



SENATOR THE HON RICHARD COLBECK

Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Senator for Tasmania

M E D I A R E L E A S E

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Petition to stop mako fishing ban receives nation-wide support

A petition calling on the Federal Labor Government to stop its banning of mako shark fishing is receiving nation-wide support.

Federal Coalition spokesman for Fisheries Senator Richard Colbeck said the Christmas and New Year break did not prevent recreational fishermen from indicating their strong opposition to the Federal Government's plan to ban mako shark fishing.

"Petitions from every State have started flooding into my office," Senator Colbeck said.

"I anticipate hundreds if not thousands more signatures will be sent in over coming weeks for formal presentation to the Australian Parliament."

Senator Colbeck said Environment Minister Peter Garrett's plan to list longfin mako, shortfin mako and porbeagle shark species under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act is planned to take effect from 29 January.

"The listing of these shark species will come at a significant cost to game fishing clubs, charter fishing operators, bait and tackle stores and fishing families," Senator Colbeck said.

"Many fishing families spend hundreds if not thousands of dollars preparing their boats and buying reels and other game fishing equipment. Should the ban go ahead, this will be money down the drain.

"Even with all of these costs, Minister Garrett has himself admitted there is no science to indicate the numbers of these shark species are in any significant danger."

"I encourage as many recreational fishers, their families and others who will be impacted by Minister Garrett's mako ban to sign the petition and send it to my office as soon as possible."

The national petition calls on Minister Garrett to:

1. postpone any decision to implement any no-take policy on shortfin mako, longfin mako and porbeagle sharks beyond this fishing season;
2. begin a genuine consultation process involving both the recreational and commercial fishing sectors, including game fishing clubs;
3. publish and explain, as part of the consultative process, the science relating to any shark fishing ban proposals including the status of the species in Australian waters; and
4. develop, with input and feedback from both the recreational and commercial fishing sectors, credible protocols for the management of the fishery prior to any bans being implemented.