

Wren Fishing commitment to provide certainty that no shark-finning occurs in the N12 fishery.

The purpose of this letter is to demonstrate to the managers of the Gulf of Carpentaria inshore Fishery (GOCIF), Northern Territory Offshore Net and Line Fishery (ONLF) and the wider Fisheries Queensland executive, the strong measures currently in place in the N12 fishery that ensure no shark-finning occurs. It outlines measures that Wren Fishing have taken as part of their Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) to ensure with comprehensive certainty that the practice of shark-finning does not occur

Shark-finning refers to the process of removing the fins off a shark and discarding of the trunk alive; however, for the purpose of this letter we consider any discarding of the trunk (alive or dead) to constitute shark-finning. Shark-finning is a cruel practice that prioritises profits over waste reduction, animal welfare and sustainability principles. It is widespread in the developing world but is thankfully rare, to negligible, in Australia. Wren fishing does not support the practice of shark-finning and has ensured it does not, and will not, participate in the practice

Wren Fishing is one of Australia's largest independent seafood producers, employing 32 staff with annual turnover of \$13 million. They are recognised as industry leaders in the uptake, development, and promotion of world's best practice fishing methods, practices, and gear development. Wren Fishing are the sole operators in the Queensland N12 fishery and hold 3 licences in the NT ONLF. In 2023 Wren Fishing underwent an MSC pre-assessment and in 2024 formally entered a Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) to achieve full MSC certification. To achieve full MSC certification, fisheries must meet and exceed MSC standards and criteria. MSC maintains rigorous evidence standards, through their Evidence Requirement Framework (ERF) to ensure fisheries provide clear and undeniable proof that they meet and exceed MSC criteria. Fisheries that achieve MSC are considered to operate at global best practice.

One action item of the Wren Fishing FIP is to ensure that no shark-finning occurs across their fishing operations. Wren Fishing are expecting to provide enough evidence, as per the Evidence Requirement Framework, to ensure with absolute certainty that no shark-finning is occurring. The evidence provided will include:

1. Independent camera-based monitoring of onboard processes, this extends to catch, TEPS, and bycatch data validation. Annual reports provided by our independent monitoring provider confirm there has been no shark-finning onboard Wren Fishing vessels.
2. Sales receipts for shark flesh. Shark flesh is an important seafood commodity that Wren Fishing begin processing onboard, to ensure quality is maximised, and sold to Queensland consumers. By providing sales receipts we will identify the economic importance of trading shark flesh, and thus, the economic incentive to NOT shark-fin.
3. Development of products using shark 'waste'. In collaboration with our wholesale partners, we have developed our own brand of pet treats 'ChewBlue' using 'shark-wastes' such as cartilage, skin, and tails. This

ensures no part of the animal is wasted and that the harvest of these animals achieves maximum economic and community benefit. Additionally, Wren Fishing are constantly seeking additional 'circular' concepts to reduce the wastage of seafood products.

Additionally, at-sea processing of shark is necessary for two reasons:

- a) To ensure high-quality flesh retention (i.e. immediate bleeding and brining)
- b) To ensure all catch can be safely stored onboard (i.e. non-processed shark takes up too much space and will lead to the overfilling of freezer stores).

Shark is first processed by being placed in a multi-day brine soak before being filleted. Brining is required by our wholesalers and customers because "*The brining process leeches blood from the protein and softens the sinew and protein fibres, which reduces the likelihood of toughening when cooking. When this style of processing is not conducted at capture, the value **decreases to 20% of its original value** and has limited applications in the supply chain*" - Shawn McAtamney from ISP.

Onboard processing ensures the flesh is of a high enough quality to be sold to our wholesaler and subsequently their consumers. In other fisheries where barrels are frozen onboard and processed onshore, "*[Wren Fishing and ISP] have observed over many years variations in protein quality. This has created downstream supply chain issues, which has caused reputation damage to the Wren brand and future access to market, owing to decrease in end user confidence in using this protein.*" - Shawn McAtamney from ISP.

Shark is a valuable fisheries resource that Wren Fishing harvest on behalf of the Queensland community. Shark is processed onboard and sold for consumption (flesh), and as pet treats (tails, skin, and cartilage), ensuring Wren Fishing minimises any shark wastage. Wren Fishing remain wholly committed to the banning of shark-finning practices and will provide irrefutable evidence that shark-finning does not occur on their vessels. By entering their FIP on the pathway to full MSC certification Wren Fishing are demonstrating their commitment to transparency and environmental protection. Prohibiting at-sea processing of shark is not a feasible solution to ensure shark-finning does not occur in the N12 fishery, instead Wren fishing are committed to providing additional, irrefutable evidence the practice doesn't occur through their independent onboard monitoring, catch receipts for the sale of shark flesh, and continued development and utilisation of waste of products into valuable community resources.