

CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR SHARKS AND RAYS IN THE PACIFIC

It is estimated that 63 to 273 million sharks are killed every year in commercial fisheries due to the high demand for their fins and other shark products. Sanctuaries provide a haven for sharks and rays within a country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Because sharks and rays frequently cross Pacific jurisdictions, many of the Pacific countries are Parties to international conventions, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), to protect sharks and rays through regional cooperation.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) also recognises the ecological and cultural significance of sharks and rays in the Pacific Ocean and has developed conservation and management measures for sharks to be implemented throughout the region.

CITES APPENDIX II LISTINGS

CITES aims to eliminate unsustainable trade in species threatened with extinction. The listed shark species found in the Pacific Islands shown here are commonly traded and considered in need of greater global management. While not all Pacific countries are Parties to CITES, in order to trade these species with the 183 member countries, all governments must adhere to CITES regulations. For more information on these guidelines, please visit www.cites.org/sharks.



Oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)



Scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*), Great hammerhead (*S. mokarran*), Smooth hammerhead (*S. zygaena*)



Bigeye thresher (*Alopias superciliosus*), Common thresher (*A. vulpinus*), Pelagic thresher (*A. pelagicus*)



Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*)



Mobula ray (*Mobula* spp.)



Oceanic manta ray (*Manta birostris*), Reef manta ray (*M. alfredi*)

KEY

WCPFC Area PROHIBITS:

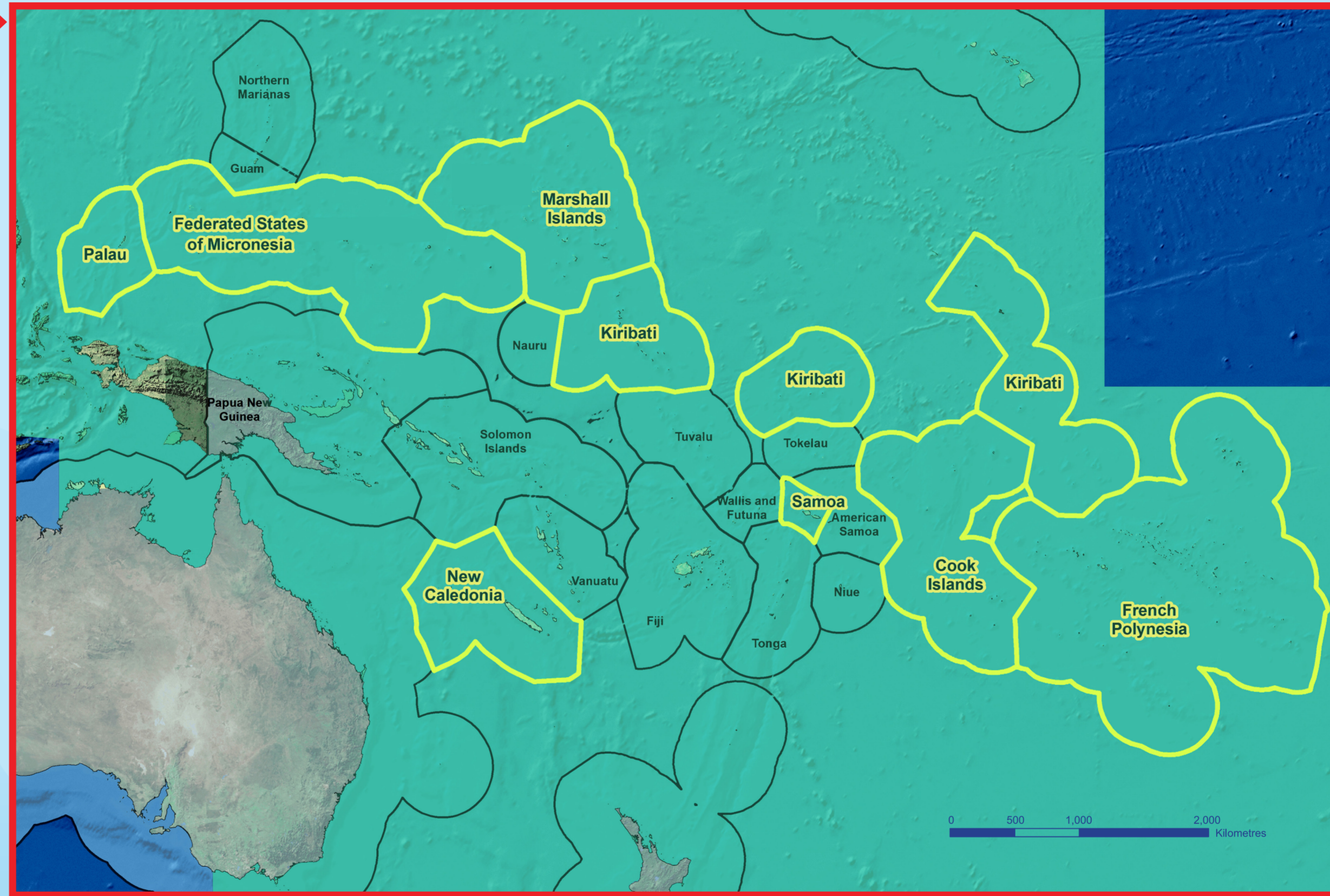
- The catching, landing, on-board vessel storage, and transshipment of oceanic whitetip and silky sharks (whole or in parts);
- The setting of purse seine nets on schools of tuna in the presence of a whale shark; and
- The use of shark lines or wire tracers/leaders.

Sanctuaries PROHIBIT:

- The commercial fishing of all shark species throughout the country's EEZ; and
- The possession, sale, trade, and import/export of sharks and shark products.

Many also PROHIBIT:

- The retention of shark and ray by-catch (dead or alive);
- The use of shark lines or wire tracers/leaders; and
- The transshipment of sharks and rays.



Sharks and rays play an important part in the cultures and traditions of the Pacific people. These species are not only featured in our songs, legends and myths, they are also considered sacred and taboo in many of the Pacific Islands. Sharks and rays are also used to identify or symbolise different families and clans in a community. Apart from their cultural significance, they maintain the health of corals reefs as top predators of the ocean. They are also worth more alive to the tourism industry, where one reef shark can bring in US\$1.9 million over its lifetime through sustainable ecotourism.

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