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MEDIA RELEASE

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ADULT GREAT WHITE SHARK NUMBERS IN THE WEST

Preliminary results from a CSIRO study of great white shark numbers indicate there are many more of the species in the west compared to the east.

The CSIRO estimates, the current adult population in the west may not be increasing but remains somewhere between 750 and 2,250 with a 90 per cent survival rate year to year.

However, the total number of great white sharks is significantly larger when you also take into account the juvenile population.

In the east, the adult numbers are considerably less when compared to the west with around 470 to 1,030 great white sharks with a survival rate of 93 per cent year to year.

Couple these higher numbers with the 15 fatal shark attacks over the last 17 years in Western Australia and it's clear the state government needs to look seriously at more rigorous and proactive measures to protect its citizens from shark attacks.

The Queensland and New South Wales governments have had in place extensive measures to manage sharks for a number of years.

In Queensland, they have had a shark control program since 1962, which today extends to 85 beaches and includes nets and drumlines.

Queensland has had only one fatality at a protected beach in more than half a century.

In New South Wales, they have had mesh nets at more than 50 beaches with no fatalities at a protected beach since 1951.

While more recently, New South Wales have also started using SMART drum lines as a non-lethal means to protect the public with great effect.

With summer upon us, now is the time to take considered, proportionate and effective action, which based on the experiences of New South Wales and Queensland can save lives.

The CSIRO study of great white shark numbers was undertaken under the National Environmental Science Program using world class genetic research and data techniques.

These preliminary estimates will be peer reviewed and may change, with the final numbers expected to be released by the CSIRO in the first quarter of next year.

Ends