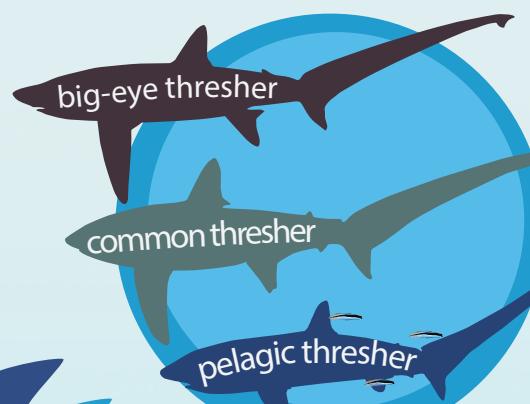
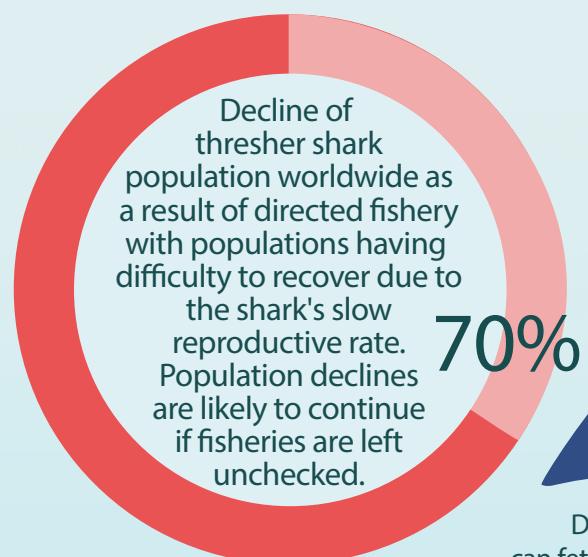


Thresher Sharks in the Philippines

<VU>

Vulnerable



Pelagic thresher sharks regularly visit Monad Shoal in northern Cebu to get cleaned of parasites.

Aside from being a cleaning station, the area shows evidence of being a pupping ground too.

FIN FACTS

The Philippines is the only country with an established pelagic thresher shark SCUBA diving industry.



Divers can observe the sharks on a daily basis in Monad Shoal, the country's first shark and ray sanctuary.



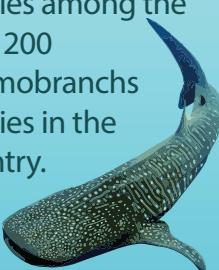
Thresher shark landing sites:

- pelagic thresher shark
- common thresher shark
- big-eye thresher shark

Thresher shark catches*

Thresher shark dive encounter

Only the whale shark and the giant manta ray are the protected species among the over 200 elasmobranchs species in the country.



Thresher sharks are a main feature of Daanbantayan's dive tourism industry which accounts for most of its annual GDP, providing employment & livelihood opportunities for locals.



There is no national or international law that provides protection for thresher sharks in the Philippines.

The thresher sharks of Monad Shoal could be caught, transported and sold legally outside of Cebu province.



**SAVE SHARKS
NETWORK PHILIPPINES**

*Percentage of thresher sharks caught in Regional Shark Fisheries from 1998-2007

**species not differentiated

Source:

Oliver SP, Hussey NE, Turner JR, Beckett AJ (2011) Oceanic Sharks Clean at Coastal Seamount. PLoS ONE 6(3): e14755. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0014755

Oliver, S.P. & Bicskó Kaszo, A.E. Coral Reefs (2015) 34: 17. doi:10.1007/s00338-014-1249-8

IUCN Species Survival Commission's Shark Specialist Group. (2007) Review of Migratory Chondrichthyan Fishes.

Department of Agriculture and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (2009) National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks in the Philippines



YES FOR THRESHERS

The Philippines is the only country that can boast to having an established pelagic thresher shark dive industry. Monad Shoal near Malapascua Island, Daanbantayan remains to be the only place in the world where scuba divers can see pelagic thresher sharks almost every day.

The scuba diving industry accounts for most of Daanbantayan's economy, securing the livelihood of many in the municipality and its neighboring communities. The presence of thresher sharks has turned Malapascua Island into a major dive tourist attraction, helping the local residents to recover after the devastation that tropical typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan) brought to many parts of the country in 2013.

In the province of Cebu, sharks are considered valuable for both their ecological and economic value that the province issued a Resolution protecting all sharks and rays in all its municipalities and established the Philippines' first shark and ray sanctuary in Daanbantayan. This legislation makes the Philippines one of the few countries in the world to have domestic protections for sharks. Aside from Cebu, thresher sharks are afforded local protection in Batangas City; Panglao Bohol; and Palawan. Unfortunately, it is not enough as thresher sharks could still be fished, hunted, and traded legally elsewhere. Their meat is usually consumed locally but the fins are sold internationally, mainly through Hong Kong and Taiwan, to be used in shark fin soup.

However, there is an opportunity coming up that could ensure protection of thresher sharks through the regulation of its international trade. This happens on 24 September to 5 October 2016 in Johannesburg, South Africa when all three species of thresher sharks are being proposed to be listed on Appendix II of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at their Conference of Parties (CoP) 17. The Philippines will be represented by the Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Taking part in this proposal will prevent unsustainable fishing of thresher sharks as the market for their fins will now be monitored and regulated, and together with 182 parties, we will have to vote to support the proposal or not.

The Philippines is in a unique position to push for the protection of the thresher sharks as we are the only country that values these sharks more than just for their fins. Not only is the Philippines' YES vote important for thresher shark conservation, it would also provide the best platform to promote one of the world's most sought-after dive experiences—the opportunity to see the pelagic thresher sharks in Monad Shoal and send a strong message to the world that our country remains as the preeminent destination to encounter these sharks. Not supporting the proposal means death to Daanbantayan's diving industry, now contributing to 80% of its economy, that visitors and locals are benefiting from.

As the Philippines' CITES Management Authority for aquatic and marine species, the BFAR has the option to vote YES or NO to the listing of thresher sharks. We need to let them know that, as a country, we want our thresher sharks to be protected under CITES which will inevitably protect them in Philippine waters.

If this proposal passes, all trade in thresher sharks would be required to be sustainable – a policy that would go a long way in ensuring their survival for generations to come.

You can help make this happen by doing the following:

1. Signing our petition!
2. Writing to BFAR (Director Gongona, 3/F PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City) to convince them to vote YES!
3. Visiting Malapascua Island to see the thresher shark and support the community.
4. Sharing our thresher shark posts on social media while using
#SaveThresherTala #StoptheThresherHunt #PHsayYes

YOU CAN HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE!
#PHsayYES



<https://www.change.org/p/philippines-vote-yes-for-threshers>