

Allen's Skate, *Pavoraja alleni*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Huveneers, C. & Last, P.R.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Abundant, fishing pressure low, and some spatial refuge across its range.		

Summary

Allen's Skate is a small demersal deepwater ray endemic to tropical waters of northwest Australia. It is reported as abundant and a common incidental catch in the Northwest Slope Trawl Fishery (NWSTF) which encompasses the species spatial and depth range. The species has a relatively restricted depth range which means it likely only occupies a narrow stretch of habitat. However, the NWSTF has limited effort with only 1–6 active vessels. The species is of little commercial value and is released when caught. Although post-release mortality is unknown, chondrichthyans are considered as at low risk from the NWSTF and further, Allen's Skate would receive refuge in the North-west Marine Parks Network. Therefore, Allen's Skate is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).



Distribution

Allen's Skate is endemic to tropical northwest Australia. It occurs from the Bonaparte Archipelago to the Monte Bello Islands, Western Australia (Last et al. 2008, Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species. However, it was considered one of the most abundant softnose skates on the upper continental slope of northwest Australia (Last and Stevens 2009).

Fisheries

Allen's Legskate is commonly caught incidentally in the Commonwealth Northwest Slope Trawl Fishery which targets prawns and scampi (*Metanephrops australiensis*) at 200–600 m depths (Last and Stevens 2009, Patterson et al. 2022). Trawl effort has declined considerably in the fishery since the late 1980s and early 1990s and currently has limited effort with only 1–6 active vessels (Patterson et

al. 2022). As it is of little commercial value, Allen’s Legskate is released and there is no information on post-release mortality, although chondrichthyans have been assessed as at low risk in this fishery (Zhou et al. 2009, Last et al. 2016). The species would receive refuge in the Commonwealth North-west Marine Parks Network that came into effect in 2018 and includes zoning and gear restrictions (Parks Australia 2023).

Habitat and biology

Allen’s Skate is demersal on the upper continental slope at depths of 305–460 m (Last et al. 2016). Maximum size is approximately 35 cm total length (TL) and males mature at 29–32 cm TL (Last et al. 2008, Last et al. 2016). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: ~35 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 29–32 cm TL Females: unknown

CAAB Code: 37 031027

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/161337/68640180>

Link to page at Shark References: <https://shark-references.com/species/view/Pavoraja-alleni>

References

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- Last, P.R, Mallick, S. and Yearsley, G.K. 2008. A review of the Australian skate genus *Pavoraja* Whitley (Rajiformes: Arhynchobatidae). *Zootaxa* 1812: 1–45.
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- Zhou, S., Fuller, M. and Smith, T. 2009. *Rapid quantitative risk assessment for fish species in additional seven Commonwealth fisheries*. Marine and Atmospheric Research, CSIRO, Cleveland, Australia.