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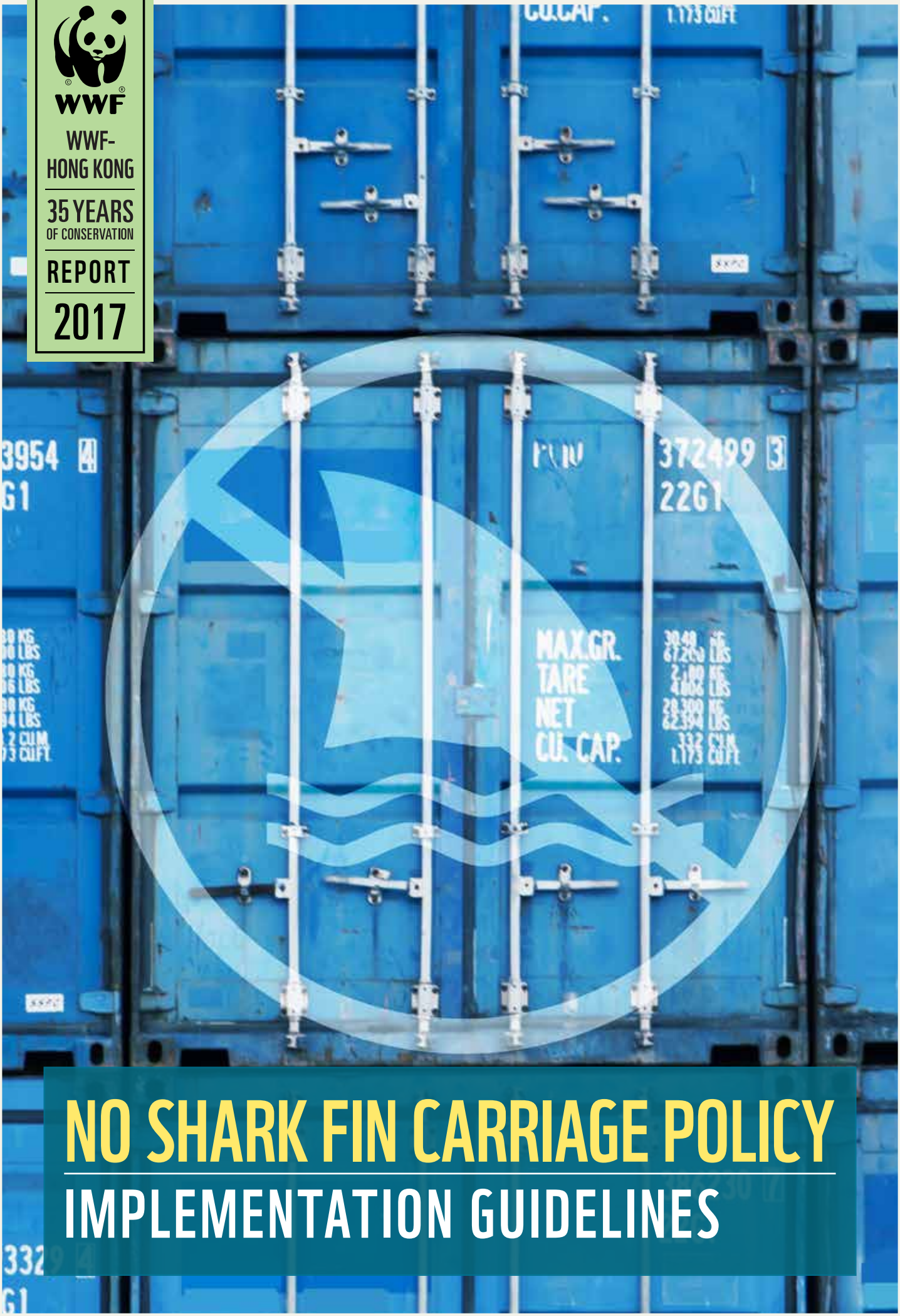
HONG KONG

35 YEARS
OF CONSERVATION

REPORT

2017



NO SHARK FIN CARRIAGE POLICY

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

ABOUT WWF

WWF is one of the world's most respectable conservation organizations, with a network active in more than 100 countries. Founded in 1961 with headquarters based in Switzerland, WWF's mission is to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- Conserving the world's biological diversity
- Ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- Promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

WWF-Hong Kong has been working since 1981 to deliver solutions for a living planet through Conservation, Footprint and Education programmes.

In support of our global mission, WWF-Hong Kong's vision is to transform Hong Kong into Asia's most sustainable city where nature is conserved, carbon pollution is reduced, and consumption is environmentally responsible.

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Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) swimming near Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Peninsula, Baja California Sur, Mexico

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sharks include some of the top predators in the ocean, and they are vital players in maintaining the balance of a healthy marine ecosystem. However, because of their late maturation and low birth rate, their population growth rate are relatively low. This means that it can take a long period of time for the shark population to recover its numbers. Sharks are facing challenges such as overfishing and international trading of shark fin, and it is important for shipping companies to acknowledge and understand this issue as they play a big part in the trading of shark fin.

Shark fin consumption is common in the Chinese tradition, and Hong Kong accounts for 50 per cent of the global shark fin trade annually. By knowing the active players in the supply chain, Hong Kong could contribute itself to global shark conservation. According to WWF-Hong Kong's research and engagement, as of July 2017, the world's largest shipping companies that account for 79.5 per cent of the industry's market share have established a No Shark Fin Carriage policy.

While this leadership commitment by shipping companies in past few years is a huge conservation achievement, the 2016 shark fin import trade data of Hong Kong does not yet show a drop in trade volume. This is an indicator that these commitments are difficult to operationalize. With help from leading shipping companies, WWF has identified some key challenges to implementing global carriage policies, and loopholes to implement a No Shark Fin Carriage policy that are being exploited by unscrupulous traders:

1. **Discrepancy on bills of lading and declarations to customs, in terms of commodity declaration and languages**
2. **Shipping companies do not have sufficient market intelligence to be able to hone in on suspicious shipments**

To facilitate shipping companies to establish or implement their no shark fin carriage policy, WWF-Hong Kong has consulted with major shipping companies and their front line staff to create No Shark Fin Carriage policy – Implementation Guidelines.

This report emphasizes the importance of sharks and the role of shipping companies on shark conservation issues. A set of tools have been developed to facilitate shipping companies to identify shipments at high risk of being shark fin. These include: shipper lists, consignee lists, countries and port lists, as well as common commodity descriptions of shark fin in other languages. WWF-Hong Kong recommends shipping companies to make World Customs Organization HS code as a mandatory item on bills of lading. This would help shipping companies to identify shark fin products whenever a shipment order is received. In addition, WWF-Hong Kong urges all shipping companies to minimize the risk of their involvement in the illegal shark fin trade by submitting all relevant documents to the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department through e-channels in advance wherever possible. This provides the Customs more time to perform risk profiling and to detect illegal shark fin shipments. These tools to identify high-risk shipments, along with additional measures, are incorporated into a recommended flow chart of the screening process.

