

Piked spurdog, *Squalus megalops*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Data deficient
Assessors	Rigby, C.L., Cavanagh, R.D. & Lisney, T.J.		
Report Card Remarks	Susceptible to overfishing; in Australian catches managed and there are refuges from fishing		

Summary

The Piked Spurdog is a small, common demersal dogfish. The species is taken in significant quantities in bottom trawls and caught with lines and mesh nets. The



Piked Spurdog is highly susceptible to overfishing as it tends to aggregate and has low biological productivity. Its Australian distribution includes fished areas off southeast Australia, although significant declines to date have not been documented in these areas, possibly due to recruitment from lightly fished areas. There are regions around Australia where the Piked Spurdog is not greatly affected by fishing. Therefore, in Australia the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) and Sustainable (SAFS). Globally, the Piked Spurdog is exposed to high fishing pressure in some areas of its occurrence where it may not have refuge from fishing. Therefore, globally it is assessed Near Threatened (IUCN).

Distribution

The Piked Spurdog occurs across temperate and tropical waters in the Atlantic and Indo-west Pacific. In Australia, it occurs in the south of the country from the Whitsunday Islands (Queensland) to the North West Shelf (Western Australia) (Last and Stevens 2009). Elsewhere, it has been reported from Brazil, Canary Islands, Mediterranean, South Africa and the western Pacific (Rigby et al. 2015).

Stock structure and status

The Piked Spurdog is common and abundant but the global population sizes are not known (Compagno et al. 2005, Last and Stevens 2009). The population off southeast Australia increased in relative abundance by 18% over two decades but also appeared to decline in other areas of Australia (Graham et al. 2001).

Fisheries

The Piked Spurdog is taken in considerable quantities in demersal trawls, lines and nets. In southeast Australia, it appeared to increase in abundance from 1976-77 to 1996-97. This could have been due to recruitment from the lightly fished outer shelf areas (Graham et al. 2001, Walker and Gason 2007).

Declines in abundance were apparent further south in a more heavily fished outer shelf area (Graham et al. 2001). Comparatively low numbers are captured in the commercial shark gillnets in Bass Strait (Walker et al. 2005). It is also discarded bycatch in the Queensland Trawl Fishery (deepwater eastern king prawn sector; Rigby et al. 2015). In Australia, there are areas where it is not exposed to fishing including the northern west coast that is closed to shark fishing. A risk assessment indicated the Piked Spurdog is potentially highly susceptible to the effects of fishing due to its low biological productivity and catch susceptibility (Braccini et al. 2006a). Globally, it is reported to experience high fishing pressure in some parts of its distribution, that is, in the Canary Islands, of eastern central Atlantic (Pajuelo et al. 2011) and off southern Africa where it is commonly caught as bycatch of the trawl fishery but is largely discarded (Watson and Smale 1999).

Habitat and ecology

The Piked Spurdog is found on the continental shelf and upper slopes from close inshore down to 732 m (Compagno et al. 2005, Last and Stevens 2009). There is regional variation in life history parameters with maximum size varying from 41 cm to 89 cm total length (TL). The known maximum age is 15 years for males and 32 years for females. It has low biological productivity due to late age at maturity, slow growth rates and small litter sizes (Watson and Smale, 1999, Graham 2005, Braccini et al. 2006 a, b, 2007, Pajuelo et al. 2011, Rigby et al. 2015).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: males 15 years, females 32 years Max size: 41-89 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 9-13 years, 33-49 cm TL Females: 15-20 years, 38-65 cm TL

Link to IUCN Page: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/41859/0>

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

References

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