



Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

American Samoa
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
FSM, State of Chuuk
FSM, State of Kosrae
FSM, State of Pohnpei
FSM, State of Yap
Island of Guam
Republic of Kiribati
Republic of the Marshall Islands
Republic of Nauru
Republic of Palau
State of Hawaii

A RESOLUTION

APIL Resolution No. 32-GA-08, CD1

“Calling on Pacific Island nations to support the creation of a Pacific Islands Regional Shark Sanctuary and opposing the United States’ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration proposal to undermine the progress in shark conservation made by Pacific Island jurisdictions.”

1 **WHEREAS**, Pacific people afford special respect to sharks, using them in our stories,
2 myths, songs, and art; and

3 **WHEREAS**, healthy shark populations maintain the balance in the ecosystems that
4 support many other species, build resiliency against climate change by keeping habitats like coral
5 reefs healthy, and ultimately affect the fish populations that we depend on for food; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the latest and best science estimates that 100 million sharks are killed each
7 year; and

8 **WHEREAS**, shark populations cannot sustain current rates of overfishing and unlike
9 other fish species are slow growing and produce few young like whales and dolphins, and thus
10 more than 140 unique species are threatened by overfishing; and

11 **WHEREAS**, each entity within this Association and the Pacific shares the same ocean
12 water resources and ecosystems that are affected by the overfishing of sharks; and

13 **WHEREAS**, member legislative assemblies of the APIL should consider the use of
14 sharks for perpetuating cultural practices to be allowable; and

15 **WHEREAS**, the people of the Pacific have led the world in taking decisive action to
16 create shark protections and enforcing them; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, during its 30th General Assembly in the Republic of Palau adopted resolution No. 30-GA-03 on June 17, 2011, requesting all legislative assemblies of the APIL to adopt legislation prohibiting the possession, selling, offering for sale, trading or distribution of shark fins, and ray parts, which underscores the APIL's recognition of the importance of sharks and their relationship to the health of the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS, the presidents and governors at the 15th Micronesia Chief Executive Summit agreed to create a Micronesia Regional Shark Sanctuary encompassing the waters of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam; and

WHEREAS, led by Palau in 2009, Marshall Islands, American Samoa, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap, Tokelau, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Maldives, Honduras, and The Bahamas have created shark sanctuaries by fully protecting all shark species; and

WHEREAS, Chuuk State Legislature's House of Representatives passed Chuuk's shark conservation and protection bill and is now in the senate for approval and APIL encourages the senate to pass this important shark protection bill; and

WHEREAS, led by Hawaii in 2010, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Washington, Oregon, California, Illinois, Maryland and Delaware have banned the sale, trade, and possession of shark fins; and

WHEREAS, a proposal by the United States' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to overturn shark fin trade bans in the states and territories undermines the progress in shark conservation in the Pacific Island nations that has been made over the past few years and goes against the overwhelming public support for strong shark protections; and

WHEREAS, the statutes enacted within the U.S. states and territories are an exercise of traditional state police powers over the sale of products that establish by law the legitimate state interests of ensuring a sustainable ocean and planet by addressing the conservation of natural resources and the protection of public health; and

WHEREAS, U.S. states and territory laws on shark protection do not directly conflict with federal law that primarily regulates shark finning and the taking of sharks within the U.S. waters, rather these laws prohibit the sale, trade, or possession of shark fins in state and territorial jurisdictions; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 32nd General Assembly, Honolulu, Hawaii, June 25-27, 2013, that APIL hereby declares that it is in agreement with the perceptive enactments of protective legislation for sharks across the globe and requests that all Pacific Island nations end the unsustainable commercial fishing of sharks by enacting a Pacific Islands Regional Shark Sanctuary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that governments implementing shark protections, including, but not limited to the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, American Samoa, Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap, Tokelau, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Hawaii, Northern Mariana Islands, and concerned non-governmental organizations and island communities, collaborate on best practices for policy development, enforcement, research, outreach, and education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL recognizes conservation values of the U.S. state and territories statutes that strengthen the U.S. leadership in global shark conservation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL hereby declares its opposition to the United States' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's proposal to undermine the progress in shark conservation made by Pacific Island jurisdictions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL President shall certify, and the APIL Secretary shall attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be transmitted to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Federated States of Micronesia President Manny Mori; United States President Barack Obama, the United States' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and to the Chief Executives and Legislative Presiding Officers of each member jurisdiction of the Association of the Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 27th DAY OF JUNE, 2013.



JUDITH T. WON PAT ED.D.
PRESIDENT



CHANG B. WILLIAM
SECRETARY

