

April 12, 2017

Representative Brian Clem, Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: Oppose HB 3429**

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

Oceana is an international conservation organization dedicated to protecting the world's oceans. On behalf our Oregon-based staff and over 13,500 Oregon members, Oceana requests the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources oppose HB 3429 and reject attempts to weaken anti-wildlife trafficking Measure 100. Like many other organizations, businesses and individuals, Oceana endorsed Measure 100, which Oregon voters overwhelmingly approved last November. Measure 100 reinforces Oregon's long tradition of protecting imperiled species, and is urgently needed to help protect ocean wildlife including sea turtles, whales, sharks and rays.

House Bill 3429 would reduce the list of animals covered by Measure 100. It would limit protections to only those species listed on Appendix I or II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) or that are listed as vulnerable, endangered, critically endangered, extinct in the wild or extinct on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. Importantly, the immediate effect of HB 3429 is that it would dramatically reduce the number of shark and ray species covered by Measure 100.

According to the latest assessment of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group,<sup>1</sup> one in four shark and ray species are threatened with extinction. There are over 1,041 known shark and ray species and for most, available data are insufficient for assessing population status or trends, which can preclude a CITES or IUCN listing.

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<sup>1</sup> Dulvey et al. 2014. Extinction risk and conservation of the world's sharks and rays. *Elife*. Accessed at: <https://elifesciences.org/content/3/e00590>

Shark and ray populations are being depleted throughout the world's oceans. The primary and global threats to sharks and rays include overfishing by directed fisheries and incidental catches (bycatch), but also includes habitat loss and climate change. Sharks and rays are particularly vulnerable to overexploitation because they generally grow slowly and live long lives. Their relatively low reproductive rates mean their populations are slow to recover once overfished. While the global fin trade is widely recognized as a major driver of shark and ray mortality, demands for meat, liver oil, and even gillrakers (of manta rays and other rays) and shark teeth also pose substantial threats.<sup>2</sup>

Sharks are important in maintaining the health and balance of marine ecological communities. As apex predators, they directly and indirectly shape the communities of animals in marine ecosystems. Removing sharks can destabilize the food web and have widespread negative ecological impacts; even lead to the eventual disappearance of other populations, including commercially-caught fish and shellfish species lower in the food web.

It is important to note that Measure 100 was carefully crafted to not impact managed fisheries that take sharks and rays off Oregon. Measure 100 specifically excludes spiny dogfish (a type of shark) that make up over 98% of shark landings in Oregon.<sup>3</sup> Measure 100 also excludes shark and ray species managed under a U.S. fishery management plan in accordance with the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. §1851-1869).

Measure 100 provides meaningful policy change to safeguard global wildlife including sea turtles, whales, sharks and rays. Please reject HB 3429 that contravenes the will of the voters and would roll back efforts to protect global shark and ray species.

Sincerely,



Ben Enticknap  
Pacific Campaign Manager and Senior Scientist  
Oceana

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<sup>2</sup> Id.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Ed Bowles (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife). Letter to Ms. Eileen Sobeck (NOAA). (April 18, 2014) finding Oregon's shark fin law is consistent with the Magnuson Stevens Act. Accessed at: [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/laws\\_policies/sca/documents/oregon.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/laws_policies/sca/documents/oregon.pdf)