

Sandbar Shark, *Carcharhinus plumbeus*

Report Card assessment	Recovering (western Australia stock) Undefined (eastern Australia stock)		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Near Threatened	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Vulnerable
Assessors	Musick, J.A., Stevens, J.D., Baum, J.K., Bradai, M., Clò, S., Fergusson, I., Grubbs, R.D., Soldo, A., Vacchi, M. & Vooren, C.M.		
Report Card Remarks	In Australia, west coast population is Recovering and east coast population status is unknown. This species has been assessed in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks http://www.fish.gov.au/		

Summary

The Sandbar Shark is a coastal, large bodied shark that is widely distributed throughout tropical and temperate waters of the globe. It is highly susceptible to fishing pressure due to its life history characteristics. The Sandbar Shark is targeted by fisheries throughout its distribution and forms an important component of many fisheries. Globally, population declines due to fishing pressure have occurred in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Northwest Pacific. In Australia,



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overfishing has driven declines in Western Australian and New South Wales. Management action has occurred to reduce further declines within Australia. Therefore, the Sandbar Shark is assessed globally as Vulnerable (IUCN) and in Australia as Near Threatened (IUCN). This species has been assessed in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks Reports as Recovering for the western Australian stock and Undefined for the eastern Australian stock.

Distribution

The Sandbar Shark is patchily distributed throughout tropical and temperate coastal waters of the world (Last and Stevens 2009). Within Australia, it is found from Esperance (Western Australia), through the Northern Territory, Queensland and to Coffs Harbour (New South Wales) (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

In Australia, the Sandbar Shark is considered to have separate Western Australian and eastern Australian stocks. In Western Australia, management actions introduced after 2005 reduced the fishing pressure, and the Western Australian stock is as considered transitional recovering (McAuley et al. 2014). The status of the Eastern Australian stock is unknown.

Fisheries

The primary threat to the Sandbar Shark is fishing pressure. Due to the life history characteristics, it is highly susceptible to overfishing (Sminkey and Musick 1995, McAuley et al. 2005, 2006). It is a major component of coastal shark fisheries throughout its distribution (Compagno 1984, Last and Stevens 2009, McAuley et al. 2005). Its fins are highly prized and made up at least 2-3% of fins traded in the world's largest shark fin trading centre, Hong Kong (Clarke et al. 2006). Overfishing has occurred in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Northwest Pacific. Within Australia, catches have declined from higher levels (>300 t in 2008) to lower levels (32 t in 2017), largely due to management actions. Catches from Western Australian stocks were unsustainable, and new management arrangements were introduced in 2005 to protect adult sharks that included large spatial closures (McAuley et al. 2014). Stocks are now recovering. In Eastern Australia, Sandbar Sharks represented 35% of the catch of set-line fishery that targeted large sharks for their fins. In 2009, management introduced shark trip limits that rendered shark fishing uneconomical (Broadhurst et al. 2014).

Habitat and biology

In other parts of the world the Sandbar Shark is a coastal species with the young often found in shallow waters such as tidal flats, estuaries and bays (Grubbs et al. 2007). However, in Australian waters the young occur in more offshore areas. Adults are also found further offshore around topographic features such as islands and reefs and can occur down to depths of 280 m. Maximum size is at least 215 cm total length (TL) (SAFS 2016).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: estimated 30-40 years Max size: 215 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 13.8 yrs, 136 cm fork length Females: 16.2 yrs, 127 cm fork length

Link to State of Australian Fish Stocks Page: <http://www.fish.gov.au>

Link to IUCN Page: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/3853/0>

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

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