In addition, shipping companies need to ensure their staff to have sufficient capacity to implement No Shark Fin Carriage policy. They also need to keep regular and frequent communication with the Customs to understand the patterns of the illegal shark fin trade.

Leading shipping companies can show they incorporate these guidelines into their standard operating procedures, and by sharing their experience with other companies in the industry who can follow suit.

Smuggling shark fin onto ships is a global problem. Therefore, the guidelines described in this document go well beyond Hong Kong. By working together, the global shipping industry can play a pivotal role in ending the often unsustainable trade of shark products, and make a significant contribution to shark conservation, ensuring our oceans are healthy, productive and resilient.

2. ABOUT SHARKS AND THEIR TRADE

Sharks include the top predators of the world's oceans. They help to maintain the marine ecosystem balance. They are particularly vulnerable to overfishing as they mature late and have few offspring, or pups. Though many governments are working increasingly hard to conserve these species, the high profits for trading shark fin drives an illegal trade.

US$2.5 TRILLION TO GLOBAL ECONOMY

THE OCEANS CONTRIBUTE US$2.5 TRILLION TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY EACH YEAR, AND SUPPORT THE LIVELIHOODS OF COUNTLESS COMMUNITIES

2.1 BIOLOGY

Sharks have existed on the planet for more than 400 million years. There are over 1,000 species of sharks and rays with over 400 shark species, from 40 foot Whale sharks to the 8-inch-long Dwarf Lantern shark.

Their biology means shark populations are slow to recover when their numbers have been depleted, the loss of apex predators may cause "knock-on" effects[1]. New research released in 2013[2] has shown that the decline in shark populations would create cascading effects on the recovery of coral reefs. Shark losses can also contribute to the destruction of the delicate balance of ocean ecosystems, which are important for the numerous species that depend on it and for humans. The oceans contribute US$2.5 trillion to the global economy each year, and support the livelihoods of countless communities[3].

100 MILLION SHARKS

100 MILLION SHARKS ARE KILLED ANNUALLY

2.2 THREAT OF OVERFISHING

A quarter of the world's sharks, rays and related species, are threatened with extinction[4]. According to the latest figures presented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations[5], 790,046 tonnes of shark species were captured in 2014. While one study estimated that 100 million sharks are killed annually[6]. Sharks are often caught by fishermen targeting other species[7], such as on longlines with baited hooks targeting tuna[8]. Often, they are regarded as a "secondary catch", and if similar in value to the targeted species, taken and sold on the market.

© naturepl.com / Cheryl-Samantha Owen / WWF

The primary threat to sharks and related species is overfishing

12 SHARK SPECIES

AS OF 2017, 12 SHARK SPECIES ARE LISTED ON CITES APPENDIX II

2.3 ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, UNREGULATED FISHING

Governments worldwide are working to conserve sharks. Numerous shark management regulations have been established. For example, the United States has listed the Scalloped Hammerhead Shark (*Sphyrna lewini*) as a nationally endangered species[9].

Unfortunately, the huge profit brought by the shark products trade drives illegal sourcing in many places. In 2012, the Taiwan Fisheries Agency officially announced the "Shark's Fins Naturally Attached" policy which aims to ban shark finning[10]. However, in 2016, an environmental group found that shark finning by Taiwanese fishing vessels was still active[11]. Another recent case was found in 2017, with a Taiwanese business woman sentenced to prison in Costa Rica because of shark finning, in which she was "responsible for damage to Costa Rica's natural resources"[12].

Governments are gearing up to protect sharks through appropriate domestic and international regulations, though implementation remains a challenge. For example, in 2015, India announced a ban on shark fin exports, while trade data from the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department showed that 58,708kg[13] of shark fin originating from India was imported into Hong Kong in 2016.

In addition to domestic regulations, international trade regulation including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has recently tightened up the trade. As of 2017, 12 shark species are listed on its Appendix II which indicates international trade for certain species are allowed but needs to be sustainable and legal. For example, in Hong Kong, a CITES permit is needed if the products from these shark species would be imported to or re-exported from Hong Kong. The following table shows the shark species' scientific and common names.

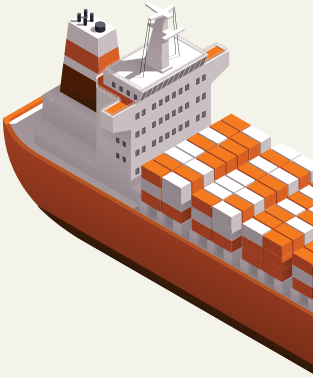
12 SHARK SPECIES LISTED ON APPENDIX II OF CITES

Table 1 :

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Basking Shark	*Cetorhinus maximus*
Great Hammerhead Shark	*Sphyrna mokarran*
Great White Shark	*Carcharodon carcharias*
* Oceanic Whitetip Shark	*Carcharhinus longimanus*
Porbeagle Shark	*Lamna nasus*
* Scalloped Hammerhead Shark	*Sphyrna lewini*
#* Silky Shark	*Carcharhinus falciformis*
* Smooth Hammerhead Shark	*Sphyrna zygaena*
#* Thresher Sharks (3 species in total)	*Alopias spp*
Whale Shark	*Rhincodon typus*

* Found in local wholesale shark fin market

This will not come into effect until October 2017



2.4 ILLEGAL SHARK FIN TRADE FOUND IN HONG KONG

Shark fin is often used as an example of "wildlife trafficking". In 2013, the United Nations Office on Durgs and Crime's (UNODC) Executive Director Yury Fedotov stated that "We need to raise awareness of the devastation caused by the markets for ivory, rhino horn, bushmeat, exotic parrots and shark fins. We must make consumers aware that this crime is far from victimless[14]."

1,280 KG

IN JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2017,1,280KG OF SUSPECTED SCHEDULED DRIED SHARK FINS WERE FOUND IN 4 CONTAINERS WITHOUT ANY RELEVANT PERMITS

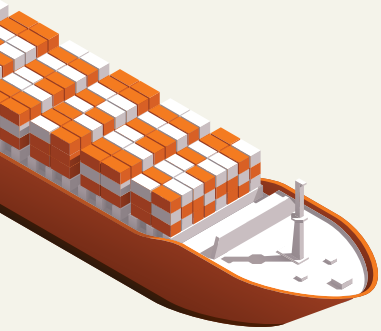
According to the Hong Kong Customs, three illegal import cases of CITES-controlled shark fins were detected in 2016. In March 2016, an unclaimed bag contained 46kg of suspected scheduled shark fins was found in the Hong Kong International Airport. In June and July 2016, around 1,043 kg of suspected scheduled shark fins, which were not covered by a valid license, were found separately in two shipments from Oman and Panama[15].

