

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 189

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the wasteful and unsportsmanlike practice known as shark finning.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 27, 1999

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (for himself, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. BILBRAY, and Mr. GILCHREST) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the wasteful and unsportsmanlike practice known as shark finning.

Whereas shark finning is the practice of removing the fins of a shark and dumping its carcass back into the ocean;

Whereas demand for shark fins is driving dramatic increases in shark fishing and mortality around the world;

Whereas the life history characteristics of sharks, including slow growth, late sexual maturity, and the production of few young, make them particularly vulnerable to over-fishing and necessitate careful management of shark fisheries;

Whereas shark finning is not prohibited in the waters of the Pacific Ocean in which fisheries are managed by the Federal Government;

Whereas according to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the number of sharks killed in Central Pacific Ocean and Western Pacific Ocean fisheries rose from 2,289 in 1991 to 60,857 in 1998, an increase of over 2,500 percent, and continues to rise unabated;

Whereas of the 60,857 sharks landed in Central Pacific Ocean and Western Pacific Ocean fisheries in 1998, 98.7 percent, or 60,085, were killed for their fins;

Whereas shark fins comprise only between 1 percent and 5 percent of the weight of a shark, and shark finning results in the unconscionable waste of 95 percent to 99 percent (by weight) of a valuable public resource;

Whereas the National Marine Fisheries Service has stated that shark finning is wasteful, should be stopped, and is contrary to United States fisheries conservation and management policies;

Whereas shark finning is prohibited in the United States exclusive economic zone of the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean;

Whereas the practice of shark finning in the waters of the United States in the Pacific Ocean is inconsistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Federal Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks, and the shark finning prohibitions that apply in State waters in the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean;

Whereas the United States is a global leader in shark management, and the practice of shark finning in the waters of the United States in the Pacific Ocean is inconsistent with United States international obligations, including the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing of the Food

and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Plan of Action for Sharks of such organization, and the United Nation's Agreement on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Species; and

Whereas establishment of a prohibition on the practice of shark finning in the Central Pacific Ocean and Western Pacific Ocean would result in the immediate reduction of waste and could reduce shark mortality by as much as 85 percent: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) the practice of removing the fins of a shark
 4 and dumping its carcass back into the ocean, com-
 5 monly referred to as shark finning, is a wasteful and
 6 unsportsmanlike practice that could lead to over-
 7 fishing of shark resources;

8 (2) the Western Pacific Fishery Management
 9 Council, the State of Hawaii, and the National Ma-
 10 rine Fisheries Service should promptly and perma-
 11 nently end the practice of shark finning in all Fed-
 12 eral and State waters in the Central Pacific Ocean
 13 and Western Pacific Ocean; and

14 (3) the Secretary of State should continue to
 15 strongly advocate for the coordinated management
 16 of sharks and the eventual elimination of shark fin-
 17 ning in all other waters.

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