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Press release | 19.09.2012

Fisheries/shark finning

EU ban on shark finning remains on agenda after EP vote but loopholes must be removed

The Greens welcomed a vote by the European Parliament's fisheries committee today supporting proposed legislation to ban shark finning in principle but regretted the introduction of loopholes (1). The Greens have long supported the outlawing of this odious and wasteful fishing practise and urged MEPs to support a definitive ban and remove the loopholes when the legislation is voted in plenary. After the vote, Green fisheries spokesperson **Raül Romeva** stated:

"An EU ban on this odious and wasteful fishing practise remains on the agenda after today's vote but work still needs to be done. Regrettably, centre-right amendments were passed introducing potential loopholes to the legislation. The Greens will work to ensure these loopholes are removed when the EP plenary votes on the rules. Hopefully, the legislation can be swiftly finalised and implemented to ensure shark finning can be consigned to the past for Europe's fisheries.

"Every year millions of sharks are caught, their fins hacked off and the bodies simply discarded to meet the demand for shark fin soup in Asia. This is not only a senseless waste, it also puts pressure on threatened shark species. Banning shark finning in European fisheries is an important step but the EU should also advocate for the practise to be outlawed at international level."

(1) The EP's fisheries committee supported the Commission's proposal to ban the separate landing of shark bodies and fins, however it also supported amendments allowing fins to be removed. The Greens will push for these loopholes to be removed when the EP votes on the legislation as a whole in plenary, with a view to ensuring there is an unequivocal ban.

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