



**UNITED NATIONS  
OCEAN CONFERENCE  
NICE, FRANCE 2025**

## **UNOC3 Conference Side Event**

### **Direct Democracy for Marine Conservation**

- How a European Citizens Initiative motivated 1.1 million people to support a shark fin trade ban

Nice / La Baleine (Orca Room), 10 June 14:45-15:30

**Organized by:** Stop Finning Deutschland e.V.

**Background on the event (one paragraph)**

The event “Direct Democracy for Marine Conservation - How a European Citizens Initiative motivated 1.1 million people to support a shark fin trade ban” showcased the power of direct democracy and public engagement as a driver for marine conservation. "Stop Finning – Stop the Trade" is the first and only successful European Citizens’ Initiative focused on the ocean. This session showed the importance of a shark fin trade ban for marine conservation and that the success story is still lacking its happy end.

**Key Issues discussed (5-8 bullet points)**

- Sharks are essential for the marine ecosystem and climate protection.
- More than 100.000.000 sharks are killed every year, mainly for their fins.
- 45% of shark fins come from Europe. The EU is still part of the problem!
- Hunting sharks for their fins can only end with a trade ban for loose fins.
- “Stop Finning – Stop the Trade” is a European Citizens Initiative supported by 1.119.996 EU citizens who call EU leaders for a #FinBanNow.

**Key recommendations for action / voluntary commitments (5-6 bullet points)**

- **Time to see some action: Stop the shark fin trade in Europe!** Upon EU Citizens request additional trade legislation is urgently needed to ban the export, import and transit of loose shark fins. With the change of the regulation the EU follows the example of other countries, like the UK, and fulfils its conservation obligations, secures a sustainable economy as well as food security and becomes part of the growing community of States, which take these responsibilities seriously. Moreover, the European Union holds its promises to its citizens and maintains the credibility of a European Citizens Initiative as a tool for direct democracy.