

# CLASS NOTES

## Season 1, Episode 2: The United States Shark Fin Ban



**Featured Guest: Dr. Andrew Ropicki, Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS Food and Resource Economics**

### Key Takeaways

- Finning is the practice of catching a shark, removing its fins for sale, and then returning the animal to the water where it will be unable to survive without its fins.
- Several legislative efforts have been made to stop finning in US Waters. Since 2000, finning sharks has been illegal in the United States. A 2010 amendment to the law made it so commercial fishers were required to bring sharks ashore with fins attached, and then allowed to separate the fins and sell them. In 2022, the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act was passed making it illegal to possess, buy, sell, or transport shark fins or any product containing shark fins.
- The current fin ban means that commercial fishers can still harvest sharks but must dispose of the fin and can only sell the meat.
- Some other ways to reduce demand, for shark fins and impact finning would be consumer education and eco-labeling.

### Additional Resources

- For any questions or more info, you can contact Dr. Ropicki by email through visiting his faculty directory page at [fred.ifas.ufl.edu/about/directory/Andrew Ropicki](https://fred.ifas.ufl.edu/about/directory/Andrew-Ropicki)
- More information about Dr. Ropicki's research on other topics can be found there as well.

### Discussion Questions

- What are the primary economic incentives driving shark finning practices, and how do these incentives impact local economies?
- What role do non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and public awareness campaigns play in combating shark finning? Are these campaigns effective?
- How might technological advancements, such as improved tracking and monitoring systems, aid in the enforcement of shark finning bans and the protection of shark populations?
- How could the economic concept of externalities be applied in the context of shark finning?
- When attempting to adjust the market for a particular good (like shark fins) do you think it is better to target demand or supply?

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