

American Samoa bans shark fishing to save species

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(AP)—American Samoa is banning shark fishing in its waters in hopes of stopping the population's decline.

American Samoa is among a number of Pacific islands to record a dramatic drop in shark numbers. Sharks are often harvested for their [fins](#), which typically end up in restaurants as shark-fin soup.

The rules taking effect this week make it illegal to catch or possess sharks within three nautical miles of the shoreline. The ban extends to three species of [reef fish](#).

Doug Fenner, who monitors [sharks](#) for the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources, says the rules cover most of the territory's coral reefs and will prevent shark trafficking.

Fenner says the protections are the most powerful in the U.S. American Samoa is an unincorporated U.S. territory.

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