



## New shark possession and landing rules for commercial fishers

**From 1 February 2023, all sharks on commercial boats must be whole or trunked with fins naturally attached.**

### Why has fins naturally attached been introduced?

In 2000, Western Australia was one of the first Australian jurisdictions to prohibit the practice of shark finning. This was achieved by introducing legislation that required commercial fishers to bring the entire shark trunk and fins (cut off) back to land together.

With an increasing number of shark species listed in international agreements, there was a need for improved traceability in the context of protected species and the trade of shark product.

Fins naturally attached is currently best practice in shark fisheries management and is a mandatory requirement in the third Marine Stewardship Council standard.

Adopting management measures that support long-term sustainable and acceptable fishing practices help support social licence in the commercial fishing industry.



## How is fins naturally attached applied to commercial fishers?

In Western Australia, all shark species are commercially protected and can only be targeted and retained in a small number of commercial fisheries.

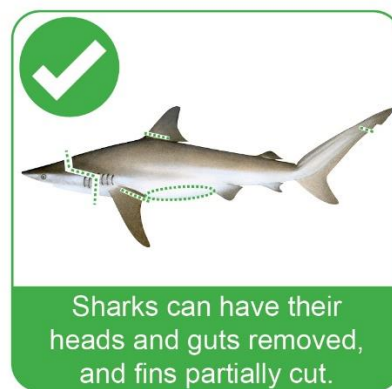
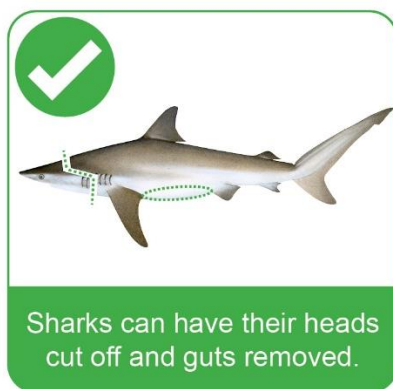
From 1 February 2023, operators in these commercial fisheries can only possess and land whole or trunked (gutted with head removed) sharks, with fins naturally attached, unless otherwise provided for in a fishery's management plan.

To facilitate processing and storage, fishers can partially cut the fins, including for the purposes of draining blood to avoid ammonisation, and fold them around the trunk.

However, fins should be attached to a substantial part of the shark, allowing the shark to be easily identified to the species level.

Before sharks are brought back to land, commercial fishers are prohibited from:

- Removing any fin from a shark;
- Removing any fin from a shark and re-attaching it by any other means; and
- Filleting sharks.



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## Where can I find out more?

More information on the application of fins naturally attached can be found in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) '[A guide to landing shark species with Fins Naturally Attached](#)'.

A '[field identification guide to Western Australian sharks and shark-like rays](#)', can be found on DPIRD's website.

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