Smoothbelly Catshark, *Apristurus longicephalus*

Report Card assessment	**Sustainable**		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Duffy, C.A.J. & Huveneers, C.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Deepwater species with refuge at depth from Australian fisheries.		

Summary


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The Longhead Catshark is a relatively small deepwater species with a patchy distribution in the Indo-West Pacific. Throughout its geographic range this catshark may be taken as bycatch in deepwater fisheries, though species-specific catch data are not available. Despite being a poorly known species, it is wide ranging and has refuge at depth at least where it occurs off Australia. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and in Australia, Sustainable (SAFS).

Distribution

The Longhead Catshark has a patchy distribution in the Indo-West Pacific. In Australia, it has been recorded off North West Cape and Ashmore Reef (Western Australia) and off Townsville (Queensland). Elsewhere it has been found in Tosa Bay of Shikoku Island, southern Japan; Okinawa Trough, East China Sea; the Philippines; Taiwan; the Seychelles; Mozambique; and New Caledonia (Iglesias et al. 2005, Last and Stevens 2009, Ebert et al. 2013).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

Fisheries

Throughout its geographic range the species may be taken as bycatch in deepwater fisheries, though species-specific catch data are not available. Deepwater fisheries may expand in future, though the species is likely to be able to find refuge at depths outside their reach. In Australian waters, there is limited fishery activity within its range.

Habitat and biology

The Longhead Catshark occurs on or near the bottom of the continental slope at 500–1,140 m (Ebert et al. 2013). Maximum size is at least 59 cm total length (TL). Males mature at 49 cm TL and females at 51 cm TL (Last and Stevens 2009, Ebert et al. 2013). Little is known of its biology except that it is hermaphroditic; possesses the genital apparatus of one sex as well as the undeveloped genital apparatus of the opposite sex in the same individual (Last and Stevens 2009).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 59 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 49 cm TL Females: 51 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 015021
Link to IUCN Page: https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/44217/68608927
Link to page at Shark References: http://www.shark-references.com/species/view/Apristurus-longicephalus

References

Ebert, D.A., Fowler, S. and Compagno, L. 2013. *Sharks of the World*. Wild Nature Press, Plymouth.

Iglesias, S.P., Sellos, D.Y. and Nakaya, K. 2005. Discovery of a normal hermaphroditic chondrichthyan species: *Apristurus longicephalus*. *Journal of Fish Biology* 66(2): 417–428.

Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. and Simpfendorfer, C.A. 2021. *The Action Plan for Australian Sharks and Rays 2021*. National Environmental Science Program, Marine Biodiversity Hub, Hobart

Last, P.R. and Stevens, J.D. 2009. *Sharks and Rays of Australia*. Second Edition. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.