In January to February 2017, about 1,280 kilograms of dried shark fins, suspected to be hammerhead sharks and oceanic whitetip sharks, were found in four containers from India, Egypt, Kenya and Peru without any relevant permits[16].

Given the complexity in identifying legal vs illegal shark fin, and an increasing number of regulatory efforts to protect sharks, the above cases may well be just the tip of the iceberg.

© naturepl.com / Jeff Rotman / WWF

Drying shark fins to trade with Hong Kong for shark fin soup. Umhlanga, South Africa



3. ROLE OF SHIPPING COMPANIES

3.1 TRANSPORT MODES – TRADE DATA FOUND IN HONG KONG

According to the Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, cross border trade transportation falls into four categories: "Air", "Land", "Ocean", and "Others". Over the past five years, most shark fins are imported through the "Ocean" route.

2012-2016 SHARK PRODUCTS - MODE OF TRANSPORT IMPORT VOLUME

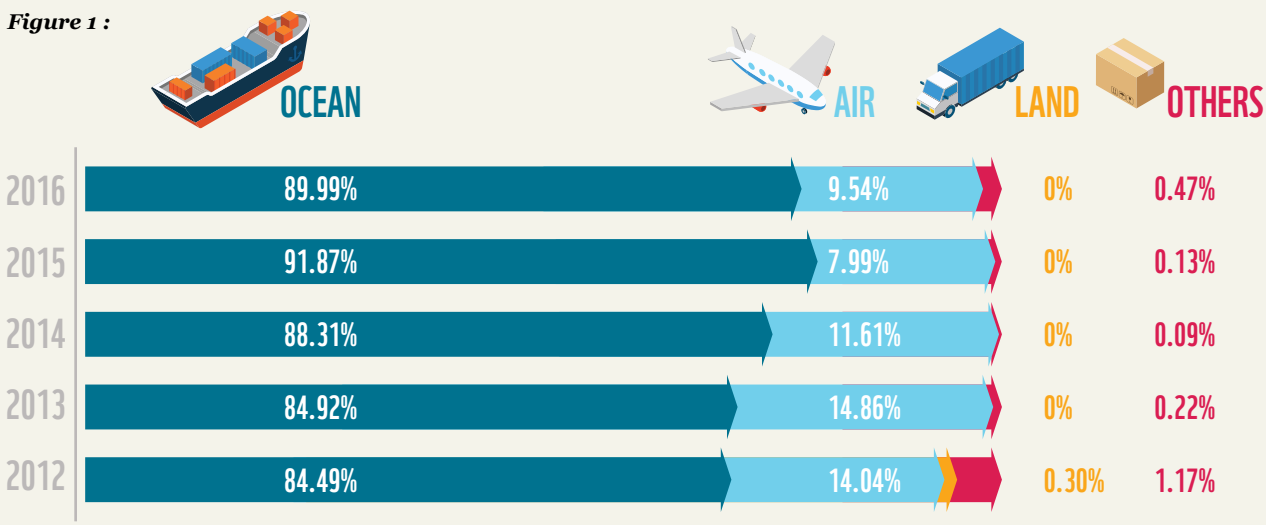
Table 2 :

TRANSPORT MODE / YEAR	2012 (TONNES)	2013 (TONNES)	2014 (TONNES)	2015 (TONNES)	2016 (TONNES)
Air	1,164	804	668	457	551
Land	25	0.07	0	0.01	0
Ocean	7,000	4,596	5,085	5,253	5,197
Others	97	12	5	8	27
Total	8,285	5,412	5,759	5,718	5,775

Note: There is no shark fishing in Hong Kong. Shark fins sold and traded in Hong Kong are all imported.

HONG KONG SHARK PRODUCTS IMPORTED ANNUALLY AND TRANSPORTATION MODES

Figure 1 :



From the data shown above, shipping companies play by far the single most important role in the supply chain.

3.2 SHIPPING COMPANIES THAT BANNED SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS

As of June 2017, 15 shipping companies[17] have banned shark fin shipments representing 79.5 per cent of the global market share in the shipping industry. (T.S Lines and Interasia have established No Shark Fin Carriage Policy just before the publication of this guidelines) WWF-Hong Kong urges all shipping companies that banned shark fin shipments should publicly annouce their policies, so as to avoid possible miscommunication among their customers or other stakeholders.

SHIPPING COMPANIES THAT BANNED SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS, MARKET SHARE, POLICY STATUS AS OF 1 JUNE 2017

Table 3 :

GLOBAL RANKING*	COMPANY NAME	OPERATOR'S SHARE OF THE WORLD LINER FLEET (IN TEUs)**	POLICY SET UP DAY	POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT DAY
1	Maersk[18]	16.2%	Since 2010	
2	MSC[19]	14.7%	21 January, 2016	
3	CMA CGM (APL is now under the ownership of CMA CGM)	11.0%	January, 2017	NA
4	COSCO[20]	8.3%	26 July, 2016	
6	Hapag-Lloyd[21] (Hapag-Lloyd and UASC merged in 2017)	7.3%	Since 2013	September 2015
7	OOCL[22]	3.3%	15 February, 2016	
8	Yang Ming	2.8%	August 2015	NA
9	NYK Line	2.7%	1 April, 2016	NA
10	Hamburg Süd[23]	2.7%	Implemented for several years	November 2015
11	MOL[24]	2.4%	18 May, 2015	
12	PIL	1.8%	Reported to have implemented for a long time	Reported to have this policy reiterated to its network as of 1 January, 2016
13	HMM[25]	1.7%	13 November, 2015	
14	'K' Line	1.7%	May 2015	NA
15	ZIM	1.6%	Exact date unknown	NA
16	Wan Hai	1.1%	June 2015	

* Based on the "Alphaliner Top 100" figures as of June 2017

** TEU=an inexact unit of cargo capacity, generally measured as a 20-foot long container and referred to as a Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU)

