

RECOMMENDATION

CARCHARIAS TAURUS - GREY NURSE SHARK

The Fisheries Scientific Committee, established under Part 7A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (the Act), has made a recommendation to support the nomination to list the Grey Nurse Shark, *Carcharias taurus* as a VULNERABLE SPECIES on Schedule 5 of the Act.

Listing of Vulnerable Species is provided for by Part 7A, Division 2 of the Act.

Carcharias taurus Rafinesque, 1810 (family Odontaspidae) has also been known in the local literature as *Odontaspis cinerea* Ramsay, 1880; *Carcharias arenarius* Ogilby, 1911; and *Eugomphodus taurus*. Overseas, this species is also known as the sand tiger shark or spotted ragged-tooth shark.

The Fisheries Scientific Committee has found that:

1. *Carcharias taurus* has been recorded from temperate waters of all oceans except the eastern Pacific, including the length of the NSW coast.
2. *Carcharias taurus* has very low fecundity, with a maximum of two young born every two years following an estimated 9-12 month pregnancy.
3. *Carcharias taurus* suffered significant declines in NSW, from spearfishing and other causes, particularly in the 1960s and 70s.
4. *Carcharias taurus* has the following official conservation status:
 - Vulnerable on Schedule 1 of the *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992* (Commonwealth).
 - Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
 - Protected in NSW waters under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.
 - Protected in Queensland waters.
5. Despite protection since 1984 in NSW waters, the population does not show a noteworthy increase in population size. *Carcharias taurus* is taken as bycatch of commercial and recreational line fishing in NSW.

In view of the evidence of population decline and failure to recover after 14 years of protection in NSW and the continuing threat of line fishing, the Fisheries Scientific Committee is of the opinion that the species is likely to become endangered unless the circumstances and factors threatening its survival cease to operate and that therefore the species qualifies for inclusion on Schedule 5 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* as a VULNERABLE SPECIES.

Dr Andrew Sanger
Chair
Fisheries Scientific Committee