

Tajuk : Shark end up in Sarawak dishes

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KOTA SAMARAHAN: Marine life expert, Dr Aazani Mujahid thinks sharks cannot be saved by not consuming its fins alone as in this part of the world, nothing is wasted once caught.

Aazani, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak Science and Resource Technology Lecturer, said shark meat was available in the market and even served as a condiment in Sarawak's Kolo Mee dish.

"You can always see fresh sharks at the fish market, dried sharks and even salted shark meat. So do you think that by not consuming its fins will help to preserve the shark population in the ocean? I beg to differ," said Aazani when met.

She was referring to the World Wildlife Fund for Nature-Malaysia #myfinmylife campaign, which

aimed to reverse the present scenario of high shark fin consumptions in Malaysia by engaging the public and business to unanimously pledge not to consume shark fin soup and products.

Its aims include sensitising 20,000 restaurants to phase out shark fin soup from menu, engaging one million Malaysians to support the call for no shark fin soup and to immediately commit 500 businesses to remove shark fin soup from its menu.

WWF Malaysia says there are at least 63 species of sharks found in Malaysian waters and they include Blacktip Reef Shark (*Carcharhinus melanopterus*), Whitetip Reef Shark (*Triaenodon obsus*) and Tawny Nurse Shark (*Nebrius ferrugineus*), which are commonly sighted.

"Tawny Nurse Sharks are the ones we commonly see in the market. These sharks are common inshore bottom-dwelling species found in the tropical waters of Malaysia and they are very vulnerable these days.

"Maybe, they will sell the fins to the highest bidder but I believe most of these sharks will end up in someone's dish. And it doesn't need to be in a restaurant," said Aazani.

She added that a holistic approach should be adopted in different regions because of cultural differences and local norms.

"To be fair to the fishermen, they may not hunt for sharks but these sharks could be among the fish entangled in their nets. And for any fisherman, a catch is always a catch regardless of the species," added Aazani.



DR AAZANI Mujahid, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak Science and Resource Technology Lecturer.