Capture and trade of these species in any form attracts punishment of seven years imprisonment with penalty up to Rs 25,000. Captured specimens of these protected species either live or dead, intentionally or unintentionally, must be surrendered to the nearest wildlife office and the same must be informed to nearest research station of CMFRI to help study population characters. Every attempt must be made to return live specimens back to the sea.

97% of all shark species are harmless to man. Let us also not harm them. They need our help and protection to survive. Let us join hands in allowing these creatures to continue their dominion over our seas.

Remember, by conserving their population, we contribute towards maintaining a healthy marine ecosystem.

For more information, please contact:

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**SHARK FACTS**

Sharks are majestic fishes that have ruled the seas much before man evolved.

They are more primitive than all other bony fishes.

They have been swimming the world's oceans for more than 400,000,000 years.

The first humans evolved only around 200,000 years ago.

They are apex predators essential for maintaining equilibrium within marine ecosystems.

Over 500 shark species were known to exist in the world oceans.

Today, only 10% of the population of most species remain.

**SHARKS ARE THREATENED**

- Demand for shark fins
- Unregulated overexploitation
- Risk of unrecoverable decline
- Several sharks join the list of endangered species

Sharks have survived mass extinction events over several million years

**BUT**

They have not evolved to withstand fishing pressure.

According to IUCN, sharks are among the most threatened marine vertebrates. It is estimated that 100 million sharks are killed every year, globally. They cannot reproduce fast enough to make up for the high annual death rate.

**EQUALLY THREATENED COUSINS**

Rays and skates are close relatives of sharks which stand under equal threat of population decline due to unmanaged fishing and habitat degradation caused by human interference.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate change, Govt. of India included 10 species of sharks, rays and skates under Schedule I of Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 which prohibits illegal fishing, exploitation and trade of these fishes in any form.

**Sharks, rays and skates under Schedule I of Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972**

- Pondicherry shark *Carcharhinus hemiodon*
- Ganges river shark *Glyphis gangeticus*
- Speartooth shark *Glyphis glyphis*
- Whale shark *Rhincodon typus*
- Ganges sting ray *Himantura fluviatilis*