

SUBMISSION NO.5
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12 January 2010

The Honourable Peter Garrett MHR
Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Arts

The Honourable Tony Burke MHR
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry

Secretary of the Joint Standing Committee of
Treaties

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals –
Implementation of Bans on Short and Long Fin Mako and Porbeagle Sharks**

I write and seek your urgent reconsideration of the ban you propose to implement in relation to the above three species that are the subject of conservation concerns internationally.

First let me introduce myself:

I am a passionate recreational fisherman. I own 2 boats and fish extensively Victorian Bay and South Coast NSW oceanic waters.

I represent a family comprising 2 sons who are also passionate fishermen and more recently 3 grandsons who are quickly showing a passion even more extreme than their grandfather.

Equally passionate am I about teaching the ethics of sound fisheries management through habitat protection, limiting the fish kept for food, catch and release, tagging and the application of sound sport fishing techniques.

In fact privileged enough to have taken out the Tag and Release Point Score at the 2008 Merimbula Open.

I pioneered the use of Tuna Circle hooks back in the 1980s recognising long before it became a requirement that these facilitated catch and release with minimal harm.

I am a 28 year member of the Knox Boat Fishing Club, a club comprising approx 170 boatowners and their families - www.kbfc.org.au

I am a member of the Victorian Gamefishing Association

I fish more than once per week throughout the year, during 2009 spent 63 days on the water

I have well in excess of \$120,000 invested in my direct boating and fishing equipment, a further \$50,000 in a tow vehicle

I would spend throughout the year conservatively \$12,000 on accommodation, fuel, bait and tackle spread evenly amongst Melbourne and NSW South Coast businesses

I seek your reconsideration of the ban for the following reasons:

My review of the obligations as signatories to the Convention do not impose a no take ban on these Article II species

There has been NO consultation with recreational fishing stakeholders leading up to your proposed action

There is little (possibly none) evidence that the migration of our species ever extend into the northern hemisphere and in particular into the Mediterranean Sea

There is no evidence put forward that the Australian population of these species are in fact under threat

My own observations and direct experience is that the population of these fish (Mako in particular) has remained unchanged over the past 30 years

The result of these bans will have far reaching community and commercial consequences that have not been assessed

There is no evidence that the bans will have any positive impact on the vulnerability of the northern hemisphere stocks of these fish

There are steps to protection that have not been considered

The species will at all times remain under threat by the existing indiscriminate laying and operations of commercial long lines – or do we ban long lining altogether?

I remain available to provide any further advice to assist in your deliberations in relation to this matter and ask that in your deliberation, you do consider the impact that this has on the “ordinary” man and form a balanced view that demonstrates your commitment to your constituents and not just an international treaty.

I am not suggesting a total disregard for the international convention, as is the apparent case with whaling, just a balanced deliberation and implementation that takes all stakeholders into consideration.

Regards
Peter Haar