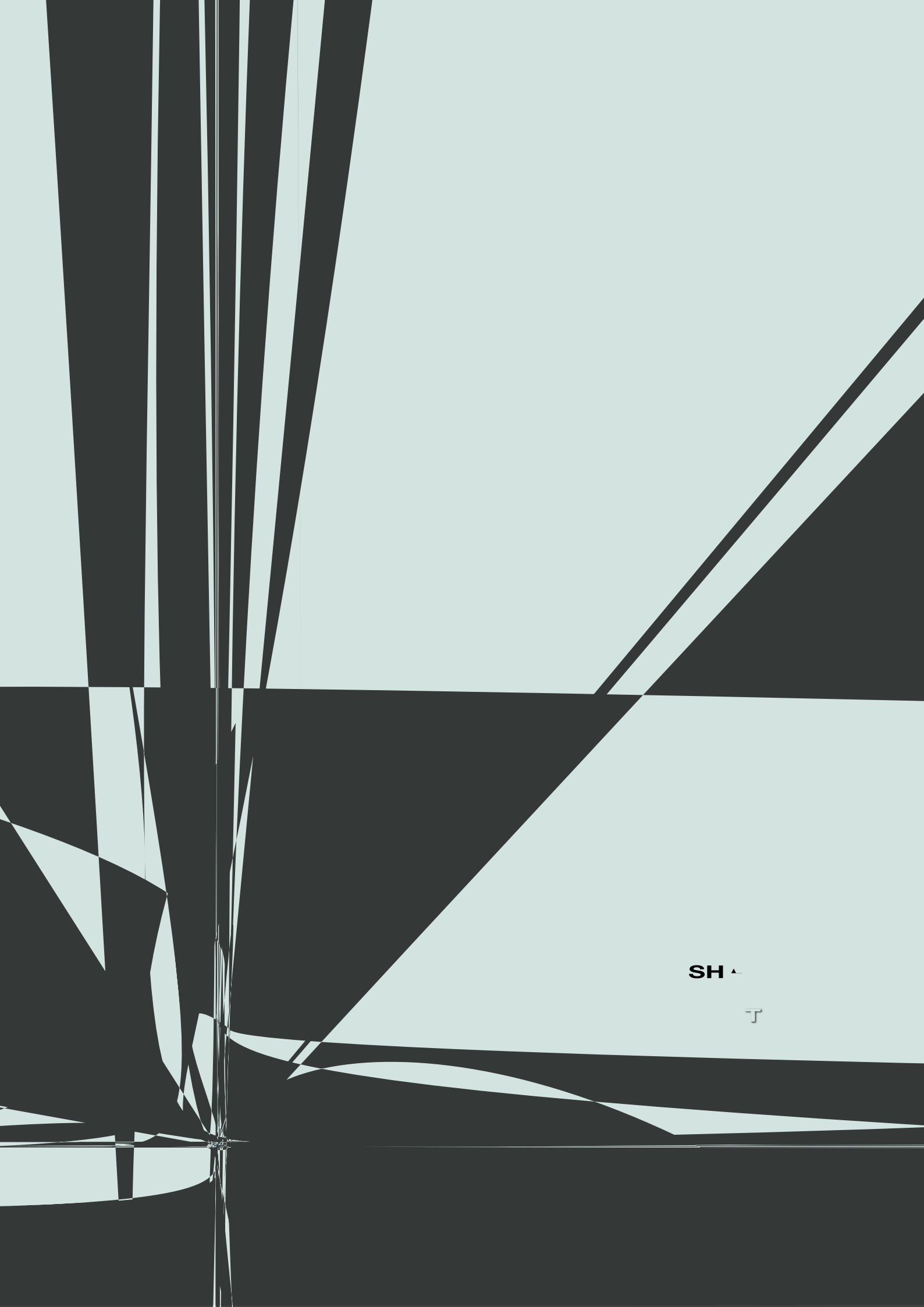
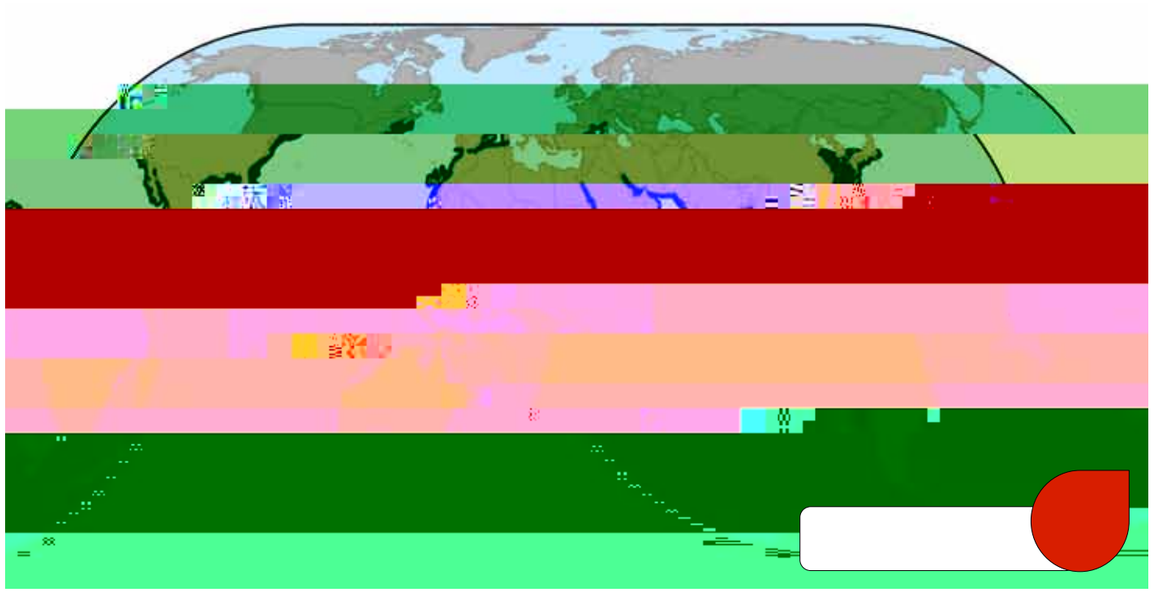

