

We Kill Cockroaches – Why Not Sharks?

Environmentalists are suspiciously selective about the species they want to protect.

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The culling of animals is far more commonplace than most people realise. In fact, we all do it.

At the start of every summer, virtually every house in Sydney and various towns around Australia goes through the annual ritual of laying baits or calling in professional pest controllers to cull cockroaches before they start emerging from behind skirting boards and scurrying around in pantries.

These are not dangerous animals. But they are, for some reason, creepy. So for our convenience, they must die.

Sharks are infinitely more dangerous, which is obvious from the increasing number of serious and fatal attacks in Australia during the past 10 years. Despite this, politicians and the supposed experts in the field have for decades categorically ruled out culling them.

There are two reasons for this.

First, **sharks are revered**. They are the new totem of the environmental movement's pseudo religion, emblematic of nature's fearful power. Environmentalists call them an "apex predator", as if this bestows on them some kind of divine status. It doesn't. With the possible exception of environmentalists themselves, humans are superior to sharks in every way. Sharks are just dumb fish with more teeth than brains.

Second, politicians and various experts have convinced us that sharks are both **endangered** and **essential** to maintaining the delicate balance of the marine environment.

They have done this not because they are concerned about the marine environment, but because they know there is a secure and lucrative career in it. As long as we punters believe that sharks require urgent protection, we will continue to vote for politicians who appoint the right experts to ensure that protection happens.

Protection of great whites was introduced by the federal government in all Australian waters in July 2000. This protection was based on flimsy data, and the relative costs and benefits of it were never once debated in parliament. Instead, protection was simply waved through as part of an automatic process under the new and powerful Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

It is hardly surprising that the people advocating for this protection from the start have been the same people who have benefited from it.

Meanwhile, over the past decade or so, shark fisheries were gradually shut down by state governments.

The result of all this has been a frightening explosion in the size and abundance of sharks at our beaches and trailing behind fishing boats.

Culling the ones that come near our beaches is not, as environmentalists assume, the same as wanting to exterminate them all.

Sharks are not the most intellectually gifted of the earth's creatures, but they are smart enough to know when a place is dangerous for them. It is a scientifically acknowledged fact, confirmed by fishermen, that when a particular type of shark is killed at a particular spot, either by other predators or by fishermen, then others from that species avoid that location for a long time.

If we culled the sharks that came near our beaches, and let the carcass sink to the bottom, others of that species will quickly learn to stay away. (This is in effect why the nets at urban beaches have been so successful since they were introduced in 1937.)

If we did this while simultaneously reintroducing a managed shark fishery, the shark problem would disappear tomorrow.

Shark “experts” would need to find new jobs, but that’s okay. **Their current jobs are worthless** anyway.

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This piece was originally published in The Daily Telegraph on 19 June.

Dear reader, if you want to learn the shocking truth about sharks in Australia, watch my entertaining and enlightening documentary, [The Heart of Sharkness, here](#).