Shark Identification in Pacific Tropical Offshore Fisheries
These identification cards are produced by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to help improve catch data and statistics on sharks that interact with longline and purse-seine fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific (WCP). With a better understanding of shark stocks, regional fisheries managers can ensure that sharks are fished in a sustainable manner. The most likely users of the cards are fisheries observers, fishing masters and crew on board longline and purse-seine vessels in the WCP. Fisheries training institutions and fishing communities are other potential users.

This publication was made possible through financial support provided by the Governments of Australia, France and New Zealand.

For further information contact:
Secretariat of the Pacific Community
Coastal Fisheries Programme
Marine Resources Division
BP D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia

Phone: +687 26 20 00
Email: cfqinfo@spc.int
Fax: +687 26 38 18
Website: http://www.spc.int


The production of these shark ID cards was conceived by Michel Blanc as part of a wider bycatch awareness campaign. Technical input was provided by Peter Sharples with the assistance of Deirdre Brogan. The design was a team effort with the help of Terihauroa Luciani and Aymeric Desurmont. Seventeen shark paintings are reproduced courtesy of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community Cataloguing-in-publication data
Shark identification in Pacific tropical offshore fisheries / Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Illustrations by Les Hata.
Shark names also in Japanese, Mandarin-Chinese and French

I. Sharks – Oceania – Identification. 2. Sharks – Oceania – Handbooks, manuals, etc.
I. Title. II. Secretariat of the Pacific Community.
AACR2
Agdex Pacific Islands 493/01
ISBN 92-85-0087-4
Blue shark

Prionace glauca

J — ロシアリザメ、ミズブカ、アオタ
C — 大寿鰨 (鮫鰨) 通
F — peau bleue

Head long and nose rounded

Long pectoral fins

Upper teeth with jagged edges

Upper lobe of tail much longer than lower lobe
Longfin mako

*Isurus paucus*

J - パラオマコ
C - 長脇灰鰨魚
F - petite taupe

Head pointed but nose rounded

Very long pectoral fins, as long as head

Upper and lower lobes of tail nearly the same length

Upper teeth with no jagged edges
Shortfin mako

*Isurus oxyrinchus*

- J — アオザメ
- C — 先射鯨
- F — taupe bleue

**Features**

- **Head and nose pointed**
- **Pectoral fins shorter than head**
- **Upper and lower lobes of tail nearly the same length**
- **Upper teeth with no jagged edges**
Sandbar shark  
*Carcharhinus plumbeus*

- J — メジロザメ サンダーバー
- C — 高雄白腹鯊
- F — requin gris à haute dorsale

First dorsal fin very large

Front of first dorsal fin clearly over the base of the pectoral fin
Galapagos shark

Carcharhinus galapagensis

J — カラバゴスザメ
C — カラバゴサメ
F — requin des Galapagos

Front of first dorsal fin over the back third of base of the pectoral fin
Copper shark (bronzewhaler)

*Carharhinus brachyurus*

- J — クロヘリメデジサケ
- C — 短尾회색대게
- F — requin cuivre

Upper teeth with characteristic shape

First dorsal fin slightly behind the base of the pectoral fin

Sharks — no obvious fin marks
Silky shark
*Carcharhinus falciformis*

J — クロトガリザメ
C — 平滑白眼鰨
F — requin soyeux

Front of first dorsal fin
*clearly behind* the pectoral fin

Very common on longliners and purse seiners
Oceanic whitetip

_Carcharhinus longimanus_

First dorsal and pectoral fins clearly broad and rounded, with spotted white tip.
Silvertip shark

*Cararchinus albimarginatus*

J — サブロ
C — 白連殖白斑鯊
F — requin à pointes blanches

The back edge (not just the tips) of all fins are white.
Whitetip reef shark

*Trienodon obesus*

- Tips always white
- Tips sometimes white

J - ねうりブカ
C - 見鯨
F - requin corail
Blacktip reef shark

*Carcharhinus melanopterus*

Distinct black markings at the tip of the first dorsal fin and bottom lobe of tail

