

**Dying for
some soup?**



**The truth behind
shark fin soup**



SOME FACTS TO THINK ABOUT:

- Sharks often have their fins sliced off while still alive
- Their finless bodies are thrown back into the sea where they sink to the bottom
- Unable to swim the shark bleeds to death, is eaten alive or suffocates
- Up to 100 million sharks are killed by man each year and this figure does not account for unreported killings
- Sharks breed late in life, have few offspring and many are being killed before they have a chance to reproduce
- Some shark populations have now declined by up to 95% in the last 50 years
- As apex predators, removing them from the ecosystem has serious knock-on effects
- The EU still has some of the weakest laws in the world regarding shark finning but are now acting to change this and close a dangerous '5% allowance' loophole
- The EU presently takes about 100,000 tonnes of sharks and their related species annually
- The main centre for the shark fin trade is Hong Kong with an estimated 70 - 80% of all fins traded through there
- The EU annually provides about 25% of the fins brought into and traded in Hong Kong presently
- The largest of the sharks, the whale shark, who filter feeds on microscopic plankton, often has its fins removed only to serve as a decoration at shark fin soup restaurants in Asia
- The shark fin is tasteless and so the soup is flavoured with either chicken or pork stock to give it flavour
- Shark can be found for sale under the deceptive name of Rock Salmon in some places, particularly in the UK to an unsuspecting public
- Sharks contain high residual levels of heavy metals such as highly toxic mercury in the form of methyl mercury that can have irreversible damaging effects on the central nervous system and fetal development
- You wouldn't support ivory poaching or animal torture, please don't support the shark fin trade either
- For more information on shark finning and how you can make a difference, along with other marine issues please visit www.wildseas.org

