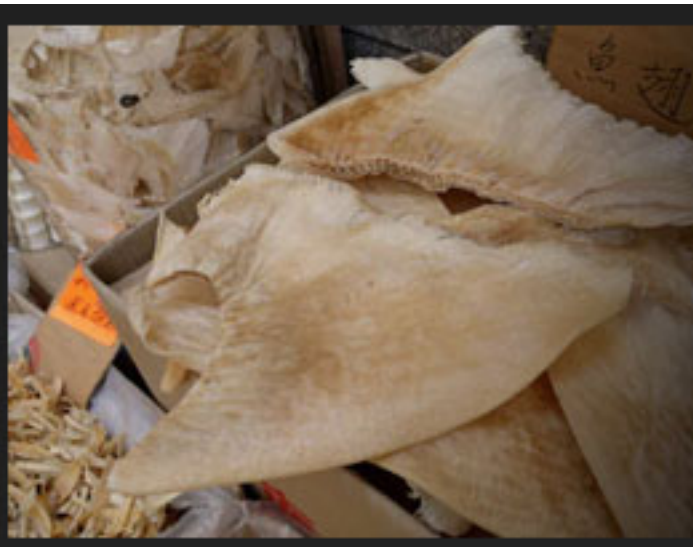
Outrage over Ontario Superior Court Judge's decision to overturn Toronto's ban on the sale and possession of shark fin

Toronto, Canada, December 1st, 2012 – Fin Free, the coalition of shark conservationists working together to ban the sale, trade and possession of shark fin, urges the Toronto City Council to immediately appeal Justice James Spence's ruling against Toronto's ban on shark fin.

On October 25, 2011, the Toronto City Council voted overwhelmingly in support of the bylaw (38-4), following suit with several other municipalities across Ontario and several states in the US. Since then, the Fin Free movement has spread internationally as well as Canada-wide, where similar bans have been adopted or proposed throughout British Columbia and Alberta.

The passage of Toronto's shark-fin bylaw satisfies two key sections of the City of Toronto Act; including section 8(2)(5) respecting, "[e]conomic, social and environmental well-being of the City", and section 8(2)(6) respecting, "[h]ealth, safety and well-being of persons". Despite this, FARGA - an organization developed to fight shark fin bans - alongside four members of the Chinese business community, funded and organized an appeal to strike down Toronto's bylaw, heard by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice on November 5th. Subsequently, Justice James Spence declared Toronto's ban as invalid based on the City's perceived lack of power as it pertains to the enforcement of such a bylaw. The four individuals challenging the ban claimed that the bylaw unfairly targets the Chinese Community, which often notes incorrectly that the shark fins are obtained legally and do not come from endangered shark species.



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