3.3 SHIPPING COMPANIES THAT ACCEPT SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS WITH CITES PERMIT

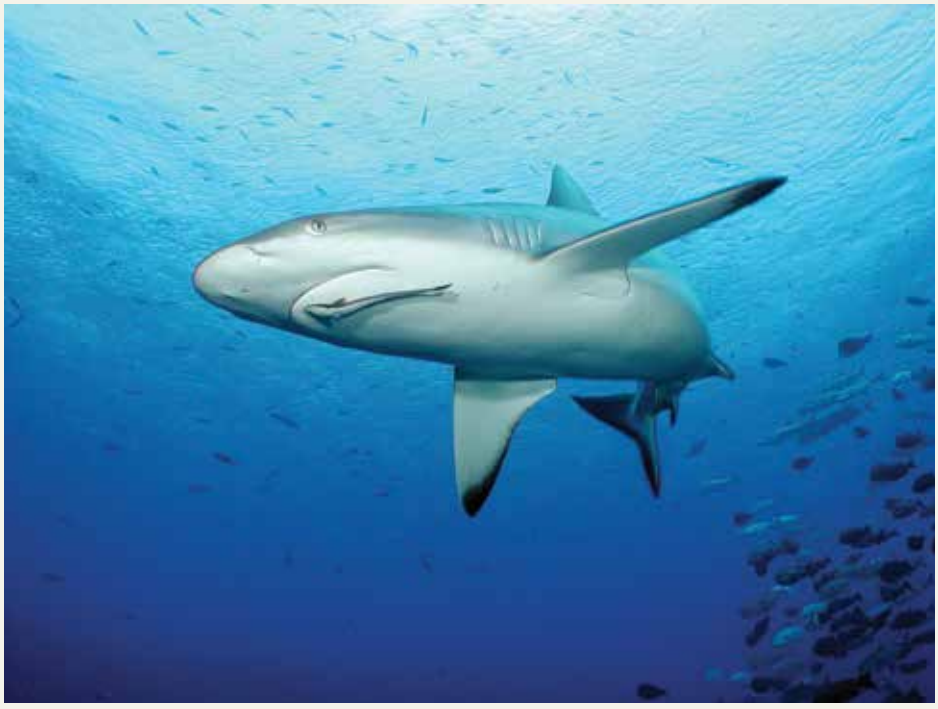
SHIPPING COMPANIES THAT BAN SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS BUT ALLOW EXCEPTIONS FOR SPECIES WITH CITES PERMITS

Table 4 :

GLOBAL RANKING*	COMPANY NAME	OPERATOR'S SHARE OF THE WORLD LINER FLEET (IN TEUs)**	POLICY SET UP DAY	POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT DAY
5	Evergreen Line[26]	4.8%	11 July, 2013	

3.4 JOIN FORCES TO COMBAT ILLEGAL SHIPMENTS

The logistics sector can play a pivotal role in combating illegal shipments. In 2016, giants from the shipping and airlines industries have signed the "The Buckingham Palace Declaration"[27]. The undersigned agree to share information about high risk illegal transport routes and provide updates on wildlife relevant regulations. Shipping companies COSCO, Hamburg Süd and Maersk are also signatories.

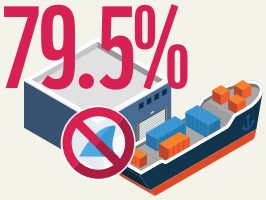


© Cat Holloway / WWF

As top predators of the ocean, sharks play a critical role in maintaining the marine ecosystem

4. HIGH RISK SHARK FIN SHIPMENT IDENTIFICATION TOOLS: RISK ASSESSMENT

Hong Kong accounts for about 50 per cent of the global shark fin trade. The trends as observed in Hong Kong such as export source countries and ports, the supplier involved in the trade as indicated in this research, can be applied globally to help shipping companies tackle this global issue of illegal shark fin shipments.



AS OF JUNE 2017, 15 LEADING SHIPPING COMPANIES REPRESENTING 79.5 PER CENT OF THE CONTAINER SHIPPING INDUSTRY HAVE BANNED SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS

Shark fin imports encountered a tremendous decrease in 2013 compared with 2012, but since then, the import volume remained at around 5,600 tonnes. As of June 2017, 15 leading shipping companies representing 79.5 per cent of the container shipping industry have banned shark fin shipments. In addition, at least 30 airlines have established their No Shark Fin Carriage policies. However while shipping companies remain committed to helping conserve the world's oceans, an analysis of the trade data indicates that there are challenges in implementation.

The single largest challenge we have identified is for shipping companies to properly identify suspected shark fin shipments. Almost all the cargo on container ships are "shippers load, count and seal". The shipping agreement between shippers / consignees with shipping companies are based on trust. But are the consignees completely trustworthy? Currently, some consignees simply declare shark fin cargo as 'frozen seafood' and continue to ship shark fin regardless of whether the shipping company has a No Shark Fin Carriage policy. This is not an uncommon practice. Such mis-declaration is a significant challenge for shipping companies to implement their policies. In this regard, shipping companies need to identify a high-risk list of consignees and points of origin. Shipping companies can be more alert when receiving shipment request from the high-risk list. This could help the companies to avoid unintentional shark fin shipments.

Tips:
According to WWF-Hong Kong's research, shark fin is often shipped with other high-valued seafood products including fish maw. Shark fin can be mis-declared as frozen seafood or dried seafood product.

The following tools can help shipping companies identify high-risk shark fin shipment orders.

4.1 HIGH-RISK SHIPPERS OR CONSIGNEES LIST

With the help of shipping companies and our own research, WWF-Hong Kong has consolidated a growing list of high-risk shippers and consignees. The list is compiled based on the past shark fin trade record of these shippers and consignees. As more shipping companies provide this information and with WWF-Hong Kong's ongoing research revealing more unscrupulous consignees, this list will keep growing to match the needs of the shipping companies. Due to the confidential nature of the information, this list will only be shared directly with shipping companies upon request.

Please visit:
http://www.wwf.org.hk/nosharkfinshipping_en/

4.2 HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES / REGIONS WITH HIGH-RISK LOADING PORTS

Hong Kong is an important shark fin trading hub. By knowing the active country players and the most frequent shark fin trading ports, shipping companies can focus on the most important frontline staff who need to deal with suspicious shipments from and to these countries and ports, and to be more alert on shipments coming from these locations when handling shipment orders.

© Jürgen Freund / WWF

Shark fins laid out to dry, Hong Kong

HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES / REGIONS WITH HIGH-RISK LOADING PORTS

The following map shows the top 10 (in terms of volume) shark fin import countries / regions to Hong Kong(HK) in 2016, and top 5 (in terms of volume) re export countries / regions from Hong Kong(HK) in 2016. The map also shows shark fin loading ports. Trade data was retrieved from the Hong Kong government, and port list was consolidated from WWF's own research and information sharing from shipping companies.

Shipping companies can take it as reference to create their own "High-Risk Countries / Regions and High risk loading ports List"

Boston

Over 1.3 million tonnes of cargo passes through Massport's terminals in the Port of Boston[37].

Washington

There are 75 ports in Washington State[43].

Mazatlán

Mazatlán is a city in the Mexico. It is a multi-purpose port which handles commercial, tourist, fishing and oil, of regional influence[44].

