



Planet Earth Series

Great White Shark: Outlook



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Great whites grow slowly and produce few offspring, and they are vulnerable to overexploitation and need a lot of time to build back their numbers. Great white shark numbers appear to be declining. Although legally protected in Australia, the United States, South Africa, Malta, Namibia, and New Zealand - making it the most widely protected shark or ray in the world - legal protection doesn't stop illegal shark finning or trade. WildAID is actively working alongside Asian conservationists to educate Chinese citizens and others about the trouble with shark fin soup.

Mahmood Shivji at Guy Harvey Research Institute uses DNA to nab illegal shark fin traders, including cases involving the great white. One argument against more strictly protecting the great

white was that they were not targeted by fisheries, but Shivji's study used DNA to prove that small-sized white shark fins were indeed sold on the market. One study Shivji worked on with Shelley Clarke estimated people kill 26-73 million sharks every year, far beyond what gets reported through official records.
