

Sharks get protection in Marshall Islands

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The fin of a shark breaks the surface. The US territory of the Marshall Islands has placed a moratorium on the trade and export of shark fins, a report said Friday, the latest in a trend across the Pacific Ocean.

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More than 70 million [sharks](#) are killed each year primarily for their fins, which are in high demand for Asian shark fin soup, environmental groups say.

A booming illegal export market prompted [Marshall Islands](#) Marine Resources Authority director Glen Joseph to impose the ban, the Marianas Variety reported.

"No one is registered and authorized to fish for sharks, but there are

substantive reports that it is happening," Joseph said.

The moratorium will remain until new rules are established to regulate the trade.

The Senate in Guam, another US island territory, voted last week to ban the sale, possession and distribution of shark fins.

Palau, Hawaii, the Northern Mariana Islands, as well as Honduras and the Maldives in the [Indian Ocean](#), have passed similar protections for the endangered predators.

The Pew Environmental Group says it is important that the endangered predators "keep their place as apex predators in the ocean food chain."

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