Manzanillo

Manzanillo is a city in the state of Colima, Mexico. The port that registered the best performance during 2015 was 2.45 million TEUs[29].

Colon

Colon is the capital of Panama's Colón Province. The port that registered the best performance during 2015 was 3.5 million[46].

Guayaquil

Guayaquil located in Ecuador. The Port of Guayaquil handled 1.7 million TEUs in 2015[34].

Callao

Callao is the chief seaport of Peru[31], handling approximately 75 per cent of the country's maritime trade[32].

Vigo

Vigo is a city in Galicia. It handles 200,000 TEUs annually[39].

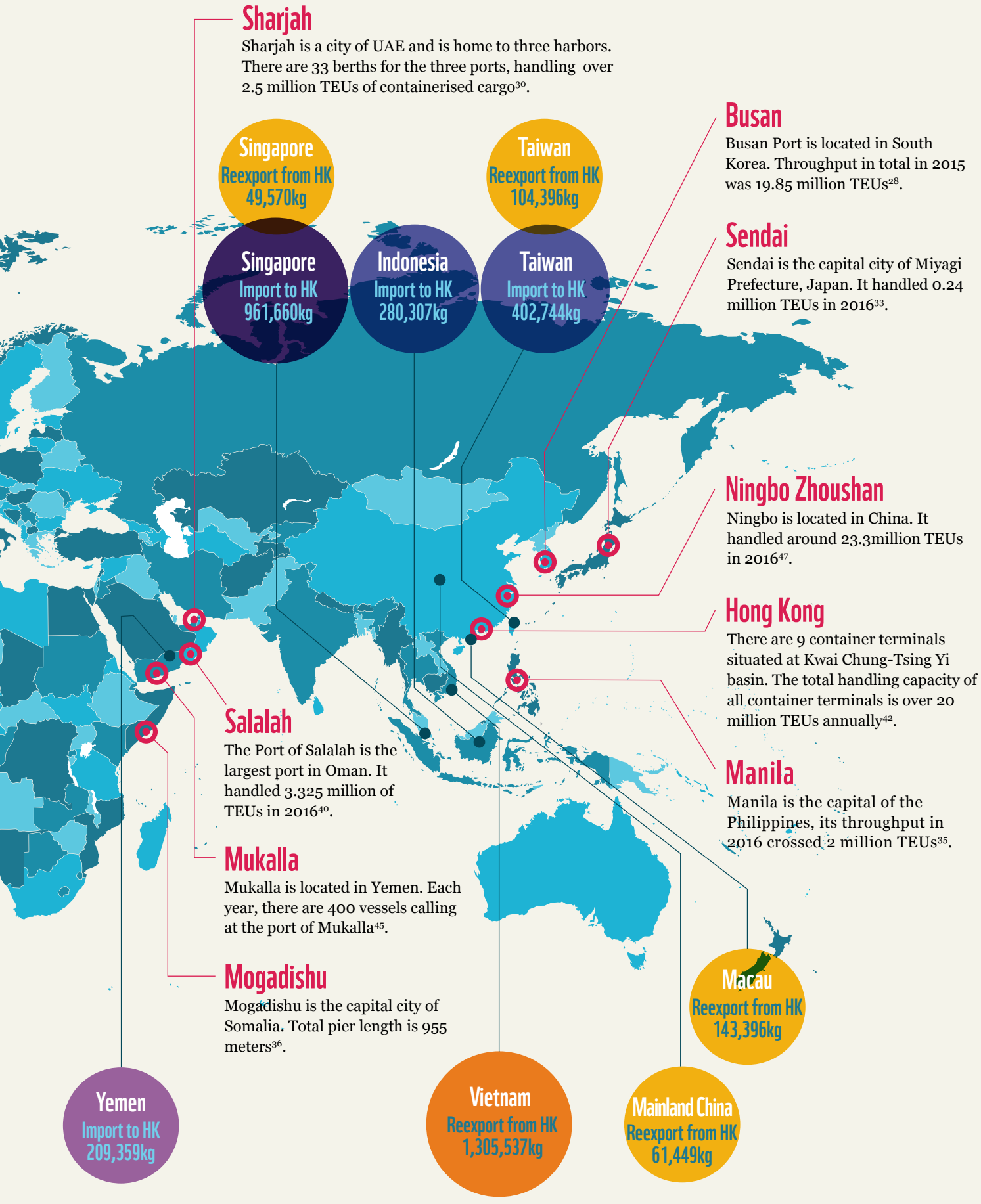
Balboa

Balboa is the Pacific-side port of the Panama Canal. Annual capacity is around 4 to 5 million TEUs[41].

Georgetown

Georgetown is the capital of Guyana. Total TEUs in 2010 was 0.05 million TEUs[38].

High-Risk Shark Fin Ports



Sharjah

Sharjah is a city of UAE and is home to three harbors. There are 33 berths for the three ports, handling over 2.5 million TEUs of containerised cargo[30].

Busan

Busan Port is located in South Korea. Throughput in total in 2015 was 19.85 million TEUs[28].

Sendai

Sendai is the capital city of Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. It handled 0.24 million TEUs in 2016[33].

Ningbo Zhoushan

Ningbo is located in China. It handled around 23.3million TEUs in 2016[47].

Hong Kong

There are 9 container terminals situated at Kwai Chung-Tsing Yi basin. The total handling capacity of all container terminals is over 20 million TEUs annually[42].

Manila

Manila is the capital of the Philippines, its throughput in 2016 crossed 2 million TEUs[35].

Salalah

The Port of Salalah is the largest port in Oman. It handled 3.325 million of TEUs in 2016[40].

Mukalla

Mukalla is located in Yemen. Each year, there are 400 vessels calling at the port of Mukalla[45].

