

Australian Sharpnose Shark, *Rhizoprionodon taylori*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Refer to Global Assessment	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Simpfendorfer, C. & Baje, L.		
Report Card Remarks	One of the most productive sharks; taken as bycatch in Australian waters		

Summary

The Australian Sharpnose Shark is a small, abundant, inshore shark found in northern Australia and southern Papua New Guinea. It is not a targeted species but is caught as bycatch in inshore



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gillnet and trawl fisheries. Catches can be large but are also uncommon. The Australian Sharpnose Shark is one of the most productive sharks in the world. It grows very quickly, is able to reproduce one year after birth, and females can give birth to up to 10 pups per year. This makes the Australian Sharpnose Shark highly resilient to fishing pressure and is therefore assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) and in Australia, Sustainable (SAFS).

Distribution

The Australian Sharpnose Shark is found in southern Papua New Guinea and across northern Australia from Carnarvon (Western Australia) through the Northern Territory and to Moreton Bay (Queensland) (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

There are no data available on population size, however estimates of rate of population increase indicate the Australian Sharpnose Shark has a population doubling time of 2.55 years (Simpfendorfer 1999). This is one of the highest rates of population increase for any shark species. Therefore, the Australian Sharpnose is believed to be highly abundant and productive within its Australian range and the lack of targeted fishing should ensure it is sustainable.

Fisheries

The Australian Sharpnose Shark is taken in gillnet fisheries that target shark, mackerel and barramundi in waters across northern Australia. These fisheries occasionally catch large numbers of Australian Sharpnose Sharks as bycatch. However, the overall catch is relatively small. In the Northern Territory, this species makes up about 0.5% of the catch in gillnet and longline fisheries

(Stevens 1999), but the sharks are considered too small to be of value (Last and Stevens 2009). Although many of the Australian Sharpnose Shark discarded in these fisheries are dead upon landing, its high reproductive rate means the species is highly resilient to fishing.

Habitat and biology

The Australian Sharpnose Shark is found in shallow inshore waters to depths of at least 110 m. It most often uses soft-bottomed habitats (sand or mud substrate) (Last and Stevens 2009, Munroe et al. 2014). Males grow to 69 cm total length (TL) and females to 81 cm TL. The species likely has a maximum age of approximately 7 years (Simpfendorfer 1992, Simpfendorfer 1993).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: ~7 years Max size: males 69 cm TL, females 81 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 40 cm TL Females: 45 cm TL

Link to IUCN Page: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/41852/0>

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

References

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