SH

## Distribution

The scalloped hammerhead shark occurs in coastal warm, temperate, and tropical seas around the world.



## International Trade

Because of their high fin ray count, hammerhead fins are particularly prized for use in the traditional Chinese celebratory dish, shark fin soup. Fins from scalloped hammerheads are regularly exported to Asia along with those of smooth and great hammerheads. Hammerhead fins can sell for more than 100 USD per kg in Hong Kong markets.

Despite data limitations, hammerheads are known to be among the shark species most frequently found in the global fin trade. Studies published in 2006 estimated that the fins of 1.3 to 2.7 million scalloped and smooth hammerhead sharks were entering the shark fin trade annually, and that the three largest hammerheads (scalloped, great, and smooth) made up nearly 6% of the Hong Kong shark fin market.

Shark fin traders in Hong Kong are able to readily identify hammerhead fins from other shark fins. Traders typically sort scalloped and smooth hammerhead fins together and separate great hammerhead fins from those of other species. Scalloped and great hammerhead fins, however, are similarly light in color and thus sometimes combined or mislabeled.

Rapid and inexpensive DNA tests are available for hammerhead parts and derivatives in trade. There are numerous shark species identification guides. Improvement of these tools is ongoing.

## Alternative Uses

Shark dive tourism contributes millions of dollars every year to regional economies, presenting viable alternative uses for sharks around the world. Hammerhead sharks consistently rank among the top underwater attractions.

## Population Status

IUCN classifies the scalloped, great, and smooth hammerhead shark as threatened species. The scalloped hammerhead and the great hammerhead are categorized on the IUCN Red List as globally *Endangered*, making them the most threatened of all the world's pelagic and semi-pelagic sharks. Smooth hammerheads are classified by IUCN as globally *Vulnerable*.

The alarming statistics demonstrating dwindling hammerhead abundance include:

- Northwest and Western Central Atlantic (1981–2005): 83–85% *S. lewini* decline;
- South Africa (1978–2003): declines of 64% for *S. lewini*; 79% for *S. mokarran*;
- Southwest Atlantic, Brazil (2000–2008): bottom gillnet hammerhead catch/unit effort fell by 80%;
- West Africa: collapses in large hammerhead landings.

Shark fisheries data are particularly sparse for Indian Ocean fisheries, but the Scientific Committee for the regional tuna commission has warned that scalloped hammerhead populations are at considerable risk from current fishing effort. Globally, the extent and rate of decline of scalloped hammerhead populations significantly exceed the qualifying levels for inclusion in CITES Appendix II, while some particularly depleted populations already qualify for Appendix I status (see expert advice below).

## Conservation Measures

The scalloped, great, and smooth hammerhead sharks are included in Annex I of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which signals international recognition of the need for cooperative management of the species but does not carry specific, binding fisheries regulations. Hammerhead sharks are not included in the CMS Appendices, and hence are not covered by the CMS Memorandum of Understanding for Migratory Sharks.

There are no hammerhead quotas under the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). EU propos-