

Common Blacktip Shark, *Carcharhinus limbatus*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable (North and West coast stock) Sustainable (East Coast stock) Undefined (Gulf of Carpentaria)		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Vulnerable
Global Assessors	Rigby, C.L., Carlson, J., Chin, A., Derrick, D., Dicken, M. & Pacoureaux, N.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) and Usher, M., Braccini, M., Peddemors, V. & Roelofs, A. (SAFS)		
Report Card Remarks	Relatively low catches across northern Australia.		

Summary

The Common Blacktip Shark is a medium-sized shark that is common in warm temperate and tropical waters throughout northern Australia and Papua New Guinea, and found in all other coastal tropical and warm-temperate areas world-wide. It frequents inshore waters as adults and has coastal nursery habitats. This makes the Common Blacktip Shark subject to fishing pressure and habitat degradation. It is regularly encountered in recreational and commercial fisheries.



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In Australia, fisheries and harvest levels are managed and two of the three recognised stocks are classified as sustainable in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks (SAFS) reports. Therefore, in Australia the Common Blacktip Shark is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021), and Sustainable (North and West coast stock, and East coast stock) or Undefined (Gulf of Carpentaria) (Usher et al. 2021). The global population is assessed as Vulnerable (IUCN). From November 2023, the species will be listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES).

Distribution

The Common Blacktip is distributed throughout tropical and warm temperate waters. It is typically found in continental shelf and coastal waters. Within Australia, it is found from Cape Leeuwin (Western Australia), through the Northern Territory and Queensland to Bermagui (New South Wales) (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

There are three recognised stocks in Australia waters (North and West Coast, East Coast, and Gulf of Carpentaria) based on the results of genetic studies (Ovenden et al. 2007, Grubert et al. 2013). The North and West Coast stock is targeted by gillnet and longline fishing, mostly by Northern Territory vessels as limited fishing for sharks has occurred in northern Western Australia since 2009. This stock was heavily fished by foreign vessels until the early 1980s, but stock assessments (Usher et al. 2021) and tag-recapture data (Bradshaw et al 2013) show that this stock has recovered and is sustainably fished. The East Coast stock is targeted by gillnet vessels in Queensland and longline vessels in northern NSW. The most recent assessment shows that this species is caught at levels below MSY levels and is therefore sustainable (Usher et al. 2021). The Gulf of Carpentaria stock is caught by gillnet and longline vessels, but there is little information available on the catches and their impact on stock status, resulting in a conclusion that the stock is currently in an Undefined state (Usher et al. 2021).

Fisheries

Common Blacktip Sharks are mostly caught by gillnet and longline fisheries in northern Australia, but are also taken by recreational and Indigenous fishers (Lynch et al. 2010, Grubert et al. 2013). It is also susceptible to habitat degradation because it uses nearshore coastal environments as nursery grounds. It is caught in small numbers in the Queensland and NSW shark control programs.

Habitat and biology

Common Blacktip Sharks are found in nearshore waters off beaches, river mouths and bays throughout its distribution. Adults and pups occupy different habitat niches which lowers competition and predatory mortality. Maximum recorded size is 265 cm total length (TL) (Harry et al. 2012). Maximum age is not known.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: 265 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Both sexes: 5–7 years, 180 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 018039

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/3851/2870736>

Status of Australian Fish Stocks Page: <https://fish.gov.au/report/403-Common-Blacktip-Shark-2020>

Link to page at Shark References: <http://shark-references.com/species/view/Carcharhinus-limbatus>

References

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