Mogadishu

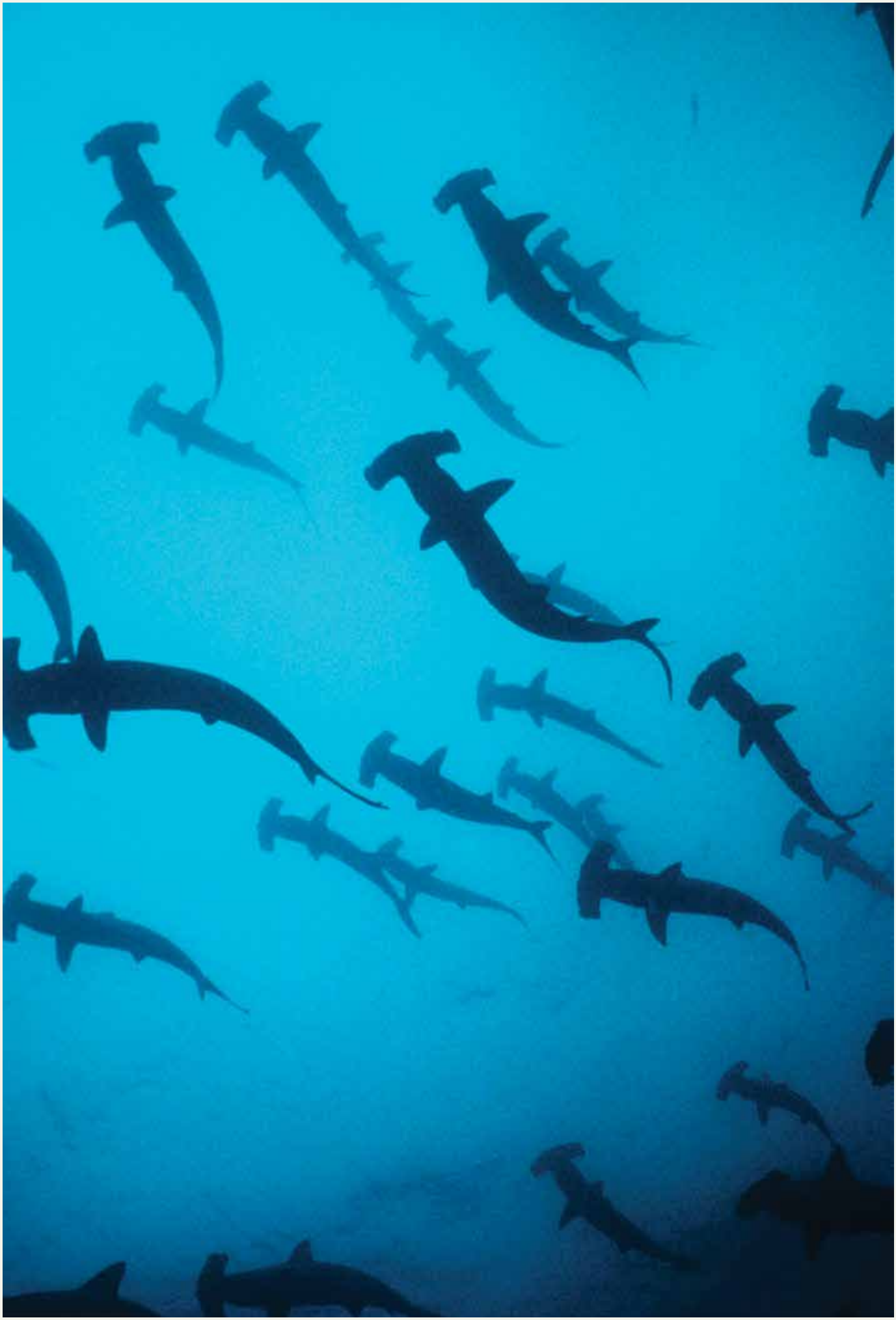
Mogadishu is the capital city of Somalia. Total pier length is 955 meters[36].

Import to Hong Kong in 2016

>500,000kg | 250,000kg - 499,999kg | 100,000kg - 249,999kg

Re export from Hong Kong in 2016

>500,000kg | 10,000kg - 249,999kg



© naturepl.com / Jeff Rotman / WWF

The fins from hammerhead sharks can be found in Hong Kong's shark fin retail market. This photo shows a group of Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*) in Cocos Island, Costa Rica

TRADERS WOULD USE "TIBURÓN" AND "ALETA DE TIBURÓN" INSTEAD OF "SHARK" AND "SHARK FIN" AS "COMMODITY DESCRIPTIONS" WHEN MAKING THEIR SHIPMENT ORDERS

4.3 HIGH-RISK LANGUAGE AND WORDING

Language

English is always the language used for bills of lading. Some shipping companies (or their specific offices), however, would accept other languages such as Spanish to complete the bills of lading. This presents a challenge to shipping companies to effectively screen commodity descriptions of shark fin in various languages other than English.

The following table shows the word "shark" and "shark fin" in different languages.

Table 5 :

	CHINESE	FRENCH	INDONESIA	SPANISH	VIETNAMESE
Shark Fin	魚翅 / 鱼翅	Aileron de requin	Sirip hiu	Aleta de tiburón	Vi cá mập
Shark	鯊魚 / 鲨鱼	Requin	Hiu	Tiburón	Cá mập

Wording

WWF-Hong Kong has come across cases where "shark" and "shark fin" were not used as commodity descriptions. Instead, shippers or consignees would use the shark species name or the combination of shark common name with "fin", for example "blue fin", instead of "blue shark's fin." When shipping companies receive shipment orders showing "fins", they must check if these fins refer to specific shark species.

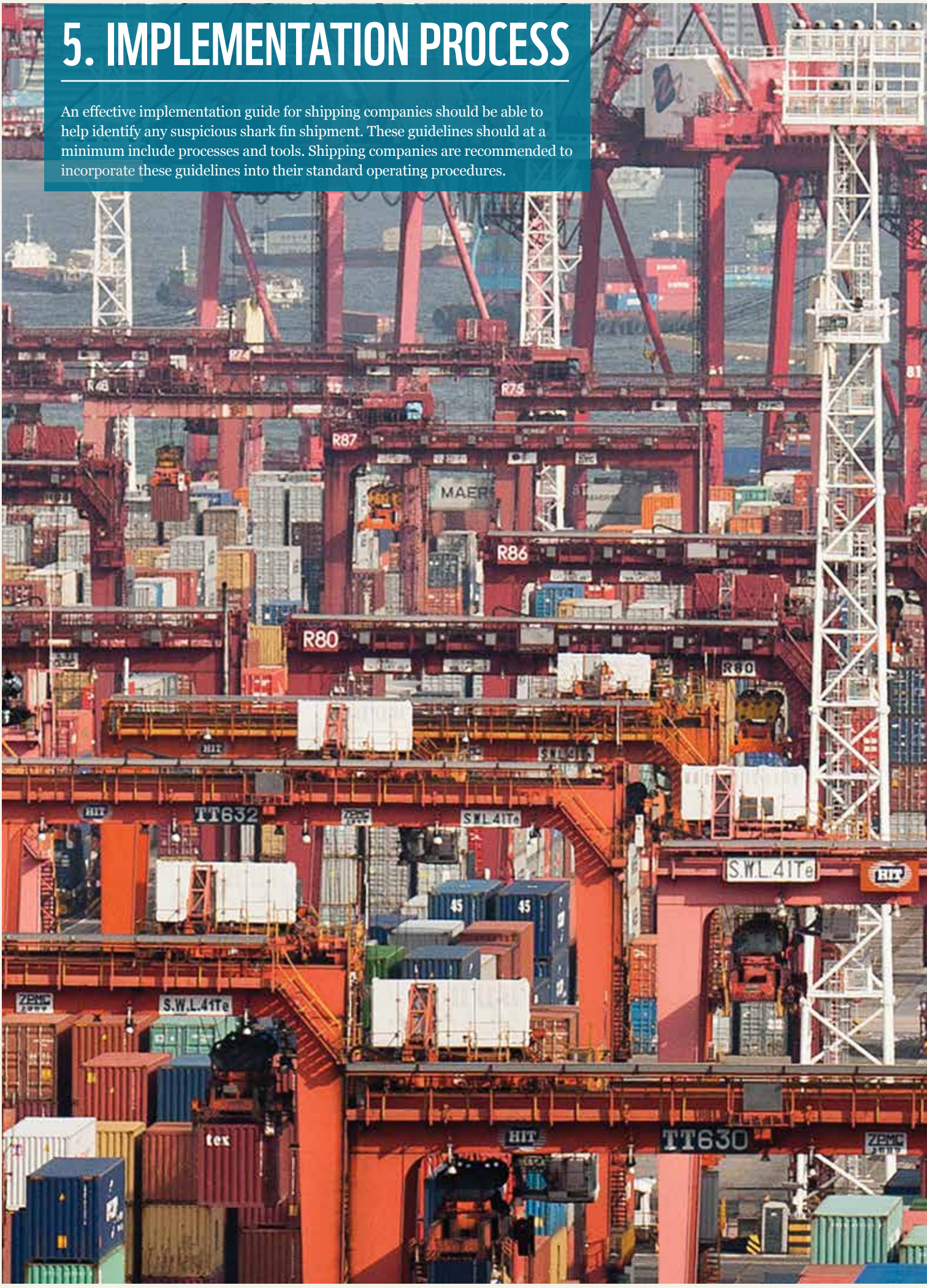
Table 6 shows the shark species which can be found in wholesale markets in Hong Kong.