J — ツマグロ
C — 池翅白鮫鯊
F — requin à pointes noires
Grey reef shark

*Carharhinus amblyrhynchos*

J — オグロメジロザメ ハイイロメジロザメ
C — 黒印白眼鯊
F — requin gris de récif, dagsit

Broad black band at the back edge of tail
Blacktip shark

*Carcharhinus limbatus*

J — カマストガリザメ
C — 黒邊鰭白鯊
F — requin bordé

Dark-to-black tips on most fins

Sharks — with black fin/tail marks
**Tiger shark**

*Galeocerdo cuvier*

J - タイガーサメ, トラザメ  
C - 鯨鮫  
F - requin tigre

Dark, tiger-stripe markings that may be faded in adults

Upper teeth with jagged edges and very characteristic shape
**Bigeye sand tiger shark**

*Odontaspis noronhai*

- J: ブラジルソニザメ
- C: 人見の砂糖蜜
- F: requin noronhai

**Features:***
- Large eyes
- Upper teeth without jagged edges and 3-pointed ends
- Upper lobe of tail much longer than lower lobe
Common thresher

*Alopias vulpinus*

- No groove on head
- White colour of belly comes above pectoral fins
- Groove at back of mouth
Bigeye thresher

*Alopias superciliosus*

- Dorsal fin closer to pelvic fins than to pectoral fins
- Groove on head
- No groove at back of mouth
- Light belly colour only below pectoral fins
- J — ハチワレ
- C — 深溝条紋
- F — renard à gros yeux
Pelagic thresher
*Alopias pelagicus*

J — ニクラ
C — 海洋隔離
F — renard pelagique

No groove on head

No groove at back of mouth
Great white shark

*Carcharodon carcharias*

J — ホホジロザメ, ホホジロ, イラゴ, マイブ
C — 大白鯨
F — grand requin blanc

Upper and lower lobe of tail
nearly the same length

Teeth with jagged edges

Very large — reaching 7 metres
Basking shark
*Cetorhinus maximus*

- Massive gill slits that go almost all the way around the head
- Very small teeth
- Huge — can be as big as 12 metres long
- J — ウカザメ
- C — 象鯨（塊鯨）
- F — pêlerin
Whale shark

*Rhincodon typus*

J — ジンベエザメ
C — 鯨鯊
F — requin baleine

A very clear pattern of light spots and vertical stripes on a dark background

Easy to see ridges on sides of body

Very small teeth

Huge — can be as big as 18 metres long

Very clear pattern of light spots and vertical stripes on a dark background
Great hammerhead

*Sphyra mokarran*

- **J** - ヒラシュモクザメ
- **C** - へらすじ鯊
- **F** - grand requin-marteau

First dorsal fin very large

Front of head nearly straight with slight dent in middle
Winghead shark

Eusphyra blochii

Head width nearly half of body length
Scalloped hammerhead

*Sphyra lewini*

Front of head curved with middle dent and a distinct lobe at each end.
Smooth hammerhead
*Sphyra zygaena*

J — シロシュモクザメ
C — 亜裂鮫
F — requin marteau commun

Front of head curved with no middle dent
Crocodile shark

*Pseudocarcharias kamoharai*

- Large eyes
- Upper teeth with no jagged edges
- Small pectoral fin
- Low first dorsal fin
- Maximum 110 cm
Cookie cutter shark

*Isistius brasiliensis*

- J — ダルマザメ
- C — 重茄鯨
- F — squalelet féroce

First dorsal and pelvic fins way back

Dark ring near gills

No anal fin

Maximum 50 cm
Help keep the oceans and the fishing industry healthy!
Identify, record and correctly report every shark caught on your vessel.

Sharks are crucial in ocean food chains. By killing and eating old or sick animals they help keep marine eco-systems healthy.

Several shark species are targeted or caught in large numbers as bycatch in the Western and Central Pacific. We know sharks reproduce slowly compared to other fish but there is a lot we do not know. We do know that both marine eco-systems and people's livelihoods depend on sharks and their associated fisheries and so sharks must not become over-fished!
The information that you report helps add to our knowledge about sharks and helps the fishing industry.