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JOB FILE

Biologist at Nova pioneers shark DNA tags

Work by the director of the Guy Harvey Research Institute helps ID species in meat markets, combat illegal activity.

BY SOLANGE REYNER

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Mahmood Shivii didn't like sharks. cies apart. And he didn't plan to make South Florida his home. Shivji, a marine biologist, the position in 1993.

The move to a climate that was as sound too appealing.

when he began to study shark foren- forensic markers."

Nova's Oceanographic Center, started Administration's law enforcement working on how to identify a shark's agency soon after, and the attention wide. species by using DNA in 1998. He got put him in the spotlight. students involved in his study soon

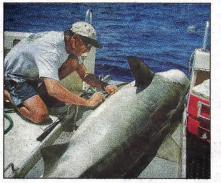
after and published his first paper on the subject in 2001.

Shivii's research involved developing DNA markers to identify shark species. He got the idea when he read about the shark meat market and how enforcement agencies couldn't tell spe-

"Nobody was keeping track of that - and the sharks couldn't be identified intended to stay at his teaching job at by their body parts. I wasn't working Nova Southeastern University for only on sharks at the time, but I realized that two to three years when he accepted DNA could be used to identify species, like we do with humans," Shivji said.

"I talked to some federal governwelcoming to hurricanes and rain- ment agencies and shark biologists and storms as it was to sharks didn't really I said I was interested and I told them I thought that I could develop DNA But the Kenyan-born director of the markers and told them that they first Guy Harvey Research Institute at Nova needed to send me [tissue] samples. in Fort Lauderdale found his niche Over the years we developed all these

Shivii's markers made a splash with Shivji, who is also a professor at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric



ILVIHZ DOOMHAM

TAGGING SHARKS: Mahmood Shivii.

calls from the media and they wanted to talk to me about my work. Now, I do cases for NOAA where if their agents detect some illegal activity they would send us the samples and we would check it out."

Now his study is being used world-

"Nothing like that existed," Shivji being a university professor with affected its growth rate.

Marine biologist

Requirements: Bachelor's (least marketable degree), master's or Ph.D. (professor status).

Salary Range: \$30,000 up to \$400,000 depending on experience and degree.

Perks: Working in a learning environment. I can honestly say that there is not a single day in my career that has been a boring day,' Shivji says.

Challenges: Working 60 to 80 hours a week to succeed.

research as an additional option when said. "Soon, I started getting phone he received his Ph.D. in 1990 from the University of Washington's School of Fisheries. While there, he studied genetics and learned about its theory and technology.

> He also has a master's in marine science from the University of California in Santa Barbara.

His research there focused on how Shivii was originally interested in kelp utilized nutrients and how that