




# HELP US PROTECT THE GREAT WHITE SHARK BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE



-  **Only a few thousand remain**
-  **Now vulnerable to extinction**
-  **Poorly understood and often misunderstood**



## More endangered than the Tiger

Scientists estimate that there are only about 3500 Great White Sharks in the ocean today – that's fewer than the number of Tigers living in the wild. And numbers continue to decline dramatically because of the growing demand for shark fins and meat in Asia, modern fishing practices and



the continuing use of gill nets off beaches such as Kwazulu Natal.

South Africa was the first country to respond to this crisis when it passed legislation protecting sharks in 1991. This lead has been followed by other countries and global protection was given by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in 2004. But this intervention has failed to halt the decline and CITES estimates that the population is falling by about 20% every three generations. As a result the International Conservation Union (ICUN) says the Great White Shark is "vulnerable" to extinction

## Research urgently needed to protect the Great White Shark

Scientifically formulated conservation strategies are urgently needed to protect the remaining endangered population of Great White Sharks. Yet, despite the worldwide recognition of the Great White Shark, most of its life is shrouded in mystery. How do they move from ocean to ocean? How does their behaviour differ in varying marine environments? How and where do they breed? At what age do they reach maturity? What is their life expectancy? These and many other critically important research questions remain unanswered.

## Unravelling these mysteries in Gansbaai

Here in Gansbaai – near the very tip of Africa – we have the unique opportunity to help to answer some of these questions.

Attracted by the population of 40 000 Cape Fur Seals living and breeding on Dyer Island, the Bay hosts the densest population of the Great White Shark anywhere in the world. Easily accessible by boat from our headquarters at Kleinbaai, these sharks are studied in contrasting marine environments throughout the year. In the Southern Hemisphere summer the sharks are found in the warm, shallow waters off the pristine and unpopulated beach while in winter they concentrate in deeper, colder waters off the Island with its famous Shark Alley. This allows our scientists to study and compare seasonal variations in behaviour in each area.

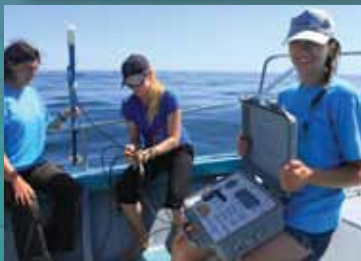
# Trust leads pioneering research programme

## Our mission

**The Dyer Island Conservation Trust delivers unique conservation and research programmes in the fragile and critically important marine eco-system at the southern-most tip of Africa. Here we strive to protect the largest surviving colonies of the endangered African Penguin whose numbers are at an all-time low; the globally important breeding and calving grounds of the Southern Right Whale; and, the world's densest populations of the vulnerable Great White Shark.**

To understand and protect the Great White Shark the Dyer Island Conservation Trust ([www.dict.org.za](http://www.dict.org.za)) is funding and conducting world class research led by a resident team of dedicated marine biologists working in close co-operation with universities in South Africa and overseas.

With our eco-tourism partner, Marine Dynamics ([www.sharkwatchsa.com](http://www.sharkwatchsa.com)) and our research boat *Lwazi* (the Xhosa word for Knowledge) this work attracts interest from international marine research centres as well as TV and film documentary makers. Assisted by interns and volunteers from around the world, the team is undertaking pioneering work including acoustic-tagging and tracking of sharks to record their behaviour and interactions with other marine species including whales and dolphins. Additionally, tens of thousands of photographs of dorsal fins are contributed to a database allowing scientists to monitor the movement of individual Great White Sharks around the world.





[www.sharkwatchsa.com](http://www.sharkwatchsa.com)

[www.marinevolunteers.com](http://www.marinevolunteers.com)

[www.whalewatchsa.com](http://www.whalewatchsa.com)

## Our research projects

- Environmental influences on inshore habitat use
- Home ranges and foraging ecology
- Parasitic infestations
- Wound healing
- Sharks as refuge for other species



## How you can help

**Our work relies on the generosity of individuals, organisations and companies.**

**You can help us discover and protect the vulnerable Great White Shark today.**

**Purchase a research block of sea ZAR150, £15, Euros15, US\$20**

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