
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM9.3	ACTION			Ward: All
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A By-law to Ban the possession, sale and consumption of Shark Fin and Derivative Products in Toronto - by Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, seconded by Councillor Krystyn Wong-Tam

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Licensing and Standards Committee. A two thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, seconded by Councillor Krystyn Wong-Tam, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, to report to the Licensing and Standards Committee and Council on a by-law that would prohibit the possession, sale and consumption of all shark fin products in Toronto.

Summary

Sharks are being slaughtered world-wide at the rate of over 70 million per year; with experts agreeing that sharks could be extinct within 10 – 20 years at the current rate of slaughter.

Shark finning is a wasteful, inhumane practice that involves cutting off a shark's fins and then tossing the still-live shark back overboard to drown, bleed to death, or be eaten alive by other animals. While shark fins are considered a delicacy in some restaurants, they have no significant nutritional value and are considered unhealthy for human consumption due to the accumulation of high levels of mercury and other toxins in the fins and flesh.

The Canadian government has banned "shark finning" in Canadian waters since 1994 as has the United States (2009) and the European Community (2003); but the sale of shark fins continues in cities across Canada and the world. States and municipal governments – including Hawaii, Guam, Washington State, Oregon and California - representing over 47 million people have introduced or proposed bans on the trade and consumption of shark fins; with legislators in mainland China and Indonesia initiating bans and restrictions as well. The City of Brantford, Ontario is the first municipality in Canada to ban shark fins.

(Submitted to City Council on June 14 and 15, 2011 as MM9.3)