Table 6 :

SHARK SPECIES SCIENTIFIC NAME	SHARK SPECIES COMMON NAME	SHARK FIN NAME	STATUS IN IUCN RED LIST	CITES APPENDIX II LISTED SPECIES
Prionace glauca	Blue	Ya jian	Near Threatened	N
Isurus oxyrinchus	Shortfin Mako	Qing lian	Vulnerable	N
Carcharhinus falciformis	Silky	Wu yang	Near Threatened	Y
Carcharhinus obscurus	Dusky	Hai hu	Vulnerable	N
Carcharhinus plumbeus	Sandbar	Bai qing	Vulnerable	N
Galeocerdo cuvier	Tiger	Ruan sha	Near Threatened	N
Sphyrna zygaena / Sphyrna lewini	Smooth Hammerhead / Scalloped Hammerhead	Chun chi	Vulnerable / Endangered	Y
Sphyrna Mokarran	Great Hammerhead	Gu pian	Endangered	Y
Alopias spp., 3 species	Thresher	Wu gu	Vulnerable	Y
Carcharhinus leucas	Bull	Sha qing	Near Threatened	N
Carcharhinus longimanus	Oceanic Whitetip	Liu qiu	Vulnerable	Y

5. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

An effective implementation guide for shipping companies should be able to help identify any suspicious shark fin shipment. These guidelines should at a minimum include processes and tools. Shipping companies are recommended to incorporate these guidelines into their standard operating procedures.



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SHIPPING COMPANIES SHOULD REQUIRE CUSTOMERS TO PROVIDE THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION HARMONIZED SYSTEM CODE (WCO HS CODE) ON ANY BILL OF LADING

5.1 MANDATE HARMONIZED CODE ON THE BILL OF LADING

One shipping company told WWF-Hong Kong that it had once received a request for "frozen seafood shipments" and the shipment was indeed shark fin. As the commodity description can vary in wording and language, an additional step shipping companies should take is to require customers to provide the World Customs Organization Harmonized System code (WCO HS code) on any bill of lading, which is currently not a mandatory requirement. This can further reduce any dubious commodity in the shipment. A list of these shark-related WCO HS codes are listed below:

2017 WCO HS CODE RELEVANT TO ALL POTENTIAL SHARK FIN PRODUCTS

Table 7 :

WCO HS CODE	ITEMS
0302.81	Fish, fresh or chilled, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 03.04. Dogfish and other sharks
0302.92	Fish, fresh or chilled, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 03.04. Shark fins
0303.81	Fish, frozen, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 03.04. Dogfish and other sharks
0303.92	Fish, frozen, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 03.04. Shark fins
0304.47	Fish fillets and other fish meat (whether or not minced), fresh, chilled or frozen Fresh or chilled fillets of other fish : Dogfish and other sharks
0304.56	Fish fillets and other fish meat (whether or not minced), fresh, chilled or frozen Other, fresh or chilled : Dogfish and other sharks
0304.88	Fish fillets and other fish meat (whether or not minced), fresh, chilled or frozen Frozen fillets of other fish Dogfish, other sharks, rays and skates (*Rajidae*)
0304.96	Fish fillets and other fish meat (whether or not minced), fresh, chilled or frozen Other, frozen Dogfish and other sharks
0305.71	Fish fins, heads, tails, maws and other edible fish offal : Shark fins

Source:
http://www.wcoomd.org/~/media/wco/public/global/pdf/topics/nomenclature/instruments-and-tools/hs-nomenclature-2017/2017/0103_2017e.pdf?la=en

World Customs Organization Harmonized System code (WCO HS code)

According to the World Customs Organization, "The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System generally referred to as the "Harmonized System" or simply "HS" is a multipurpose international product nomenclature developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO).

It comprises about 5,000 commodity groups; each identified by a six-digit code, arranged in a legal and logical structure and is supported by well-defined rules to achieve uniform classification."

Countries and regions can, based on their needs, add additional digits after the sixth digit, to ensure better monitoring on specific goods. In Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Harmonized Commodity Code was extended to eight digits.

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Drying shark fins, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong

5.2 PROVIDE RELEVANT INFORMATION TO CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES IN ADVANCE

WWF-Hong Kong urges all shipping companies to minimize the risk of their involvement in the illegal wildlife trade by submitting all relevant documents to the Customs through e-channels or other available channels in advance wherever possible for import countries or regions. In Hong Kong, people who import the goods need to complete import declarations within 14 days after the importation of the goods. If shipping companies provide more details about the products they are carrying before their ship enters Hong Kong, the Customs and Excise Department will have more time to perform risk profiling and therefore detect illegal shark fin shipments.

