



Seventy-four shark species are currently at risk of extinction. A leading driver of the worldwide depletion of shark populations is the international trade in shark fins, which are used in soups and alternative medicines in some Asian nations, including TPP countries.

The Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) has claimed that the [Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade trade agreement (TPP)] would help protect sharks. This claim ignores the fact that the TPP would slash tariffs for shark fins, spurring the killing of more at-risk sharks.

Four of the five largest shark-fin importers in the world are TPP countries. That includes Vietnam, the world's 4th-largest importer of shark fins by volume, which currently imposes a 20-percent tariff on shark fins. TPP member Malaysia, meanwhile, is the world's 9th-largest importer of shark fins, with a 7-percent shark-fin tariff. These tariffs make imported shark fins more expensive, therefore restricting trade in shark fins and reducing the killing of sharks.

On the very first day the TPP is implemented, however, these tariffs would be eliminated for shark fins imported from other TPP countries, such as Peru and Mexico – the 5th- and 7th-largest exporters of shark fins in the world, respectively. Mexico already ranks among the top ten countries in the world for the number of sharks killed each year, and Peru's exports of shark fins to Asia are already growing significantly. The TPP's tariff elimination would encourage increased shark hunting in both countries to feed demand in Asia. Neither Vietnam nor Malaysia has existing free trade agreements with Mexico or Peru that would reduce tariffs on shark fin imports in the absence of the TPP.



Meanwhile, the TPP's environment chapter... includes no meaningful protections for sharks to offset the deal's incentives for increased trade in shark fins. Despite calls from environmental groups, the TPP includes no prohibition on shark finning. The TPP's chapter dedicated to the environment only includes a non-binding list of measures that TPP countries "should" take to "promote" shark conservation, if they deem it "appropriate." This weak language would not prevent a TPP-facilitated increase in shark deaths via finning.

Excerpted from "Sharks, Tigers, and Elephants: New Analysis Reveals TPP Threats to Endangered Species" an article by Ben Beachy of the Sierra Club's Responsible Trade program, originally published on the Sierra Club's Compass blog on December 7, 2016. Read the complete article at <http://gjae.org/sharktig>.

What You Can Do

Call and email your members of Senators and US Representative and urge them to publicly commit to vote NO on TPP. You can find their names and contact information at <http://gjae.org/leg>

To learn more or to volunteer to stop TPP, contact:

Global Justice for Animals and the Environment

Phone: (718) 218-4523 * Email: info@gjae.org

Web: <http://freetradekillsanimals.org>

Facebook Page: <http://gjae.org/fbp>

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