

**Hon Nathan Guy**  
Minister for Primary Industries

**Hon Dr Nick Smith**  
Minister of Conservation



## **Media Statement**

**9 January 2014**

### **Shark fin ban confirmed and timetable tightened**

Primary Industries Minister Nathan Guy and Conservation Minister Dr Nick Smith today confirmed the Government's decision to ban shark finning and have tightened the timetable in response to 45,300 submissions on the National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks.

"The 45,300 submissions in favour of the proposal to ban finning show New Zealanders' attitudes to sharks have come a long way since the 'Jaws' days. It is now widely recognised that sharks are an important part of the marine ecosystem and that we need to ensure the 113 species of shark in our waters survive," Dr Smith says.

"We have taken on board submitters' concerns that the timetable for banning shark finning should be sooner. A first tranche of shark species will be covered by the shark finning ban from 1 October 2014, a second tranche from 1 October 2015, and only the highly migratory blue sharks will be left until 1 October 2016. This tightened timetable is achievable and puts in place these new protections for sharks as quickly as possible," Mr Guy says.

"It is already an offence under the Animal Welfare Act to fin a shark and return it to sea alive. Under the extended ban, it will also become illegal to catch a shark, kill it, remove its fins and dump the carcass at sea," Mr Guy says.

The National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (NPOA) also contains a range of goals for the conservation and management of sharks to maintain their biodiversity and long-term viability, including communication and education, non-fishing threats, international engagement, and research and information.

"Sharks play an important role in our marine ecosystems, and this plan builds on New Zealand's proud history of balancing conservation and the prudent use of resources to ensure their long-term sustainability," Dr Smith says.

"The commercial fishing industry has been aware for some time that changes were coming. Timing for the banning of shark finning provides sufficient lead in for the industry to practically adjust their processes," Mr Guy says.

The NPOA-Sharks will be reviewed again in 2017, with the intention of issuing a revised NPOA in 2018.

The NPOA-Sharks is available at <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>

### **Media contacts:**

Rachael Bruce (Dr Smith) 021 841 087  
Phil Rennie (Mr Guy) 021 405 443