

SUBMISSION NO.29
TT 25 & 26 November 2009

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Department of House of Representatives

I am writing to voice my disappointment over the pending decision to ban all forms of fishing for short finned Mako sharks, long finned Mako sharks and Porebeagle sharks and find it to be unnecessary.

While I understand In December 2008 the three species of shark listed on Appendix II on the CMS, Appendix II requires members of the convention carefully manage the stock to conserve the species only.

The EPBC Conservation Act 1999 does not distinguish between the different levels of protection, results in Australia applying unnecessarily the highest level of protection to species being added to either appendix. Surely the EPBC is out dated and is in urgent need of attention.

I would also like to bring to your urgent attention to The National Interest Analysis [2009] ATNIA 26 paper compiled by Minister Garretts Department stated, It is anticipated that the costs for most sectors will be minor I as a avid fisherman spend thousands of dollars each year in fishing related expenses, season tickets for boat ramps (currently I have 2), boat registration, fishing licence, fishing tackle, boat maintenance, fuel for the boat and tow car, bait and burley, until recently I had a separate tow car, and the list goes on, to give you some idea for the first 10 days of this month I have spent in excess of \$1500 for my fishing. VRfish and Recfish just recently released figures showing 2.7 million dollars is spent on recreational fishing in Victoria alone. With a major part of that being spent on game fishing. Is this truly an interpretation of a minor cost?

The paper also added There is likely to be some cost associated with changes required by game or charter fishing operators where they target the species concerned. Here in Victoria we are limited on what game fish we can target, unlike some other more fortunate states, all we have are 3 main species the blue fin tuna, albacore and short finned Mako being the most prized. To say there will be some cost associated with this ban is a gross understatement. Bait and tackle stores and charter operators have estimated losses of tens of thousands of dollars effectively putting them out of business if the ban goes ahead. Thats business that, employ local people. Not to mention small costal towns that rely on the money that us fisherman spend when we go fishing in there towns, and what of the 10 game affiliated clubs in Victoria and there yearly competitions?

Yet the commercial fisherman have been excepted as stated in the EPBC Act, it provides an exception to these prohibitions where species are caught as by catch in accordance with management arrangements accredited under Part 13 of the Act. That as I understand it, is 20 or so makos per fishing trip.

I would like to bring to your consideration that experts in the field (marine biologist and scientist) Dr Jullian Pepperall, Dr John Stevens, Dr Barry Bruce and others all believe that whilst Mako sharks are migratory there is no interaction or migration between the fish in the Southern and Northern Hemispheres and even little if any migration East to West, all state there is no evidence of any connection between the Mediterranean Makes and Australian ones. Record distance moved by tagged fish DPI 2005 (PUP 2007) Clearly show that the furthest a Mako has traveled was 4,755 Kilometers, This is also backed up by the Pop up satellite tagging program being run by the Sardi Organisation. Figures gained by the game

fishing clubs tagging protocol show that Australian Mako sharks are in fact in healthy numbers.

If you can show me figures that prove all the above is wrong, I and most fisherman I am sure, would gladly stop fishing for Mako sharks, its our ocean and we are responsible for it, but I am happy to say all the information that I can get hold of shows a healthy sustainable fishery. And banning us Australians fishing for Makos will do absolutely nothing for the poor stocks in the Mediterranean, and at a great financial and social cost to us.

We keep hearing on the media that kids should get out and do sports to be fit and avoid obesity, not sit in front of the TV or computer games, yet each day we are restricted in what we can do, most 4x4 tracks have been closed in Victoria, the area were you can ride trail bikes have been limited, our fishing has been restricted with marine parks and new ports even some camping areas have been closed or heavily restricted. What message are we really sending our kids?

The biggest disappointment is how this decision was rushed through with no consultation with interested bodies, I as a tax paying voter, think it is my right to fish not a privilege, my young family will eat fresh fish once or twice a week, fish that we catch, fish that the kids catch, then help clean prepare and cook, we used to grow vegetables in the garden but due to water restrictions we are unable to do this, instead we have to buy the vegetables that someone else grows using the same water that I cant use, then truck them half way around the country so I can buy them in the supermarket, at the same time we are told to cut green house gasses, what a joke! Is this the same way our weekly supply of fish is going? I read a recent report from the UK that most UK kids when asked were vegetables came from, there response was the shop. We go out and fish and usually release more fish then we take home the kids even at this young age understand that we only take what we can eat, the rest go back to swim for another day. Most big Makos would also be released as they are not that good eating, it is only the smaller ones that are usually kept for the table.

Minister Garretts Department rushed this decision through, I assume because they think its important yet, I hear nothing about stopping trade with countries that are not signatories to the CMS, countries that openly practice shark fining, whaling(for scientific research), illegally fishing in our waters and the list goes on. Yet we here in Australia that do the right thing with our fisheries will suffer while the ones that rape and pillage the sea are free to go on doing so.

If you thought we as people that fish, would let this go quietly, you are greatly mistaken, we here in Victoria recently had a rushed meeting with around 400 people attending, all fisherman not just game fisherman, we all understand that this is the line, the line that needs to be drawn, for if we let this happen to us, what is next? I implore you to re think this decision and look for an amicable outcome, there is room to move on this one as I understand, I am sure if you look at the data that you will agree that the advice Minister Garretts Department received to make this decision was flawed.

As you can see I am passionate about this as many others are, fishing is more than a sport or a hobby its what we are, its what we do, all you need to do is have a quick look at the internet news and fishing sites to see how deep this decision has cut. Again I ask you as a voter what can you do to resolve this for me?

Yours faithfully

Daniel Stanilovic

12 January 2010