

ENDANGERED SPECIES / LESSON OVERVIEW

Objectives

The students will:

- learn how and why sharks become threatened;
- learn how the Endangered Species Act started and what it does;
- learn how the Endangered Species List started and what categories are listed;
- learn about state, federal, and international protection;
- learn what shark species are listed under each category;
- learn what they can do to help endangered or threatened shark species.

Lesson Summary

Part 1. Sharks are Disappearing Faster than Ever (5 – 10 minutes)

Explain extinction and how many sharks are disappearing every year due to human activity. Explain commercial fishing, bycatch, and habitat degradation.

Part 2. Why You Should Care (10 – 15 minutes)

Explain how sharks play crucial role as apex predator. Explain why a healthy ocean is so beneficial.

Part 3. Protection for Endangered Species: CITES (15 – 20 minutes)

Part 4. Protection for Endangered Species: IUCN (10 – 15 minutes)

Part 5. Protection for Endangered Species: Endangered Species Act (10 – 15 minutes)

Part 6. Protection for Endangered Species: State Protection (10 – 15 minutes)

Part 7. How OCEARCH is Helping Wild Sharks (5 – 10 minutes)

Part 8. How YOU Can Help Endangered Species (10 minutes)

Activity 1. Sign a Petition

This lesson introduces students to the power of voice! Signing petitions makes your voice heard and can be used to influence the designation of a species into protected status. Students can openly discuss what shark conservation issues they are interested in and sign a real petition to help protect shark species, locally or globally! Open petition links are provided as examples.

Activity 2. Be Heard

Personal letters to Congress have made huge impacts on laws that are passed every day. Write to your own state or federal government representative to enforce protection or to support the passing of anti-shark finning laws.