review of Alternative Approaches)
- The documentary Envoy: Shark Cull documentary is now available for worldwide streaming and has embarrassed Australia, in particular the QLD and NSW Governments on a global stage. The filmmakers impact survey data shows the majority of viewers will now reconsider or avoid future visits to Australia and particularly QLD and NSW.
- Numerous polls show the public is strongly opposed to shark culling:
  - The Morning Show asked: Four sharks have been killed following two attacks that's left victims in hospital -- but do you think sharks should be culled? 10% Yes, 90% No (13.1K votes)
  - ABC Brisbane asked: Should sharks be culled in response to attacks on humans? 16% Yes, 84% No (9.1K votes)
  - Channel 7 Brisbane asked: Do you agree with catching and killing sharks? 23% Yes, 77% No (12.7K votes)
  - Courier Mail asked: Should sharks be culled in Queensland? 31% Yes, 69% No (552 votes)
  - Fairfax Media asked: Do you support the culling of sharks after an attack? 10% Yes, 90% No (voter number unknown)
  - The Humane Society International survey found 71% of respondents support non-lethal alternatives along the entire QLD Coast

<sup>1</sup> See: George Roff et al., 'Decline of coastal apex shark populations over the past half century' (2018) 1(1) *Communications Biology* 223; Leah Gibbs et al., 'Effects and effectiveness of lethal shark hazard management: The Shark Meshing (Bather Protection) Program, NSW, Australia' (2019) 2(1) *People and Nature* 189.

<sup>2</sup> *Humane Society International (Australia) Inc v Department of Agriculture & Fisheries (Qld)* [2019] AATA 617 at [94].

<sup>3</sup> *HSI (Australia) v Department of Agriculture & Fisheries (Qld)* [2019] AATA 617, [40].

<sup>4</sup> Daryl McPhee, *Likely effectiveness of netting or other capture programs as a shark hazard mitigation strategy in Western Australia* (Report prepared for Department of Fisheries, Western Australia, 2012) 10.

## WHAT THE POLLIES SAY

- **The Shark Control Program / Shark Meshing Program is not a cull**  
The definition of cull is to “reduce the population of (a wild animal) by selective slaughter,” which is exactly what these programs do.
- **Shark control equipment is used to catch and reduce the number of potentially dangerous sharks**  
In Hawaii over 4,500 sharks were culled over nearly two decades. After an evaluation demonstrated that the cull did not impact the number of swimmer fatalities, the program was abandoned in favour of non-lethal measures.
- **Shark control equipment has been proven to reduce the number of fatalities at protected beaches**  
This statement goes directly against studies which show that the number of fatalities have actually decreased because of quick medical care. There have still been almost 70 bites and 3 fatalities at ‘protected’ beaches. The sole purpose behind these programs is to reduce the risk of a shark bite occurring by depleting the local abundance of sharks, despite this being scientifically disproven to be effective (shark bites and shark population do not correlate). No scientific evidence supports the effectiveness of these programs.
- **Shark control equipment "fishes-down" local populations of potentially dangerous sharks, and stops them from developing home ranges near beaches**  
The three shark species of concern (White, Tiger, Bull) are highly migratory species and do not have home ranges in the way that is implied here. They regularly travel thousands of kilometres, and up to 100km a day. White sharks can even circumnavigate the globe. This program does not "fish-down" (eg: cull) local populations, because there are no local populations. What this is really doing is culling entire migratory populations as they happen to pass through NSW/QLD waters.
- **The Queensland Government is committed to reviewing and adapting the program in line with emerging science and community expectations. The government always puts the safety of people first and will not make changes until effective alternatives suitable for Queensland conditions are identified and proven.**  
There is no need for trials with these alternative solutions. They have been trialled in other parts of Australia and the world. They have proved effective so it is time to roll them out and replace (not supplement) current lethal methods.

## WHAT NOW?

### *Queensland*

A coalition of organisations have drafted a Queensland Shark Control Program Modernisation Proposal and Cost Estimate using data provided to the Queensland Government in the 2019 Cardno Review of Alternative Approaches.

The program requires upfront expenditure to build and buy some infrastructure (shark barriers, drones etc) and thereafter will cost HALF the amount of the current QSCP budget, and create far more jobs.

A copy of this proposal can be accessed here: [envoyfilm.com.au/solutions](http://envoyfilm.com.au/solutions).

