

## 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 a nomination to list the grey nurse shark, *Carcharias taurus* as an ENDANGERED SPECIES in Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the Act and as a consequence, remove it from Schedule 5 (vulnerable species).

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

The Fisheries Scientific Committee has found that:

1. *Carcharias taurus* Rafinesque, 1810 of the 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.
2. *Carcharias taurus* has been recorded from temperate waters of all oceans except the eastern Pacific, including the length of the NSW coast.
3. *Carcharias taurus* has very low fecundity, with a maximum of two young born every two years following an estimated 9-12 month pregnancy.
4. *Carcharias taurus* has the following official conservation status:
  - Listed as vulnerable in Schedule 1 of the *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992* (Commonwealth);
  - Currently listed as vulnerable in Schedule 5 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*;
  - Listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species;
  - Listed as vulnerable by the Australian Society for Fish Biology; and
  - Protected in Queensland waters.
5. *Carcharias taurus* suffered significant declines in NSW, from spearfishing and other causes, particularly in the 1960s and 70s and is currently taken as bycatch in commercial and recreational line fishing in NSW.
6. Despite protection since 1984 in NSW waters, the species has not shown an increase in population size.
7. Current research (quarterly surveys from November 1998) indicates a much lower adult population size than when the species was recommended to be listed as a vulnerable species in NSW (early 1999), and the status of juvenile numbers in the sampled population is uncertain.

8. In light of 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 the Fisheries Scientific Committee is of the opinion that *Carcharias taurus* is likely to become extinct in nature in New South Wales unless the circumstances and factors threatening its survival or evolutionary development cease to operate. Therefore the species qualifies for inclusion in Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* as an ENDANGERED SPECIES.

Dr Andrew Sanger  
Chairperson  
Fisheries Scientific Committee