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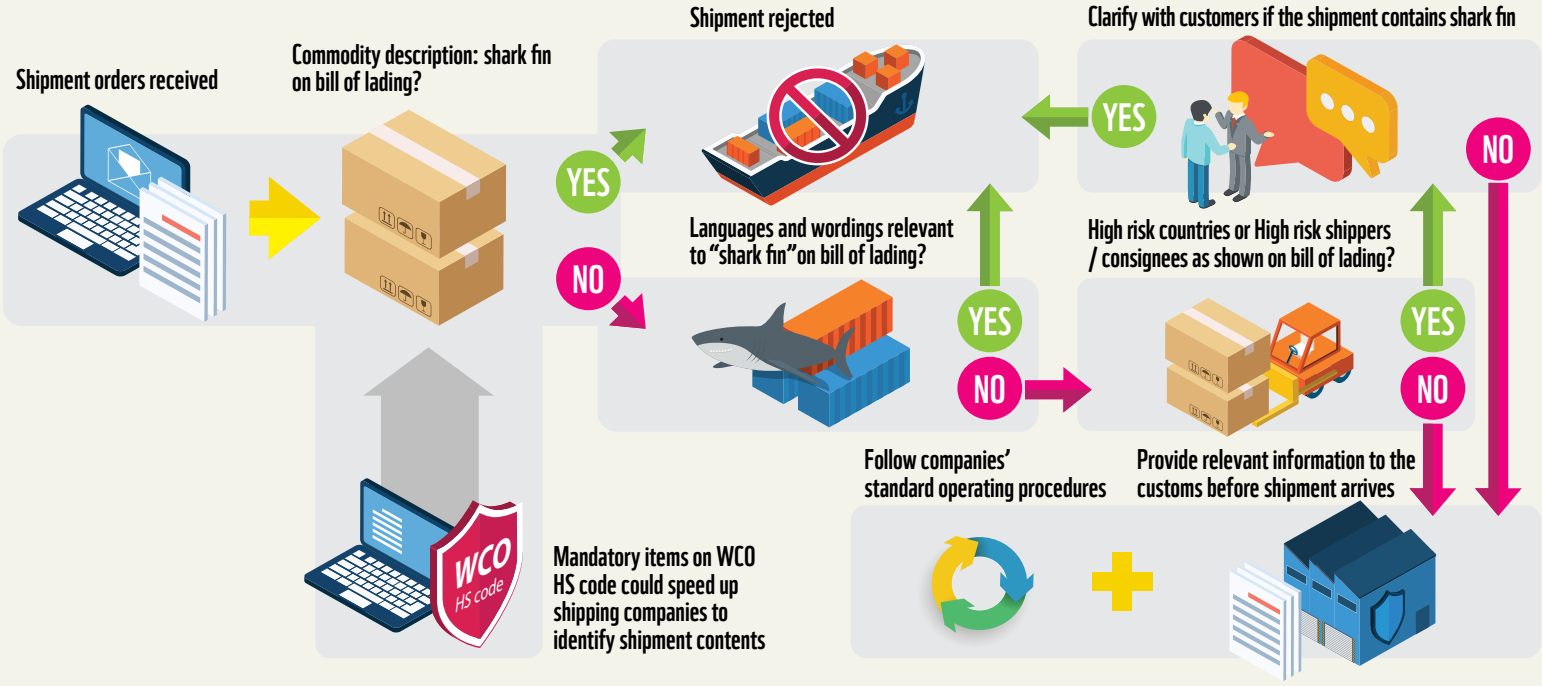
Hong Kong Customs mounted an anti-smuggling operation in the New Territories on 11 April, 2017 and seized a quantity of suspected smuggled high-value products including bird's nest, shark fin, red wine and mobile phone screens, with an estimated market value of over HK$30 million

5.3 IMPROVE THE SCREENING SYSTEM

Only customs authorities have the right to check the shipment cargo. As there is a huge number of transiting every day, shipping companies cannot rely only on customs' support for random checking to prevent illegal products on board their vessels. For companies that banned shark fin shipments, efforts to improve their booking system will help avoid shark fin shipments.

SUGGESTED SCREENING PROCESS

Figure 2 :



FRONT LINE STAFF ARE THE GATE KEEPERS FOR ACCEPTING OR REJECTING SHARK FIN SHIPMENTS

5.4 TRAINING OF FRONT LINE STAFF

As more shark species are protected by domestic and international regulations, shark conservation becomes an issue of legality. Front line staff are the gate keepers for accepting or rejecting shark fin shipments, therefore adequate and frequent training is needed using a well-defined screening process.

5.5 COOPERATION WITH ENVIRONMENTAL NGOs

Global environmental NGOs such as WWF are well positioned to provide up-to-date information including trade patterns, domestic regulations regarding shark fin, tools to help identify and avoid carrying shark fin shipments as well as staff training. WWF, through ongoing research and collaboration with companies in the shipping industry, will continuously update the tools described above and can share this information with shipping companies as needed.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT

Code of Conduct

Shipping companies are playing a pivotal role in ocean conservation by not shipping shark fin. Adherence to the following six-point Code of Conduct, which includes "Risk assessment" and "Implementation process" will ensure that shipping companies implement their policies. WWF-Hong Kong recommends companies in the logistic sector including airlines to adopt these guidelines. With this code of conduct as a reference logistics players could avoid any unintentional shark fin shipment.

Risk assessment

1. Identify the high-risk points in the supply chain including high risk shippers, high-risk consignees, high-risk countries/regions, and loading ports. Identify suspicious language, keywords and wording, and establish a high-risk list for internal reference.

Implementation process

2. Mandate full harmonized codes on bills of landing
   Make the World Customs Organization Harmonized System Code (WCO HS code) a mandatory item on all bills of lading

3. Provide relevant information to customs authorities in advance
   Work closely with government authorities, for example to hand in all the required documents to the Customs before a shipment arrives at its destination wherever possible, even if this goes beyond the minimum legal requirement

4. Improve the screening system
   Improve the screening system for suspicious cargo, utilizing WWF-Hong Kong's recommended flow chart as a reference

5. Training of front line staff
   Regular training is essential as front line staff are gate keepers for acceptance of shipment orders

6. Cooperation with environmental NGOs
   Shipping companies can seek help from environmental NGOs including WWF to provide up-to-date information including trade patterns and domestic regulations regarding shark fin

   A strong commitment with good implementation can offer a sustainable future for the worlds' shark species.

7. END NOTES

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NO SHARK FIN CARRIAGE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

90%

Hong Kong accounts for about 50 per cent of the global shark fin trade annually. Ninety per cent of shark fin by weight were imported into Hong Kong "by ocean"

>79%

The world largest shipping companies that account for 79.5 per cent of the industry's market share have set up No Shark Fin Carriage policy

1/4

1/4 of sharks and related species are threatened with extinction

400M

The first great sharks evolved around 400 million years ago

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