### *New South Wales*

Whilst the above modernisation costing exercise has not been repeated for NSW as yet, because they are already so active with drones and smart drumlines, the ask in NSW is simple: remove the 51 shark nets now, and rely on the proven non-lethal technology already being used. The recent investment of \$21.4 million into alternative measures for the 2020/21 season has demonstrated that non-lethal alternatives are viable and in use currently; the only thing required is the removal of 51 nets that don't work



# NSW SHARK MESHING & BATHER PROTECTION PROGRAM IMAGES 2019

Obtained under Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 - Ref: GIPA 20-1157

For more images visit [envoyfilm.com.au/gallery](http://envoyfilm.com.au/gallery)

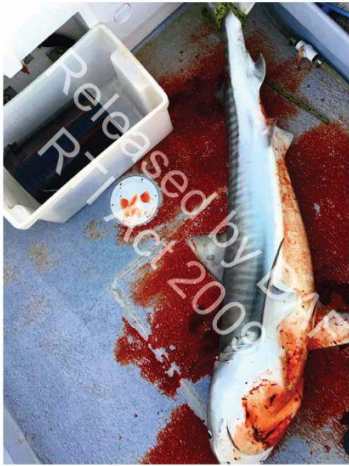




# QLD SHARK CONTROL PROGRAM IMAGES 2019

Obtained under Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld) Ref: 19-347

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**Table 1: Conservation listing and global unprovoked shark bite accounts of all target species under Australia's 'shark control' programs in New South Wales and Queensland**

SPECIES	TARGET IN QLD	TARGET IN NSW	EPBC Act	IUCN RED LIST	CMS Convention of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	CITES	MoU Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks	UNPROVOKED BITES TO HUMANS (GLOBAL accounts since 1580 AD)	
								(Non-Fatal)	(Fatal)
White shark <i>(Carcharodon carcharias)</i>	Y	Y	Listed (Vulnerable)	Vulnerable	Appendix I Appendix II	Appendix II	Listed	297	57
Tiger shark <i>(Galeocerdo cuvier)</i>	Y	Y	Not listed	Near Threatened	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	102	36
Bull shark <i>(Carcharhinus leucas)</i>	Y	Y	Not listed	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	95	26
Australian blacktip shark <i>(Carcharhinus tilstoni)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Least Concern	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	68* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>	1* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>
Big nose whaler shark <i>(Carcharhinus altimus)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Near Threatened	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	68* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>	1* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>
Blue shark <i>(Prionace glauca)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Near Threatened	Appendix II	Not Listed	Not Listed	9	4
Common blacktip shark <i>(Carcharhinus limbatus)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	41	0
Dusky whaler shark <i>(Carcharhinus obscurus)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Endangered	Appendix II	Not Listed	Listed	1	1

Great hammerhead shark <i>(Sphyrna mokarran)</i>	Y	N	Under Assessment	Critically Endangered	Appendix II	Appendix II	Listed	16* <i>(For all Sphyrna spp)</i>	0* <i>(For all Sphyrna spp)</i>
Grey reef shark <i>(Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Endangered	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	8	1
Spinner shark (long nose whaler) <i>(Carcharhinus brevipinna)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	16	0
Longfin Mako shark <i>(Isurus paucus)</i>	Y	N	Listed	Endangered	Appendix II	Appendix II	Listed	3* <i>(For all Isurus spp)</i>	0* <i>(For all Isurus spp)</i>
Shortfin Mako shark <i>(Isurus oxyrinchus)</i>	Y	N	Listed	Endangered	Appendix II	Appendix II	Listed	8 No recorded bites to humans in Australia	1
Oceanic whitetip shark <i>(Carcharhinus longimanus)</i>	Y	N	Listed	Critically Endangered	Appendix I	Appendix II	Listed	12	3
Pigeye shark <i>(Carcharhinus amboinensis)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	68* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>	1* <i>(for entire Carcharhinus spp)</i>
Sandbar shark <i>(Carcharhinus plumbeus)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Endangered	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	5	0
Lemon shark <i>(Negaprion acutidens)</i>	Y	N	Not listed	Endangered	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	10	0
Silky shark <i>(Carcharhinus falciformis)</i>	Y	N	Listed	Vulnerable	Appendix II	Appendix II	Listed	2	0

Silvertip shark ( <i>Carcharhinus albimarginatus</i> )	Y	N	Not listed	Vulnerable	Not Listed	Not Listed	Not Listed	68* (for entire <i>Carcharhinus</i> spp)	1* (for entire <i>Carcharhinus</i> spp)
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Unprovoked shark bites source: *International Shark Attack File*, Florida Museum (21 January 2022) <<https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/shark-attacks/factors/species-implicated/>>..