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The FAKE FLAKE, is now fished out!

One of the great Australian traditions has been under threat – the beloved Friday night Fish'n'Chips. But now, THE FAKE FLAKE, is fished out!

As of Easter, after a two year application process championed by the Southern Shark Industry Alliance Inc. (SSIA), the Australian Fish Names Committee, the body that endorses the real and official Fish Names Standard in Australia, officially made the word FLAKE the sole name for the species of Gummy Shark (*Mustelus antarcticus*) and NZ Gummy Shark (*Mustelus lenticulatus*).

Ask most Aussies and they will tell you that a trip down to the local Fish'n'Chips shop with the family is as Australian as beach cricket and a meat pie at the footy.

Unfortunately, they'll also tell you that the tradition isn't what it used to be. The Friday night Fish'n'Chips was in big trouble. The quality of what we're eating was dropping alarmingly – why?

Over the past few years, the previous Federal Labor Government has made it so hard and expensive for Australian fishermen to catch genuine, fresh Gummy Shark – the REAL FLAKE – that a large number of imported substitutes have flooded the market.

Want to know why your flake doesn't taste as good as it used to? It's because you're not really eating flake anymore, you're getting the FAKE FLAKE.

Your FLAKE is no longer what it should be. It's now Bronze Whaler, Copper Shark, Black Tip Shark, Lemon Shark and the list of substitutes goes on... some of which even include species on the IUCN (International Union of Conservation of Nature) Red List!

These substitutes are caught overseas, processed for the fins and then the meat is sent here to be sold under the name 'flake' – which is just wrong....it's a FAKE FLAKE!

The substitute fish is much cheaper (often just \$2-\$3 per piece) than the genuine Gummy Shark flake and as is often the case, none of these savings are passed on to customers – customers who still mistakenly believe that they are eating real Gummy Shark.

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Fortunately, there are still quality Fish'n'Chips shop owners who are honest and dedicated to a high quality product – they are usually the ones with a long line snaking out the front door. Unfortunately for true Fish'n'Chips lovers, they are now having to travel further and further away to find the genuine article.

So, how do we stop this deception? How do we get a return to the quality we remember?

We get the labeling right so people know the truth behind their favorite Friday night meal. The word “FLAKE” is now an official fish name. Retailers and wholesalers have been calling any shark flake, but the consumer thinks they are getting Gummy Shark.

Consumers have the right to get what they paid for, not something that's good one day and off the other.

Importers are calling all the imported product “FLAKE” without putting the real name on the side of the box, so, the retailer sells what's been supplied to him and calls it the same thing.

No one is breaking the law, but the consumer doesn't really know what's going on – until now.

The word “FLAKE” is listed in the Australian Oxford Dictionary as “the flesh of the Gummy Shark”, and now it's official. The SSIA (Southern Shark Industry Alliance Inc.) has successfully applied to the Australian Fish Names Committee to make the word “FLAKE” the official name of the Gummy Shark (*Mustelus antarcticus*) and NZ Gummy Shark (*Mustelus lenticulatus*).

If it's not a *Mustelus*, you can't call it FLAKE. Simple as that!

The next time you go to a Fish'n'Chips shop, have a look up at the board and ask yourself; *if you had a choice of Hammerhead Shark, Copper Shark, or Flake, which one would you buy?* Then ask the fishmonger; *is that real Flake your serving or the FAKE FLAKE?*